

TERTULLIAN
APOLOGY DE SPECTACULIS

WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY

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MINUCIUS FELIX

WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY

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TERTULLIAN
APOLOGY

TERTULLIANI APOLOGETICUS

- 1 I. Si non licet vobis, Romani imperii antistites, in aperto et edito, in ipso fere vertice civitatis praesidentibus ad iudicandum palam dispicere et coram examinare quid sit liquido in causa Christianorum, si ad hanc solam speciem auctoritas vestra de iustitiae diligentia in publico aut timet aut erubescit inquirere, si denique, quod proxime accidit, domesticis iudiciis nimis operata infestatio sectae huius obstruit defensionem, liceat veritati vel occulta via tacitarum litterarum ad aures vestras pervenire.
- 2 Nihil de causa sua deprecatur, quia nec de condicione miratur. Scit se peregrinam in terris agere, inter extraneos facile inimicos invenire, ceterum genus, sedem, spem, gratiam, dignitatem in caelis habere. Unum gessit interdum, ne ignorata damnetur.
- 3 Quid hic deperit legibus in suo regno dominantibus, si audiatur? An hoc magis gloriabitur potestas eorum, quo etiam auditam damnabunt veritatem? Ceterum inauditam si damnent, praeter invidiam iniquitatis etiam suspicionem merebuntur

*He appears to refer to some recent case, unknown, of course, to us, in which the new religion had been discovered in some family, taught in secret by slaves, etc. Cf. Celsus, cited by Origen, *Contra Cels.* iii. 65.

TERTULLIAN: APOLOGY

I. If you, the magistrates of the Roman Empire,—
 you, who, in the light of day, set on high, at the very
 head of the state, preside to do justice,—if you are
 not allowed openly to investigate, face to face to
 examine, the Christian issue, to learn what it is in
 truth ;—if, in this phase of life, and this alone, your
 authority either dreads or blushes to inquire in public,
 with all the care that Justice demands ;—if finally (as
 recently befell) persecution of this school is so busy in
 the domestic tribunal^a as to block the way of defence ;
 —then let truth be allowed to reach your ears at
 least by the hidden path of silent literature.

Truth asks no favours in her cause, since she has no
 surprise at her present position. Truth knows that
 she is a stranger on earth and easily finds enemies
 among men of another allegiance, but she knows that
 her race, home, hope, recompense, honour, are in
 heaven. For one thing meanwhile she is eager—not
 to be condemned without being known. The laws are
 supreme in their own sphere ; what loss can they
 suffer, if Truth be heard? Why, would it not en-
 hance the glory of their supremacy to condemn Truth
after hearing her? But, if they condemn her un-
 heard—let us set on one side the odium such injustice
 will incur—they will rouse the suspicion that they

alicuius conscientiae, nolentes audire quod auditum damnare non possint.

4 Hanc itaque primam causam apud vos collocamus iniquitatis odii erga nomen Christianorum. Quam iniquitatem idem titulus et onerat et revincit qui videtur excusare, ignorantia scilicet. Quid enim iniquius, quam ut oderint homines quod ignorant, etiam si res meretur odium? Tunc etenim meretur, 5 cum cognoscitur an mereatur. Vacante autem meriti notitia, unde odii iustitia defenditur, quae non de eventu, sed de conscientia probanda est? Cum ergo propterea oderunt homines, quia ignorant quale sit quod oderunt, cur non liceat eiusmodi illud esse, quod non debeant odisse? Ita utrumque ex alterutro redarguimus, et ignorare illos, dum oderunt, et iniuste 6 odisse, dum ignorant. Testimonium ignorantiae est, quae iniquitatem dum excusat, condemnat, cum omnes qui retro oderant, quia ignorabant quale sit quod oderant, simul desinunt ignorare, cessant et odisse. Ex his fiunt Christiani, utique de conperto, et incipiunt odisse quod fuerant, et profiteri quod 7 oderant, et sunt tanti quanti et denotamur. Obsessam vociferantur civitatem; in agris, in castellis, in insulis Christianos; omnem sexum, aetatem, conditionem, etiam dignitatem transgredi ad hoc nomen 8 quasi detrimento maerent. Nec tamen hoc modo ad

have some secret sense that they are unjust, when they refuse to hear what, once heard, they cannot condemn.

This, then, is the first plea we lodge with you—the 4 injustice of your hatred of the Christian name. The very excuse that seems to acquit it, at once aggravates and convicts that injustice—to wit, ignorance. For what could be more unjust than for men to hate a thing they do not know, even though it really deserves hatred? It can only deserve hatred when it is known whether it does deserve it. But so long as 5 nothing at all is known of its deserts, how can you defend the justice of the hatred? That must be established, not on the bare fact of its existence, but on knowledge. When men hate a thing simply because they do not know the character of what they hate, what prevents it being of a nature that does not deserve hate at all? Whichever alternative you choose, we maintain both points: they are ignorant so long as they hate, and their hate is unjust so long as they are ignorant. It is evidence of an ignorance 6 which, while it is made an excuse for their injustice, really condemns it, that all who once hated Christianity because they were ignorant of the nature of what they hated, so soon as they cease to be ignorant of it, leave off hating it. From their number come the Christians; it is on the basis of knowledge, nothing else; and they begin to hate what once they were and to profess what once they hated; and we are as many as we are alleged to be. Men proclaim aloud 7 that the state is beset with us; in countryside, in villages, in islands, Christians; every sex, age, condition, yes! and rank going over to this name. They 8 lament it as an injury; and yet even so they do not

aestimationem alicuius latentis boni promovent animos. Non licet rectius suspicari, non libet propius experiri. Hic tantum curiositas humana torpescit. Amant ignorare, cum alii gaudeant cognovisse. Quanto magis hos Anacharsis denotasset imprudentes de prudentibus iudicantes quam immuscos de musicis!

- 9 Malunt nescire, quia iam oderunt. Adeo quod nesciant praecudicant id esse quod, si sciant, odisse non poterant, quando, si nullum odii debitum deprehendatur, optimum utique sit desinere iniuste odisse, si vero de merito constet, non modo nihil odii detrahatur, sed amplius adquiratur ad perseverantiam, etiam iustitiae ipsius auctoritate.
- 10 Sed non ideo, inquit, bonum, quia multos convertit: quanti enim ad malum performantur? quanti transfugae in perversum? Quis negat? tamen quod vere malum est, ne ipsi quidem, quos rapit, defendere pro bono audent. Omne malum aut timore aut pudore
- 11 natura perfudit. Denique malefici gestiunt latere, devitant apparere, trepidant deprehensi, negant accusati, ne torti quidem facile aut semper confitentur, certe damnati maerent. Dinumerant in semetipsos mentis malae impetus, vel fato vel astris imputant; nolunt enim suum esse, quod¹ malum agnoscunt.
- 12 Christianus vero quid simile? Neminem pudet,

¹ *Oehler reads quia.*

^a Cf. Plutarch, *Solon*, 5; Diogenes Laertius, i. 8. 5, 103.

^b *malae mentis* may perhaps equally well denote some evil spirit, daemon, or the like, assailing the wretch with solicitation to evil. So Kellner takes it.

bestir their minds to reflect whether there may not be in it something good that escapes them. No! it is forbidden to guess more shrewdly; it does not please them to test it at closer quarters. Here, and here alone, human curiosity grows torpid. They love to be ignorant, though others rejoice to know. How much better the saying of Anacharsis about the ignorant judging the expert would have fitted them, than the unmusical who judge the musicians!^a They prefer not to know because they already hate. Their prejudice implies that what they do not know really is what, if they were to know, they could not hate. Because, if no just ground for hatred be found, surely it is best to leave off hating unjustly. But if the hatred prove to be deserved, so far from any of it being abated, more hatred should be added to keep it up; and Justice itself would endorse it.

But, says he, a thing is not necessarily good 10 because it wins many adherents; how many are predisposed to evil, how many desert to error! Who denies that? Yet a thing that is really bad, not even those who are caught by it dare to defend or to call good. Nature steeps every evil thing with either fear or shame. Why, evil-doers are eager 11 to escape notice; they avoid appearing; they are anxious when caught; they deny when accused; even under torture they do not easily or always confess; at all events, when condemned they lament. They tell how often they have felt the impulses of a mind distraught^b; they set their deeds down to fate or to the stars; they will not admit to be their own what they recognize as evil. But look at the Chris- 12 tians! There you have quite another story; not a man of them is ashamed of it, not a man regrets—

neminem paenitet, nisi plane retro non fuisse. Si denotatur, gloriatur; si accusatur, non defendit; interrogatus vel ultro confitetur, damnatus gratias 13 agit. Quid hoc mali est, quod naturalia mali non habet, timorem, pudorem, tergiversationem, paenitentiam, deplorationem? Quid? hoc malum est, cuius reus gaudet? cuius accusatio votum est et poena felicitas? Non potes dementiam dicere, qui revinceris ignorare.

1 II. Si certum est denique nos nocentissimos esse, cur a vobis ipsis aliter tractamur quam pares nostri, id est ceteri nocentes, cum eiusdem noxae eadem 2 tractatio deberet intervenire? Quodcunque dicimur, cum alii dicuntur, et proprio ore et mercenaria advocacy utuntur ad innocentiae suae commendationem. Respondendi, altercandi facultas patet, quando nec 3 liceat indefensos et inauditos omnino damnari. Sed Christianis solis nihil permittitur loqui quod causam purget, quod veritatem defendat, quod iudicem non faciat iniustum, sed illud solum expectatur quod odio publico necessarium est, confessio nominis, non 4 examinatio criminis: quando, si de aliquo nocente cognoscatis, non statim confesso eo nomen homicidae vel sacrilegi vel incesti vel publici hostis, ut de nostris elogiis loquar, contenti sitis ad pronuntiandum, nisi et consequentia exigatis, qualitatem facti, numero 5 rum, locum, modum, tempus, consocios, socios. De

* Cf. *Acts of Scillitan Martyrs* (ed. Armitage Robinson).

unless, indeed, that he was not a Christian earlier. If he is denounced [as a Christian], he glories in it; if he is accused, he does not defend himself; when he is questioned, he confesses without any pressure; when he is condemned, he renders thanks.^a What sort of 13 evil is that which has none of the native marks of evil—fear, shame, shuffling, regret, lament? What? is that evil where the criminal is glad, where accusation is the thing he prays for, and punishment is his felicity? It is not for you to call it madness—you, a man convicted of sheer ignorance of it.

II. But now, if it is really certain that we are of all 1 men the most criminal, why do you yourselves treat us otherwise than those like us, the rest of the criminal classes, when the same treatment belongs to the same fault? Whatever you charge against us, 2 when you so charge others, they use their own eloquence, they hire the advocacy of others, to prove their innocence. There is freedom to answer, to cross-question, since in fact it is against the law for men to be condemned, undefended and unheard. But to Christians alone it is forbidden to say any- 3 thing to clear their case, to defend Truth, to save the judge from being unjust. No! one thing is looked for, one alone, the one thing needful for popular hatred—the confession of the name. Not investigation of the charge! Yet, if you are trying any other 4 criminal, it does not follow at once from his confessing to the name of murderer, or temple-robber, or adulterer, or enemy of the state (to touch on *our* indictments!), that you are satisfied to pronounce sentence, unless you pursue all the consequent investigation, such as the character of the act, how often, where, how, when, he did it, his accessories, his

nobis nihil tale, cum aequè extorqueri oporteret quod cum falso iactatur, quot quisque iam infanticidia degustasset, quot incesta contenebrasset, qui coci, qui canes adfuissent. O quanta illius praesidis gloria, si eruisset aliquem, qui centum iam infantes comedisset!

6 Atquin invenimus inquisitionem quoque in nos prohibitam. Plinius enim Secundus cum provinciam regeret, damnatis quibusdam Christianis, quibusdam gradu pulsus, ipsa tamen multitudine perturbatus, quid de cetero ageret, consuluit tunc Traianum imperatorem, adlegans praeter obstinationem non sacrificandi nihil aliud se de sacramentis eorum conperisse quam coetus antelucanos ad canendum Christo et¹ deo, et ad confoederandam disciplinam, homicidium, adulterium, fraudem, perfidiam et cetera scelera 7 prohibentes. Tunc Traianus rescripsit hoc genus inquirendos quidem non esse, oblatos vero puniri 8 oportere. O sententiam necessitate confusam! Negat inquirendos ut innocentes, et mandat puniendos ut nocentes. Parcit et saevit, dissimulat et animadvertit. Quid temetipsum censura circumvenis?²

¹ The mss. appear to read et, which has been emended to ut, to square with Pliny's Christo quasi deo ("as if a God").

² Oehler reads quid temetipsam, censura, circumvenis? "Why cheat thyself, O Judgement?" The reading is far from impossible, but there is ms. support for the change, accepted by Kellner.

^a See ch. 7.

^b See the most famous of all Pliny's letters, book x. ep. 96, and Trajan's reply; and on both see W. M. Ramsay, *Church and Roman Empire*, p. 187; H. M. Gwatkin, *Early Church History*, vol. i. ch. vii. pp. 128 ff.; and F. C. Conybeare, *The Historical Christ*, 162. Also Bishop Lightfoot, *Apostolic*

confederates. In our case nothing of the kind! Yet 5 it ought just as much to be wrung out of us (when-ever that false charge is made) how many murdered babies each of us had tasted, how many acts of incest he had done in the dark, what cooks were there—yes, and what dogs.^a Oh! the glory of that magistrate who had brought to light some Christian who had eaten up to date a hundred babies!

And yet we find it is forbidden even to hunt us 6 down. For when Plinius Secundus was governing his province and had condemned some Christians and driven others from their steadfastness, and still the sheer numbers concerned worried him as to what he ought to do thereafter, he consulted the Emperor Trajan.^b He asserted that, apart from an obstinacy that refused to sacrifice, he had learnt nothing about the Christian mysteries—nothing beyond meetings before dawn to sing to Christ and to God, and to band themselves together in discipline, forbidding murder, adultery, dishonesty, treachery, and the other crimes. Trajan replied in a 7 rescript that men of this kind were not to be sought out, but if they were brought before Pliny they must be punished. What a decision, how inevitably 8 entangled! He says they must not be sought out, implying they are innocent; and he orders them to be punished, implying they are guilty. He spares them and rages against them, he pretends not to see and punishes. Why cheat yourself with your judgement? If you condemn them, why not hunt them

Fathers, part ii. vol. i. p. 55, on the genuineness of the letter, quoting Renan on the improbability of a Christian forger being able "si admirablement imiter la langue précieuse et raffinée de Pline."

Si damnas, cur non et inquiris? si non inquiris, cur non et absolvis? Latronibus vestigandis per universas provincias militaris statio sortitur. In reos maiestatis et publicos hostes omnis homo miles est; ad socios, ad conscios usque inquisitio extenditur.

9 Solum Christianum inquiri non licet, offerri licet, quasi aliud esset actura inquisitio quam oblationem. Damnatis itaque oblatum quem nemo voluit requisitum, qui, puto, iam non ideo meruit poenam, quia nocens est, sed quia non requirendus inventus est.

10 Itaque nec in illo ex forma malorum iudicandorum agitis erga nos, quod ceteris negantibus tormenta adhibetis ad confitendum, solis Christianis ad negandum, cum, si malum esset, nos quidem negaremus, vos vero confiteri tormentis compelleretis. Neque enim ideo non putaretis requirenda quaestionibus scelera, quia certi essetis admitti ea ex nominis confessione, qui hodie de confesso homicida, scientes homicidium quid sit, nihilominus ordinem extorquetis

11 admissi. Quo perversius, cum praesumatibus de sceleribus nostris ex nominis confessione, cogitis tormentis de confessione decedere, ut negantes nomen pariter utique negemus et scelera, de quibus ex

12 confessione nominis praesumpseratis. Sed, opinor,

^a Irony, as so often throughout.

down? If you do not hunt them down, why not also acquit them? To track down bandits through all the provinces is a duty assigned by lot to the garrisons. Against those guilty of treason, against public enemies, every man is a soldier; inquiry is extended to confederates, to accessories. The 9 Christian alone may not be hunted down; but he may be haled before the magistrate; as if hunting down led to anything but haling to the court. So you condemn a man when haled to court—a man whom nobody wished to be sought out, who (I suppose) really has not deserved punishment because he is guilty, but because, forbidden to be looked for, he was found!

Then, again, in that matter, you do not deal with 10 us in accordance with your procedure in judging criminals. If the other criminals plead Not guilty, you torture them to make them confess; the Christians alone you torture to make them deny. Yet if it were something evil, we should deny our guilt, and you would use torture to force us to confess it. For you would not hold judicial investigation of our crimes needless, on the ground that you were certain of their commission from the confession of the name; for to this day, though the murderer confesses, and though you know what murder is, none the less you rack out of him the story of his crime. So much the 11 more upside down is your procedure with us, when you presume our crimes from our confession of the name and then try by torture to force us to cancel our confession, in order that, by denying the name, we may really deny the crimes too, which you had presumed from our confession of the name. But, of 12 course,^a I suppose you do not want us to be done to

non vultis nos perire, quos pessimos creditis. Sic enim soletis dicere homicidae Nega, laniari iubere sacrilegum, si confiteri perseveraverit. Si non ita agitis circa nos nocentes, ergo nos innocentissimos iudicatis, cum quasi innocentissimos non vultis in ea confessione perseverare, quam necessitate, non iustitia damnam a vobis sciatis.

- 13 Vociferatur homo: Christianus sum. Quod est dicit; tu vis audire quod non est. Veritatis extorquendae praesides de nobis solis mendacium elaboratis audire. Hoc sum, inquit, quod quaeris an sim. Quid me torques in perversum? Confiteor, et torques: quid faceres, si negarem? Plane aliis negantibus non facile fidem accommodatis: nobis, si 14 negaverimus, statim creditis. Suspecta sit vobis ista perversitas, ne qua vis lateat in occulto, quae vos adversus formam, adversus naturam iudicandi, contra ipsas quoque leges ministret. Nisi fallor enim, leges malos erui iubent, non abscondi, confessos damnari praescribunt, non absolvi. Hoc senatusconsulta, hoc principum mandata definiunt. Hoc imperium, cuius ministri estis, civilis, non tyrannica dominatio est.
- 15 Apud tyrannos enim tormenta etiam pro poena adhibebantur: apud vos soli quaestioni temperatur. Vestram illis servate legem usque ad confessionem necessariam, et iam si confessione praeveniantur,

^a *i.e.*, tortured to make him deny.

^b The eventual meaning is clear, though the steps to it are not: If you treat us in exactly the opposite way to other criminals, it means that you really believe us innocent. The whole thing would be simplified by omitting *nos* before *nocentes*, which one ms. does omit. But in Tertullian it is far from a safe rule to prefer the simpler or directer reading.

death—though you believe us the worst of men. For that is your way—to say to the murderer, “Deny!” and to order the temple-thief to be mangled,^a if he will insist on confession! If that is not your procedure^b with regard to us in our guilt, then it is clear you count us the most innocent of men, when you will not have us (as being the most innocent of men) persist with a confession which you know you will have to condemn, not because justice requires it, but of necessity.

A man shouts, “I am a Christian.” He says 13 what he is. You, sir, wish to hear what he is *not*. Presiding to extort the truth, you take infinite pains in our case, and ours alone, to hear a lie. “I am,” says he, “what you ask if I am; why torture me to twist the fact round? I confess, and you torture me. What would you do if I denied?” Clearly, when others deny, you do not readily believe them; if we have denied, you at once believe us. Let this 14 topsy-turvy dealing of yours suggest to you the suspicion that there may be some hidden power which makes tools of you against the form, yes, against the very nature, of judicial procedure, against the laws themselves into the bargain. For, unless I am mistaken, the laws bid evil men to be brought to light, not hidden; they enact that those confessing be condemned, not acquitted. This is laid down by decrees of the Senate, by rescripts of the Emperors. This Empire of which you are ministers is the rule of citizens, not of tyrants. With tyrants torture was 15 also used as penalty; with you, it is moderated and used for examination only. Maintain your law by it till the necessary confession is made. If it is forestalled by confession, it serves no purpose. It is the

- vacabunt : sententia opus est : debito poenae nocens
 16 expungendus est, non eximendus. Denique nemo illum gestit absolvere. Non licet hoc velle, ideo nec cogitur quisquam negare. Christianum hominem omnium scelerum reum, deorum, imperatorum, legum, morum, naturae totius inimicum existimas, et cogis negare, ut absolveras quem non poteris absolvere
 17 nisi negaverit. Praevaricaris in leges. Vis ergo neget se nocentem, ut eum facias innocentem, et quidem invitum iam, nec de praeterito reum. Unde ista perversitas, ut etiam illud non recogitetis, sponte confesso magis credendum esse quam per vim neganti? vel ne compulsus negare non ex fide negarit et absolutus ibidem post tribunal de vestra rideat aemulatione iterum Christianus?
 18 Cum igitur in omnibus nos aliter disponitis quam ceteros nocentes, ad unum contendendo, ut de eo nomine excludamur (excludimur enim si faciamus quae faciunt non Christiani), intellegere potestis non scelus aliquod in causa esse, sed nomen, quod quaedam ratio aemulae operationis insequitur, hoc primum agens, ut homines nolint scire pro certo quod se nescire
 19 pro certo sciunt. Ideo et credunt de nobis quae non probantur, et nolunt inquiri, ne probentur non esse quae malunt credidisse, ut nomen illius aemulae

^a *i.e.*, we are expelled from the Church (and dissociated from the Name) if we deny our Christianity, as non-Christians of course do.

^b The demon-world.

^c This intolerable antithesis seems to mean that the demons wish men (who really know themselves to be ignorant as to Christianity) to avoid clearing up their minds with definite knowledge about it.

sentence that is called for then ; the guilty man must cancel the penalty due by enduring it, not by being relieved of it. No, nobody desires to acquit him ; it 16 is not permissible to wish it ; that is why no man is forced to deny [his guilt]. But the Christian, a man guilty of every crime, the enemy of gods, emperors, laws, morals, of all Nature together—so you conceive of him ; and then you force him to deny the charge, in order to acquit him—a man you will not be able to acquit unless he has denied. You are play- 17 ing fast and loose with the laws. You want him, then, to deny that he is guilty, in order to *make* him innocent—and quite against his will, too, by now ; and even his past is not to count against him. What is the meaning of this confusion ? this failure to reflect that more credence is to be given to a voluntary confession than to a forced denial ? to reflect that, when compelled to deny, he may not honestly deny ; and, once acquitted, he may again after your tribunal laugh at your enmity, once more a Christian ?

So, when in every detail you treat us differently 18 from all other criminals—as you do in concentrating on the one object of dissociating us from that name (for we are dissociated from it, if we do what men not Christians do ^a)—you can gather that the gravamen of the case is not any crime but a name. This name, a certain rational agency,^b rival in its operation, assails, with the prime motive that men may be unwilling to know for certain, what they certainly know they do not know.^c So they believe things about us which 19 are not proved ; and they are unwilling for inquiry to be made, in case things they prefer to have believed should be proved untrue ; and the object is that the name, which is the enemy of that rival

rationis inimicum praesumptis, non probatis criminibus de sua sola confessione damnetur. Ideo torquemur confitentes et punimur perseverantes
 20 et absolvimur negantes, quia nominis proclium est. Denique quid de tabella recitatis illum Christianum? Cur non et homicidam? Si homicida Christianus,¹ cur non et incestus vel quodcumque aliud esse nos creditis? In nobis solis pudet aut piget ipsis nominibus scelus pronuntiare? Christianus si nullius criminis nomine reus est, valde incestum, si solius nominis crimen est.²

- 1 III. Quid? quod ita plerique clausis oculis in odium eius inpingunt, ut bonum alicui testimonium ferentes admisceant nominis exprobrationem. Bonus vir Gaius Seius, tantum quod Christianus. Item alius: Ego miror Lucium Titium sapientem virum repente factum Christianum. Nemo retractat, ne ideo bonus Gaius et prudens Lucius, quia Christianus, aut ideo
 2 Christianus, quia prudens et bonus. Laudant quae sciunt, vituperant quae ignorant, et id quod sciunt eo quod ignorant inrumpunt, cum sit iustius occulta de manifestis praeiudicare quam manifesta de occultis
 3 praedamnare. Alii, quos retro ante hoc nomen vagos, viles, improbos noverant, ex ipso denotant quod laudant. Caccitate odii in suffragium inpingunt: Quae mulier! quam lasciva, quam festiva! Quis

¹ The question marks may be shifted as in the English.

² The sentence is another of Tertullian's favourite rhetorical devices. The MSS. vary between *nomine reus* and *nomen reus*; they give *incestum* which editors have altered to *infestum*. What Tertullian actually wrote, we can only guess; the English is no more than a desperate and doubtful attempt to recapture what he may have written. The general sense behind his jingle or antithesis is plain enough in outline.

agency, may, because of crimes presumed but not proven, be condemned simply on its own confession. So we are tortured when we confess; we are punished when we persist; we are acquitted when we deny; all because the battle is for a name. Finally, in reading the charge, why do you call the 20 man a Christian, why not a murderer too, if a Christian is a murderer? Why not incestuous? or anything else you believe us to be? Or is it that in our case, and ours alone, it shames you, or vexes you, to use the actual names of our crimes? If a Christian, with no charge laid against him, is defendant because of a name, how shocking the name must be, if the charge consist of a name and nothing more.

III. Well, then, what does it mean, when most 1 people shut their eyes and run so blindfold into hatred of that name, that, even if they bear favourable testimony to a man, they throw in some detestation of the name? "A good man," they say, "this Caius Seius, only that he is a Christian." Then another says: "I am surprised that that wise man, Lucius Titius, has suddenly become a Christian." Nobody reflects whether Caius is good, and Lucius sensible, just because he is a Christian, or is a Christian because he is sensible and good. They praise what 2 they know and blame what they don't know; and their knowledge they spoil with their ignorance; though it is fairer to prejudice what is hidden by what is manifest, than to condemn in advance what is manifest because of what is hidden. In other cases, 3 persons known before they had the name to have been vagabond, worthless, and wicked, they condemn and praise in one breath; in the blindness of hate they stumble into commendation. "What a woman!

- iuvenis ! quam lascivus, quam amasius ! Facti sunt Christiani ! Ita nomen emendationi imputatur.
- 4 Nonnulli etiam de utilitatibus suis cum odio isto paciscuntur, contenti iniuria, dum ne domi habeant quod oderunt. Uxorem iam pudicam maritus iam non zelotypus eiecit,¹ filium iam subiectum pater retro patiens abdicavit, servum iam fidelem dominus olim mitis ab oculis relegavit ; ut quisque hoc nomine emendatur, offendit. Tanti non est bonum quanti odium Christianorum.
- 5 Nunc igitur, si nominis odium est, quis nominum reatus ? Quae accusatio vocabulorum, nisi si aut barbarum sonat aliqua vox nominis, aut infaustum aut maledicum aut inpudicum ? Christianus vero, quantum interpretatio est, de unctione deducitur. Sed et cum perperam Christianus pronuntiatur a vobis (nam nec nominis certa est notitia penes vos), de suavitate vel benignitate compositum est. Oditur itaque in hominibus innocuis etiam nomen innocuum.
- 6 At enim secta oditur in nomine utique sui auctoris. Quid novi, si aliqua disciplina de magistro cognomen tum sectatoribus suis inducit ? Nonne philosophi de auctoribus suis nuncupantur Platonici, Epicurei, Pythagorici ? etiam a locis conventiculorum et statio-

¹ *Oehler deletes eiecit.*

* See Suetonius, *Claudius*, 25. 4 "Iudaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit." J. C. Rolfe, in the Loeb edition *ad loc.*, notes the word. "It is uncertain whether Suetonius is guilty of an error in chronology" [and in spelling, as Tertullian suggests] "or is referring to some Jew of that name. The former seems probable because of the absence of *quodam*." It should be remembered that to Greeks and Romans *Chrestos* was more familiar and more obvious as a name (even though rarely if ever used as a

how wanton, how frolicsome ! What a young man ! how wanton, how gallant ! They have become Christians." So the name follows the reformation as a fresh charge. Some men go further, bartering their own advantage against this hatred, content to suffer loss, provided they do not have at home what they hate. The wife is chaste now ; but the husband has ceased to be jealous, and has turned her out. The son is now submissive ; but the father, who used to bear with his ways, has disinherited him. The slave is faithful now ; but the master, once so gentle, has banished him from his sight. As sure as a man is reformed by the name, he gives offence. The advantage does not balance the hatred felt for Christians.

Tell me, then, if it is hatred of a name, how can you indict names ? What charge can lie against words, unless the pronunciation of some name has a barbarous sound about it—something unlucky or scurrilous or lewd ? "Christian," so far as translation goes, is derived from "anointing." Yes, and when it is mispronounced by you "Chrestian" (for you have not even certain knowledge of the mere name) it is framed from "sweetness" or "kindness."^a So in innocent men you hate even the innocent name.

Ah, but the school is in fact hated for the name of its founder ! What novelty is it, if some way of life gives its followers a name drawn from their teacher ? Are not the philosophers called after their founders—Platonists, Epicureans, Pythagoreans ? yes, and from the places where they gathered, where they (name) than *Christos*, which is a translation of a word quite foreign to them.

num suarum Stoici, Academici? aequae medici ab Erasistrato et grammatici ab Aristarcho, coci etiam
 7 ab Apicio? nec tamen quemquam offendit professio nominis cum institutione transmissa ab institutore. Plane, si qui probavit malam sectam et ita malum et auctorem, is probabit et nomen malum dignum odio de reatu sectae et auctoris, ideoque ante odium nominis conpetebat prius de auctore sectam recog-
 8 noscere vel auctorem de secta. At nunc utriusque inquisitione et agnitione neglecta nomen detinetur, nomen expugnatur, et ignotam sectam, ignotum et auctorem vox sola praedamnat, quia nominantur, non quia revincuntur.

1 IV. Atque adeo quasi praefatus haec ad sugillandam odii erga nos publici iniquitatem, iam de causa innocentiae consistam, nec tantum refutabo quae nobis obiciuntur, sed etiam in ipsos retorquebo qui obiciunt, ut ex hoc quoque sciant homines in Christianis non esse quae in se nesciunt esse, simul uti erubescant accusantes non dico pessimi optimos, sed iam, ut
 2 volunt, compares suos. Respondebimus ad singula quae in occulto admittere dicimur, quae illos palam

^a The famous physician of the court of Seleucus I., hero of a much quoted anecdote about the curing of the king's son. He is said to have come near the discovery of the circulation of the blood.

^b The great editor of the text of Homer. His name became a proverb for a shrewd critic; cf. Cicero, *Ad Att.* i. 14. 3; Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 450.

^c Tacitus, *Ann.* iv. 1, speaks of a famous epicure of this name in the reign of Tiberius; but others of the same name and fame are mentioned; and *Apicius* is the title of a work

took their stand—Stoics, Academics? and physicians in the same way from Erasistratus,^a and grammarians from Aristarchus^b—cooks too from Apicius^c? Yet 7 nobody is ever offended by the avowal of a name, handed down with his teaching from the teacher. Clearly, if a man has proved the school a bad one and its founder as bad, he will prove the bad name also to be worthy of hate because of the guilt of the school and the founder. So before you hated the name, it would have been proper first to judge the school in the light of the founder, or the founder in the light of 8 the school. But, as things are, inquiry as to both and knowledge of both are allowed to slide; the name is picked out; the name is the object of attack. The school is unknown; the founder is unknown; a word of itself condemns both in advance—because they bear a name, not because they are convicted of anything.

IV. So much, then, by way of preface as it were, to 1 assail the injustice that is in the general hatred felt for us. Now I will take my stand on the plea of our innocence. I will not only refute the charges brought against us, but I will turn them against those who bring them; so that, in this too, all may learn that they will not find in Christians what they are unaware of in themselves, and that at the same time they may blush to accuse—no, I will not say that the worst of men are accusing the best, but I will put it, as they would wish, and say—their equals. We will reply 2 in detail as to the crimes we are alleged to commit in secret, but which we find them openly committing—

on cookery (in ten books) compiled some centuries later; cf. Wight Duff, *Lit. Hist. Rome Silver Age*, p. 131, who finds it surprising and ill-written.

admittentes invenimus, in quibus scelesti, in quibus vani, in quibus damnandi, in quibus inridendi deputamur.

- 3 Sed quoniam, cum ad omnia occurrit veritas nostra, postremo legum obstruitur auctoritas adversus eam, ut aut nihil dicatur retractandum esse post leges aut ingratis necessitas obsequii praeferatur veritati, de legibus prius concurrem vobiscum ut cum tutoribus
4 legum. Iam primum cum dure¹ definitis dicendo : Non licet esse vos ! et hoc sine ullo retractatu humaniore praescribitis, vim profitemini et iniquam ex arce dominationem, si ideo negatis licere, quia vultis, non
5 quia debuit non licere. Quodsi, quia non debet, ideo non vultis licere, sine dubio id non debet licere quod male fit, et utique hoc ipso praeiudicatur licere quod bene fit. Si bonum invenero esse quod lex tua prohibuit, nonne ex illo praeiudicio prohibere me non potest quod, si malum esset, iure prohiberet ? Si lex tua erravit, puto, ab homine concepta est ; neque enim de caelo ruit.
- 6 Miramini hominem aut errare potuisse in lege condenda aut resipuisse in reprobanda ? Non enim et ipsius Lycurgi leges a Lacedaemoniis emendatae tantum auctori suo doloris incusserunt, ut in secessu
7 inedia de semetipso iudicaret ? Nonne et vos cotidie experimentis inluminantibus tenebras antiquitatis totam illam veterem et squalentem silvam legum novis

¹ *v.l.* iure.

^a Judaism was *religio licita*, had a *vectigalis libertas* (see below, ch. 21) ; Christianity was in a different position. See E. G. Hardy, *Christianity and the Roman Government*. There is more controversy here than can be handled in a footnote.

^b A reference to Greek tyrants and their garrisons.

matters in which we are set down as guilty, empty-headed, damnable, ridiculous.

Truth, which is ours, meets all the charges ; and 3 yet, in the last resort, the authority of the laws is cited against her—to the effect, either that, after the laws have spoken, there is (they say) no re-opening the matter, or that necessity of obedience, though you regret it, takes precedence of truth ; in view of all which I will meet you, as guardians of the laws, on the legal issue first. To begin, then : when you harshly cut 4 the case short by saying, “Your existence is illegal^a” ; when you lay it down without any more humane reconsideration, your dictum means mere force, an unjust tyranny from the citadel^b—if you say a thing is not lawful simply because that is your will, and not because it *ought* not to be lawful. If, because a 5 thing *ought* not to be lawful, you therefore wish it not to be lawful, all will agree that what is ill done ought not to be lawful—a principle which involves a presumption that what is a right thing to do is lawful. If I find that to be good which your law has forbidden, does not that presumption imply that the law cannot forbid me to do it, since it would only rightly forbid it if it were bad ? If your law has made a mistake, well, I think, it was the creation of man ; it did not come down from heaven.

Do you wonder that a man may have made a mis- 6 take in framing a law, or returned to sense in disallowing his law ? Is it not the fact that the laws of Lycurgus himself were altered by the Spartans and that this caused their author such grief that he withdrew and condemned himself to starve to death ? Yes, and you 7 yourselves, as experiment every day lightens the darkness of antiquity, do *you* not lop and fell all that old and

- principalium rescriptorum et edictorum securibus
 8 truncatis et caeditis? Nonne vanissimas Papias leges,
 quae ante liberos suscipi cogunt quam Iuliae matri-
 monium contrahi, post tantae auctoritatis senectutem
 heri Severus, constantissimus principum, exclusit?
 9 Sed et iudicatos in partes secari a creditoribus leges
 erant, consensu tamen publico crudelitas postea erasa
 est, in pudoris notam capitis poena conversa est.
 Bonorum adhibita proscriptio suffundere maluit
 hominis sanguinem quam effundere.
- 10 Quot adhuc vobis repurgandae latent leges, quas
 neque annorum numerus neque conditorum dignitas
 commendat, sed aequitas sola? et ideo cum iniquae
 recognoscuntur, merito damnantur, licet damnent.
- 11 Quomodo iniquas dicimus? Immo, si nomen puniunt,
 etiam stultas: si vero facta, cur de solo nomine
 puniunt facta, quae in aliis de admissio, non de nomine
 probata defendunt? Incestus sum, cur non requi-
 runt? Infanticidia cur non extorquent? In deos, in
 Caesares aliquid committo, cur non audior qui habeo
 12 quo purger? Nulla lex vetat discuti quod prohibet
 admitti, quia neque iudex iuste ulciscitur, nisi co-
 gnoscat admissum esse quod non licet, neque civis
 fideliter legi obsequitur ignorans quale sit quod
 13 ulciscitur lex. Nulla lex sibi soli conscientiam iusti-

^a Cf. Tacitus, *Ann.* iii. 25; and excursus of Furneaux in his edition.

^b The jingle is meant to keep the play on *suffundere* and *effundere*.

squalid jungle of laws with the new axes of imperial rescripts and edicts? Why, those absurd Papian laws ^a 8 which require people to have children at an earlier age than the Julian laws require them to be married —did not the valiant Emperor Severus clear them out but yesterday for all their old age and authority? Yes, and the laws had it of old that the debtor should 9 on being sentenced be cut up by the creditors; yet by common agreement that cruelty was erased, and for the punishment of death there was substituted a mark of disgrace; the confiscation of his goods that was applied meant a preference for the blush spread rather than the blood shed.^b

How many of your laws lie forgotten, still to be 10 reformed? What recommends a law is not the number of its years nor the dignity of its makers, but its equity and nothing else. So when laws are recognized to be unjust, they are deservedly condemned, even if they do condemn. But why do we say un- 11 just? I will go further, and, if they punish a name, I will say silly. If it is deeds they punish, why in our case do they punish deeds on the score of the name alone, while in the case of others they must have them proved not from a name but from an act committed? I am incestuous, say they; why do they not inquire into it? If it be murder of babies, why do they not torture the fact from me? I commit something against a god or a Caesar, why, when I am able to clear my character, am I not heard? No law forbids 12 the investigation of the act, of which it forbids the commission. The judge does not justly avenge, unless he knows that the unlawful act was committed; nor does the citizen faithfully obey the law, if he does not know what sort of act the law avenges. A law 13

tiae suae debet, sed eis a quibus obsequium expectat. Ceterum suspecta lex est quae probari se non vult, inproba autem, si non probata dominetur.

- 1 V. Ut de origine aliquid retractemus eiusmodi legum, vetus erat decretum, ne qui deus ab imperatore consecraretur nisi a senatu probatus. Scit M. Aemilius de deo suo Alburno. Facit et hoc ad causam nostram, quod apud vos de humano arbitratu divinitas pensatur. Nisi homini deus placuerit, deus non erit; homo iam deo propitius esse debet.
- 2 Tiberius ergo, cuius tempore nomen Christianum in saeculum introivit, adnuntiata sibi ex Syria Palaestina, quae illic veritatem ipsius divinitatis revelaverant, detulit ad senatum cum praerogativa suffragii sui. Senatus, quia non ipse probaverat, respuit, Caesar in sententia mansit, comminatus periculum accusa-
- 3 toribus Christianorum. Consulite commentarios vestros, illic reperietis primum Neronem in hanc sectam cum maxime Romae orientem Caesariano gladio fecissee. Sed tali dedicatore damnationis nostrae etiam gloriamur. Qui enim scit illum, intellegere

^a Tertullian elsewhere refers to this episode, and Eusebius in *Hist. Eccles.* ii. 2. 4 translates this passage from "Tertullian who had an accurate knowledge of Roman Law," though Lawlor and Oulton in their commentary on *Hist. Eccles.* remark with surprise how little Eusebius knew of Tertullian, some of whose treatises were written in Greek. He quotes the *Apology* alone five times, in a poor translation, and mostly this chapter. They suggest that the attempt to deify Alburnus was made in 115 B.C. when M. Aemilius Scaurus and M. Caecilius Metellus were consuls, but add that nothing is known of it.

^b Cf. chaps. 21, 24. On this story of Pontius Pilate, Tiberius, and the Senate, see Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, ch. xvi. (Bury's edition, vol. ii. p. 108). J. E. B. Mayor

does not owe to itself alone a sure sense of its own justice; it owes it to those from whom it expects obedience. Contrariwise, a law is suspect which is unwilling to be examined—yes, and bad, if without such examination it tyrannizes.

V. A word of discussion on the origin of laws on this 1 matter. There was an ancient decree, that no god should be consecrated by an emperor without the approval of the Senate. M. Aemilius knows about that law in the matter of his god, Alburnus.^a It bears also on our case, because among you a god's divinity depends on man's decision. Unless a god please man, he shall not be a god at all; in fact, man must be gracious to god! It was in the age of Tiberius, then, 2 that the Christian name went out into the world, and he referred to the Senate the news which he had received^b from Syria Palestine, which had revealed the truth of Christ's (*ipsius*) divinity; he did this exercising his prerogative in giving it his endorsement. The Senate had not approved beforehand and so rejected it. Caesar held to his opinion and threatened danger to accusers of the Christians. Consult your 3 histories. There you will find that Nero was the first to rage with the imperial sword against this school in the very hour of its rise in Rome.^c But we glory—nothing less than glory—to have had such a man to inaugurate our condemnation. One who

pronounces Gibbon and others who reject the story "wiser in their day" than those who accepted it. It seems to have been an inference (perhaps from the ways of the Civil Service at the end of the second century) that Pilate must have written to Tiberius; few will suppose that the document was actually seen among archives. The rest of the story would appear to be largely inference from inference, or mere guesswork.

^c See Tacitus, *Annals*, xv. 44. 3.

potest non nisi grande aliquod bonum a Nerone
 4 damnatum. Temptaverat et Domitianus, portio
 Neronis de crudelitate, sed qua et homo, facile
 coeptum repressit, restitutis etiam quos relegaverat.
 Tales semper nobis insecutores, iniusti, impii, turpes,
 quos et ipsi damnare consueverat, a quibus damnatos
 5 restituere soliti estis. Ceterum de tot exinde princi-
 pibus ad hodiernum divinum humanumque sapientibus
 edite aliquem debellatorem Christianorum!

6 At nos e contrario edimus protectorem, si litterae
 M. Aurelii gravissimi imperatoris requirantur, quibus
 illam Germanicam sitim Christianorum forte militum
 precessionibus impetrato imbri discussam contestatur.
 Sicut non palam ab eiusmodi hominibus poenam
 dimovit, ita alio modo palam dispersit, adiecta etiam
 7 accusatoribus damnatione, et quidem tetriore. Quales
 ergo leges istae quas adversus nos soli exercent impii,
 iniusti, turpes, truces, vani, dementes? quas Traianus
 ex parte frustratus est vetando inquiri Christianos,
 quas nullus Hadrianus, quamquam omnium curio-
 sitatum explorator, nullus Vespasianus, quamquam
 Iudaeorum debellator, nullus Pius, nullus Verus in-
 8 pressit. Facilius utique pessimi ab optimis quibusque.

^a Either Domitian changed his mind, or a name has dropped out, perhaps Nerva. Hegesippus, *ap. Euseb. Ch. Hist.* iii. 19, appears to confirm Domitian's change of mind.

^b Bishop Lightfoot, *Ignatius*, vol. i. pp. 485 ff., prints the letter of Marcus Aurelius to the Senate (in Greek), and calls it a manifest forgery, which yet shows some acquaintance with the men of the time. It is an appendix to the second *Apology* of Justin. The picture given of the policy of M. Aurelius, says Lightfoot, is wholly unhistorical. Tertullian seems to be borrowing, with an unfortunate lack of criticism.

^c The letter orders the accuser to be burnt alive.

^d For Pliny's letter to Trajan, and Trajan's reply, see

knows Nero can understand that, unless a thing were good—and very good—it was not condemned by Nero. Domitian too, who was a good deal of a Nero 4 in cruelty, attempted it; but, being in some degree human, he ^a soon stopped what he had begun, and restored those he had banished. Such are ever our persecutors—men unjust, impious, foul—men whom you yourselves are accustomed to condemn; and those whom they condemn you have become accus- 5 tomed to restore. But from among so many em- perors down to to-day, men wise in things divine and human, pick me out one who warred against the Christians!

We, however, on the other side, produce a pro- 6 tector, if you will refer to the letters of M. Aurelius, most venerable of Emperors, in which he testifies that the great drought in Germany was broken by rain obtained through the prayers of Christians, who, as it chanced, were among his soldiers.^b M. Aurelius, indeed, did not openly remove the penalty from Chris- tians, but in another way as openly he got rid of it by attaching a condemnation to their accusers, and a harsher one too.^c What sort of laws, then, are those 7 which are only used against us by the impious, the unjust, the foul, the fierce, the vain, the demented? laws which Trajan in part frustrated by forbidding Christians to be sought out,^d laws which never a Hadrian, though the explorer of everything curious, enforced, never a Vespasian though he warred ^e against the Jews, never a Pius, never a Verus.^f Yet 8

Pliny, *Epp.* x. 96, 97; and ch. 2. 6 of this work. The quota- tion is not too exact.

^e Notice the recurrence of this word from above, § 5.

^f Perhaps with a play on the meaning of the names.

ut ab aemulis, quam a suis sociis eradicandi iudicaretur.

- 1 VI. Nunc religiosissimi legum et paternorum institutorum protectores et ultores respondeant velim de sua fide et honore et obsequio erga maiorum consulta, si a nullo desciverunt, si in nullo exorbitaverunt, si non necessaria et aptissima quaeque disciplinae oblitteraverunt. Quonam illae leges abierunt sumptum et ambitionem comprimentes? quae centum aera non amplius in coenam subscribi iuebant nec amplius quam unam inferri gallinam, et eam non saginatam, quae patricium, quod decem pondo argenti habuisset, pro magno ambitionis titulo senatu submovebant, quae theatra stuprandis moribus orientia statim destruebant, quae dignitatum et honestorum natalium insignia non temere nec impune usurpari sinebant?
- 2
- 3 Video enim et centenarias coenas a centenis iam sestertiis dicendas, et in lances (parum est si senatorum et non libertinorum vel adhuc flagra rumpentium) argentaria metalla producta. Video et theatra nec singula satis esse nec nuda; nam ne vel hieme voluptas inpudica frigeret, primi Lacedaemonii penulam ludis excogitaverunt. Video et inter matronas atque prostibulas nullum de habitu discrimen
- 4 relictum. Circa feminas quidem etiam illa maiorum

^a A quotation of the current condemnation of the Christians. His sense is that, if the Christians were, as men call them, the worst of men, then naturally it would be the best of men (like the good Emperors named) who would seek to destroy them, and not such persons as Nero, who are much of a muchness with the worst of men.

^b Slaves on whom whips were broken. Cf. Juvenal, vi. 479 "hic frangit ferulas."

^c The Spartans invented their cloak for military service, but the reader of Tertullian soon learns to expect irony.

I should think "the worst of men"^a might more easily be judged worthy of extermination by the best of men—their enemies, you might say—rather than by their fellows!

VI. But now I will ask those most religious protectors and maintainers of laws and ancestral usages to answer as to their loyalty, as to the honour and obedience they render to the decrees of their ancestors—if they have abandoned none of them—if in nothing they have deviated from them—if they have not obliterated matters necessary to discipline and most proper to it. Where have those laws gone ² that limit luxury and ostentation? the laws that forbade more than 100 *asses* to be allowed for a banquet or more than one fowl to be set on the table, and that fowl not fattened either? the laws that dealt with a patrician because he had ten pounds weight of silver plate, and, on the grave indictment of aspiring too high, removed him from the Senate? the laws which, when theatres first rose for the depravation of morals, at once destroyed them? the laws which did not allow the insignia of rank and honourable birth to be lightly used or with impunity? For I see "centenary" banquets, so-called from the ³ 100,000 sesterces they cost. I see—it would be little if it were the work of senators and not of freedmen or of whip-spoilers ^b—I see whole silver-mines turned into dishes. I see theatres—and a single theatre here or there will not suffice—not uncovered, either. For—oh! it was for the games that the Spartans first invented the cloak,^c in case unclean pleasure should be cold in winter! I see, between matrons and harlots, not a vestige of distinction in dress left. Really, as regards ⁴ women, the usages of our ancestors have lapsed that

instituta ceciderunt quae modestiae, quae sobrietati patrocinebantur, cum aurum nulla norat praeter unico digito quem sponsus obpignorasset pronubo anulo, cum mulieres usque adeo vino abstinerentur, ut matronam ob resignatos cellae vinariae loculos sui inedia necarint, sub Romulo vero quae vinum attigerat, impune a Metennio marito trucidata sit.

5 Idcirco et oscula propinquis offerre etiam necessitas 6 erat, ut spiritu iudicarentur. Ubi est illa felicitas matrimoniorum de moribus utique prosperata, qua per annos ferme sexcentos ab urbe condita nulla repudium domus scripsit? At nunc in feminis prae auro nullum leve est membrum, prae vino nullum liberum est osculum, repudium vero iam et votum est, quasi matrimonii fructus.

7 Etiam circa ipsos deos vestros quae prospecte decreverant patres vestri, idem vos obsequentissimi rescidistis. Liberum Patrem cum mysteriis suis consules senatus auctoritate non modo urbe, sed universa 8 Italia eliminauerunt. Serapidem et Isidem et Arpo- cratem cum suo cynocephalo Capitolio prohibitos inferri, id est curia deorum pulsos, Piso et Gabinius consules non utique Christiani eversis etiam aris eorum abdicaverunt, turpium et otiosarum superstitionum vitia cohibentes. His vos restitutis summam 9 maiestatem contulistis. Ubi religio, ubi veneratio maioribus debita a vobis? Habitu, victu, instructu, sensu, ipso denique sermone proavis renuntiastis.

^a Harpocrates is Har-pe-khrot, "Horus the child," a plump sucking infant—"no god was closer to the heart of the people"; Erman, *Handbook of Egyptian Religion* (tr.), pp. 218-225, with pictures of the child-god riding now a goose and now a ram. Cf. p. 382 n.

^b i.e., Anubis.

protected modesty or sobriety, when no woman knew gold save on one finger, which her betrothed pledged to himself with the engagement ring; when women abstained so entirely from wine that when a matron once unlocked the wine cellar, her family made her starve to death. Why, under Romulus, a woman who had touched wine was killed with impunity by Metennius her husband. That was why they were 5 compelled to offer to kiss their relatives—that they might be judged by their breath. Where is that 6 happiness of marriage, so prospered I think by morals, that, in the six hundred years following the foundation of Rome, no house registered a divorce? But nowadays among women no limb of the body but is heavy with gold; wine forbids the free kiss; divorce—divorce by now is prayed for, as if it were the proper sequel of marriage.

To come next to your gods themselves, the decrees 7 which your fathers prudently enacted, you, the most law-abiding of men, have repealed. Father Bacchus and his mysteries,—the consuls with the approval of the Senate turned him not only out of the City but out of the whole of Italy. Serapis and Isis and Harpo- 8 crates^a with his Dog-head^b were forbidden the Capitol—in other words, expelled from the Assembly of the gods; and Piso and Gabinius—consuls, not Christians, I think—actually overturned their altars and banished them, in the endeavour to restrain the vices that go with foul and idle superstitions. You have restored them and bestowed on them supreme majesty. Where is the religious awe, where is the 9 veneration owed by you to your ancestors? In dress, habit of life, furniture, feeling, yes! and speech, you have renounced your great-grandfathers! You are

- Laudatis semper antiquitatem, et nove de die vivitis. Per quod ostenditur, dum a bonis maiorum institutis deceditis, ea vos retinere et custodire quae non
 10 debuistis, cum quae debuistis non custodistis. Ipsum adhuc quod videmini fidelissime tueri a patribus traditum, in quo principaliter reos transgressionis Christianos destinastis, studium dico deorum colendorum, de quo maxime erravit antiquitas, licet Serapidi iam Romano aras restruxeritis, licet Baccho
 11 iam Italico furias vestras immoletis, suo loco ostendam proinde despici et neglegi et destrui a vobis adversus maiorum auctoritatem. Nunc enim ad illam occultorum facinorum infamiam respondebo, ut viam mihi ad manifestiora purgem.
- 1 VII. Dicimur sceleratissimi de sacramento infanticidii et pabulo inde, et post convivium incesto, quod eversores luminum canes, lenones scilicet tenebrarum, libidinum impiarum in verecundiam¹ procurent. Dicimur tamen semper, nec vos quod tam diu dicimur eruere curatis. Ergo aut eruite, si creditis, aut nolite
 2 credere, qui non eruistis. De vestra vobis dissimu-

¹ in verecundiam is a correction made by Oehler, who explains that the dogs verecundiae consuluisse by bringing darkness upon the scene. This text I have tried to render, without much conviction. Kellner calls the passage a crux interpretum. Every reader may try his hand at it. An et for the comma after tenebrarum, a comma at impiarum, and inverecundiam in one word, are suggested.

^a To a question that has been raised as to the point of this parenthesis, the answer is given in his treatment of the gods (chs. 10, 11): antiquity never blundered so badly as in its selection of gods.

^b The more conspicuous crimes are dealt with in ch. 10. Cf. ch. 9. 20.

for ever praising antiquity, and every day you improvise some new way of life. All of which goes to prove that, while you abandon the good usages of your ancestors, you keep and maintain the practices you should not have, and what you should have kept you have not maintained. In fact, as to that very point 10 of ancestral tradition, which you think you most faithfully guard, which above all else you have used to mark down the Christians as law-breakers,—I mean the passion for worshipping the gods, (and that is where antiquity made its worst mistake^a)—though you may have rebuilt his altars for Serapis Romanized, though you may make an offering of your frenzy to Bacchus Italianate—I will show in its proper place that you despise, neglect and destroy that tradition, clean against the authority of your ancestors. For 11 the moment I will make my reply to the infamy of our secret crimes, to clear my way to deal with those which are more conspicuous.^b

VII. We are said to be the most criminal of men, 1 on the score of our sacramental baby-killing and the baby-eating that goes with it and the incest that follows the banquet, where the dogs^c are our pimps in the dark, forsooth, and make a sort of decency for guilty lusts by overturning the lamps. That, at all events, is what you always say about us; and yet you take no pains to bring into the daylight what you have been saying about us all this long time. Then, I say, either bring it out, if you believe all this, or refuse to believe it after leaving it uninvestigated. Your habit of looking the other way 2

^c The dogs were supposed to be tied to the candles; food thrown to them; and the sudden movement made the room dark.

latione praescribitur non esse quod nec ipsi audetis eruere. Longe aliud munus carnifici in Christianos imperatis, non ut dicant quae faciunt, sed ut negent
 3 quod sunt. Census istius disciplinae, ut iam edidimus, a Tiberio est. Cum odio sui coepit veritas. Simul atque apparuit, inimica est. Tot hostes eius quot extranei, et quidem proprie ex aemulatione Iudaei, ex concussione milites, ex natura ipsi etiam
 4 domestici nostri. Cotidie obsidemur, cotidie prodimur, in ipsis plurimum coetibus et congregationibus
 5 nostris opprimimur. Quis umquam taliter vagienti infanti supervenit? Quis cruenta, ut invenerat, Cyclopus et Sirenum ora iudici reservavit? Quis vel in uxoribus aliqua immunda vestigia deprehendit? Quis talia facinora cum invenisset, celavit aut vendidit ipsos trahens homines? Si semper latemus, quando proditum est quod admittimus?
 6 Immo a quibus prodi potuit? Ab ipsis enim reis non utique, cum vel ex forma omnibus mysteriis silentii fides debeatur. Samothracia et Eleusinia reticentur, quanto magis talia quae prodita interim etiam humanam animadversionem provocabunt, dum divina
 7 servatur? Si ergo non ipsi proditores sui, sequitur ut extranei. Et unde extraneis notitia, cum semper

^a Some take *domestici* to be slaves, natural enemies of their masters. It may be right; but the translation given above has some support from ch. 3. 4.

^b i.e., was bribed into silence.

constitutes a demurrer in the case, a presumption that the thing is not there at all, which not even you yourselves dare to try to bring out. It is quite a different task that you enjoin on the executioner against the Christians,—not to make them say what they do, but deny what they are.

This way of life dates, as we have already said, 3 from the reign of Tiberius. Truth and hatred of truth start together; as soon as it has appeared, it begins to be disliked. Count the outsiders, and you count its enemies—the Jews its proper enemies from rivalry, the soldiers for blackmail, while it is nature itself that makes the home circle our enemies.^a Every day 4 we stand siege; every day we are betrayed; above all in our gatherings and our assemblies we are surprised. Who yet, I ask, came upon a baby wailing, 5 as they say? Who ever kept for the judge's sight the jaws of Cyclops and Siren, bloodstained as he had found them? Who, again, found in our wives the traces of impurity? Who discovered such crimes and concealed them, or sold his discovery,^b with his hands on the persons of the guilty? If we always escape detection, when was our wicked conduct betrayed?

Yes, tell me, by whom the betrayal could have 6 been made? Not, I should think, by the guilty themselves; since in all mysteries the very fact that they are mysteries requires the pledge of silence. The mysteries of Samothrace and Eleusis remain unspoken. How much more such mysteries as these, whose betrayal will provoke man's vengeance at once, with God's in reserve? Well, if 7 they are not their own betrayers, it follows that outsiders must betray them. And where do the outsiders get their information, when initiations, even pious

etiam piae initiationes arceant profanos et arbitris caveant? Nisi si impii minus metuunt.

- 8 Natura famae omnibus nota est. Vestrum est: Fama malum qua non aliud velocius ullum. Cur malum fama? quia velox? quia index? an quia plurimum mendax? quae ne tunc quidem, cum aliquid veri adfert, sine mendacii vitio est, detrahens, adiciens, 9 demutans de veritate. Quid? quod ea illi condicio est, ut non nisi cum mentitur perseveret et tamdiu vivit quamdiu non probat, siquidem, ubi probavit, cessat esse et quasi officio nuntiandi functa rem tradit, 10 et exinde res tenetur, res nominatur. Nec quisquam dicit verbi gratia, Hoc Romae aiunt factum, aut, Fama est illum provinciam sortitum, sed, Sortitus est 11 ille provinciam, et, Hoc factum est Romae. Fama, nomen incerti, locum non habet ubi certum est. An vero famae credat nisi inconsideratus? Quia sapiens non credit incerto. Omnium est aestimare, quantacunque illa ambitione diffusa sit, quantacunque asseveratione constructa, quod ab uno aliquando 12 principe exorta sit necesse est. Exinde in traduces linguarum et aurium serpit, et ita modici seminis vitium cetera rumoris obscurat, ut nemo recogitet, ne primum illud os mendacium seminaverit, quod saepe

^a Virgil, *Aen.* iv. 174.

ones, always bid the profane avaunt, and guard against observers? Or do you suggest that the impious are less afraid?

Everybody knows the nature of Rumour. It is 8 in your literature:

Rumour, a curse, and swiftest of all curses.^a

Why is Rumour a curse? Because she is swift? Because she is an informer? Or because she is generally a liar? Why, Rumour, even when she does bring a bit of truth, does not quite escape from her vice of lying; she subtracts from the Truth, adds to it, alters it. What? Surely the terms of her existence are 9 that she only survives while she lies, and only lives so long as she fails to prove her tale. When she has proved it, she ceases to be Rumour; and, as if she had completed her task of telling, she gives us fact; and, after that, it is fact that is held, and fact it is called; 10 nor does anybody say, for example, "They say this occurred at Rome," or "Rumour is that so and so is assigned the province," but "He has been assigned the province" and "This did occur in Rome." Rumour, a synonym for the uncertain, has no place 11 where there is certainty. Would anybody believe Rumour, except the unthinking? The wise man does not believe uncertainty. It lies with everybody to reflect that, however widely Rumour has been put about, with whatever assurance it has been contrived, it must necessarily have originated at some moment with some single person who started it. After 12 that it creeps through ramifications of tongues and ears; and something wrong in the little seed, whence it sprang, so obscures all else in the rumour, that no one reflects whether that first mouth sowed the lie, as

fit aut ingenio aemulationis aut arbitrio suspicionis aut non nova sed ingenua quibusdam mentiendi
 13 voluptate. Bene autem quod omnia tempus revelat, testibus etiam vestris proverbii atque sententiis, ex dispositione naturae, quae ita ordinavit, ut nihil diu lateat, etiam quod fama non distulit. Merito igitur fama tamdiu conscia sola est scelerum Christianorum. Hanc indicem adversus nos profertis, quae quod aliquando iactavit tantoque spatio in opinionem corroboravit usque adhuc probare non valuit, ut fidem naturae ipsius appellem adversus eos qui talia credenda esse praesumunt.

- 1 VIII. Ecce proponimus horum facinorum mercedem. Vitam aeternam repromittunt. Credite interim. De hoc enim quaero, an et qui credideris
 2 tanti habeas ad eam tali conscientia pervenire. Veni, demerge ferrum in infantem nullius inimicum, nullius reum, omnium filium, vel, si alterius officium est, tu modo assiste morienti homini antequam vixit, fugientem animam novam expecta, excipe rudem sanguinem, eo panem tuum satia, vescere libenter.
 3 Intereadiscumbens dinumera loca, ubi mater, ubi soror; nota diligenter, ut, cum tenebrae ceciderint caninae, non erres. Piaculum enim admiseris nisi incestum
 4 feceris. Talia initiatus et consignatus vivis in aevum. Cupio respondeas, si tanti aeternitas. Aut si non,

* See p. 242 note a.

often happens, from an envious nature, from wanton suspicion, or from that mere pleasure in lying which with some people is no new thing but inborn in them. It is well that time reveals all, as your own proverbs and wise saws witness, and does it by the law of nature, which has so ordained that nothing long lies hid, even when Rumour has not flung it abroad. Very properly, 13 then, Rumour alone all this long time is the authority for the crimes of the Christians. Rumour is the informer you bring forward against us. Yet what she once launched and in all this interval has hardened into general belief, to this hour she has not been able to prove. So I would appeal to the authority of Nature herself to give evidence against those who assume such charges to be credible.

VIII. Look, then; we offer a reward for these 1 crimes; they promise eternal life! For the moment believe it. Then I ask a question on this point—whether even you, sir, who have believed it, count eternal life worth winning at such a price, with all this on your conscience? Come! plunge the knife into the baby, 2 nobody's enemy, guilty of nothing, everybody's child; or, if that is the other man's job, do you just stand by (that is all), by this human creature dying before it has lived; watch for the young soul as it escapes; catch the infant blood; steep your bread with it; eat and enjoy it. Meanwhile, as you recline on your 3 couch, reckon the places where your mother, your sister, may be; make a careful note so that, when the darkness of the dogs' contriving shall fall, you can make no mistake. You will be guilty of a sin, unless you have committed incest. So initiated, so 4 sealed,^a you live for ever. I wish you to answer: Is eternities worth it? Or if it is not, then you must not

ideo nec credenda. Etiam si credideris, nego te velle; etiam si volueris, nego te posse. Cur ergo alii possint, si vos non potestis? cur non possitis, si alii possunt? 5 Alia nos, opinor, natura; Cynopaeae aut Sciapodae? Alii ordines dentium, alii ad incestam libidinem nervi? Qui ista credis de homine, potes et facere. Homo es et ipse, quod et Christianus. Qui non potes facere, non debes credere. Homo est enim et Christianus et quod et tu.

6 Sed ignorantibus subicitur et inponitur. Nihil enim tale de Christianis asseverari sciebant observandum 7 utique sibi et omni vigilantia investigandum. Atquin volentibus initiari moris est, opinor, prius patrem illum sacrorum adire, quae praeparanda sint describere. Tum ille: Infans tibi necessarius adhuc tener, qui nesciat mortem, qui sub cultro tuo rideat; item panis, quo sanguinis iurulentiam¹ colligas; praeterea candelabra et lucernae et canes aliqui et offulae, quae illos ad eversionem luminum extendant: ante 8 omnia cum matre et sorore tua venire debebis. Quid si noluerint vel nullae fuerint? quid denique singulares Christiani? Non erit, opinor, legitimus Christianus nisi frater aut filius. Quid nunc, et si ista omnia ignaris praeparantur? Certe postea cognoscent et sustinent et ignoscunt. Timent plecti, si 9

¹ *Oehler prints virulentiam.*

^a These pleasant people are found in Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 2. 23, who quotes Ctesias as authority for a population somewhere of 120,000 dog-headed, and for the Sciapods, "quod in maiore aestu humi iacentes resupini umbra se pedum protegunt." Herodotus, iv. 191, refers to dog-headed men, but implies they are fabulous. See Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius*, 45. So down through history from Sir John Mandeville to Othello,

believe the tales. Even if you have believed, I deny that you wish it [at the price]; even if you should wish it, I deny that you could *do* the thing. Then how can others do it, if you cannot? Why can't you, if others can? Oh, we have another nature, I suppose! 5 Dog-headed men, perhaps, or Sciapods? ^a A different arrangement of teeth, other muscles for incestuous lust? You, sir, who believe this of any man, you can do it just as easily as believe it. You are a man yourself, and that is just what a Christian is. You, sir, who cannot do the thing, ought not to believe it of another. For a Christian too is a man, and exactly what you are.

"But, of course, the ignorant are trapped into it; 6 the trick is played on them. For they never knew that any such thing is asserted of Christians,—nothing that they should look into, nothing to investigate with all watchfulness." Yet when men seek initiation, 7 the usual thing, I suppose, is first to approach the "father" of the ritual, to map out what is to be prepared. Then quoth he: "You must have a baby, still tender, that can know nothing of death, that can smile under your knife; *item* a loaf, to catch its juicy blood; add lampstands and lamps, a dog or two, and some sops to set the dogs tumbling the lamps over; above all, you must come with your mother and sister." But if they won't come, or 8 if you have none? What, Christians with *no* relatives? I suppose, a man is not a regular Christian unless he is a brother or a son. "But, look! what if all this is made ready for people who know nothing about it?" At all events they know afterwards, and bear up under it, and forgive it. "They are afraid 9 of punishment, if they were to tell the story." They

proclament, qui defendi merebuntur, qui etiam ultro perire malint quam sub tali conscientia vivere. Age nunc timeant, cur etiam perseverant? Sequitur enim, ne ultra velis id te esse quod, si prius scisses, non fuisses.

1 IX. Haec quo magis refutaverim, a vobis fieri ostendam partim in aperto, partim in occulto, per 2 quod forsitan et de nobis credidistis. Infantes penes Africam Saturno immolabantur palam usque ad proconsulatum Tiberii, qui eosdem sacerdotes in eisdem arboribus templi sui obumbratricibus scelerum votivis crucibus exposuit, teste militia patriae nostrae, quae 3 id ipsum munus illi proconsuli functa est. Sed et nunc in occulto perseveratur hoc sacrum facinus. Non soli vos contemnunt Christiani, nec ullum scelus in perpetuum eradicatur aut mores suos aliqui deus 4 mutat. Cum propriis filiis Saturnus non pepercit, extraneis utique non parcendo perseverabat, quos quidem ipsi parentes sui offerebant et libentes respondebant et infantibus blandiebantur, ne lacrimantes immolarentur. Et tamen multum homicidio parri- 5 cidium differt. Maior aetas apud Gallos Mercurio prosequatur. Remitto fabulas Tauricas theatri suis.

^a *i.e.*, as victims of such trickery, or as informers against such crimes.

^b J. E. B. Mayor cites Plato, *Minos*, 315 n-c, on Carthaginian sacrifices of children to Kronos; Varro too, quoted by Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, vii. 19.

^c Since Joseph Scaliger's days it has been discussed what Tiberius this was, and when was his proconsulate, or whether emendation might solve the problem. In the absence of exact knowledge from other sources, the translation is questioned, but the translators generally agree on the treatment of the priests, though the Latin is perplexing.

^d A reference to Carthage, and half a hint that it was some recent proconsul Tiberius; so Mayor.

will deserve to be protected^a; they would prefer to die right out than to live with such deeds on their conscience. Put it that they are afraid—why do they go on with it? For it follows that you would not wish to be any longer what, if only you had known before, you never would have been.

IX. To refute these charges still further, I will show 1 that these very things are done by you, sometimes openly, sometimes in secret, and that perhaps is the reason for your having believed them about us also.

In Africa infants used to be sacrificed to Saturn,^b 2 and quite openly, down to the proconsulate of Tiberius,^c who took the priests themselves and on the very trees of their temple, under whose shadow their crimes had been committed, hung them alive like votive offerings on crosses; and the soldiers of my own country^d are witnesses to it, who served that proconsul in that very task. Yes, and to this day 3 that holy crime persists in secret. Christians are not the only people who defy you; no crime is ever wholly rooted out; nor does any of your gods change his ways. Saturn did not spare his own children; 4 so, where other people's were concerned, he naturally persisted in not sparing them; and their own parents offered them to him, were glad to respond, and fondled their children that they might not be sacrificed in tears. And between murder and sacrifice by parents—oh! the difference is great! Persons of 5 older years used to be sacrificed to Mercury among the Gauls. The plays about the Tauric Chersonese belong to the theatres, and there I leave them.^e But,

^e *Iphigenia in Tauris* may be in his mind, or plays copied from it.

Ecce in illa religiosissima urbe Aeneadarum piorum est Iupiter quidam quem ludis suis humano sanguine proluunt. Sed bestiarum, inquit. Hoc, opinor, minus quam hominis? An hoc turpius, quod mali hominis? certe tamen de homicidio funditur. O Iovem Christianum et solum patris filium de crudelitate! Sed quoniam de infanticidio nihil interest sacro an arbitrio perpetretur, licet parricidium homicidio intersit, convertar ad populum.

Quot vultis ex his circumstantibus et in Christianorum sanguinem hiantibus, ex ipsis etiam vobis iustissimis et severissimis in nos praesidibus apud conscientias pulsem, qui natos sibi liberos enecent? 7 Siquidem et de genere necis differt, utique crudelius in aqua spiritum extorquetis aut frigori et fami et canibus exponitis. Ferro enim mori aetas quoque 8 maior optaverit. Nobis vero semel homicidio interdicto etiam conceptum utero, dum adhuc sanguis in hominem delibatur, dissolvere non licet. Homicidii festinatio est prohibere nasci, nec refert natam quis eripiat animam an nascentem disturbet. Homo est et qui est futurus; etiam fructus omnis iam in semine est.

^a Compare the phrase describing Domitian and his likeness to Nero, ch. 5. 4. The rendering "the only son of his father, because of his cruelty" (viz. Saturn's cruelty in eating the rest of his children) is suggested, but seems less probable.

^b One feels that the saving clause may have an irony: of course, it is not so dreadful if it is your own child.

^c The exposure of infants, especially of girls, is constantly hurled at the heathen by apologists. We do not, says Clement of Alexandria, cast out our children and keep parrots. The frequency with which the *dénouement* of a comedy turns on these exposures, with other evidence, con-

look you! in that most religious of all cities, the city of the pious race of Aeneas, is a certain Jupiter, whom they drench with human blood at his own games. "Yes, but only the blood of a man condemned already to the beasts," you say? That, I take it, makes it something less than a man's blood? Or may it not be so much worse because the blood of a bad man? At all events it is at least the blood of murder. What a Christian Jove, to be sure, his father's only son so far as cruelty goes! ^a But since 6 there is no difference as to baby-killing whether you do it as a sacred rite or just because you choose to do it (though we must grant a difference between murder and killing your own child ^b), I will turn to the people.

How many, think you, of these persons standing round and panting for Christian blood,—how many of you, most just magistrates and most severe upon us, how many should I touch in their consciences for killing their own children, born to them? Since 7 there is a difference between one kind of death and another, surely your way is more cruel, to choke out the breath in water, or to expose to cold, starvation and the dogs. ^c Grown-up people would sooner die by iron. For us murder is once for all forbidden; so even 8 the child in the womb, while yet the mother's blood is still being drawn on to form the human being, it is not lawful for us to destroy. To forbid birth is only quicker murder. It makes no difference whether one take away the life once born or destroy it as it comes to birth. He is a man, who is to be a man; the fruit is always present in the seed.

firms the charge. The papyrus letter of Hilarion to Alis (A.D. 1) is well known; "If it was a girl, put it out."

- 9 De sanguinis pabulo et eiusmodi tragicis ferculis legite, necubi relatum sit (est apud Herodotum, opinor), defusum brachiis sanguinem ex alterutro degustatum nationes quasdam foederi comparasse. Nescio quid et sub Catilina degustatum est. Aiunt et apud quosdam gentiles Scytharum defunctum
- 10 quemque a suis comedi. Longe excurro. Hodie istic Bellonae sacratus sanguis de femore proscisso in palmulam exceptus et esui datus signat.¹ Item illi qui munere in arena noxiorum iugulorum sanguinem recentem de iugulo decurrentem exceptum avida siti
- 11 comitali morbo medentes auferunt, ubi sunt? Item illi qui de arena ferinis obsoniis coenant, qui de apro, qui de cervo petunt? Aper ille quem cruentavit, conluctando deterisit. Cervus ille in gladiatoris sanguine iacuit. Ipsorum ursorum alvei appetuntur cruditantes adhuc de visceribus humanis. Ructatur
- 12 proinde ab homine caro pasta de homine. Haec qui editis, quantum abestis a convivii Christianorum? Minus autem et illi faciunt qui libidine fera humanis membris inhiant, quia vivos vorant? minus humano sanguine ad spurcitiam consecrantur, quia futurum sanguinem lambunt? Non edunt infantes plane, sed magis puberes.
- 13 Erubescat error vester Christianis, qui ne animalium quidem sanguinem in epulis esculentis habemus, qui propterea suffocatis quoque et morticinis abstinemus, ne quo modo sanguine contaminemur vel intra viscera

¹ *Text uncertain, whether sacratus or sacratos, esui or suis; palmulam or parmulam. The translation is a compromise.*

^a Herodotus, iv. 70.

^b Sallust, *Catiline*, 22.

As to tasting blood, and such like tragic dishes, ⁹ read—wherever it may be told (it is in Herodotus,^a I think)—how some tribes have used blood drawn from the arms of both parties and taste it to seal a treaty. Something of the kind was tasted in Catiline's plot.^b They say, too, that among some tribesmen of Scythian stock every dead man is eaten by his kindred.^c But I go too far afield. To-day ¹⁰ and here, when men are dedicated to Bellona, the thigh is cut, the blood is caught in a little shield,^d and given them to consume—as a sign. Again, those who, when a show is given in the arena, with greedy thirst have caught the fresh blood of the guilty slain, as it pours fresh from their throats, and carry it off as a cure for their epilepsy ^e—what of them? Again, those who dine on the flesh of wild ¹¹ animals from the arena, keen on the meat of boar or stag? That boar in his battle has wiped the blood off him whose blood he drew; that stag has wallowed in the blood of a gladiator. The bellies of the very bears are sought, full of raw and undigested human flesh. Man's flesh goes belching, fattened on man's flesh. You who eat these things, how far are you ¹² from those Christian banquets?

Let your error blush ^f before the Christians, for we ¹³ do not include even animals' blood in our natural diet. We abstain on that account from things strangled or that die of themselves, that we may not in any way be polluted by blood, even if it is

^c Cf. Herodotus, i. 216, the Massagetæ eat the aged; iv. 26, the Issedones eat the dead.

^d Or "in the hand."

^e Cf. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 1 (2).

^f In less rhetorical language, "blush for your unnatural practices in eating."

- 14 sepulto. Denique inter temptamenta Christianorum botulos etiam cruore distensos admoventis, certissimi scilicet illicitum esse penes illos per quod exorbitare eos vultis. Porro quale est, ut quos sanguinem pecoris horrere confiditis, humano inhiare credatis, nisi forte
 15 suaviorem eum experti? Quem quidem et ipsum proinde examinatorem Christianorum adhiberi oportebat ut foculum, ut acerram. Proinde enim probarentur sanguinem humanum adpetendo quemadmodum sacrificium respuendo, alioquin negandi si non gustassent, quemadmodum si immolassent, et utique non deesset vobis in auditione custodiarum et damnatione sanguis humanus.¹
- 16 Proinde incesti qui magis quam quos ipse Iupiter docuit? Persas cum suis matribus misceri Ctesias refert. Sed et Macedones suspecti, quia, cum primum Oedipum tragoediam audissent, ridentes incesti dolo-
 17 rem, "Ἡλανε, dicebant, εἰς τὴν μητέρα. Iam nunc recogitate quantum liceat erroribus ad incesta miscenda, suppeditante materias passivitate luxuria. Imprimis filios exponitis suscipiendos ab aliqua praeter-
 eunte misericordia extranea, vel adoptandos melioribus parentibus emancipatis. Alienati generis necesse est quandoque memoriam dissipari, et simul error inegerit, exinde iam tradux proficiet incesti ser-
 18 pente genere cum scelere. Tunc deinde quocunque in loco, domi, peregre, trans freta comes est libido, cuius ubique saltus facile possunt alicubi ignaris

¹ *The text varies, necandi or negandi, with the negatives rearranged.*

^a Cf. Acts xv. 20, 29.

buried in the meat.^a Finally, when you are testing 14 Christians, you offer them sausages full of blood; you are thoroughly well aware, of course, that among them it is forbidden; but you want to make them transgress. Now, I ask you, what sort of a thing is it, that when you are confident they will turn with horror from animals' blood, you should suppose them greedy for human blood—unless perhaps you yourselves have found it sweeter? Human blood then 15 ought to be used as an extra test with the Christians, like the brazier and incense-box. They would be convicted as much by their eagerness for human blood as by their refusal of sacrifice, and acquitted if they did not taste it, just as they would be if they had sacrificed. And when your prisoners were being tried and condemned, there would, I am very sure, be no shortage of human blood.

Then again who are more incestuous than the 16 disciples of Jupiter? The Persians according to Ctesias consort with their mothers. And the Macedonians are suspected of it too, because when first they heard the tragedy of *Oedipus*, they laughed at his grief for the incest; "he lay with Jocasta," they said. Yet now reflect how far error may go in 17 promoting incest, as your promiscuous wantonness offers occasion. To begin, you expose your children to be taken up by the pity of any stray outsider who passes—or (shall we say?) you release them to be adopted by better parents. When the family is discarded, sometimes memory must be lost; and when once mistake strikes in, then a strain of incest will continue as stock and sin creep on together. Then, 18 in the next instance, whatever the spot, at home, abroad, across the sea, lust goes with you, whose sallies

filios pangere vel ex aliqua seminis portione, ut ita sparsum genus per commercia humana concurrat in memorias suas, neque eas caecus incesti sanguinis agnoscat.¹

- 19 Nos ab isto eventu diligentissima et fidelissima castitas sepsit, quantumque ab stupris et ab omni post matrimonium excessu, tantum et ab incestu casu tuti sumus. Quidam multo securiores totam vim huius erroris virgine continentia depellunt, senes
20 pueri. Haec in vobis esse si consideraretis, proinde in Christianis non esse perspiceretis. Idem oculi renuntiassent utrumque. Sed caecitatis duae species facile concurrunt, ut qui non vident quae sunt, videre videantur quae non sunt. Sic per omnia ostendam. Nunc de manifestioribus dicam.

- 1 X. Deos, inquit, non colitis, et pro imperatoribus sacrificia non penditis. Sequitur ut eadem ratione pro aliis non sacrificemus, quia nec pro nobis ipsis, semel deos non colendo. Itaque sacrilegii et maiestatis rei convenimur. Summa haec causa, immo tota est, et utique digna cognosci, si non praesumptio aut iniquitas iudicet, altera quae desperat, altera quae
2 recusat veritatem. Deos vestros colere desinimus ex quo illos non esse cognoscimus. Hoc igitur exigere debetis, uti probemus non esse illos deos, et idcirco

¹ So Oehler, following the mss. He says caecus is equivalent to ignarus and is to be construed with the genitive. One is to suppose some noun or pronoun, representing a man, understood. Or the text can be changed. coetus is also read for caecus, and there are other variants.

^a Kellner takes it as "old men and young alike."

^b The Ante-Nicene Christian Library translator puts it that prejudice has no idea of discovering the truth while injustice simply and at once rejects it.

may in every place beget you children without your knowing it; a very little of the seed will do it; so that a stock scattered through the range of human travel may fall in with its own source, and, all unaware, fail to recognize an incestuous union.

From such an event we are guarded by a chastity, 19 supremely careful and faithful; we are safe from random intercourse and from all excess after marriage, and in that degree from the risk of incest. Some indeed, in a much greater security, guard themselves against the violence of this sin by a virgin continence, old in years but still children.^a If you 20 would realize that these sins are found among yourselves, you would see that they are not to be found among the Christians. The same eyes would assure you of both facts. But two sorts of blindness easily meet, so that those, who do not see what is really there, seem to see what is not. So in all the points at issue, as I will show you. But now of our more conspicuous crimes!

X. "You do not," say you "worship the gods; 1 you do not offer sacrifice for the Emperors." It follows by parity of reasoning that we do not sacrifice for others because we do not for ourselves—it follows from our not worshipping the gods. So we are accused of sacrilege and treason at once. That is the chief of the case against us—the whole of it, in fact; and it in any case deserves investigation, unless the judgement is to be given by prejudice or injustice, the one despairing of the truth, the other refusing it.^b Your gods, then, we cease to worship, 2 from the moment when we recognize that they are not gods. So that is what you ought to require us to prove—that those gods are not gods and are there-

non colendos, quia tunc demum coli debuissent, si dei fuissent. Tunc et Christiani puniendi, si quos non colerent, quia putarent non esse, constaret illos deos esse.

3 Sed nobis, inquit, dei sunt. Appellamus et provocamus a vobis ad conscientiam vestram: illa nos iudicet, illa nos damnet, si poterit negare omnes
4 istos deos vestros homines fuisse. Si et ipsa inficias ierit, de suis antiquitatum instrumentis revincetur, de quibus eos didicit, testimonium perhibentibus ad hodiernum et civitatibus in quibus nati sunt, et regionibus in quibus aliquid operati vestigia relique-
5 runt, in quibus etiam sepulti demonstrantur. Nunc ergo per singulos decurram, tot ac tantos, novos, veteres, barbaros, Graecos, Romanos, peregrinos, captivos, adoptivos, proprios, communes, masculos, feminas, rusticos, urbanos, nauticos, militares? Otiosum et etiam titulos persequi, ut colligam in compendium, et hoc non quo cognoscatis, sed reco-
6 gnoscatis. Certe enim oblitos agitis. Ante Saturnum deus penes vos nemo est, ab illo census totius vel potioris et notioris divinitatis. Itaque quod de origine
7 constiterit, id et de posteritate conveniet. Saturnum itaque, si quantum litterae docent, neque Diodorus Graecus aut Thallus neque Cassius Severus aut Cornelius Nepos neque ullus commentator eiusmodi antiquitatum aliud quam hominem promulgaverunt,

^a For the theory, associated with the name of Euhemerus, that the gods had once been men, see Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, I. 42. 119 "qui aut fortes aut claros aut potentes viros tradunt post mortem ad deos pervenisse," with a reference to Ennius translating Euhemerus.

^b viz., stories and origins of the gods. For these authors cf. p. 374 n.

fore not to be worshipped; because it is only if they had been gods that they should be worshipped. Then indeed Christians would deserve punishment if it were established that the gods whom they did not worship because they thought they were not gods, really were gods.

"But they are gods for us," you say. Here we 3 lodge an appeal, and carry the case from you to your conscience. Let your conscience judge us, let it condemn us, if it can deny that all these gods of yours were once men.^a But if your conscience shall contest 4 the point against us, it shall be refuted from the ancient books from which it learnt the gods; and testimony is also given to this day by the cities in which the gods were born, and by the regions in which they left traces of anything they did,—yes, and in which they were demonstrably buried. And 5 now—am I to run over them in detail, in all their number and greatness, new gods and old, barbarian, Greek, Roman, foreign, captive, adoptive, private, public, male, female, rustic, urban, naval, military? It would be idle to list even their titles to make a compendium of them; it would not give you new information but would merely remind you. For you certainly act as if you had forgotten. Before 6 Saturn you had no god among you; he is the original of all your pantheon, or of the more powerful of them, the better-known. So whatever is established about the source, will suit the posterity. As to 7 Saturn, then, so far as books inform us, neither Diodorus the Greek nor Thallus, neither Cassius Severus nor Cornelius Nepos, nor any other author dealing with antiquities of that kind,^b has alleged that Saturn was anything but a man. As to proofs

si quantum rerum argumenta, nusquam invenio fideliora quam apud ipsam Italiam, in qua Saturnus post multas expeditiones postque Attica hospitia consedit, exceptus a Iano, vel Iane, ut Salii volunt.

8 Mons quem incoluerat, Saturnius dictus, civitas quam depalaverat, Saturnia usque nunc est, tota denique Italia post Oenotriam Saturnia cognominabatur. Ab ipso primum tabulae et imagine signatus nummus, et

9 inde aerario praesidet. Tamen si homo Saturnus, utique ex homine, et quia ab homine, non utique de caelo et terra. Sed cuius parentes ignoti erant, facile fuit eorum filium dici quorum et omnes possumus videri. Quis enim non caelum ac terram matrem ac patrem venerationis et honoris gratia appellet? vel ex consuetudine humana, qua ignoti vel ex inopinato

10 adparentes de caelo supervenisse dicuntur. Proinde Saturno repentino ubique caelitem contigit dici; nam et terrae filios vulgus vocat quorum genus incertum est. Taceo quod ita rudes adhuc homines agebant, ut cuiuslibet novi viri adpectu quasi divino commoverentur, cum hodie iam politi quos ante paucos dies luctu publico mortuos sint confessi, in deos

11 consecrant. Satis iam de Saturno, licet paucis. Etiam Iovem ostendemus tam hominem quam ex homine, et deinceps totum generis examen tam mortale quam seminis sui par.

1 XI. Et quoniam sicut illos homines fuisse non audetis negare, ita post mortem deos factos insti-

^a Perhaps "laws."

from actual monuments, I find none more reliable than in Italy itself, where, after his many expeditions and his visit to Attica, Saturn settled down, made welcome by Janus,—or Janes, as the Salii prefer it. The mountain which he inhabited is called 8 Saturnius; the city whose bounds he staked out is Saturnia to this day; the whole of Italy in fact, after being called Oenotria, bore the name Saturnia. From him first came writing ^a; and coin stamped with an image; and hence he rules the treasury. Yet, if Saturn was a man, I suppose he was born of 9 man; and, since he was born of man, he was not the child of the sky and the earth. But, where a man's parents were unknown, it was easy for him to be called the child of sky and earth; we must all pass for being their children. Who would not call sky and earth mother and father, by way of veneration and honour? Or it may be merely human usage, just as we say that unknown persons or people turning up unexpectedly have come from the sky. Then as 10 Saturn was everywhere unexpected, it was his lot to be called a child of the sky. For people, whose family is unknown, are called, in the vulgar phrase, "sons of earth." I waive the fact that men were in those days so uncivilized that they were moved by the sight of any strange person as if divine,—when to-day civilized people will deify persons whom they have a day or two before by public mourning admitted to be dead. But enough of Saturn, in these few 11 words. We will show that Jove too was a man and born of man, and thereafter that the whole family swarm were mortal,—mortal as the seed they came of.

XI. But since, while you dare not deny that the gods 1 once were men, you have yet made it your practice to

tuistis adseverare, causas quae hoc exegerint retrac-
 2 temus. Inprimis quidem necesse est concedatis esse
 aliquem sublimiorem deum et mancipem quendam
 divinitatis, qui ex hominibus deos fecerit. Nam
 neque sibi illi sumere potuissent divinitatem, quam
 non habebant, nec alius praestare eam non habentibus,
 3 nisi qui proprie possidebat. Ceterum si nemo esset
 qui deos faceret, frustra praesumitis deos factos
 auferendo factorem. Certe quidem si ipsi se facere
 potuissent, nunquam homines fuissent, possidentes
 scilicet condicionis melioris potestatem.
 4 Igitur si est qui faciat deos, revertor ad causas
 examinandas faciendorum ex hominibus deorum, nec
 ullas invenio, nisi si ministeria et auxilia officiis
 divinis desideravit ille magnus deus. Primo indignum
 est, ut alicuius opera indigeret, et quidem mortui,
 cum dignius ab initio deum aliquem fecisset qui
 5 mortui erat operam desideraturus. Sed nec operae
 locum video. Totum enim hoc mundi corpus sive
 innatum et infectum secundum Pythagoram, sive
 natum factumve secundum Platonem, semel utique
 in ista constructione dispositum et instructum et
 ordinatum cum omni rationis gubernaculo inventum
 est. Imperfectum non potuit esse quod perfecit
 6 omnia. Nihil Saturnum et Saturniam gentem expec-
 tabat. Vani erunt homines, nisi certi sint a primordio

^a Some scholars take *mancipem* in the other sense of "dealer in . . .", "seller of . . .", which seems to miss what is a central thought of Tertullian. Kellner renders, as above, "gewissermassen Ureigentümer der Gotteswürde."

^b Cf. Cicero, *Tusculan Disput.* i. 28. 70 "possumusne dubitare quin eis praesit aliquis vel effector, si haec nata

affirm that after death they became gods, let us discuss the causes that brought this about. First of 2 all, you must allow there is a God more sublime, true owner in his own right (so to say) of deity, ^a who made the gods out of men. For neither could they have assumed for themselves a deity they did not possess, nor could another give it them when they were without it, unless he really had it himself. But if there were nobody who could make gods, it is 3 idle to assume gods were made when you do away with the maker. At all events, if they could have made themselves, they would never have been men, with this power in themselves of having a better position.

So, if there is one who makes gods, I turn back to 4 examine the reasons for making gods out of men; and I find no reasons—unless their services and their assistance in his divine functions were desired by the great God. First, then, it is beneath his dignity to need the help of another (and a dead man's help, at that!) when, with more dignity, he might have made a god to start with, if he were going to need the aid of a dead man. But I do not see the place where 5 that aid is needed. For this whole fabric of the universe, whether unborn and unmade (as Pythagoras says) or born or made (as Plato prefers ^b), we find to be once for all disposed, equipped, ordered as it stands, and supplied with the complete guidance of reason. That could not be imperfect, which has perfected all things. Nothing was left waiting for Saturn 6 and Saturn's tribe. Men will be fools, unless they are sure that from the beginning the rain fell from sunt, ut Platoni videtur, vel si semper fuerunt, ut Aristoteli placet, moderator tanti operis et muneris?

et pluvias de caelo ruisse et sidera radiasse et lumina floruisse et tonitrua mugisse et ipsum Iovem quae in manu eius inpositis fulmina timuisse, item omnem frugem ante Liberum et Cererem et Minervam, immo ante illum aliquem principem hominem de terra exuberasse, quia nihil continendo et sustinendo homini prospectum post hominem potuit inferri.

7 Denique invenisse dicuntur necessaria ista vitae, non instituisse. Quod autem invenitur, fuit, et quod fuit, non eius deputabitur qui invenit, sed eius qui instituit ;
8 erat enim antequam inveniretur. Ceterum si propterea Liber deus quod vitem demonstravit, male cum Lucullo actum est, qui primus cerasia ex Ponto Italiae promulgavit, quod non est propterea consecratus ut
9 frugis novae auctor, qui ostensor. Quamobrem si ab initio et instructa et certis exercendorum officiorum suorum rationibus dispensata universitas constitit, vacat ex hac parte causa adlegendae humanitatis in divinitatem, quia quas illis stationes et potestates distribuistis, tam fuerunt ab initio quam et fuissent etiamsi deos istos non creassetis.

10 Sed convertimini ad causam aliam, respondentes conlationem divinitatis meritorum remunerandorum fuisse rationem. Et hinc conceditis, opinor, illum deum deificum iustitia praecellere, qui non temere nec indigne nec prodige tantum praemium dispensarit.
11 Volo igitur merita recensere, an eiusmodi sint, ut illos in caelum extulerint et non potius in imum

^a Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xv. 25. 102, states this of Lucullus, dating it A.U.C. 680, and adds that 120 years later the cherry crossed the ocean to Britain—"in Britanniam usque."

heaven, the stars shone, the lights were bright, the thunder roared, yes, and Jove himself was afraid of the thunderbolts which you put in his hand ; unless they are sure that before Liber and Ceres and Minerva and before the first man (whoever he was), crops came richly from the earth, for nothing designed to preserve and sustain man could be introduced *after* man. In fact, your gods are said to have dis- 7 covered those necessities of life, not to have devised them. But what is discovered has already existed ; what has already existed will be credited not to him who discovered it but to him who devised it ; for it existed before it was found. But if Liber is 8 a god because he showed men the vine, it is a sad pity for Lucullus, who first introduced the cherry from Pontus to Italy, that he was not consecrated a god for it, as author of a new fruit, because he was the discoverer of it.^a Thus, if from the very beginning 9 the universe stood there equipped and furnished with definite laws for the exercise of all its functions, from this point of view there really is no cause for electing men into the ranks of the gods ; because the posts and powers you have allotted to them existed from the beginning, and as surely would have existed even if you had never created these gods.

But you turn over to another reason ; you rejoin 10 that the bestowal of deity was a method of rewarding their merits. And in this you allow, I suppose, that the God who makes gods excels in justice, seeing that neither recklessly nor unworthily, nor in prodigal style, has he dispensed this great reward. I would 11 like, then, to review the merits alleged, to determine whether they are of a nature to raise those men to heaven and not rather to plunge them into the

tartarum merserint, quem carcerem poenarum infer-
 12 narum cum vultis adfirmatis. Illuc enim abstrudi
 solent impii quique in parentes et incesti in sorores
 et maritarum adulteri et virginum raptores et pue-
 rorum contaminatores et qui saeviunt et qui
 occidunt et qui furantur et qui decipiunt et quicumque
 similes sunt alicuius dei vestri, quem neminem
 integrum a crimine aut vitio probare poteritis, nisi
 hominem negaveritis. Atquin ut illos homines fuisse
 13 non possitis negare, etiam istae notae accedunt quae
 nec deos postea factos credi permittunt. Si enim
 vos talibus puniendis praesidetis, si commercium,
 colloquium, convictum malorum et turpium probi
 quique respuitis, horum autem pares deus ille
 maiestatis suae consortio adscivit, quid ergo damnatis
 14 quorum collegas adoratis? Suggillatio est in caelo
 vestra iustitia. Deos facite criminosissimos quosque,
 ut placeatis deis vestris. Illorum est honor consecratio
 15 coaequalium. Sed ut omittam huius indignitatis
 retractatum, probi et integri et boni fuerint. Quot
 tamen potiores viros apud inferos reliquistis! aliquem
 de sapientia Socratem, de iustitia Aristiden, de militia
 Themistoclem, de sublimitate Alexandrum, de felici-
 tate Polycraten, de copia Croesum, de eloquentia
 16 Demosthenen. Quis ex illis deis vestris gravior et
 sapientior Catone, iustior et militarior Scipione? quis
 sublimior Pompeio, felicior Sulla, copiosior Crasso,
 eloquentior Tullio? Quanto dignius istos deos ille
 adsumendos expectasset, praescius utique potiorum?

bottom of Tartarus, which you, when you so please,
 affirm to be the prison of infernal punishment. That 12
 is the place to which commonly are relegated the
 impious, those who commit incest on parents or
 sisters, who seduce wives, rape virgins, defile boys,
 who are cruel, who kill, who steal, who deceive, any-
 one, in short, who might be like some god or other of
 yours, not one of whom you will be able to prove
 free from guilt or vice—unless you deny that he was a
 man. And yet, just as you cannot deny that they 13
 were men, those stains upon them forbid us to believe
 they afterwards became gods. If you sit as magistrates
 to punish such persons, if you (all decent people,
 that is) repudiate intercourse, converse, association
 with the bad and foul, but if the great God took
 their like to be partners of his majesty—why do you
 condemn people, whose fellows you adore? Your
 justice is an affront to heaven. You should make 14
 your worst criminals into gods, if you would please
 your gods! The consecration of their equals is an
 honour to them! But, to drop discussion of this 15
 indignity—let us suppose them to have been honest,
 upright, good. Well, even so, how many better men
 have you left among the dead? A Socrates for
 wisdom, an Aristides for justice, a Themistocles for
 military skill, an Alexander for grandeur, a Polyperates
 for luck, a Croesus for wealth, a Demosthenes for
 eloquence? Who among those gods of yours is more 16
 reverend, more wise, than Cato, more just and more
 of a military genius than Scipio, grander than Pompey,
 luckier than Sulla, richer than Crassus, more eloquent
 than Cicero? How much more worthily might he
 have waited to take them as gods, when he must
 surely have foreseen that they would be better? He

Properavit, opinor, et caelum semel clusit, et nunc utique melioribus apud inferos musitantibus erubescit.

- 1 XII. Cesso iam de isto, ut qui sciam me ex ipsa veritate demonstraturum quid non sint, cum ostendero quid sint. Quantum igitur de deis vestris, nomina solummodo video quorundam veterum mortuorum et
2 fabulas audio et sacra de fabulis recognosco : quantum autem de simulacris ipsis, nihil aliud reprehendo quam materias sorores esse vasculorum instrumentorumque communium vel ex isdem vasculis et instrumentis quasi fatum consecratione mutantes licentia artis transfigurante, et quidem contumeliosissime et in ipso opere sacrilege, ut revera nobis maxime, qui propter ipsos deos plectimur, solatium poenarum esse
3 possit quod eadem et ipsi patiuntur ut fiant. Crucibus et stipitibus inponitis Christianos. Quod simulacrum non prius argilla deformat cruci et stipiti superstructa? in patibulo primum corpus dei vestri dedicatur.
4 Ungulis deraditis latera Christianorum. At in deos vestros per omnia membra validius incumbunt asciae et runcinae et scobinae. Cervices ponimus. Ante plumbum et glutinum et gomphos sine capite sunt dei vestri. Ad bestias impellimur. Certe quas Libero
5 et Cybele et Caelesti applicatis. Ignibus urimur. Hoc et illi a prima quidem massa. In metalla damnatur. Inde censentur dei vestri. In insulis relegamur. Solet et in insula aliqui deus vester aut

^a Jupiter, *e.g.*, according to various stories, was born, or buried, or both, in Crete. *Cf.* note on ch. 25. 7. Patmos will remind the reader of the relegation of a Christian to an island.

must have been in a great hurry, I think, and closed heaven once and for all; and now, no doubt, when better men are grumbling about it in the world of the dead, he is put to the blush.

XII. I stop on this issue; for I know that on the basis of truth I shall have shown what they are not, when I have made clear what they are. So, as to your gods, I see merely the names of certain dead men of the past; I hear their stories; from their stories I understand their rituals. As to their actual images, 2 I find nothing beyond material akin to what is in ordinary pots and tools. Or else the matter of those same pots and tools experiences in consecration a change of destiny, as the free hand of art transforms it—and (let me say) does it with the maximum of insult, yes! and sacrilege, while the work is proceeding. So it really might be a consolation to us in our pains, when we are tortured because of these gods, that they too suffer the same, to become gods. 3 You hang Christians on crosses and stakes; what idol is there but is first moulded in clay, hung on cross and stake? It is on a gibbet that the body of your god is first dedicated. With hooks you tear the flanks 4 of Christians; but on your gods, over every limb of them, fall axes and planes and rasps. We lay down our necks [to lose our heads]; before the lead, the glue, the nails, your gods have not a head at all. We are driven to the beasts,—those beasts which you attach to Liber, to Ceres, to the Celestial Mother. We are burnt in the flames; so are they in the 5 first state of the ore. We are condemned to the mines; and that is where your gods come from. We are banished to islands; very frequently a god of yours will be born or will die on an island.^a

nasci aut mori. Si per haec constat divinitas aliqua, ergo qui puniuntur, consecrantur, et numina erunt
 6 dicenda supplicia. Sed plane non sentiunt has iniurias et contumelias fabricationis suae dei vestri, sicut nec obsequia. O impiae voces, o sacrilega convicia! Infrendite, inspumate! Idem estis qui Senecam aliquem pluribus et amarioribus de vestra super-
 7 stitione perorantem reprehendistis. Igitur si statuas et imagines frigidas mortuorum suorum simillimas non adoramus, quas milvi et mures et araneae intellegunt, nonne laudem magis quam poenam merebatur repudium agniti erroris? Possumus enim videri laedere eos quos certi sumus omnino non esse? Quod non est, nihil ab ullo patitur, quia non est.

1 XIII. Sed nobis dei sunt, inquis. Et quomodo vos e contrario impii et sacrilegi et inreligiosi erga deos vestros deprehendimini, qui, quos praesumitis esse, neglegitis, quos timetis, destruitis, quos
 2 etiam vindicatis, inluditis? Recognoscite si mentior. Primo quidem, cum alii alios colitis, utique quos non colitis, offenditis. Praelatio alterius sine alterius contumelia non potest procedere, quia nec electio
 3 sine reprobatione. Iam ergo contemnitis quos reprobatis, quos reprobando offendere non timetis. Nam, ut

^a Possibly the *O* clauses are to be taken as exclamations of the heathen reader. For *aliquis* cf. ch. 50. 5 "*aliqua Carthaginis conditrix*." But was Seneca blamed for his book *De Superstitione* (quotations in Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, vi. 10)? Contrast ch. 46. 4.

If this is the way to deity, then those whom you punish are being deified; punishment and apotheosis will be the same thing. But then, obviously, your
 6 gods do not feel these injuries and insults involved in their fabrication—nor your adoration either! Oh, impious words. O profane abuse! Grind your teeth, vent your spittle! Yes, you are the same people, who blamed a Seneca, when at greater length and with words more bitter he declaimed on your superstitions.^a So, if we do not adore statues and
 7 images, cold as their own dead men, and just like them,—statues which the kites, the mice, the spiders^b quite comprehend—should not praise rather than punishment have been the reward for repudiating recognized error? For can we really be supposed to injure those who we are certain do not exist at all? What is non-existent suffers no injury from anybody, because it does not exist.

XIII. "But for us they are gods," you say. Then 1 I retort your charge, and ask how is it that you are found to be impious, sacrilegious, irreligious towards your gods—in that those whom you presume to be gods you neglect; whom you fear, you destroy; whom you actually champion, you mock? Look to it, if I lie. First, then, when some of you worship one lot 2 of gods and another group others, why, surely those whom you do not worship you offend. There cannot be preference of the one without slight to the other; there is no choice without rejection. So you really 3 despise those whom you reject—whom you are not afraid to offend by rejecting them. For, as we noted

^b The spiders weave their webs over the idols as over other objects, and the birds foul them; they at least recognize what they are.

supra praestrinximus, status dei cuiusque in senatus aestimatione pendebat. Deus non erat quem homo
 4 consultus nolisset et nolendo damnasset. Domesticos deos, quos Lares dicitis, domestica potestate tractatis pignerando, venditando, demutando aliquando in caccabulum de Saturno, aliquando in trullam de Minerva, ut quisque contritus atque contusus est, dum diu colitur, ut quisque dominus sanctiorem
 5 expertus est domesticam necessitatem. Publicos aequae publico iure foedatis, quos in hastario vectigales habetis. Sic Capitolium, sic olitorium forum petitur; sub eadem voce praeconis, sub eadem hasta, sub eadem adnotatione quaestoris divinitas addicta con-
 6 ducitur. Sed enim agri tributo onusti viliores, hominum capita stipendio censa ignobiliora (nam haec sunt notae captivitatis), dei vero qui magis tributarii, magis sancti, immo qui magis sancti, magis tributarii. Maiestas quaestuarium efficitur. Circuit cauponas religio mendicans. Exigitis mercedem pro solo templi, pro aditu sacri. Non licet deos gratis nosse; venales sunt.

7 Quid omnino ad honorandos eos facitis quod non etiam mortuis vestris conferatis? Aedes proinde, aras proinde. Idem habitus et insignia in statuistis.

^a So the translators generally take it; but he may mean more precisely the lawyer, whose opinion is sought, rather than the senator who with his colleagues is consulted in the Senate. The emphasis is on *homo*.

^b The dictionaries and the translators take *hastarium* to be an auction catalogue; Oehler cites authority for its use for the *place* where the auction is held; which is probably the sense here. The *hasta* is the sign of an auction.

^c The Mother of the gods paid tribute to the Emperor, so Theophilus, i. 10; and we learn that the same was true of other gods. It seems as if the collection of this tribute (as of other tributes, e.g. harbour-dues), was put up to auction.

before, the status of each god depended on the estimate of him made by the Senate. He was not a god, whom man on consultation ^a had not wished, and by not wishing had condemned. Gods of the house, 4 whom you call *lares*, you deal with according to your household rights—pledging them, selling them, transforming them at times—making a cooking-pot of Saturn, a wash basin of Minerva, as each might be worn down and knocked about in the course of long worship—or as any particular owner might find domestic necessity more sacred. Public gods you 5 dishonour equally under public law, as you make them yield you revenue at auction.^b Whether it is to the Capitol you go or the vegetable market, it is all one; the same tones of the auctioneer, the same spear, the same registration by the quaestor; and deity is knocked down to the highest bidder, and leased out. But lands subject to tribute go cheaper; 6 persons assessed under the poll-tax are less noble; for these are the marks of servitude. But gods are more sacred the more tribute they pay; indeed, the more sacred they are, the bigger the tribute. Their majesty is made money-making. Religion goes round the cookshops begging. You exact a price for the ground one stands on in a temple, for the approach to the holy rite; one may not know the gods for nothing; they are for sale.^c

What at all do you do to honour them, that you 7 do not bestow on your dead also? Temples alike; altars alike. The same garb, the same emblems on

Fees for initiation are mentioned by Apuleius, *Met.* xi. 23. 28; cf. Tertullian, *Ad Nationes*, i. 10. The apologists point out that no charge is made for the Christian sacraments. The begging priests of Cybele are familiar.

Ut aetas, ut ars, ut negotium mortui fuit, ita deus est. Quo differt ab epulo Iovis silicernium? a simpulo obba? ab haruspice pollinator? Nam et haruspex mortuis apparet.

8 Sed digne imperatoribus defunctis honorem divinitatis dicatis, quibus et viventibus eum addicatis. Accepto ferent dei vestri, immo gratulabuntur, quod pares eis fiant domini sui. Sed cum Larentinam
9 publicum scortum, velim saltem Laidem aut Phrynen, inter Iunones et Cereres et Dianas adoretis, cum Simonem Magum statua et inscriptione Sancti Dei inauguratis, cum de paedagogiis aulicis nescio quem synodi¹ deum facitis, licet non nobiliores dei veteres tamen contumeliam a vobis deputabunt hoc et aliis licuisse quod solis antiquitas contulit.

1 XIV. Nolo² et ritus vestros recensere: non dico quales sitis in sacrificando, cum enecta et tabidosa et scabiosa quaeque mactatis, cum de opimis et integris supervacua quaeque truncatis, capitula et ungulas, quae domi quoque pueris vel canibus destinassetis, cum de decima Herculis nec tertiam partem in aram

¹ Some of the editors wish to emend this to cinaedum, which Kellner accepts: Oehler defends the text.

² v.l. volo: nolo is a correction which seems justified by the abrupt transition to literature, and the negative, non dico.

^a Livy, i. 4. 7 "sunt qui Larentiam (foster mother of Romulus and Remus) vulgato corpore lupam inter pastores vocatam putent." Ovid, *Pasti*, iii. 55-57, connects her with the Larentalia. Cf. Gellius, *Noct. Att.* vii. 7. 5, who says she left her money to Romulus, and because of that a public sacrifice is offered to her by the *flamen Quirinalis*.

^b The famous if ill-founded story of the deification of Simon Magus. The altar was found after the Renaissance; it belongs not to Simon, but to a Sabine god, Semo Sancus.

the statues. The age, the art, the business of the dead man—and the god the same. What is the difference between the feast of Jove and the funeral feast? Between the sacrificial bowl and the cup of libation to the dead? Between the priestly inspector of entrails and the washer of corpses? For the former attends on the dead.

Still, it is quite proper for you to bestow the honour 8 of deity on dead emperors, when you make it theirs while alive. The gods will take it kindly—they will congratulate themselves—that their masters are put on a level with them. But when you adore Larentina,^a 9 the public harlot (I could wish it had at least been Lais or Phryne!) among the Junos, the Cereses and Dianas; when you establish Simon Magus with a statue and the inscription "Holy God"^b; when from among the pages of the imperial court you make some lad a god of the Sacred Synod^c;—well, though the old gods were no nobler themselves, still they will count it insolence from you, that the privilege which antiquity gave to them alone, is open to others.

XIV. I am unwilling to review your rituals. I 1 say nothing of your ways as to sacrifice, in offering the worn out, the decaying, the scabrous; nor how you lop from the choice and sound all that is useless,—heads and hoofs,—which at home you would have destined for the slaves and the dogs; nor of the tithe of Hercules,^d of which you do not put one third

^c For the story of Antinous see B. W. Henderson, *Emperor Hadrian*, pp. 130-134; Pausanias, viii. 9. 7-8.

^d It was a common practice to vow a tenth to Hercules, if one should have real good luck; cf. Cicero, *De Nat. Deorum*, iii. 36. 88; Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, iii. 12. 2; Plautus, *Truculentus*, ii. vii. 11, and others of his plays.

eius inponitis. Laudabo magis sapientiam, quod de perditō aliquid eripitis.¹

- 2 Sed conversus ad litteras vestras, quibus informamini ad prudentiam et liberalia officia, quanta invenio ludibria! deos inter se propter Troianos et Achivos ut gladiatorum paria congressos depugnasse, Venerem humana sagitta sauciatam, quod filium suum Aenean paene interfectum ab eodem Diomede rapere vellet,
- 3 Martem tredecim mensibus in vinculis paene consumptum, Iovem, ne eandem vim a ceteris caelitibus experiretur, opera cuiusdam monstri liberatum, et nunc flentem Sarpedonis casum, nunc foede subantem in sororem sub commemoratione non ita dilecturam
- 4 iampridem amicarum. Exinde quis non poeta ex auctoritate principis sui dedecorator invenitur deorum? Hic Apollinem Admeto regi pascendis pecoribus addicit, ille Neptuni structorias operas Laomedonti
- 5 locat. Est et ille de lyricis (Pindarum dico) qui Aesculapium canit avaritiae merito, quia medicinam nocenter exercebat, fulmine iudicatum. Malus Iuppiter, si fulmen illius est, impius in nepotem, invidus in artificem. Haec neque vera prodi neque falsa con-
- 6 fingi apud religiosissimos oportebat. Nec tragici quidem aut comici parcunt, ut non aerumnas vel
- 7 errores domus alicuius dei praefentur. Taceo de philosophis, Socrate contentus, qui in contumeliam

¹ Here I have slightly altered Oehler's punctuation to make a new sentence and a new paragraph.

^a These stories will be found in the *Iliad*, and some in the *Aeneid* as well.

^b Euripides, *Alcestis*, prologue.

^c Homer, *Iliad*, xxi. 443.

^d Pindar, *Pythian* 3. 54 ff.

on his altar. I would rather praise your wisdom in salving something out of the loss!

But I turn to your literature, by which you are 2 trained in wisdom and the liberal arts; and what absurdities I find! I read how the gods on account of Trojans and Achaeans fell to it and fought it out themselves like so many pairs of gladiators; how Venus was wounded by a man's arrow, because she wished to snatch away her son Aeneas, who was all but killed by that same Diomedes; how Mars 3 was almost done to death by thirteen months in fetters; how Jove, to escape similar outrage from the rest of the celestials, was liberated by a certain monster's aid; how now he wept Sarpedon's fall, and now he shamefully craved his sister's embraces, recounting to her all the former doxies he had never loved so much!^a And thereafter which of the poets 4 is not to be found following the pattern of his great original and dishonouring the gods? This poet binds over Apollo to King Admetus to feed his flocks^b; the other leases Neptune's services as builder to Laomedon.^c And then there is one of the lyric poets (I mean Pindar) who sings how Aesculapius on the score of his avarice, because he made improper use of his healing skill, was punished by a thunderbolt.^d Jupiter was evil, if that thunderbolt was his—without proper affection for his grandson, envious of the artist. If these tales were true, they ought not to be pub- 5 lished, if false they should not be invented, among people so very religious. Neither tragic nor comic 6 poets spare them, but must needs find their plots in the sorrows or blunders that befall in some god's house or other.

I say nothing of the philosophers; Socrates 7

deorum quercum et hircum et canem deierabat. Sed propterea damnatus est Socrates, quia deos destruebat. Plane olim, id est semper, veritas odio est. Tamen cum paenitentia sententiae Athenienses
8 et criminatores Socratis postea affligerint et imaginem eius auream in templo collocarint, rescissa damnatio testimonium Socrati reddidit. Sed et Diogenes nescio quid in Herculem ludit, et Romanus Cynicus Varro trecentos Ioves, sive Iupitros dicendos, sine capitibus introducit.

- 1 XV. Cetera lasciviae ingenia etiam voluptatibus vestris per deorum dedecus operantur. Dispicite Lentulorum et Hostiliorum venustates, utrum mimos an deos vestros in iocis et strophis rideatis : moechum Anubin, et masculum Lunam, et Dianam flagellatam, et Iovis mortui testamentum recitatum, et tres
2 Hercules famelicos inrisos. Sed et histrionum litterae omnem foeditatem eorum designant. Luget Sol filium de caelo iactatum laetantibus vobis, et Cybele pastorum suspirat fastidiosum non erubescitibus vobis, et sustinetis Iovis elogia cantari, et Iunonem, Venerem, Minervam a pastore iudicari.
3 Ipsum quod imago dei vestri ignominiosum caput et famosum vestit, quod corpus inpurum et ad istam

^a A tale in Diogenes Laertius (ii. 5. 23, 43), but there it is a brazen statue.

^b Tertullian can hardly be quoting Lucian, Diog. Laert. vi. 2. 12, 80, says Diogenes wrote seven tragedies, one entitled *Herakles*.

^c Varro's researches into old Italian religion proved a gold-mine to the apologists, and especially to St. Augustine. Servius on *Aeneid*, xi. 785-788, speaks of Varro as "ubique expugnator religionis."

serves my need, who to mock the gods would swear by the oak, the goat and the dog. But Socrates was condemned, because he was destroying the gods. Quite clearly of old—that means always—truth is hated. Yet, when, in regret for their decision, the
8 Athenians later on punished his accusers and put a golden image of him in the temple, the cancelling of his condemnation was a testimony to Socrates.^a Yes, and Diogenes too has his jest at Hercules^b; and the Roman cynic, Varro, introduces three hundred Joves (or ought one to say Jupiters?) without heads.^c

XV. And all the other wanton men of genius to 1 promote your pleasures do dishonour to the gods. Look at the pretty trifles of a Lentulus or a Hostilius^d —is it your actors or your gods that make you laugh with their jokes and tricks? Think of "Anubis the Adulterer," "The Gentleman Moon," "Diana Lashed,"^e and the reading of "The Will of the late Jove, deceased," and the mockery of "Three hungry Herculeses." But the literature of the stage 2 too attributes every foulness to the gods. The Sun laments his son hurled from the sky^f—to your delight. Cybele sighs for her proud shepherd—and you don't blush. You suffer a song to be sung of the ill-deeds of Jove^g; you let Juno, Venus, Minerva submit to a shepherd's award. What again does it mean 3 that the likeness of your god covers the shameful and infamous head of an actor^h? that a vile body, cas-

^a These names are otherwise unknown; but cf. Ovid, *Tristia*, ii. 497 "quodsi scripsissem mimos obscaena iocantes."

^b Cf. *Iliad*, xxi. 489.

^c Phaëthon.

^d *Elogium* in law is a judicial abstract of offences charged or proved against a prisoner.

^e The actor wears a mask which portrays a god.

artem effeminatione productum Minervam aliquam vel Herculem repraesentat, nonne violatur maiestas et divinitas constupratur laudantibus vobis?

4 Plane religiosiores estis in cavea, ubi super sanguinem humanum, super inquinamenta poenarum proinde saltant dei vestri argumenta et historias noxiis ministrantes, nisi quod et ipsos deos vestros
5 saepe noxii induunt. Vidimus aliquando castratum Attin, illum deum ex Pessinunte, et qui vivus ardebat, Herculem induerat. Risimus et inter ludicras meridianorum crudelitates Mercurium mortuos cauterio examinantem, vidimus et Iovis fratrem gladiatorum
6 cadavera cum malleo deducentem. Singula ista quaeque adhuc investigare quis posset? Si honorem inquietant divinitatis, si maiestatis vestigia obsoletant, de contemptu utique censentur tam eorum qui eiusmodi factitant quam eorum quibus factitant.

7 Sed ludicra ista sint. Ceterum si adiciam, quae non minus conscientiae omnium recognoscent, in templis adulteria componi, inter aras lenocinia tractari, in ipsis plerumque aeditiuorum et sacerdotum tabernaculis sub isdem vittis et apicibus et purpuris thure flagrante libidinem expungi, nescio, ne plus de vobis

^a The repeated *vidimus*, the *risimus*, taken with *de vestris sumus* (ch. 18. 4), and with the *malo non implere quam meminisse* (*De spectaculis*, 19), are illuminative references to the days of Tertullian before his conversion. The reader of Apuleius, *Golden Ass*, will not be surprised at these scenes of theatre and amphitheatre; he does not mean that the things were simulated, but actually done before the audience. Cf. Clement of Rome, i. 6. 2 *Δαναῖδες καὶ Ἀλκίμαρα δεινὰ καὶ ἀνθρώπων παθοῦσαι*. (Wordsworth's clever emendation *πένδυες παιδοῦσαι* does not explain the corruption, if it is one and scholars now reject the correction. But, while the text may be right, it is a little too vivid for Clement's usual style

trated for the art of the theatre, represents some Minerva or Hercules? Is not their majesty violated, their deity defiled, by your plaudits?

But you really are still more religious in the amphitheatre, where over human blood, over the dirt of pollution of capital punishment, your gods dance, supplying plots and themes for the guilty—unless it is that often the guilty play the parts of the gods. We have seen^a at one time or other Atys, that god from Pessinus, being castrated; and a man, who was being burned alive, had been rigged out as Hercules. We have laughed, amid the noon's blend of cruelty and absurdity,^b at Mercury using his burning iron to see who was dead. We have seen Jove's brother,^c too, hauling out the corpses of gladiators, hammer in hand. And all the details⁶ of it, who could inquire into them? If they overturn the honour of deity, if they blot out every trace of majesty, it simply means the sheer contempt felt by those who do these things, and by those for whom they do them.

But suppose that is all play. Then if I add—and 7 the conscience of every man of you will recognize it as readily—if I add that in the temples adulteries are arranged, that between the altars the pander's trade is plied, that, quite commonly, in the very vestries of temple-keeper and priest, under those same holy fillets, crowns and purple garments, while the incense burns, lust is gratified—well, I do not know and the correction represents what the apologists constantly said in plain words. K. Lake in the Loeb *Apostolic Fathers* accepts neither text nor correction.)

^b We are told that at noon cheap pairs of gladiators without shield or helmet were set to kill each other.

^c i.e., Pluto.

dei vestri quam de Christianis querantur. Certe sacrilegi de vestris semper adprehenduntur. Christiani enim templa nec interdiu norunt; spoliarent forsitan ea et ipsi, si et ipsi ea adorarent.

8 Quid ergo colunt qui talia non colunt? Iam quidem intellegi subiacet veritatis esse cultores qui mendacii non sint, nec errare amplius in eo in quo errasse se recognoscendo cessaverunt. Hoc prius capite et omnem hinc sacramenti nostri ordinem haurite, reperiunt ante tamen opinionibus falsis.

1 XVI. Nam et, ut quidam, somniastis caput asinum esse deum nostrum. Hanc Cornelius Tacitus
2 suspicionem eiusmodi dei inservit. Is enim, in quinta historiarum suarum bellum Iudaicum exorsus ab origine gentis, etiam de ipsa tam origine quam de nomine et religione gentis quae voluit argumentatus Iudaeos refert Aegypto expeditos sive, ut putavit, extorres vastis Arabiae in locis aquarum egentissimis, cum siti macerarentur, onagris, qui forte de pastu potum petitori aestimabantur, indicibus fontis usos ob eam gratiam consimilis bestiae superficiem
3 consecrasset. Atque ita inde praesumptum opinor nos quoque ut Iudaicae religionis propinquos eidem simulacro initiari. At enim idem Cornelius Tacitus,

^a *i.e.*, let alone finding their way about them at night for purposes of theft.

^b Tacitus, *Histories*, v. 4, the wild ass tale; v. 9, Pompey's entrance into the temple, "inde volgatum nulla intus effigie vacuum sedem et inania arcana."

whether your gods may not have more complaints to make of you than of the Christians. Certainly the temple-robbers who are caught are always of your party. Christians have no knowledge of the temples even in the daytime ^a; perhaps they too would rob them, if they adored them.

Well, what *do* they worship, who don't worship 8 such things? Here you have it; it lies within easy reach of your understanding, that, since they are not worshippers of falsehood, they are worshippers of Truth; that they no longer continue in an error which they have recognized and so have abandoned. Get a hold of this point first, and then learn the whole system of our religion—but there are some false opinions about it that must first be cleared out of the way.

XVI. For, in fact, with other people, you have 1 dreamed that our God is an ass's head. This sort of notion Cornelius Tacitus introduced. For in the fifth 2 book of his *Histories* ^b he begins his account of the Jewish War with the origin of the race; and about that origin as about the name and religion of the race he discoursed as he pleased. He tells how the Jews, liberated from Egypt, or, as he thought, exiled, were in the wilderness of Arabia utterly barren of water; and how, dying of thirst, they saw wild asses, which chanced to be returning from their pasture (it was thought) to slake their thirst; how they used them as guides to a fountain, and out of gratitude consecrated the likeness of a beast of the kind. Thence came, I think, the assumption that 3 we too, standing so near Jewish religion, are devoted to worship of the same image. Yet this same Cornelius Tacitus—no, not Tacit, he, but a first

- sane ille mendaciorum loquacissimus, in eadem historia refert Gnaeum Pompeium, cum Hierusalem cepisset proptereaque templum adisset speculandis Iudaicae religionis arcanis, nullum illic reperisse simulacrum.
- 4 Et utique, si id colebatur quod aliqua effigie repraesentabatur, nusquam magis quam in sacrario suo exhiberetur, eo magis, quia nec verebatur extraneos arbitros, quamquam vana cultura. Solis enim sacerdotibus adire licitum; etiam conspectus ceterorum
- 5 velo oppanso interdicebatur. Vos tamen non negabitis et iumenta omnia et totos cantherios cum sua Epona coli a vobis. Hoc forsitan inprobamur, quod inter cultores omnium pecudum bestiarumque asinarii tantum sumus.
- 6 Sed et qui crucis nos religiosos putat, consecraneus erit noster. Cum lignum aliquod propitiatur, viderit habitus, cum materiae qualitas eadem sit, viderit forma, dum id ipsum dei corpus sit. Et tamen quanto distinguitur a crucis stipite Pallas Attica, et Ceres Pharia, quae sine effigie rudi palo et informi
- 7 ligno prostant? Pars crucis est omne robur quod erecta statione defigitur. Nos, si forte, integrum et totum deum colimus. Diximus originem deorum vestrorum a plastis de cruce induci. Sed et Victorias adoratis, cum in tropaeis cruces intestina sint tro-
- 8 paeorum. Religio Romanorum tota castrensis signa

^a *i.e.*, not the mere head, but the whole creature.

^b Epona, "the goddess of horseflesh," *cf.* Juvenal, vii. 157 "et facies olida ad praeseptia pictas"; Apuleius, *Met.* iii. 27.

^c See Sir James Frazer's note on Pausanias, i. 26. 6. The image was of wood and set up by the "aborigines," Plutarch says. Oehler identifies Ceres Pharia with Isis, but says there is no other evidence as to the rude image. Mayor cites Lucan, iii. 412-413 "simulacraque maesta deorum | arte

class chatterbox when it comes to lies!—in the same History tells how Cnaeus Pompey, on taking Jerusalem, visited the temple to look into the mysteries of Jewish religion, and found no image there. And 4 surely if the object of worship had been represented by any image, nowhere would it have been more likely to be seen than in its own shrine; all the more, because, however trivial the worship, there at least it feared no eyes from outside. For only the priests were allowed to enter; even to look in was made impossible for all others by a veil hung between. You, however, will 5 not deny that every kind of baggage cattle and whole donkeys ^a with their goddess Epona ^b are objects of your worship. Perhaps this is the real source of our bad name, that, among worshippers of every kind of beast and quadruped, we confine ourselves to the ass!

Yes, and the man who thinks we worship the cross, 6 will prove a fellow-worshipper of ours. For when a bit of wood is worshipped—what matters the shape, if the nature of the material is the same? what the form if it is itself the body of a god? Yet what distinction can you make between the shaft of a cross and Attic Pallas or Pharian Ceres, each of whom stands there unshaped, a rude pole, a log untrimmed? ^c Every balk of timber, which is set up erect, is a part of 7 a cross; we—perhaps—worship a god complete and whole. We have said that in the first instance your gods are moulded by the sculptors on a cross.^d But you also adore Victorias, and in all trophies the cross is the inner structure of the trophy. Roman religion, 8

carent caesisque exstant informia truncis" (the grove of the Druids).

^d See ch. 12. 8. He refers once more to the wooden structure on which the clay is modelled for the image.

veneratur, signa iurat, signa omnibus deis praeponit. Omnes illi imaginum suggestus in signis monilia crucum sunt; siphara illa vexillorum et cantabrorum stolae crucum sunt. Laudo diligentiam. Noluistis incultas et nudas cruces consecrare.

- 9 Alii plane humanius et verisimilius solem credunt deum nostrum. Ad Persas, si forte, deputabimur, licet solem non in linteo depictum adoremus, habentes
10 ipsum ubique in suo clypeo. Denique inde suspicio quod innotuerit nos ad orientis regionem precari. Sed et plerique vestrum adfectione aliquando et caelestia adorandi ad solis ortum labia vibratis.
11 Aequae si diem solis laetitiae indulgemus, alia longe ratione quam religione solis secundo loco ab eis sumus qui diem Saturni otio et victui decernunt exorbitantes et ipsi a Iudaico more, quem ignorant.
12 Sed nova iam dei nostri in ista proxima civitate editio publicata est, ex quo quidam frustrandis bestiis mercenarius noxius picturam proposuit cum eiusmodi inscriptione: DEUS CHRISTIANORUM ONOKOITHΣ.¹ Is erat auribus asininis, altero pede unguatus, librum

¹ Here I leave Oehler's text. The original word is very uncertain, it may have been bad Greek (risimus et nomen); manuscripts and editors have it in various shapes and restorations. The rendering is the nearest that translators have come to a meaning reconcilable with the general shape of the word (ὄνοκος). Oehler added a central η, reading ONOKOIHTHΣ, thinking it might be "priest of the ass," asinarius sacerdos; but after all it was a god.

^a This phrase can be also construed "among the Romans the whole of the soldier's religion is to venerate," etc. So Kellner.

^b Cf. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xiii. 3. (4.) 23, standards anointed on festal days; Dionys. Halic. vi. 45. § 2; Tac. *Ann.* i. 39. 7; ii. 17. 2 "propria legionum numina."

^c The argument, says Kellner, "ist für uns etwas gesucht."

every bit of it a religion of camps,^a venerates the standards, swears by the standards, sets the standards before all the gods.^b All those rows of images on the standards are but ornaments hung on crosses. Those hangings of your standards and banners are but robes upon crosses.^c I laud your thoughtfulness. You did not wish to consecrate crosses naked and unadorned.

Others again (it is really a more refined, a more probable idea) believe the sun to be our god. We shall be reckoned perhaps as Persians, though we do not adore the sun painted on a canvas, seeing we have the sun with us everywhere in his own orb.^d This 10 suspicion must be due to its becoming known that we turn to the East when we pray. But again a great many of you, in some make-believe of adoring now and then the heavenly bodies among other things, move your lips at sunrise. Equally, if we devote the 11 day of the sun (Sunday) to joy (from a very different cause than sun-worship) we stand next in line to those who devote Saturn's day to resting and eating, wide as they are from Jewish usage of which they know nothing.^e

But quite recently in this city a new representation 12 of our god has been displayed, since a certain person,^f a criminal hired to dodge wild beasts in the arena, exhibited a picture with this inscription: "The God of the Christians, ass-begotten." It had ass's ears; one foot was a hoof; it carried a book and wore a toga.

^d Mayor takes *clypeus* as the sun's disk; Kellner as its orbit.

^e Cf. Horace, *Sat.* i. 9. 69 "tricesima sabbata"; Ovid, *A.A.* i. 76; Juvenal, xiv. 96.

^f This person is described by Tertullian, *Ad Nationes*, i. 14, as "suae religionis desertor, solo detrimento cutis Iudaeus."

13 gestans et togatus. Risimus et nomen et formam. Sed illi debebant adorare statim biforme numen, qui et canino et leonino capite commixtos, et de capro et de ariete cornutos, et a lumbis hircos, et a cruribus serpentes, et planta vel tergo alites deos receperunt.

Haec ex abundanti, ne quid rumoris inrepercutsum quasi de conscientia praeterissemus. Quae omnia conversi iam ad demonstrationem religionis nostrae repurgavimus.

- 1 XVII. Quod colimus, deus unus est, qui totam molem istam cum omni instrumento elementorum, corporum, spirituum verbo quo iussit, ratione qua disposuit, virtute qua potuit, de nihilo expressit in ornamentum maiestatis suae, unde et Graeci nomen mundo κόσμον accommodaverunt. Invisibilis est,
- 2 etsi videatur; incomprehensibilis, etsi per gratiam repraesentetur; inaestimabilis, etsi humanis sensibus aestimetur. Ideo verus et tantus est. Ceterum quod videri communiter, quod comprehendere, quod aestimari potest, minus est et oculis quibus occupatur, et manibus quibus contaminatur, et sensibus quibus invenitur: quod vero immensum est, soli sibi notum
- 3 est. Hoc quod est, deum aestimari facit, dum aestimari non capit. Ita eum vis magnitudinis et notum hominibus obicit et ignotum. Et haec est summa delicti nolentium recognoscere quem ignorare non
- 4 possunt. Vultis ex operibus ipsius tot ac talibus, quibus continemur, quibus sustinemur, quibus oblectamur, etiam quibus exterremur, vultis ex animae

^a The Abbé deourcey renders it thus: "Rien ne donne une idée de Dieu plus magnifique que l'impossibilité de le concevoir."

We laughed at both the name and the shape. But 13 they at least ought at once to have adored a biform divinity, who have accepted gods with a dog's head or a lion's, gods with a goat's horns or a ram's, gods goat from the loins down, gods with serpents for legs, gods with wings on their feet or their backs.

All this, at unnecessary length—lest it should seem that, from conscious guilt, we had passed over any fragment of rumour unrebuted. All such tales, then, we have cleared off, and turn now to expound our religion.

XVII. What we worship is the One God; who 1 fashioned this whole fabric with all its equipment of elements, bodies, spirits; who by the word wherewith He commanded, by the reason wherewith He ordered it, by the might wherewith He could do it, fashioned it out of nothing, to the glory of His majesty. Hence the Greeks also have given to the universe the name *cosmos*, "order." He is invisible, though He is seen; 2 incomprehensible, though by grace revealed; beyond our conceiving, though conceived by human senses. So true is He and so great. But what in the ordinary sense can be seen, comprehended, conceived, is less than the eyes that grasp it, the hands that soil it, the senses that discover it. The infinite is known only to itself. Because this is so, it allows us to con- 3 ceive of God—though He is beyond our conceiving.^a The power of His greatness makes Him known to men, and unknown. And here is the sum total of their sin who will not recognize Him whom they cannot fail to know. Would you have us prove him to you 4 from His own works, in their multitude and character, those works that contain us, that sustain us, that delight us; yes! and affright us? Would you have

- ipsius testimonio conprobemus? Quae licet carcere
 5 corporis pressa, licet institutionibus pravis circumscripta, licet libidinibus et concupiscentiis evigorata, licet falsis deis exancillata, cum tamen respiscit, ut ex crapula, ut ex somno, ut ex aliqua valitudine, et sanitatem suam patitur, deum nominat, hoc solo, quia proprie verus hic unus. Deus bonus et magnus, et
 6 Quod deus dederit omnium vox est. Iudicem quoque contestatur illum Deus videt, et Deo commendo, et Deus mihi reddet. O testimonium animae naturaliter Christianae! Denique pronuntians haec non ad Capitolium, sed ad caelum respicit. Novit enim sedem dei vivi; ab illo, et inde descendit.
- 1 XVIII. Sed quo plenius et inpressius tam ipsum quam dispositiones eius et voluntates adiremus, adiecit instrumentum litteraturae, si qui velit de deo inquirere, et inquisito invenire, et invento credere, 2 et credito deservire. Viros enim iustitiae innocentia dignos deum nosse et ostendere a primordio in saeculum emisit spiritu divino inundatos, quo praedicarent deum unicum esse, qui universa condiderit, qui hominem de humo struxerit (hic enim est verus Prometheus), qui saeculum certis temporum dispositionibus et 3 exitibus ordinavit, exinde quae signa maiestatis suae iudicantis ediderit per imbres, per ignes, quas demerendo sibi disciplinas determinaverit, quae ignoratis

^a *patitur*, "experiences," like the Greek *πάσχει*, we are told by Rauschen; v.l. *potitur*.

^b Contrast the statement (and the mind) of his contemporary Pausanias who sees by a ravine's side two stones, each a cartload, clay-coloured but smelling very like the flesh of a man; and he is told that these stones are what was left of the clay out of which Prometheus moulded the race of man (Paus. x. 4. 4).

us prove Him to you from the witness of the human soul itself? Yes! the soul, be it cabined and 5 cribbed by the body, be it confined by evil nurture, be it robbed of its strength by lusts and desires, be it enslaved to false gods,—none the less, when it recovers its senses, as after surfeit, as after sleep, as after some illness, when it recaptures^a its proper health, the soul names God, and for this reason and no other, because, if language be used aright, He is the one true God. "Great God!" "Good God!" "Which may God give!" is the utterance of all men. That He is also Judge, is 6 shown by such utterance as: "God sees;" "I leave it to God;" "God will repay me." O the witness of the soul, in its very nature Christian! And then, as it says these words, it turns its gaze not to the Capitol, but to heaven. For it knows the abode of the living God; from Him and from heaven it came.

XVIII. But that more fully and more firmly we 1 might approach God Himself and His thoughts and His will, He has given us the help of books, that who will, may inquire regarding God, on inquiring may find Him, on finding Him may believe, on believing may serve Him. Men worthy in their 2 stainless righteousness to know God and to show God, from the very beginning He sent into the world, steeped in the Holy Spirit, to proclaim that He alone is God, Who made the universe, Who fashioned man of mud—(for He is your true Prometheus!^b)—Who ordained the course of the world, appointing the seasons, the one to follow the other; to tell us, moreover, what 3 proofs in flood and in fire He has displayed of His avenging Majesty; what laws of life He has appointed whereby we may please him; what requital He has

et desertis et observatis his praemia destinavit, ut qui producto aevo isto iudicaturus sit suos cultores in vitae aeternae retributionem, profanos in ignem aequae perpetem et iugem, suscitatis omnibus ab initio defunctis et reformatis et recensitis ad utriusque meriti disputationem.

- 4 Haec et nos risimus aliquando. De vestris sumus. Fiunt, non nascuntur Christiani.
- 5 Quos diximus praedicatores, prophetae de officio praefandi vocantur. Voces eorum itemque virtutes quas ad fidem divinitatis edebant, in thesauris litterarum manent, nec istae latent. Ptolemaeorum eruditissimus, quem Philadelphum supernominant, et omnis litteraturae sagacissimus, cum studio bibliothecarum Pisistratum, opinor, aemularetur, inter cetera memoriarum, quibus aut vetustas aut curiositas aliqua ad famam patrocinebatur, ex suggestu Demetri Phalerei grammaticorum tunc probatissimi, cui praefecturam mandaverat, libros a Iudaeis quoque postulavit, proprias atque vernaculas litteras, quas soli habebant.
- 6 Ex ipsis enim et ad ipsos semper prophetae peroraverant, scilicet ad domesticam dei gentem ex patrum gratia. Hebraei retro qui nunc Iudaei. Igitur et
- 7 litterae Hebraeae et eloquium. Sed ne notitia vacaret, hoc quoque a Iudaeis Ptolemaeo subscriptum est septuaginta et duobus interpretibus indultis, quos

^a Often taken as "deeds of power," *δυνάμεις* in Justin, miracles.

^b Ptolemy II. Philadelphus, the founder of the famous Alexandrian library and museum, king 283-245 B.C., for whom see E. R. Bevan, *A History of Egypt under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, ch. 3 (p. 112 for the Septuagint.) For the library cf. Ammianus Marcellinus, xxii. 16, §§ 12-13.

^c Cf. Josephus, *Ant. Jud.* xii. 2. 12.

determined for ignorance of those laws, for breaking or keeping them; seeing that, when this age reaches its full end, He will sit as Judge, and His worshippers He will repay with life eternal, and the profane He will condemn to fire as perpetual and unceasing; for the dead, every man of them from the beginning, shall be raised, refashioned and reviewed, that their deserts of either kind, good or evil, may be adjudged.

Yes! we too in our day laughed at this. We are 4 from among yourselves. Christians are made, not born!

These messengers of God, whom we mentioned, 5 are called prophets from the function of prediction. Their voices, their virtues ^a—all directed to promote faith in Godhead—are still in the treasure-house of letters, which are no secret. The most learned of the Ptolemies, whom they surname Philadelphus, ^b most acute in all literature, the rival (I would say) of Pisistratus in love of libraries, in addition to the other documents which age or art recommended to fame (it was Demetrius of Phalerum that gave him the hint, of all scholars of that day most expert, chief librarian of the King)—Ptolemy, then, asked the Jews also for their books, their own literature in their own tongue, which they alone possessed. Of the 6 Jews had the prophets come; to the Jews had the prophets ever preached as to the race and household of God, in accordance with the grace shown to their fathers. Hebrews of old they were, who now are Jews; so the books are called Hebrew and the language. But that understanding of their books 7 might not be wanting, the concession was made to Ptolemy by the Jews, and seventy-two interpreters were given to him—men, whom Menedemus, ^c him-

Menedemus quoque philosophus, providentiae vindex,
 8 de sententiae communione suscepit. Adfirmavit haec
 vobis etiam Aristaeus. Ita in Graecum stilum ex aperta
 monumenta reliquit. Hodie apud Serapeum Ptole-
 maei bibliothecae cum ipsis Hebraicis litteris ex-
 hibentur. Sed et Iudaei palam lectitant. Vectigalis
 libertas; vulgo aditur sabbatis omnibus. Qui
 audierit, inveniet deum; qui etiam studuerit intel-
 legere, cogetur et credere.

1 XIX. Primam instrumentis istis auctoritatem sum-
 ma antiquitas vindicat. Apud vos quoque religionis
 est instar, fidem de temporibus adserere. [Auctori-
 tatem litteris praestat antiquitas summa. Primus
 enim propheta Moyses, qui mundi conditionem et
 generis humani pullulationem et mox ultricem iniqui-
 tatis illius aevi vim cataclysmi de praeterito exorsus
 est, per vaticinationem usque ad suam aetatem et
 deinceps per res suas futurorum imagines edidit,
 penes quem et temporum ordo digestus ab initio
 supputationem saeculi praestitit. Superior invenitur
 annis circiter trecentis quam ille antiquissimus penes
 vos Danaus in Argos transvenisset, Troiano denique

^a Aristaeus (Aristeas) was an official of Ptolemy Philadelphus, but the "letter" in which he tells the story and which is the source of Josephus and of Tertullian (directly or indirectly) is historically worthless. It is from this source that the very dubious connexion of Menedemus with the LXX comes. This man was a philosopher of the period who had many adventures; Diogenes Laertius and Athenaeus have a good many stories about him.

^b He is not precise as to Hebrew or Septuagint.

^c A very condensed phrase; the Jews paid a head-tax of two drachmas to Jupiter Capitolinus, and enjoyed the right of free worship in their synagogues. Dio Cassius, lvi. 7.

^d The bracketed passage is only found in one ms., the

self a philosopher, champion of belief in Providence, esteemed for their sharing this dogma with him. Aristaeus^a has told you the story, too. So he left the 8 records open to all in Greek. To this day in the temple of Serapis, Ptolemy's library is displayed together with the Hebrew originals. Why, yes! and the Jews openly read the books.^b They have that freedom in return for a tribute.^c Every Sabbath day there is common access to those books. He who will hear, will find God; he who will take the pains to understand, will find himself compelled to believe.

XIX. Supreme antiquity, then, claims for these 1 books the highest authority. And among *you* it is almost a superstition to make credit depend on time elapsed.

^d [Extreme antiquity gives books authority. For Moses was the first prophet. He began in the past with foundation of the world, the production of mankind, and later on the mighty cataclysm that avenged the iniquity of that age; by prophecy down to his own day and thereafter, in his own story he gave pictures of things yet to be. In his book the sequence of events set in order from the beginning has permitted the computation of the world's age. Moses then is discovered to have lived about three hundred years before your most ancient man Danaus had crossed to Argos; that means, he is about a thousand years earlier than the Trojan war, and

Codex Fuldensis. It is accepted as genuine by Harnack and Schanz; rejected by Rauschen. It looks like an alternative draft; and the *Ad Nationes* is a standing witness that Tertullian re-handled his matter. The reader will feel that the second draft is far the more vigorous.

proelio ad mille annos ante est, unde et ipso Saturno. Secundum enim historiam Thalli, qua relatum est Belum¹ Assyriorum et Saturnum Titanorum regem cum Iove dimicasse, ostenditur bellum cccxx et duobus annis Iliacum exitum antecessisse. Per hunc Moysen etiam illa lex propria Iudaeis a deo missa est. Deinceps multa et alii prophetae vetustiores litteris vestris. Nam et qui ultimo cecinit, aut aliquantulo praecurrit aut certe concurrit aetate sapientiae auctoribus, etiam latoribus legis. Cyri enim et Darii regno fuit Zacharias, quo in tempore Thales, physicorum princeps, sciscitanti Croeso nihil certum de divinitate respondit, turbatus scilicet vocibus prophetarum. Solon eidem regi finem longae vitae intuendum praedicavit non aliter quam prophetae. Adeo respici potest tam iura vestra quam studia de lege deque divina doctrina concepisse. Quod prius est, hoc sit semen necesse est. Inde quaedam nobiscum vel prope nos habetis. De sophia amor eius philosophia vocitatus est, de prophetia affectatio eius poeticam vaticinationem deputavit. Gloriae homines si quid invenerant, ut proprium facerent, adulteraverunt. Etiam fructibus a semine degenerare contigit. Multis adhuc de vetustate modis consisterem divinarum litterarum, si non maior auctoritas illis ad fidem de veritatis suae viribus quam de aetatis annalibus suppetisset. Quid enim potentius patro-

¹ Oehler prints bellum.

* Thallus appears to have been a Samaritan, a freedman of the Emperor Tiberius, and author of a Chronicle in three books.

^b Cf. Zechariah i. 1, "In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah." Cf. dated passages in Haggai i. 1, and ii. 1.

consequently earlier than Saturn himself. For according to the history of Thallus,^a in which is narrated the war which Belus, king of the Assyrians and Saturn, king of the Titans, waged with Jove, it is shown that this war was 322 years before the fall of Troy. It was by this Moses too that their peculiar Law was sent to the Jews by God. Much follows; and other prophets older than your literature. For the very last who sang was either a little antecedent to your sages and your legislators, or at any rate of the same period. For Zacharias lived in the reign of Cyrus and Darius,^b at the very time when Thales, chief of the philosophers who wrote of Nature, could give no certain answer to Croesus's inquiry as to deity—perplexed, I suppose, by the words of the prophets. Solon told the same king that the end of a long life must be seen^c—much as the prophets did. So it can be seen that your laws and your studies alike were fertilized from the [Hebrew] law and teaching of God; the earlier must be the seed. Hence you have some tenets in common with us, or very near us. From *sophia* men call the love of wisdom philosophy; from prophecy comes, by emulation of it, poetic "vaticination."^d Anything glorious that men found, they must, to make it their own, spoil it. Even crops degenerate from their seed. In many ways I must maintain the antiquity of the divine library, did it not derive more authority to win credence from its own force of truth than from any annals of a former day. What can more powerfully sustain the testimony of

^a Herodotus i. 32.

^d *Vates* is bard and prophet, a familiar word in Horace, *vatis amici, vatis Horati* (*Odes* ii. 6. 24; iv. 6. 44), and in Virgil. And see the end of this bracketed passage.

cinabitur testimonio earum, nisi dispunctio cotidiana saeculi totius, cum dispositiones regnorum, cum casus urbium, cum exitus gentium, cum status temporum ita omnibus respondent, quemadmodum ante milia annorum praeuntiabantur? Unde et spes nostra, quam ridetis, animatur, et fiducia, quam praesumptionem vocatis, corroboratur. Idonea est enim recognitio praeteritorum ad disponendam fiduciam futurorum. Eadem voces praedicaverunt utramque partem, eadem¹ litterae notaverunt. Unum est tempus apud illas quod apud nos separari videtur. Ita omnia quae supersunt improbata, *probata* sunt nobis, quia cum illis quae probata sunt tunc futuris praedicabantur. Habetis, quod sciam, et vos Sibyllam, quatinus appellatio ista verae vatis dei veri passim super ceteros qui vaticinari videbantur usurpata est. Sunt vestrae Sibyllae nomen de veritate mentitae, quemadmodum et dei vestri.]

2 Omnes itaque substantias omnesque materias, origines, ordines, venas veterani cuiusque stili vestri, gentes etiam plerasque et urbes insignes historiarum et canas memoriarum, ipsas denique effigies litterarum, indices custodesque rerum et (puto adhuc minus dicimus) ipsos inquam deos vestros, ipsa templa et oracula et sacra unius interim prophetae scrinium saeculis vincit, in quo videtur thesaurus collocatus totius Iudaici sacramenti et inde iam

¹ *Oehler prints eadem in both places, but the correction given above seems to be generally accepted and to be necessary. It is confirmed by the equivalent passage in 20. 4.*

^a Perhaps "the exact dates."

^b *i.e.*, there are false Sibyls just as there are false gods. There is a large collection of Sibylline oracles, in Greek hexameter verse, of more or less Jewish origin and a monotheistic tinge. (Edition by A. Rzach, 1891.) There is

that library than its daily fulfilment all the world over, when the disposal of kingdoms, the fall of cities, the fate of nations, the posture of the times,^a answer so exactly in every particular to what was foretold thousands of years ago? It is from that fact that our hope (which you mock) draws animation, our faith (which you call presumption) corroboration. Recognition of what has come to pass may properly dispose to belief in what is yet to be. The same voices have foretold both alike; the same books have recorded both. Time, which seems to us to be two-fold (past and present), in those books is one. So all that remains over unproved, is for us proved, because it was foretold along with what is already proved but then was yet to be. You, too, I think, have a Sibyl—since this name belonging to a true prophetess of the true God has been very widely used to cover those who seemed to prophesy. Your Sibyls have turned the name from true to false, just as your gods have done.^b

So all the subject matter, all the material, all the 2 origins, chronologies, sources, of every ancient pen you know—yes, and most of your races, your cities, famous in history, hoary of memory^c—nay, the very shapes of your letters, those witnesses and guardians of the past—and (for I seem to be understating things), I say, add your very gods, temples, oracles, rituals and all—the book of a single prophet notwithstanding beats them all, with centuries to spare,—that book in which is seen summed up the treasure of the whole Jewish religion, and in con-

irony in *habetis et vos*, as if the heathen Sibyl were a copy. The fact, however, was the other way.

^c *Cf. μάθημα χρόνω πολύν, Plato, Timaeus, 22 B.*

3 nostri. Si quem audistis interim Moysen, Argivo
 Inacho pariter actate est. Quadringentis paene annis
 (nam et septem minus) Danaum, et ipsum apud vos
 vetustissimum, praevenit, mille circiter cladem Priami
 antecedit, possem etiam dicere quingentis amplius et
 4 Homerum, habens quos sequar. Ceteri quoque pro-
 phetae etsi Moysi postulant, extremissimi tamen
 eorum non retrosiores reprehenduntur primoribus ves-
 5 tris sapientibus et legiferis et historicis. Haec quibus
 ordinibus probari possint non tam difficile est nobis
 exponere quam enorme, nec arduum, sed interim
 longum. Multis instrumentis cum digitorum sup-
 putariis gesticulis adsidendum est. Reseranda anti-
 quissimarum etiam gentium archiva, Aegyptiorum,
 6 Chaldaeorum, Phoenicum. Advocandi muncipes
 eorum per quos notitia subministrata est, aliqui
 Manethon Aegyptius et Berosus Chaldaeus, sed et
 Hieromus Phoenix, Tyri rex, sectatores quoque ipso-
 rum Mendesius Ptolemaeus et Menander Ephesius et
 Demetrius Phalereus et rex Iuba et Apion et Thallus
 et si quis istos aut probat aut revincit; Iudaeus
 Iosephus, antiquitatum Iudaicarum vernaculus vindex;
 7 Graecorum etiam censuales conferendi, ut quae
 quando sint gesta aut concatenationes temporum
 aperiantur, per quae luceant annalium numeri;
 peregrinandum est in historias et litteras orbis. Et
 tamen quasi partem iam probationis intulimus, cum

^a The man against whom Josephus wrote.

^b Oehler says they are a whole horizon wide of the mark who take *si quis* to refer to Josephus, as he once did himself.

sequence of ours as well. If you chance, however, to 3
 have heard of one Moses, he is coeval with Argive
 Inachus, about four hundred years (to be exact, less
 seven) before Danaus who is *your* most ancient of
 men, a rough thousand years ahead of Priam's cala-
 mity. I might also say fifteen hundred years before
 Homer, with authority for saying so. Then the rest 4
 of the prophets—they, of course, come after Moses,
 but the very last of them are found not to be later
 than the early ones among your sages and lawgivers
 and historians. All this, the proofs of it in due 5
 order, it would not be difficult for us to set out in
 detail—not difficult so much as endless, not an
 arduous task, but for the moment too long. It
 would mean sitting down to a pile of books, with one's
 fingers busy in keeping the tally. We should have
 to unlock the archives of the most ancient races too
 —Egyptians, Chaldaeans, Phoenicians. We should 6
 have to summon their fellow-citizens through whom
 this knowledge is furnished to us—to wit, one Manetho
 an Egyptian, and Berosus a Chaldaean, and in addition
 Hieromus, a Phoenician and King of Tyre; add their
 followers Ptolemy of Mendes, Menander of Ephesus,
 Demetrius of Phalerum, King Juba, Apion,^a Thallus,
 and any other who confirms or refutes them.^b The
 Jew Josephus, native champion of Jewish Antiquities,
 must be consulted, and the Greek books of Origen, 7
 to reckon out when each set of events befel, to dis-
 close the concatenations of eras, to elucidate the
 figures in our annals. It would mean an excursion
 into the histories and literatures of the world. Still
 we have really already introduced a good part of the

Other editors correct *si quis* to *qui*, which is obvious enough, if it were not Tertullian writing.

8 per quae probari possint aspersimus. Verum differre praestat, vel ne minus persequamur festinando vel diutius evagemur persequendo.

1 XX. Plus iam offerimus pro ista dilatione maiestatem scripturarum, si non vetustate¹ divinas probamus, si dubitatur antiquitas. Nec hoc tardius aut aliunde discendum. Coram sunt quae docebunt, mundus et
2 saeculum et exitus. Quicquid agitur, praenuntiabatur; quicquid videtur, audiebatur. Quod terrae vorant urbes, quod insulas maria fraudant, quod externa atque interna bella dilaniant, quod regnis regna compulsant, quod fames et lues et locales quaeque clades et frequentiae plerumque mortium vastant, quod humiles sublimitate, sublimes humilitate mutantur, quod iustitia rarescit, iniquitas increbrescit, bonarum omnium disciplinarum cura torpescit, quod etiam officia temporum et elementorum munia exorbitant, quod et monstris et portentis naturalium forma turbatur, providenter scripta sunt. Dum patimur, leguntur; dum recognoscimus, probantur.
4 divinationis. Hinc igitur apud nos futurorum quoque fides tuta est, iam scilicet probatorum, quia cum illis, quae cotidie probantur, praedicebantur. Eaedem voces sonant, eadem litterae notant, idem spiritus pulsant, unum tempus est divinationi futura praefanti.

¹ Some editors print an emendation here—reading *vetustatem with a stop*. We should then translate “We offer the majesty of the scriptures if not their antiquity: we prove them divine, if we fail to prove them ancient.” It certainly heightens the antithesis.

^a I am inclined to take this advice, and refer the reader to the Classical dictionary. Manetho and Berossus, however, popularized in Greek what they thought desirable of

proof, when we have indicated how the proof can be established. Better postpone it!—lest in our haste we finish too little, or wander too long in finishing it.^a

XX. More than an equivalent we offer you in 1 return for postponement of proof—the majesty of the scriptures—if we do not prove them divine from their antiquity, if it is still a question whether they are ancient. There will be no delay about *this*, or reference to evidence from elsewhere; here, in our presence, are the things that will teach us—I mean, the world, all time, all history. Everything that 2 happens was foretold; everything now seen was of old heard. That the lands swallow up cities; that the seas steal islands; that wars without and wars within lacerate us; that kingdoms clash with kingdoms; that famine and plague, local disasters and wholesale death lay us waste; that the lowly are set on high, the high brought low; that justice grows 3 rare, iniquity lavish and to spare, good manners lack all care; that the seasons are out of gear and the functions of the elements astray; that the order of nature is perverted by monsters and portents—it was all foreseen, it was all written. While we suffer, it is all read in the book; the recognition is the proof of it. I opine that a fair proof of the divinity would be the truth of the divination! Hence, then, we have 4 a sure belief in what is yet to be—as proved already, in that it was predicted along with what every day is being proved. The same voices name it, the same books proclaim it; the same spirit impels them; time is *one* for divination foretelling what shall be.

Egyptian and Babylonian antiquities of religion. Modern scholars, judging them from their fragments, think poorly of their accuracy.

5 Apud homines, si forte, distinguitur, dum expungitur, dum ex futuro praesens, dehinc ex praesenti praeteritum deputatur. Quid delinquimus, oro vos, futura quoque credentes, qui iam didicimus illi per duos gradus credere ?

1 XXI. Sed quoniam edidimus antiquissimis Iudaeorum instrumentis sectam istam esse suffultam quam aliquanto novellam, ut Tiberiani temporis, plerique sciunt, profitentibus nobis quoque, fortasse an hoc nomine de statu eius retractetur, quasi sub umbraculo insignissimae religionis, certe licitae, aliquid propriae
2 praesumptionis abscondat, vel quia praeter aetatem neque de victus exceptionibus neque de solemnitatibus dierum neque de ipso signaculo corporis neque de consortio nominis cum Iudaeis agimus, quod
3 utique oporteret si eidem deo manciparemur. Sed et vulgus iam scit Christum ut hominum aliquem, qualem Iudaei iudicaverunt, quo facilius quis nos hominis cultores existimaverit. Verum neque de Christo erubescimus, cum sub nomine eius deputari et damnari iuvat, neque de deo aliter praesumimus. Necesse est igitur pauca de Christo ut deo.

4 Dudum Iudaeis erat apud deum gratia ubi et insignis iustitia et fides originalium auctorum ; unde illis et generis magnitudo et regni sublimitas floruit et tanta felicitas, ut de dei vocibus, quibus edocentur, de promerendo deo et non offendendo prae-

^a Viz. present and past.

^b *Secta*, the common word for a philosophic school, is adopted by Tertullian to describe the Christian community united in thought learnt from a great Teacher.

^c i.e., circumcision.

Among men, perchance a distinction may be made 5 while fulfilment proceeds, while from being future it is reckoned present, and then, no longer present, is counted past. Where is our mistake, I beg of you, if we believe also in the future, who have already learnt through two stages ^a to believe in it ?

XXI. But now that we have stated that this school ^b 1 rests on the very ancient books of the Jews—this school which most people know to be rather modern, as dating from the reign of Tiberius,—a fact we ourselves admit—perhaps some question may be raised as to the standing of the school, on the ground that, under cover of a very famous religion (and one certainly permitted by law), the school insinuates quietly certain claims of its own ; because (waiving 2 all question as to age) as regards forbidden food, sacred days, the bodily “ seal,” ^c or common designation, we have nothing to do with the Jews, as should surely be the case, if we were servants of the same God. But by now even the common people know 3 the name of Christ, taking him to be some man (as the Jews also thought), so that it is easier for anybody to think of us as worshippers of a man. But we neither blush for Christ (for it is our delight to be reckoned under His name and under it to be condemned) nor do we differ in our idea of God [from the Jews]. We must then say a few words about Christ as God.

Of old the Jews had favour with God ; such was 4 the outstanding righteousness and faith of the original founders of their race ; and thence followed for them a nation's greatness, a kingdom's splendour, such prosperity (in short) that by God's own words (the source of their training) they were warned to

5 monerentur. Sed quanta deliquerint, fiducia patrum inflati ad declinandum, derivantes a disciplina in profanum modum, etsi ipsi non confiterentur, probaret exitus hodiernus ipsorum. Dispersi, palabundi, et soli et caeli sui extorres vagantur per orbem sine homine, sine deo rege, quibus nec advenarum iure terram patriam saltem vestigio salutare conceditur.

6 Cum haec illis sanctae voces praeminarentur, eadem semper omnes ingerebant fore uti sub extimis curriculum saeculi ex omni iam gente et populo et loco cultores sibi adlegeret deus multo fideliores in quos gratiam transferret, plenior quidem ob disciplinae auctoris capacitatem.

7 Venit igitur qui ad reformandam et inluminandam eam venturus a deo praenuntiabatur, Christus ille filius dei. Huius igitur gratiae disciplinaeque arbiter et magister, inluminator atque deductor generis humani filius dei adnuntiabatur: non quidem ita genitus, ut erubescat in filii nomine aut de patris

8 semine. Non de sororis incesto nec de stupro filiae aut coniugis alienae deum patrem passus est squamatum aut cornutum aut plumatum, amatorem in auro conversum Danaidis. Iovis ista sunt numina vestra.

9 Ceterum dei filius nullam de impudicitia habet matrem; etiam quam videtur habere, non nupsit.

deserve God's care and not to offend Him. But 5 what sin they committed; how proud confidence in their origin led to their decline; and how they turned from what they had been taught into ungodly ways—even if they did not confess it themselves, the outcome of it all for them to-day would prove it. Scattered, wanderers, exiles from their own soil and sky, they stray the world over, without man or God for their king; they are not permitted even as foreigners to greet their native land, with so much as a footfall. Of this those holy voices warned them 6 beforehand, and insisted at the same time (every one of them always, and in unison) that the day should come when in the last courses of time God would from every race, people and place gather Himself worshippers far more faithful, to whom He would transfer his favour, and that in fuller measure, because they would be able to bear an ampler discipline.

So to remake, to illuminate that discipline it was 7 proclaimed by God that Christ the son of God should come; and he came. To be the dispenser and teacher of this favour (grace) and discipline, to be the illuminator and guide of mankind, a Son of God was proclaimed beforehand—not so born as to blush for his sonship or his begetting. No incest with a sister 8 was here, no pollution of a daughter or another's wife; he had not to endure a divine father, disguised with scales, or horns, or feathers, a lover turned into gold for a Danaë; no! no! it is your divinities that suffer such things from Jove! But the Son of God 9 has a mother touched by no impurity^a; even she, whom he seems to have, had never been a bride.

^a i.e., coitus.

10 Sed prius substantiam edisseram, et ita nativitatis qualitas intellegatur.

Iam ediximus deum universitatem hanc mundi verbo et ratione et virtute molitum. Apud vestros quoque sapientes ΛΟΓΟΝ, id est sermonem atque rationem, constat artificem videri universitatis. Hunc enim Zeno determinat factitorem, qui cuncta in dispositione formaverit; eundem et fatum vocari et deum et animum Iovis et necessitatem omnium rerum. Haec Cleanthes in spiritum congerit, quem permeatorem universitatis adfirmat.

11 Et nos autem sermoni atque rationi itemque virtuti, per quae omnia molitum deum ediximus, propriam substantiam spiritum inscribimus, cui et sermo insit pronuntianti et ratio adsit disponenti et virtus praesit perficienti. Hunc ex deo prolatum didicimus et prolatione generatum et idcirco filium dei et deum dictum
12 ex unitate substantiae. Nam et deus spiritus. Et cum radius ex sole porrigitur, portio ex summa; sed sol

^a Ch. 17.

^b Compare Seneca, *Natur. Quaest.* ii. 45, who gives a good (and eloquent) summary of Stoic doctrine. "These ancient sages . . . recognized the same Jupiter as we do, the guardian and ruler of the universe, its soul and breath, the maker and lord of this earthly frame of things, to whom every name of power is appropriate. If you prefer to call him fate you will not be wrong. He it is on whom depend all things, from whom proceed all causes of causes. If you prefer to call him providence you will still be right; for he it is by whose counsel provision is made for the world that it may pursue its orderly course and unfold the drama of its being. If you prefer to call him nature, you will make no mistake; for it is he from whom all things derive being, and by whose breath we live. If you prefer to call him the world, you will not be in error; for he is everything that you can see, he is totally infused in all his parts, self-sustained through inherent power" (translation by John Clark). Compare also Virgil, *Georgic*, iv. 221-224:

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But first let me speak of his essential nature and 10 so the manner of his birth will be understood.

We have already said ^a that God devised the whole universe by Word, by Reason, by Might. Among your own philosophers, too, it is argued that *Logos*, that is Word and Reason, would seem to be the Artificer of the universe. This *Logos* Zeno defines as the maker who has formed and ordered all; he will have it that this *Logos* is also called fate and God, and mind of Jove, and universal law. All this Cleanthes gathers up into Spirit and affirms it to pervade the universe.^b We, too, to that Word, Reason and Power 11 (by which we said God devised all things) would ascribe Spirit as its proper nature; and in Spirit, giving utterance, we should find Word; with Spirit, ordering and disposing all things, Reason; and over Spirit, achieving all things, Power. This, ^c we have been taught, proceeds from God, begotten in this proceeding from God, and therefore called "Son of God" and "God" because of unity of nature. For God too is spirit. When a ray is 12 projected from the sun, it is a portion of the whole; but

deum namque ire per omnes
terrasque tractusque maris caelumque profundum.
hinc pecudes, armenta, viros, genus omne ferarum
quemque sibi tenuis nascentem arcessere vitas;

and *Aeneid*, vi. 724 ff., especially the lines:

spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.

^c "This" I leave as bald as *Hunc* in the Latin, on purpose. I would remind the reader that the author is pre-Nicene, and that the translator is not a theologian. The general line of Tertullian is that of the second-century apologists, in whom the simile from one light kindling another light is very familiar. The difficulties of early Latin terminology (*substantia* for *οὐσία*), *materia*, etc., are beyond discussion in a footnote.

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erit in radio, quia solis est radius nec separatur substantia sed extenditur. Ita de spiritu spiritus et de deo deus ut lumen de lumine accensum. Manet integra et indefecta materiae matrix, etsi plures inde traduces qualitatis mutueris: ita et quod de deo profectum est, deus est dei filius et unus ambo.

- 13 Ita et de spiritu spiritus et de deo deus modulo alternum numerum, gradu non statu fecit, et a
14 matrice non recessit sed excessit. Iste igitur dei radius, ut retro semper praedicabatur, delapsus in virginem quandam et in utero eius caro figuratus nascitur homo deo mixtus. Caro spiritu instructa nutritur, adolescit, adfatur, docet, operatur et Christus est.

- Recipite interim hanc fabulam, similis est vestris, dum ostendimus quomodo Christus probetur et qui penes vos eiusmodi fabulas aemulas ad destructionem
15 veritatis istiusmodi praeministraverint. Sciebant et Iudaei venturum esse Christum, scilicet quibus prophetae loquebantur. Nam et nunc adventum eius expectant, nec alia magis inter nos et illos compulsatio est quam quod iam venisse non credunt. Duobus enim adventibus eius significatis, primo, qui iam expunctus est in humilitate conditionis humanae, secundo, qui concludendo saeculo imminet in sublimitate divinitatis exertae, primum non intellegendo
16 unum existimaverunt. Ne enim intellegerent primum, credituri, si intellexissent, et consecuturi salu-

^a Cf. Tertullian, *Adv. Praxeas*, 2.

^b He means the demons; see ch. 22. 9.

the sun will be in the ray, because it is the sun's ray, nor is it a division of nature, but an extension. Spirit from Spirit, God from God—as light is lit from light. The source of the substance remains whole and undiminished even if you borrow many offshoots of its quality from it. Thus what 13 has proceeded from God, is God and God's Son, and both are one. Thus Spirit from Spirit, God from God—it makes in mode a double number, in order not in condition (*status*), not departing from the source but proceeding from it.^a This ray of God, as was 14 ever foretold in time past, entered into a certain virgin, and, in her womb fashioned into flesh, is born, man mingled with God. The flesh informed by the spirit is nourished, grows to manhood, speaks, teaches, acts—and is Christ.

For the moment accept this story (it is like your own stories) while we show how Christ is proved, and who they were who, in order to destroy the truth, set about among you rival stories of the same kind.^b The Jews knew that Christ was to come, of 15 course, for it was to them that the prophets spoke. Even now the Jews look for his coming, nor is there any other greater cause of clash between us than that they do not believe he has come. Two comings were predicted for him; in the first (which is already fulfilled) he should come in the lowliness of human form; in the second, which impends for the ending of the world, it should be in the majesty of deity displayed. But the Jews misunderstood the first coming; and the second, which was more clearly foretold and for which they hope, they took to be the only one. As for the first coming—they would 16 have believed, if they had understood, and they

tem, si credidissent, meritum fuit delictum eorum. Ipsi legunt ita scriptum mulctatos se sapientia et intelligentia et oculorum et aurium fruge.

- 17 Quem igitur hominem solummodo praesumpserant de humilitate, sequebatur uti magum aestimarent de potestate, cum ille verbo daemonia de hominibus excuteret, caecos reluminaret, leprosos purgaret, paralyticos restringeret, mortuos denique verbo redderet vitae, elementa ipsa famularet compescens procellas et freta ingrediens, ostendens se esse verbum dei, id est ΛΟΓΟΝ, illud primordiale, primogenitum, virtute et ratione comitatum et spiritu fultum, eundem qui verbo omnia et faceret et fecisset.
- 18 Ad doctrinam vero eius, qua revincebantur magistri primoresque Iudaeorum, ita exasperabuntur, maxime quod ingens ad eum multitudo deflecteret, ut postremo oblatum Pontio Pilato, Syriam tunc ex parte Romana procuranti, violentia suffragiorum in crucem Iesum dedi sibi extorserint. Praedixerat et ipse ita fac-
- 19 tuos; parum si non et prophetae retro. Et tamen suffixus multa mortis illius propria ostendit insignia. Nam spiritum cum verbo sponte dimisit, praevento carnificis officio. Eodem momento dies medium orbem signante sole subducta est. Deliquium utique putaverunt qui id quoque super Christo praedicatum
- 20 non scierunt. Et tamen eum mundi casum relatum

^a Isaiah vi. 9, 10.

would have won salvation if they had believed—but what prevented them from believing was the result of their sin. They themselves read it written in scripture ^a that they have been deprived of wisdom and understanding, of the fruits of eye and ear.

From his lowly guise they took him to be merely 17 a man; so it followed that, confronted by his power, they counted him a magician. For with a word he drove devils out of men, he gave light again to the blind, he cleansed the lepers, he braced up the paralytic, and to crown all he restored the dead to life by his word; he made the very elements his servants, he controlled the storm, he walked on the sea,—showing that he is the *Logos* of God, that is the Word, original and first-begotten, attended by Power and Reason, upheld by Spirit, the same Being who by his word still made as he had made all things. His teach- 18 ing, with its refutation of the instructors and chief men of the Jews, so incensed them (chiefly because of the vast multitudes it turned to him) that at last they brought him to Pontius Pilate, at that time Roman procurator of Syria, and by the fury of their suffrages extorted it from Pilate that Jesus should be handed over to them to be crucified. He himself had foretold that they would do this. If that be not enough, so had the prophets long before. Yet, nailed to the 19 cross he showed many signs by which his death was distinguished from others. For with a word, of his own will, he dismissed his spirit—forestalling the work of the executioner. At that very moment, though the sun was in mid sky, day was withdrawn. An eclipse, of course, they supposed it, who did not know that this too was predicted of Christ; yet that 20 cosmic event you have in your archives; it is told

- in arcanis vestris habetis. Tunc Iudaei detractum et sepulchro conditum magna etiam militari manu custodiae diligentia circumdederunt, ne, quia praedixerat tertia die resurrecturum se a morte, discipuli
 21 furto amoliti cadaver fallerent suspectos. Sed ecce tertia die concussa repente terra, et mole revoluta quae obstruxerat sepulchrum, et custodia pavore disiecta, nullis apparentibus discipulis, nihil in sepulchro repertum est praeterquam exuviae sepulti.
 22 Nihilominus tamen primores, quorum intererat et scelus divulgare et populum vectigalem et famularem sibi a fide revocare, subreptum a discipulis iactitaverunt. Nam nec ille se in vulgus eduxit, ne impii errore liberarentur, ut et fides, non mediocri
 23 praemio destinata, difficultate constaret. Cum discipulis autem quibusdam apud Galilaeam, Iudaeae regionem, ad quadraginta dies egit docens eos quae docerent. Dehinc ordinatis eis ad officium praedicandi per orbem circumfusa nube in caelum est receptus, multo verius quam apud vos adseverare de Romulo Proculi solent.
 24 Ea omnia super Christo Pilatus, et ipse iam pro sua conscientia Christianus, Caesari tunc Tiberio nuntiavit. Sed et Caesares credidissent super Christo, si aut Caesares non essent necessarii saeculo, aut si et
 25 Christiani potuissent esse Caesares. Discipuli quoque diffusi per orbem ex praecepto magistri dei paruerunt,

^a Acts x. 40 "non omni populo" (Vulgate).

^b Cf. p. 376 n.

^c This report to Caesar was a presumption; the pagan was challenged to look in the archives for it. The idea was fertile in literature of a kind. Cf. ch. v. 2; Euseb. *Ecol. Hist.* ii. 2. The Gospel of *Nicodemus*, with its magnificent pendant, *The Harrowing of Hell*, is one attempt to develop the story. The *Harrowing* is from another writer, of fine imagination.

there. He was taken down from the cross and laid in a tomb; the Jews with supreme care surrounded it with a great military guard, lest, since he had foretold his rising from death on the third day, his disciples by stealth should get the dead body away and trick them for all their suspicions. But, look you! on 21 the third day, there was a sudden earthquake; the structure that blocked the tomb was shaken down; the guard was scattered in terror; but though no disciples appeared on the scene, nothing was found in the tomb but the cloths in which he was buried. None the less, the chief men of the Jews—it was to their 22 interest to tell a false tale and to recapture from the faith a people to pay them tribute and yield them service; so they spread the story about that the disciples had stolen him. For he did not display himself to the common gaze,^a lest the wicked should be set free from their misjudgement; and that faith, with that supreme prize set before it, should not be too easy. With certain disciples he spent forty days 23 in Galilee, a region of Judaea, teaching them what they should teach. Then he appointed them to the duty of preaching throughout the world, and, with a cloud cast about him, he was caught up to heaven—far more truly than any Romulus of yours in the tale of Proculus.^b

This whole story of Christ was reported to Caesar 24 (at that time it was Tiberius) by Pilate,^c himself in his secret heart already a Christian. Yes, and the Caesars also would have believed on Christ, if Caesars had not been necessary for the world, or if the Caesars, too, could have been Christians. His disciples, also, were scattered through the world, 25 in obedience to the precept of God their teacher; they

qui et ipsi a Iudaeis insequentibus multa perpassi utique pro fiducia veritatis libenter Romae postremo per Neronis saevitiam sanguinem Christianum semi-
 26 naverunt. Sed monstrabimus vobis idoneos testes Christi ipsos illos quos adoratis. Multum est si eos adhibeam ut credatis Christianis propter quos non creditis Christianis. Interim hic est ordo nostrae institutionis, hunc edidimus et sectae et nominis censum cum suo auctore.

27 Nemo iam infamiam incutiat, nemo aliud existimet, quia nec fas est ulli de sua religione mentiri. Ex eo enim quod aliud a se coli dicit quam colit, negat quod colit, et culturam et honorem in alterum transfert, et
 28 transferendo iam non colit quod negavit. Dicimus, et palam dicimus, et vobis torquentibus lacerati et cruenti vociferamur: Deum colimus per Christum. Illum hominem putate, per eum et in eo se cognosci
 29 et coli deus vult. Ut Iudaeis respondeamus, et ipsi dominum per hominem Moysen colere didicerunt: ut Graecis occurram, Orpheus Pieriae, Musaeus Athenis, Melampus Argis, Trophonius Boeotiae initiationibus homines obligaverunt: ut ad vos quoque dominatores gentium adspiciam homo fuit Pompilius Numa, qui Romanos operosissimis super-
 30 stitionibus oneravit. Licuerit et Christo commentari divinitatem, rem propriam, non qua rupices et adhuc feros homines multitudini tot numinum demeren-

^a Cf. ch. 50. 13.

suffered much from Jewish persecution—but gladly enough because of their faith in the truth; finally at Rome, through the cruelty of Nero, they sowed the seed of Christian blood.^a But we will produce 26 for you as witnesses to Christ (and very appropriate for you) those very beings whom you worship. It will be a great point if I can use to make you believe in Christ the very beings for whose sake you do not believe the Christians. Meantime you have before you the facts in due order that relate to our founding; we have given you here the origin of our school and of its name, and told you of our Founder.

Let none now fling foul charges at us; let none 27 believe aught but what we have said; because no one may lie about his religion. For in the very act of saying he worships something other than he does worship, he denies what he worships; his worship and his reverence he transfers to another and by the transfer ceases to worship the God he has denied. We say—and we say it openly—while you are tortur- 28 ing us,—mangled and bleeding—we shout it: “We worship God through Christ.” Count him man, if you will; through him and in him God would have Himself known and worshipped. A word to the Jews; 29 they themselves learned to worship the Lord through the man Moses. A retort to the Greeks: Orpheus in Pieria, Musaeus at Athens, Melampus at Argos, Trophonius of Boeotia, have bound men by their religious ceremonies. A glance at you also, rulers of the nations: Numa Pompilius was a man, Numa who loaded the Romans with the most fatiguing superstitions. Surely Christ too may be given leave 30 to devise deity for himself and make it his own, not as one who should mould men, stockish and still

dorum attonitos efficiendo ad humanitatem temperaret, quod Numa, sed qui iam expolitos et ipsa urbanitate deceptos in agnitionem veritatis ocularet. Quaerite igitur si vera est ista divinitas Christi.

31 Si ea est qua cognita ad bonum quis reformatur, sequitur ut falsae renuntietur, conperta inprimis illa omni ratione quae delitiscens sub nominibus et imaginibus mortuorum quibusdam signis et miraculis et oraculis fidem divinitatis operatur.

- 1 XXII. Atque adeo dicimus esse substantias quasdam spirituales. Nec novum nomen est. Sciunt daemones philosophi, Socrate ipso ad daemonii arbitrium exspectante. Quidni? cum et ipsi daemonium a pueritia adhaesisse dicatur, dehortatorium plane a
2 bono. Omnes sciunt poetæ; etiam vulgus indoctum in usum maledicti frequentat. Nam et Satanan, principem huius mali generis, proinde de propria conscientia animae eadem execramenti voce pronuntiat. Angelos quoque etiam Plato non negavit.
3 Utriusque nominis testes esse vel magi adsunt. Sed

^a On this chapter about demons see Plato, *Apology*, 40, for the "familiar oracle within me," as Jowett translates it; cf. *ib.* 27. Tertullian is more derivative than accurate here. Plato constantly discusses gods and their nature, notably in *Rep.* ii. 378 D, E (the gods must be spoken of as they are, whatever defence is made of myth by the use of allegory), and *Tymaeus*, 41 A-D (intermediary gods). Plutarch wrote much on the subject and emphasizes Hesiod's distinction between gods and demons (which is hardly to be found in Homer). See my *Conflict of Religions*, ch. 3, pp. 94-103. Tertullian's contemporary Apuleius in his little treatise "On the God of Socrates" offers the most illuminative commentary on what the Christian apologists say. See *Conflict*, pp. 231-232. Plutarch in his *De Iside* discusses "the Magian Zoroaster, who lived about 500 years before the Trojan War," and his doctrine of good and bad spiritual natures; modern scholars give Zoroaster a much later date, and know more of

savage, to civilization by terrorizing them with such a crowd of gods to worship as Numa did; but as one who should give to men, highly civilized already, and misled by their own urbanity, eyes to recognize the truth. Ask the question, then, whether that deity of Christ be true. If it is in fact such a deity that 31 the recognition of it remakes a man and makes him good, then it follows that false deity must be renounced, not least when the whole scheme of it is laid bare—how, under cover of the names and images of dead men, by means of certain signs, miracles and oracles, it gains credence for its own divinity.

XXII. Yes, we say there are certain spiritual 1 natures; nor is the name new. The philosophers know of demons, with Socrates himself watching for the will of his *daimonion*.^a Why not? When that *daimonion* is said to have stuck to him from boyhood, a dissuasive influence—obviously from what was good. All the poets know of them; even the untaught 2 vulgar make constant use of them in cursing; for by way of execration they utter the name of Satan,^b the prince of this evil kind, as it were from their souls' instinctive knowledge. Angels again Plato has not denied. To both names, demon and angel, the Magi answer our summons to bear witness. But the 3

his real teaching; but the literature of the Roman empire is full of references to *magi* and magic. Herodotus perhaps first introduced *μάγοι* to the notice of the West: i. 101, 120, 140. The Manichaean heresy is an offshoot, or indebted at least to Zoroaster. For which see Augustine, *Confessions*.

^b A similar statement as to Satan in his *De Testimonio Animae*, 3, where the commentator suggests it is the ejaculation *malum*! that is meant. Perhaps; but by A.D. 200 there may have been new varieties in execration.

quomodo de angelis quibusdam sua sponte corruptis corruptior gens daemonum evaserit, damnata a deo cum generis auctoribus et cum eo quem diximus principe, apud litteras sanctas ordo cognoscitur.

4 Nunc de operatione eorum satis erit exponere. Operatio eorum est hominis eversio. Sic malitia spiritalis a primordio auspicata est in hominis exitium. Itaque corporibus quidem et valitudines infligunt et aliquos casus acerbos, animae vero repentinos et extraordinarios per vim excessus. Suppetit illis ad utramque substantiam hominis adeundam subtilitas

5 et tenuitas sua. Multum spiritalibus viribus licet, ut invisibiles et insensibiles in effectu potius quam in actu suo appareant, si poma, si fruges nescio quod aurae latens vitium in flore praecipitat, in germine exanimat, in pubertate convulnerat, ac si caeca ratione temptatus aër pestilentes haustus suos offundit.

6 Eadem igitur obscuritate contagionis adspiratio daemonum et angelorum mentis quoque corruptelas agit furoribus et amentis foedis aut saevis libidinibus cum erroribus variis, quorum iste potissimus quo deos istos captis et circumscriptis hominum mentibus commendat, ut et sibi pabula propria nidoris et

7 sanguinis procuret simulacris imaginibus oblata. Et quae illi accuratior pascua est, quam ut hominem e

^a Cf. Genesis vi. 1-4; Coloss. ii. 18; 2 Peter ii. 4. Also Psalm xcv. 5 (lxx), all the gods of the nations are demons.

^b I am not clear here whether both clauses represent the same thing, i.e. a general blight and failure of crops, or two things, a blight and a pestilence. M. Waltzing's version implies the latter against the earlier translators.

^c *Illi* and *avertat* are read by the mss. and corrected to the plural by some editors. *Illi* in the singular agrees with *adspiratio daemonum*; much less probably it might refer to

story how certain angels corrupted themselves and how from them was produced a brood of demons yet more corrupt, condemned by God with the authors of their race and that prince whom we have named—all this is duly made known in the sacred books.^a Here 4 and now it will be enough to explain how they go to work. Their work is the ruin of man; thus spiritual wickedness from the very beginning designed the destruction of man. So on men's bodies they inflict sicknesses and other bitter calamities, and on the soul sudden extravagant bursts of violence. To assail both sides of man's nature their subtle and impalpable substance avails them. Much is possible to the 5 might of these spirits, so that, undetected by sight or sense, they are recognized more in the consequences of their action than in their action itself; as when some obscure blight lays fruit and crop low when still in flower, takes life out of the bud, or wounds them in their full growth, and when the air is tainted in some unseen way and sweeps down with wafts of pestilence.^b By a contagion similar in its 6 obscurity the breath of demons and angels achieves the corruption of the mind in foul bursts of fury and insanity, or in savage lusts, along with every kind of delusion; and of all delusions that is the greatest which they use to recommend those gods to the captive and outwitted minds of men—and it also serves to secure for themselves their peculiar diet of smell and blood, offered to their likenesses and images. And what fare more exquisite for them,^c 7 than by false sleights to turn man from contempla-

the prince of the demons. As there is no doubt about the general sense, the correction, though easier to translate literally, seems hardly needed.

cogitatu verae divinitatis avertat praestigiis falsis ?
Quas et ipsas quomodo operetur expediam.

- 8 Omnis spiritus ales est. Hoc angeli et daemones. Igitur momento ubique sunt ; totus orbis illis locus unus est ; quid ubi geratur tam facile sciunt quam adnuntiant. Velocitas divinitas creditur, quia substantia ignoratur. Sic et auctores interdum videri
9 volunt eorum quae adnuntiant. Et sunt plane malorum nonnunquam, bonorum tamen nunquam. Dispositiones etiam dei et tunc prophetis contionantibus exceperunt¹ et nunc lectionibus resonantibus carpunt. Ita et hinc sumentes quasdam temporum sortes aemulantur divinitatem, dum furantur divinationem.
10 In oraculis autem quo ingenio ambiguitates temperent in eventus sciunt Croesi, sciunt Pyrrhi. Ceterum testudinem decoqui cum carnibus pecudis Pythius eo modo renuntiavit quo supra diximus ; momento apud Lydiam fuerat. Habent de incolatu aëris et de vicinia siderum et de commercio nubium caelestes sapere paraturas, ut et pluvias, quas iam sentiunt, promittant. Benefici² plane et circa curas valitudinum. Laedunt enim primo, dehinc remedia praecipiant ad miraculum nova sive contraria, post quae
12 desinunt laedere, et curasse creduntur. Quid ergo de ceteris ingeniis vel etiam viribus fallaciae spiritalis

¹ Oehler reads *excerpunt*.

² The *codex Fuldensis* reads *venefici*. I take this as a typical case of *ms. confusion*. What irony can be in *venefici*? It seems a safe rule with Tertullian to prefer the more pungent and satirical variant whatever the *ms. attestation*.

^a Four syllables of assonance cannot be unintentional in Tertullian.

^b He refers to the two famous oracles—*Κροῖσος Ἄλυν διαβὰς μεγάλην ἀρχὴν καταλύσει* (Herodotus i. 53; Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, iii. 5. 4, p. 1407 a), and *Aio te Aeacide Romanos vincere*

tion of true deity ? These false sleights I will explain, and how they work them.

Every spirit is winged ; so it is with angels, so it is with demons. Thus in a moment they are everywhere ; all the world is to them one spot ; what is being done, and where, it is as easy for them to know as to tell. Their swiftness passes for divinity, because their real nature is unknown. So they sometimes wish to appear as doing what they merely report ; and they obviously are at times the authors of mischief but never of good. The purposes of God they caught up *then* as they heard the prophets propound, *now* when they hear the lesson resound.^a It is thus, it is from these sources, that they have learnt certain appointed dates and times, and on stolen divination affect divinity. In the matter of oracles how ingeniously they can fit ambiguity to event, a Croesus, a Pyrrhus knows.^b But the boiling of the tortoise with the flesh of the lamb Apollo reported, by the method we have described ; in a moment he had been in Lydia. They have their abode in the air, the stars are their neighbours, their commerce is with the clouds, so they can learn what is preparing in the sky and promise the rain, which they feel already. Mighty
11 kind they are too in the treatment of diseases ! First, they injure ; then, they teach remedies new or contradictory to the point of miracle ; after that they cease to injure and are believed to have healed. But 12 why should I discuss the rest of their tricks, or the

posse (Cicero, *De Divinatione*, ii. 56, 115, who just above translates the Greek "Croesus Halym penetrans magnam pervertet opum vim"). Apollo, so says Herodotus, i. 47, 48, alone among gods who give oracles, told Croesus that he had been boiling the things named, at the precise hour fixed.

edisseram? phantasmata Castorum, et aquam cribro gestatam, et navem cingulo promotam, et barbam tactu inrufatam, ut numina lapides crederentur, ut deus verus non quaereretur?

- 1 XXIII. Porro, si et magi phantasmata edunt et iam defunctorum infamant animas, si pueros in eloquium oraculi elidunt, si multa miracula circulatoriis praestigiis ludunt, si et somnia immittunt habentes semel invitatorum angelorum et daemonum adsistentem sibi potestatem, per quos et caprae et mensae divinare consuerunt, quanto magis ea potestas de suo arbitrio et pro suo negotio studeat totis viribus
2 operari quod alienae praestat negotiationi! Aut si eadem et angeli et daemones operantur quae et dei vestri, ubi est ergo praecellentia divinitatis, quam utique superiorem omni potestate credendum est? Non ergo dignius praesumetur ipsos esse qui se deos faciant, cum eadem edant quae faciant deos credi, quam pares angelis et daemonibus deos esse?
3 Locorum differentia distinguitur, opinor, ut a templis deos existimetis quos alibi deos non dicitis; ut aliter dementire videatur qui sacras turres pervolat, aliter qui tecta viciniae transilit, et alia vis pronuntietur in eo qui genitalia vel lacertos, alia qui sibi gulam

^a These stories are to be found in Valerius Maximus, i. 8. 1 (the twins); viii. 5. 1 (the sieve); Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 305 ff. (the girdle); Suetonius, *Nero*, 1 (the red beard).
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power of spiritual treachery? or tell of apparitions of the Heavenly Twins, of water carried in a sieve, of a ship towed with a girdle, a beard made red with a touch^a—and all of it, that stones may be believed to be gods and the true God left unsought?

XXIII. To proceed, if magicians produce phantoms 1 and give a bad name to the souls of the dead; if they kill children to make an oracle speak; if by mountebank tricks they play off no end of miracles; if they send dreams to people; assisted by the power of the angels and demons invoked, those same beings by whose aid she-goats and tables have acquired the habit of divining; how much more, think you? would that power, acting on its own behalf and in its own business, take pains to use its full strength to achieve what it does in the affairs of others? Or, if 2 angels and demons do exactly what your gods do; where, then, is the pre-eminence of divinity, which we surely should count superior to every other power? Will it not be a worthier supposition that it is they who make themselves into gods when they do what wins credence for gods, than that gods should be on a level with angels and demons? The distinction 3 between them, I really suppose, depends on difference of place; so that, where a temple is in the story, you reckon them to be gods, though elsewhere you do not call them gods; so that if a man leaps among the temple towers he has a different sort of insanity from one who jumps from roof to roof of his neighbours' houses; so that a different influence is declared to be at work in the man who castrates himself or slashes his muscles,^b from what is in the

^b A touch at the priests of Cybele. Cf. Apuleius, *Met.* viii. 27.

prosecat. Compar exitus furoris et una ratio est instigationis.

- 4 Sed hactenus verba; iam hinc demonstratio rei ipsius, qua ostendemus unam esse utriusque nominis qualitatem. Edatur hic aliqui ibidem sub tribunalibus vestris quem daemone agi constet. Iussus a quolibet Christiano loqui spiritus ille tam se daemone confitebitur de vero quam alibi dominum de falso. Aequae producat aliquis ex his qui de deo pati existimantur, qui aris inhalantes numen de nidore concipiunt, qui ructando curantur, qui anhelando praefantur. 5 Isti ipsa Virgo Caelestis pluviarum pollicitatrix, ipse iste Aesculapius medicinarum demonstrator, alia die morituris Socordio et Tenatio et Asclepiodoto sumministrator, nisi se daemones confessi fuerint Christiano mentiri non audentes, ibidem illius 6 Christiani procacissimi sanguinem fundite! Quid isto opere manifestius? Quid hac probatione fidelius? Simplicitas veritatis in medio est. Virtus illi sua adsistit; nihil suspicari licebit. Magia aut aliqua eiusmodi fallacia fieri dicitis? Non dicetis, si oculi 7 vestri et aures permiserint vobis. Quid autem inici potest adversus id quod ostenditur nuda sinceritate?

^a Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi. 77; Apuleius, *Met.* viii. 27.

^b *Virgo Caelestis* is the Juno of Carthage, familiar in a rather Roman style in the *Aeneid*, but originally more like, if not identical with, the Astarte or Ashtoreth of the Phoenicians. Cf. ch. 22. 10 for the explanation of the power of a demon (or goddess) to promise rain.

^c The translation ignores Oehler's two emendations *aliam diem, sumministraturi*, and follows ms. *alia die sumministrator*. The commentators tell me nothing of these three people, and I can add no more. They are restorations from hopeless ms. confusion. One commentator even suggests that they are herbs! *Socordium* was a plant found in

man who cuts his throat. But the outcome of the frenzy is the same, and one account must be given of its provocation.

So far, words; now for a test in actual fact, to 4 show that, whichever names you use, the nature (*qualitas*) is the same. Produce someone before your tribunals, who is admittedly demon-possessed. Let any Christian you please bid him speak, and the spirit in the man will own himself a demon—and truly—just as he will elsewhere call himself a god, falsely. Similarly bring forward some one or other of 5 those persons who are supposed to be god-possessed,^a who by sniffing at altars inhale a divine power in the smell, who cure themselves by belching, who declaim panting. Let us take your great Virgin of 6 Heaven herself,^b promiser of rain, your great Aesculapius, discoverer of medical arts, giver of life to Socordius, Thanatius, Asclepiodotus (who will die some other day all the same ^c)—if they do not confess they are demons, not daring to lie to a Christian, then shed that impudent Christian's blood on the spot! What could be plainer than such a deed? 7 What proof more reliable? The simplicity of the truth is plain to see. Its own power is in it. There can be no room for suspicion. Oh! do you say it is done by magic or some trickery of that sort? You will not say that, even if your eyes and ears let you.^d But 8 what can be set against fact displayed in naked

Pontus, and used to make antidotes; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxv. 6. 63. Oehler thinks Tertullian may refer to a past event; but he seems to be devising a test to be tried. Waltzing translates very much as above.

^d The text again doubtful, and restored, without much gain. The translation is mere makeshift.

- Si altera parte vere dei sunt, cur sese daemonia mentiuntur? An ut nobis obsequantur? Iam ergo subiecta est Christianis divinitas vestra, nec divinitas deputanda est quae subdita est homini et, si quid ad
 9 dedecus facit, aemulis suis. Si altera parte daemones sunt vel angeli, cur se alibi pro deis agere respondent? Nam sicut illi qui dei habentur daemones se dicere noluissent, si vere dei essent, scilicet ne se de maiestate deponerent, ita et isti, quos directo daemones nostis, non auderent alibi pro deis agere, si aliqui omnino dei essent, quorum nominibus utuntur. Vererentur enim abuti maiestate superiore sine dubio
 10 et timendorum. Adeo nulla est divinitas ista quam tenetis, quia, si esset, neque a daemoniis adfectaretur in confessione neque a deis negaretur. Cum ergo utraque pars concurrat in confessionem deos esse negans, agnoscite unum genus esse, id est daemones, verum utrobique.
- 11 Iam deos quaerite. Quos enim praesumpseratis, daemones esse cognoscitis. Eadem vero opera nostra ab eisdem deis vestris non tantum hoc detegentibus quod neque ipsi dei sint neque ulli alii, etiam illud in continenti cognoscitis, qui sit vere deus, et an ille et an unicus quem Christiani profitemur, et an ita credendus colendusque, ut fides, ut disciplina disposita est Christianorum.
- 12 Dicent ibidem: Et quis ille Christus cum sua fabula;

^a He means that some Christian will compel the demons not only to confess that they are not gods but to acknowledge the God of the Christians.

sincerity? If on the one hand they really *are* gods, why do they lie and say they are demons? To oblige *us*? So you see, divinity, as you understand it, is subject to Christians, but I don't think it is really to be reckoned divinity if it is subject to a man, and (if anything can add to the disgrace) to its rivals. If, 9 on the other hand, they are demons or angels, why do they reply that elsewhere they act the part of gods? For just as those beings which pass for gods would have been reluctant to call themselves demons, if they really were gods,—they would not wish, of course, to abdicate their majesty!—so those creatures, whom you definitely know to be demons, would not dare elsewhere to pass themselves off as gods, if those whose names they use were gods at all. For they would be afraid to misuse a majesty beyond doubt above them, the majesty of powers they feared. So 10 that divinity, which you maintain, is nothing of the kind; because, if it were divinity, the demons, when confessing, would not claim it, nor the gods disclaim it. So when both groups concur in confession, when both deny godhead, recognize that it is only one group—demons, on the one side and on the other.

So now try to find gods! Those whom you had 11 presumed to be gods, you learn to be demons. Once more we lend you aid^a; and from these same gods of yours, who have more to disclose than the fact that neither they nor any others are gods, there is another thing for you to learn at one and the same time, that is, who really is God, whether it is He, and only He, whom we Christians confess, and whether He requires belief and worship, on the lines of the faith and teaching of Christians.

They will also tell you, on the spot, who is “that 12

- Si homo communis conditionis, si magus, si post mortem de sepulchro a discipulis subreptus, si nunc denique penes inferos, si non in caelis potius, et inde venturus cum totius mundi motu, cum orbis horrore, cum planctu omnium, sed non Christianorum, ut dei virtus et dei spiritus et sermo et sapientia et ratio
 13 et dei filius.¹ Quodcumque ridetis, rideant et illi vobiscum; negent Christum omnem ab aevo animam restituto corpore iudicaturum, dicant hoc pro tribunali, si forte, Minoëm et Rhadamanthum secundum consensum Platonis et poetarum hoc esse sortitos;
 14 suae saltem ignominiae et damnationis notam refutent. Renuntiant² se immundos spiritus esse, quod vel ex pabulis eorum, sanguine et fumo et putidis rogis pecorum, et impuratisimis linguis ipsorum vatium intellegi debuit: renuant ob malitiam praedamnatos se in eundem iudicii diem cum omnibus cultoribus et operationibus suis.
 15 Atquin omnis haec nostra in illos dominatio et potestas de nominatione Christi valet et de commemoratione eorum quae sibi a deo per arbitrum Christum imminetia expectant. Christum timentes in deo et deum in Christo subiciuntur servis dei et
 16 Christi. Ita de contactu deque afflatu nostro, contemplatione et repraesentatione ignis illius correpti

¹ From these six short si clauses, I have removed the question-marks which Oehler prints.

² Some editors substitute renuant here from the codex Fuldensis, which is attractive in keeping the succession of jussive subjunctives. renuntiant has this defence, that the demons have already confessed to being demons; the only new point about them is that they too are doomed to judgement.

^a Will the demons merely echo the common talk of the opponents of Christianity?

Christ with his story"—whether he was a man of the common sort; whether he was a magician; whether, after his death, his disciples stole him from the grave; whether he is now, in a word, down among the dead,^a and not rather in heaven, thence to come, amid the upheaval of the whole universe, the horror of the world, the wailing of all men (but not of the Christians!)—to come as Power of God, Spirit of God, Word, Wisdom, Reason, Son of God? Laugh at what you will^b—13 but let them (the demons) laugh with you! let them deny that Christ will judge every soul since time began, with its body given back to it! let them say, before your court, that Minos perchance and Rhadamanthus, as Plato and the poets agree, have this function! Let them at least get rid of the 14 brand of humiliation and damnation set upon them! They tell you that they are unclean spirits—as ought to have been understood even from their diet, the blood, the smoke, the stinking holocausts of dead beasts—and the defiled tongues of their prophets! Let them deny that for their sin they are condemned already against that same Day of Judgement, they and all their worshippers and all their works!

Yet all this sovereignty and power that we have 15 over them derives its force only from the naming of Christ, and the reminder of what they expect to come upon them from God at the judgement-seat of Christ. They are afraid of Christ in God, and of God in Christ; and that is why they are subject to the servants of God and Christ. Thus at a touch, a 16 breath from us, they are seized by the thought, by

^b Cf. the allusion to laughter at the mention of the Judgement Day, ch. 18. 4.

- etiam de corporibus nostro imperio excedunt inviti et dolentes et vobis praesentibus erubescences. Credite illis, cum verum de se loquuntur, qui mentientibus creditis. Nemo ad suum dedecus mentitur, quin
 17 potius ad honorem. Magis fides proxima est adversus semetipsos confitentes quam pro semetipsis negantes.
 18 Haec denique testimonia deorum vestrorum Christianos facere consuerunt; quam plurimum illis credendo in Christo domino credimus. Ipsi litterarum nostrarum fidem accendunt, ipsi spei nostrae fidentiam
 19 aedificant. Colitis illos, quod sciam, etiam de sanguine Christianorum. Nollent itaque vos tam fructuosos, tam officiosos sibi amittere, vel ne a vobis quandoque Christianis¹ fugentur, si illis sub Christiano, volente vobis veritatem probare, mentiri liceret.
 1 XXIV. Omnis ista confessio illorum qua se deos negant esse quaque non alium deum respondent praeter unum, cui nos mancipamur, satis idonea est ad depellendum crimen laesae maxime Romanae religionis. Si enim non sunt dei pro certo, nec religio pro certo est: si religio non est, quia nec dei pro certo, nec nos pro certo rei sumus laesae religionis.
 2 At e contrario in vos exprobratio resultavit, qui mendacium colentes veram religionem veri dei non modo neglegendo, quin insuper expugnando, in verum
 3 committitis crimen verae inreligiositatis.

Nunc ut constaret illos deos esse, nonne conceditis

¹ Oehler, with the Paris ms., reads a Christianis. Those who keep this text seem to take a vobis to mean "out of you."

^a "Crimen laesae religionis" is perhaps Tertullian's own coining after the model of a more familiar phrase, amplified in ch. 28. 2 "titulum laesae augustioris maiestatis." Trajan was unwilling "criminibus maiestatis reverentiam nomini meo acquiri"; Pliny, *Epp.* x. 82.

the foretaste of that fire, and they leave the bodies of men at our command, all against their will, in pain, blushing to have you witness it. Believe them when they tell the truth about themselves, you who believe them when they lie! No one lies simply to bring disgrace on himself—no, much rather to win credit. It is much easier to believe people when they confess against themselves than when they deny to defend themselves.

This kind of witness, then, offered by your gods 18 regularly makes Christians. The more we believe them, the more we believe in Christ as Lord. They kindle our faith in our sacred books; they build up our assurance in our hope. You worship them (to the 19 best of my knowledge) with the blood of Christians. So they would not wish to lose you, when you are so profitable, so obsequious, to them,—lest you, too, perhaps, turning Christian some day should drive them out!—they would not indeed! if only they might lie, when a Christian wishes to prove the truth to you!

XXIV. All this confession of theirs, their avowal 1 that they are not gods, their response that there is no God but the One whose servants we are, is amply enough to repel the charge brought against us of treason above all to the religion of Rome.^a If they definitely are not gods, then definitely it is not a religion; if it is not a religion because they definitely are not gods, then we are definitely not guilty of injuring religion. On the contrary the taunt has 2 recoiled upon you, who, by your worship of a lie, by your neglect of the true religion of the true God—and more than that—by your assault upon it, commit against the true God the crime of real irreligion.

Now, suppose them to be gods; but you concede, 3

de aestimatione communi aliquem esse sublimiorem et potentiorum, velut principem mundi perfectae potentiae et maiestatis? Nam et sic plerique disponunt divinitatem, ut imperium summae dominationis esse penes unum, officia eius penes multos velint, ut Plato Iovem magnum in caelo comitatum exercitu describit
 4 deorum pariter et daemonum. Itaque oportere et procurantes et praefectos et praesides pariter suspici. Et tamen quod facinus admittit qui magis ad Caesarem promerendum et operam et spem suam transfert nec appellationem dei ita ut imperatoris in aliquo principe confitetur, cum capitale esse iudicetur alium praeter
 5 Caesarem et dicere et audire? Colat alius deum, alius Iovem, alius ad caelum manus supplices tendat, alius ad aram Fidei, alius, si hoc putatis, nubes numeret orans, alius lacunaria, alius suam animam deo suo
 6 voveat, alius hirci. Videte enim ne et hoc ad irreligiositatis elogium concurrat, adimere libertatem religionis et interdicare optionem divinitatis, ut non liceat mihi colere quem velim, sed cogar colere quem nolim. Nemo se ab invito coli volet, ne homo quidem.
 7 Atque adeo et Aegyptiis permissa est tam vanae superstitionis potestas avibus et bestiis consecrandis et capite damnandis qui aliquem huiusmodi deum occiderit. Unicuique etiam provinciae et civitati suus deus est, ut Syriae Astartes, ut Arabiae Dusares, ut Norici Belenus, ut Africae Caelestis, ut Mauri-

^a Plato, *Phaedrus*, 246 E.

^b The sentence seems a little syncopated, but the meaning is not hard to disentangle.

^c As they said the Christians did. Cf. Juvenal, xiv. 96, on Jewish worship.

^d *v.l.* Atargatis.

do you not, on the basis of common consent, that there is a god, more sublime and more potent, Emperor as it were of the universe, of absolute power and majesty? For that is how most men appportion divinity; they hold that the control, the supreme sway, rests with one, the various functions of divinity among many. Plato,^a for instance, describes the great Jove in heaven accompanied by a host of gods and demons together. So they hold that his pro-
 4 curators and prefects and presiding officers should be respected equally with him. And yet what crime does he commit, who, to win Caesar's favour more securely, transfers his attention and his hope elsewhere, and does not confess that the title of God, like that of Emperor, belongs to one supreme over all,^b when it is legally a capital offence to speak of another beside Caesar or even to listen to such talk? Let
 5 one man worship God, another Jove; let this man raise suppliant hands to heaven, that man to the altar of Fides; let one (if you so suppose) count the clouds as he prays,^c another the panels of the ceiling; let one dedicate his own soul to his god, another a goat's. Look to it, whether this also may form part of the
 6 accusation of irreligion—to do away with freedom of religion, to forbid a man choice of deity, so that I may not worship whom I would, but am forced to worship whom I would not. No one, not even a man, will wish to receive reluctant worship.

Why, the Egyptians are allowed full freedom in
 7 their empty superstition, to make gods of birds and beasts, and to condemn to death any who may kill a god of that sort. Every individual province, every city, has its own god; Syria has Astartes^d; Arabia, Dusares; the Norici Belenus; Africa, her Heavenly

- 8 taniae reguli sui. Romanas, ut opinor, provincias edidi, nec tamen Romanos deos earum, quia Romae non magis coluntur quam qui per ipsam quoque Italiam municipali consecratione censentur: Casinensium Delventinus, Narniensium Visidianus, Asculanorum Ancharia, Volsiniensium Nortia, Oriculanorum Valentia, Sutrinorum Hostia; Faliscorum in honorem 9 Patris Curis et accepit cognomen Iuno. Sed nos soli arcemur a religionis proprietate. Laedimus Romanos nec Romani habemur qui non Romanorum deum 10 colimus. Bene quod omnium deus est, cuius velimus aut nolimus omnes sumus. Sed apud vos quodvis colere ius est praeter deum verum, quasi non hic magis omnium sit deus cuius omnes sumus.
- 1 XXV. Satis quidem mihi videor probasse de falsa et vera divinitate, cum demonstravi quemadmodum probatio consistat, non modo disputationibus, nec argumentationibus, sed ipsorum etiam testimoniis quos deos creditis, ut nihil iam ad hanc causam 2 sit retractandum. Quoniam tamen Romani nominis proprie mentio occurrit, non omitam congressionem, quam provocat illa praesumptio dicentium Romanos pro merito religiositatis diligentissimae in tantum sublimitatis elatos, ut orbem occuparint, et adeo deos esse, ut praeter ceteros floreat qui illis officium praeter ceteros faciant.
- 3 Scilicet ista merces a Romanis deis pro gratia ex-

^a Cf. Minucius Felix, 21. 9.

^b Curis, Curitis, or Quiritis. Cf. Macrobius, i. 9. 16 "hasta quam Sabini curin vocant." (So Ovid, *Fasti*, ii. 477.)

^c Cf. Cicero, *De Haruspicio Responsis*, 9. 19, where, in a speech and therefore appealing to a public that will agree, Cicero says that the Romans did not surpass the Spaniards in number, the Carthaginians in cunning, the Italians in

Virgin; Mauretania its chieftains.^a These provinces 8 that I mention are, I think, Roman; but their gods are not Roman; for they are not worshipped at Rome any more than the gods honoured in Italy itself by municipal deification—such as Delventinus at Casinum, Visidianus at Narnia, Ancharia at Asculum, Nortia at Volsinii, Valentia at Oriculum, Hostia at Sutrium; while among the Falisci, in honour of Father Curis, Juno has the surname^b too. But we 9 alone are forbidden a religion of our own. We injure the Romans, we are reckoned not to be Romans, because we do not worship the god of the Romans. Happy it is that God is God of all, and that all of us 10 are His, whether we would wish it or not. But among you it is lawful to worship anything at all, so long as it is not the true God!—as if He were not rather God of all, whose we all are.

XXV. I think I have proved enough as to false 1 and true deity. I have shown how the proof hangs together consistently, resting as it does not only on discussion and argument, but on the evidence of those beings whom you believe to be gods; so that there is nothing more to be dealt with on that issue. Yet, 2 since specific mention has been made of the Roman name, I must not shirk the encounter challenged by the assumption of those who say it is as a reward for their eminently religious attitude that the Romans have reached so high a point of grandeur as to hold the whole world^c; and that the gods are so conspicuously gods that those flourish beyond all others who beyond all others render them obedience.

I understand, then, this reward has been paid by the 3 commonsense (their peculiar gift), but won their empire over the world "pietate et religione." Cf. *De Nat. Deorum*, ii. 3. 8.

pensa est. Sterculus et Mutunus et Larentina provexit imperium. Peregrinos enim deos non putem extraneae genti magis fautum voluisse quam suae, et patrium solum, in quo nati, adulti, nobilitati sepultique sunt, 4 transfretanis dedisse. Viderit Cybele, si urbem Romanam ut memoriam Troiani generis adamavit, vernaculi sui scilicet adversus Achivorum arma protecti, si ad ultores transire prospexit, quos sciebat Graeciam 5 Phrygiae debellatricem subacturos. Itaque maiestatis suae in urbem conlatae grande documentum nostra etiam aetate proposuit, cum Marco Aurelio apud Sirmium reipublicae exempto die sexto decimo Kalendarum Aprilium archigallus ille sanctissimus die nono Kalendarum earundem, quo sanguinem impurum laceratos quoque castrando libabat, pro salute imperatoris Marci iam intercepti solita aequae imperia mandavit. 6 O nuntios tardos! o somniculosa diplomata! quorum vitio excessum imperatoris non ante Cybele cognovit, 7 ne deam talem riderent Christiani. Sed non statim et Iupiter Cretam suam Romanis fascibus concuti sineret, oblitus antrum illud Idaeum et aera Corybantia et iocundissimum illic nutricis suae odorem. Nonne omni Capitolio tumulum illum suum prae-

^a The god of dung: Mutunus of sexual intercourse: Larentina, *cf.* ch. 13. 9. These are native Roman divinities.

^b *Cf.* p. 330 n.

^c See Dio Cassius, lxxii. 33 (Loeb text, vol. ix. p. 60).

^d The *dies sanguinis*, *cf.* Trebellius Pollio, *Life of Claudius* 4 (in *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*).

^e The goat Amalthaea; *cf.* p. 383 n.

^f Another reference to the theory that the gods had been originally men (ch. 10. 11) and to the reported grave of Zeus in Crete. *Cf.* Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, iii. 21. 53, who speaks of three Jupiters, "tertium Cretensem Saturni filium, cuius in illa insula sepulcrum ostenditur" (*ib.* i. 41. 119

Roman gods on the score of gratitude. Sterculus ^a has extended their empire,—and Mutunus, and Larentina! For as to foreign gods, I would not suppose they preferred to favour an alien race rather than their own, and that they surrendered to men from across the sea their own native soil on which they were born, reared, ennobled, and in which they were buried. Let Cybele ^b see to it, if she have loved the city ⁴ of Rome in memory of the Trojan race, her own native race that she guarded against the arms of the Achaeans—if she looked ahead and planned to pass over to the avengers' camp, knowing that they would yet subdue Greece, conqueror of Phrygia! So it ⁵ was indeed a fine proof of her greatness transferred to Rome that she offered in our own generation. The State lost Marcus Aurelius by death at Sirmium on the 17th of March ^c; but on the 24th, ^d his holiness the arch-eunuch, offering his own unclean blood and slashing his muscles, issued the usual orders to pray for the safety of Marcus, who was already dead. O sluggish messengers! O sleepy-headed ⁶ postal service! it was your fault that Cybele failed to hear earlier of the Emperor's death, to prevent Christians from laughing at such a goddess! Jupiter too would hardly be in a hurry to let his own ⁷ Crete tumble before the Roman fasces—forgetting that cave on Ida, the cymbals of the Corybantes, that too delicious odour of his nurse ^e there! Would not he have preferred that grave of his ^f to any Capitol, on this theory of Euhemerus and graves of gods). Compare also Callimachus:

Κρήτες δὲλ ψεύσται, καὶ γὰρ τάφον, ὃ ἄνα, σείο

Κρήτες ἐτεκμήναντο· σὸ δ' οὐ θάνατος, ἔσσι γὰρ αἰεὶ,

quoted by Origen, *Against Celsus*, iii. 43. Lactantius, i. 11, says the grave bore the inscription ZAN KRONOY.

posuisset, ut ea potius orbi terra¹ praeccelleret quae
8 cineres Iovis texit? Vellet Iuno Punicam urbem
posthabita Samo dilectam ab Aeneadarum gente
deleri? Quod sciam

hic illius arma,
hic currus fuit, hoc regnum dea gentibus esse,
si qua fata sinant, iam tum tenditque fovetque.

Misera illa coniunx Iovis et soror adversus fata non
valuit! Plane

fato stat Iupiter ipse.

9 Nec tantum tamen honoris fati Romani dicaverunt
dedentibus sibi Carthaginem adversus destinatum
votumque Iunonis quantum prostitutissimae lupae
Larentinae.

10 Plures deos vestros regnasse certum est. Igitur si
conferendi imperii tenent potestatem, cum ipsi
regnarent, a quibus acceperant eam gratiam? Quem
coluerat Saturnus et Iupiter? Aliquem, opinor,
Stereulum. Sed postea Romani cum indigitamentis
11 suis.² Etiam si qui non regnaverunt, tamen regna-
bantur ab aliis nondum cultoribus suis, ut qui
nondum dei habebantur. Ergo aliorum est regnum

¹ terra is an emendation: Oehler prints terrae.

² Here I have left Oehler, who reads cum indigenis suis,
and distributes the punctuation differently.

^a Virgil, *Aeneid*, i. 16.

^b *Aeneid*, i. 16-18.

^c *Aeneid*, i. 47.

^d The text is uncertain; one ms. has *inditamentis*, another *indignis*. If the restoration above is right, Tertullian swings off from Stereulum to say in an aside that the Romans and their catalogues of gods (see Servius on Virgil, *Georg.* i. 21) or indigenous gods, belong to a later date. In §§ 10, 11 he deals with the argument that the gods bestowed empire. How could they, if they had not empire to bestow? Either they were or were not kings. Those who were kings, who

that the world should bow to the land which covered
the ashes of Jove? Would Juno wish the Punic 8
city that she loved "yea, above Samos' self,"^a to
be destroyed by the race of Aeneas of all people?
To the best of my knowledge

Here were her arms,
Her chariot here; this city, the world's queen
Yet to become, if but the fates allow,
The goddess cherishes.^b

Poor "wife of Jove and sister,"^c she could do
nothing against the fates! Obviously

By fate Jove's self must stand.

Yet somehow the Romans have not paid so much 9
honour to the fates that gave them Carthage, clean
against the plan and prayer of Juno, as to that
strumpet of a she-wolf, Larentina.

It is established that several of your gods once 10
were kings. If then they possess the power of
bestowing empire, seeing they were kings, from
whom did they receive that privilege? Whom had
Saturn worshipped, and Jove? Some Stereulum or
other, I presume. (The Romans came later with their
catalogues of gods.) Further if some of the gods were 11
not kings, they were reigned over by others, who were
not yet their worshippers—for they were not yet
reckoned to be gods.^d It follows that it belongs to

made them kings and gave them such rights? But some
were not kings at all, and were reigned over by others who
did not worship them, as they were not yet deified. But if
there were kings before these gods were gods, the right to
bestow empire rests, not with the gods, but elsewhere. This
clears out Saturn and his family. *Tamen* remains to perplex
reader and translator, and more desperate remedies may be
needed for the text.

dare, quia regnabatur multo ante quam isti dei inciderentur.

- 12 Sed quam vanum est fastigium Romani nominis religiositatis meritis deputare, cum post imperium sive adhuc regnum religio profecerit.¹ Nam etsi a Numa concepta est curiositas superstitiosa, nondum tamen aut simulacris aut templis res divina apud Romanos
- 13 constabat. Frugi religio et pauperes ritus et nulla Capitolia certantia ad caelum, sed temeraria de cespite altaria, et vasa adhuc Samia, et nidor ex illis,² et deus ipse nusquam. Nondum enim tunc ingenia Graecorum atque Tuscorum fingendis simulacris urbem inundaverant. Ergo non ante religiosi Romani quam magni, ideoque non ob hoc magni, quia religiosi.
- 14 Atquin quomodo ob religionem magni, quibus magnitudo de inreligiositate provenit? Ni fallor enim, omne regnum vel imperium bellis quaeritur et victoriis propagatur. Porro bella et victoriae captis et eversis plurimum urbibus constant. Id negotium sine deorum iniuria non est. Eadem strages moenium et templorum, pares caedes civium et sacerdotum, nec dissimiles rapinae sacrarum divitiarum et profanarum.
- 15 Tot igitur sacrilegia Romanorum quot tropaea, tot de deis quot de gentibus triumphi, tot manubiae quot
- 16 manent adhuc simulacra captivorum deorum. Et ab hostibus ergo suis sustinent adorari et illis imperium sine fine decernunt quorum magis iniurias quam

¹ After profecerit Oehler reads Age iam rebus religio profecerit? The Fuldensis and some editors put this sentence in a further form Auctis age iam rebus (which is more intelligible) before the Sed quam vanum sentence. Rauschen (whom I follow here) takes it as a gloss and deletes it from the text altogether. It is not much needed.

² The Fuldensis gives exilis, "not very much smell."

others to bestow kingship, since there were kings long before those gods had their names carved on stone.

But how absurd it is to set down the glory of the 12 Roman name as the reward of religious feeling, when it is only since the empire (or perhaps it was still kingdom) was achieved, that the religion made its forward strides! Even if that nicety in superstition was conceived by Numa, not yet among the Romans did service of the gods rest on images or temples. It was frugal religion, the rites of poverty, no 13 Capitol vying with the sky, but chance altars of turf, pottery still Samian, and the smell rising from the pots,—and the god himself nowhere! Not yet had men of genius, Greek and Tuscan, flooded the city, to make images. So the Romans were not "religious" before they were great; and, it follows, they are not great because they were religious. How 14 could they be great because of their religion, when their greatness came from irreligion? Unless I am mistaken, all kingship or empire is sought in war and extended by victory. War and victory depend on the capture and generally the overthrow of cities. That business is not put through, without injury to the gods. Walls and temples have one destruction; citizens and priests alike are slain; the plunder of wealth is the same whether it is sacred property or that of laymen. Then the sacrileges of the 15 Romans are exactly as many as their trophies; their triumphs over gods as many as over races; their spoils in war as many as the statues still left of captured gods. And (we are told) the gods can 16 bear to be adored by their enemies and decree to them "empire sans end"^a—when they ought to have

^a Aeneid, i. 279.

adolationes remunerasse debuerant. Sed qui nihil sentiunt tam impune laeduntur quam frustra coluntur.

17 Certe non potest fidei convenire, ut religionis meritis excrevisse videantur qui, ut suggessimus, religionem aut laedendo creverunt aut crescendo laeserunt. Etiam illi quorum regna conflata sunt in imperii Romanii summam, cum ea amitterent, sine religionibus non fuerunt.

1 XXVI. Videte igitur, ne ille regna dispenset cuius est et orbis qui regnatur et homo ipse qui regnat, ne ille vices dominationum ipsis temporibus in saeculo ordinavit qui ante omne tempus fuit et saeculum corpus temporum fecit, ne ille civitates extollat aut deprimat sub quo fuit sine civitatibus aliquando gens 2 hominum. Quid erratis? prior est quibusdam deis suis silvestris Roma, ante regnavit quam tantum ambitum Capitolii extrueret. Regnaverant et Babylonii ante Pontifices, et Medi ante Quindecimviro, et Aegyptii ante Salios, et Assyrii ante Luperco, et 3 Amazones ante Virgines Vestales. Postremo si Romanae religiones regna praestant, nunquam retro Iudaea regnasset despectrix communium istarum divinitatum, cuius et deum victimis et templum donis et gentem foederibus aliquamdiu Romani honorastis, numquam dominaturi eius, si¹ non deliquisset ultimo in Christum.

1 XXVII. Satis haec adversus intentionem laesae

¹ Here Oehler keeps deo which other editors delete.

^a Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, viii. 347:

hinc ad Tarpelam sedem et Capitolia ducit
aurea nunc, olim silvestribus horrida dumis.

repaid their injuries rather than their homage. But those who feel nothing, it is as safe to hurt as it is vain to court. Certainly it cannot square with belief 17 that *they* should be supposed to have grown great as a reward of religion, who, as we have shown, did religion wrong and so grew strong, or growing strong did it wrong. Those also whose kingdoms were melted down to make the sum total of the Roman empire,—when they lost those kingdoms, they too were not without religions of their own.

XXVI. Look to it then, lest it prove that He dispenses the kingdoms, Whose is the world that is reigned over and the man who reigns; lest it be He that has ordained the progression of empires each at its time in the world's story, He who was ere time was, who made the world's story of all the times; lest it be He who extols the cities or brings them low, He under whom mankind was once without cities at all. Why blunder? Rome in the forest ^a 2 is older than some of her gods; she reigned before she built that great circuit of the Capitol. And Babylonians reigned before there were Roman pontiffs, Medes before there were Quindecimviri, Egyptians before there were Sali, Assyrians before there were Luperco, Amazons before there were Vestal Virgins. Finally, if Rome's religious observ- 3 ances give her the kingdoms, never in olden days would Judaea have reigned, Judaea who despised those deities of the nations; and yet time was when you Romans honoured Judaea's God with victims, her temple with gifts, her race with treaties, nor would you ever have lorded it over her, if she had not at the last sinned against Christ.

XXVII. So much is enough to rebut the charge of 1

divinitatis, quo non videamur laedere eam quam ostendimus non esse. Igitur provocati ad sacrificandum obstruimus gradum pro fide conscientiae nostrae, qua certi sumus ad quos ista perveniant officia sub imaginum prostitutione et humanorum nominum consecratione. Sed quidam dementiam existimant, quod, cum possimus et sacrificare in praesenti et inlaesi abire manente apud animum proposito, obstinationem saluti praeferamus. Datis scilicet consilium, quo vobis abutamur; sed agnoscimus, unde talia suggerantur, quis totum hoc agitet, et quomodo nunc astutia suadendi nunc duritia saeviendi ad constantiam nostram deiciendam operetur. Ille scilicet spiritus daemonicae et angelicae paraturae, qui noster ob divortium aemulus et ob dei gratiam invidus de mentibus vestris adversus nos proeliatur occulta inspiratione modulatis et subornatis ad omnem quam in primordio exorsi sumus et iudicandi perversitatem et saeviendi iniquitatem. Nam licet subiecta sit nobis tota vis daemonum et eiusmodi spirituum, ut nequam tamen et servi metu nonnunquam contumaciam miscant, et laedere gestiunt quos alias verentur. Odium enim etiam timor spirat. Praeterquam et desperata condicio eorum ex praedamnatione solatium reputat fruendae interim malignitatis de poenae mora. Et tamen adprehensi subiguntur et conditioni suae succidunt, et quos de longinquo oppugnant, de proximo obsecrant. Itaque cum vice rebellantium ergastulorum sive carcerum vel metallorum vel hoc genus poenalis servitutis erumpunt

^a The demons are not endowed with deity.

^b Compare Pliny's letter about the Christians to Trajan, *Epp.* x. 96. 3 "neque enim dubitabam, qualecunque esset

injuring deity—since we cannot be thought to injure what we have proved non-existent.^a So, when challenged to sacrifice, we stand immovable in loyalty to our conscience, certain in our knowledge whose are those services with their profane idols, and their deification of human names. But some people think 2 it madness, that, though we could for the moment sacrifice and go away unhurt, with a mental reservation, we prefer "obstinacy"^b to safety. That is to 3 say, you advise us how to cheat you. But we recognize the source of these hints; who it is that sets it all in motion; how, sometimes by cunning ruse, sometimes by cruel rage, he works to overthrow our constancy. That spirit of demonic and angelic nature, 4 our rival because we are severed from him,^c our enemy because God gives us grace, battles against us with your hearts for his base—your hearts tuned and suborned (as I said at the beginning) to perverse judgement and to savage rage. For though all the 5 power of demons and spirits of that sort be subject to us, still, like rascal slaves, they mingle insolence with their fear, and delight to injure those whom at other times they dread. For fear also is a source of hate. And, besides, in their desperate condition of being 6 condemned already, they count it consolation to gratify their spite while their punishment delays. And yet, when recognized, they are subdued and succumb to their condition; hostile to us from afar, face to face they entreat us. So when like rebels 7 breaking out of slave-pens, jails or mines, or that sort of penal servitude, they break out against us (in

quod faterentur, pertinaciam certe et inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri." Also ch. 50 of this *Apology*.

^c *Ob divortium* is taken by some as his revolt from God.

adversus nos, in quorum potestate sunt, certi et inpares se esse et hoc magis perditos, ingratissimos ut aequales et repugnantes perseverantes in eo quod oppugnant et illos nunquam magis detriumphamus quam cum pro fidei obstinatione damnamur.

1 XXVIII. Quoniam autem facile iniquum videretur liberos homines invitos urgeri ad sacrificandum (nam et alias divinae rei faciundae libens animus indicitur), certe ineptum existimaretur, si quis ab alio cogeretur ad honorem deorum, quos ultro sui causa placare deberet, ne prae manu esset iure libertatis dicere: Nolo mihi Iovem propitium; tu quis es? Me conveniat Ianus iratus ex qua velit fronte; quid tibi mecum est? Formati estis ab isdem utique spiritibus, uti nos pro salute imperatoris sacrificare cogatis, et inposita est tam vobis necessitas cogendi quam nobis obligatio periclitandi.

2 Ventum est igitur ad secundum titulum laesae augustioris maiestatis, siquidem maiore formidine et callidiore timiditate Caesarem observatis quam ipsum de Olympo Iovem. Et merito, si sciatis. Quis enim

3 ex viventibus quilibet non mortuo potior? Sed nec hoc vos ratione facitis potius quam respectu praesentaneae potestatis: adeo et in isto irreligiosi erga

^a *Ut aequales* is also translated "as if we were merely their equals," i.e. not their betters.

^b The Latin structure of this half chapter, it is suggested, requires *quoniam* to cover all the clauses down to *mecum est*, after which comes the sequel or apodosis. But Latin structure, transferred to English words, does not always make for idiom or lucidity.

^c He claims a free man's liberty to do without the goodwill of Janus and all other gods, but he ironically suggests that the demons urge compulsion because a higher welfare than his own is involved, viz. the Emperor's. The clause suffers, like some others, from having too much irony in it.

whose power they are)—though they well know they are no match for us and are only so much the more damned for it,—we have no choice but to hold our ground against them, conscious we are a match for them^a; we put up a fight against them, and stand stubbornly on the point they assail. And our triumph over them is never greater than when for our obstinacy in our faith we are condemned.

XXVIII. It might easily seem unjust that free men should be compelled to sacrifice against their will, for in other acts of divine service a willing mind is enjoined.^b It would certainly seem silly for a man to be forced by another to honour the gods whom he ought to wish to please on his own account—forced to do it, that he might not use a freeman's right and rejoin offhand: "I don't want Jove to be propitious to me; who are you? Let Janus confront me in anger, with either face he pleases; what have I to do with you?" But you have been instructed of course by those very same evil spirits, to compel us to sacrifice for the health of the Emperor^c; the necessity is laid upon you to compel us, just as much as the duty is laid upon us to face the danger.

So now we have come to the second charge, the 2 charge of treason against a majesty more august.^d For it is with greater fear and shrewder timidity that you watch Caesar, than Olympian Jove himself. Quite right too, if you only knew it! For who among the living, whoever he be, is not better than a dead man? But it is not reason that makes you do this so much as 3 regard for power that can act on the instant. So that in this too you will be found irreligious to those gods

^d See note on ch. 24, 1.

deos vestros deprehendimini, cum plus timoris humano dominio dicatis. Citius denique apud vos per omnes deos quam per unum genium Caesaris peieratur.

- 1 XXIX. Constet igitur prius, si isti, quibus sacrificatur, salutem imperatoribus vel cuilibet homini impertire possunt, et ita nos crimini maiestatis addicite, si angeli aut daemones substantia pessimi spiritus beneficium aliquod operantur, si perditii conservant, si damnati liberant, si denique, quod in conscientia
2 vestra est, mortui vivos tuentur. Nam utique suas primo statuas et imagines et aedes tuerentur, quae, ut opinor, Caesarum milites excubiis salva praestant. Puto autem, eae ipsae materiae de metallis Caesarum veniunt, et tota templa de nutu Caesaris constant.
3 Multi denique dei habuerunt Caesarem iratum. Facit ad causam, si et propitium, cum illis aliquid liberalitatis aut privilegii confert. Ita qui sunt in Caesaris potestate, cuius et toti sunt, quomodo habebunt salutem Caesaris in potestate, ut eam praestare posse videantur, quam facilius ipsi a Caesare consequantur? Ideo ergo committimus in maiestatem imperatoris, quia illos non subicimus rebus suis, quia non ludimus de officio salutis ipsorum qui eam
4 non putamus in manibus esse plumbatis! Sed vos religiosi,¹ qui eam quaeritis ubi non est, petitis a quibus dari non potest, praeterito eo in cuius est

¹ The reading *irreligiosi, though well supported, misses the irony. It is kept by Oehler.*

^a Genius is the equivalent of guardian spirit. Every man had his genius, the woman her Juno. Cf. ch. 32. 2.

^b The hands of idols are still cast separately and soldered on,

of yours, when you show more fear for the rule of a man. In fact, among you perjury by all the gods together comes quicker than by the genius^a of a single Caesar.

XXIX. First, then, let it be established whether 1 those beings, to whom sacrifice is offered, can give safety to the Emperor or to anybody at all; and then impeach us on the charge of treason, if it appears that angels or demons, in their natures the worst of spirits, do any good service; if the lost can save; if the damned can give freedom; if, in a word (and this is in your secret hearts), if the dead can protect the living. For they really would 2 begin by protecting their own statues and images and temples; which, I take it, are really kept safe by the soldiers of the Caesars on duty. I think, though, that the material of which they are made comes from Caesar's mines; and whole temples rest on Caesar's nod. Many gods ere now have felt Caesar's wrath. It 3 bears on the case, too, if they have found Caesar propitious—in conferring on them something by way of largesse or privilege. So, I ask, how will they, who are in Caesar's power, who belong to Caesar outright, have Caesar's safety in their power, that you should suppose them able to secure for him the safety which they themselves more easily have from Caesar? So, after 4 all, our crime against the majesty of the Emperors comes to this: that we do not subordinate them to their property; that we do not make a jest of our care for their safety, and do not think it really lies in hands soldered on with lead.^b But it is you who are the 5 really religious people—you who seek Caesar's safety where it is not, who pray for it from those by whom it cannot be given, who pass by Him in whose power

potestate. Insuper eos debellatis qui eam sciunt petere, qui etiam possunt impetrare, dum sciunt petere.

- 1 XXX. Nos enim pro salute imperatorum deum invocamus aeternum, deum verum, deum vivum, quem et ipsi imperatores propitium sibi praeter ceteros malunt. Sciunt quis illis dederit imperium, sciunt, qua homines, quis et animam, sentiunt eum esse deum solum in cuius solius potestate sunt, a quo sint secundi, post quem primi, ante omnes et super omnes deos. Quidni? cum super omnes homines, qui utique vivunt et mortuis antistant. Recogitant
- 2 quousque vires imperii sui valent, et ita deum intellegunt; adversus quem valere non possunt, per eum valere se cognoscunt. Caelum denique debellet imperator, caelum captivum triumpho suo invehat, caelo mittat excubias, caelo vectigalia imponat. Non
- 3 potest. Ideo magnus est quia caelo minor est. Illius enim est ipse cuius et caelum est et omnis creatura. Inde est imperator unde et homo antequam imperator, inde potestas illi unde et spiritus.
- 4 Illuc suspicientes Christiani manibus expansis, quia innocuis, capite nudo, quia non erubescimus, denique sine monitore, quia de pectore oramus, precantes sumus semper pro omnibus imperatoribus. Vitam illis prolixam, imperium securum, domum tutam, exercitus fortes, senatum fidelem, populum probum,

^a Cf. prayer for Emperors in Clement of Rome, 60.

^b Is this a distant memory of Horace? *Odes*, iii. 6. 5 "dis te minorem quod geris imperas."

^c The Roman prayed with head covered; cf. Virgil, *Aen.* iii. 405; Lucr. v. 1196.

^d In Roman ritual the formula was more important than the intention; the prayer (like an Indian *mantram*) depended

it is. Yes, and more than that, you wage war on those who know how to pray for it, and who can obtain it too, since they know how to pray for it.

XXX. For we, on behalf of the safety of the 1 Emperors,^a invoke the eternal God, the true God, the living God, whom the Emperors themselves prefer to have propitious to them beyond all other gods. They know who has given them the empire; they know, as men, who has given them life; they feel that He is God alone, in whose power and no other's they are, second to whom they stand, after whom they come first, before all gods and above all gods. Why not? seeing that they are above all men, and men at any rate live and so are better than dead things. They 2 reflect how far the strength of their empire avails, and thus they understand God; against Him they cannot avail, so they know it is through Him that they do avail. Let the Emperor, as a last test, make war on heaven, carry heaven captive in his triumph, set a guard on heaven, lay taxes on heaven. He cannot. So he is great, because he is less than heaven.^b He 3 himself belongs to Him, whose is heaven and all creation. Thence comes the Emperor, whence came the man before he was Emperor; thence his power, whence his spirit. Looking up to heaven the 4 Christians—with hands outspread, because innocent, with head bare because we do not blush,^c yes! and without one to give the form of words,^d for we pray from the heart,—we are ever making intercession for all the Emperors. We pray for them long life, a secure rule, a safe home, brave armies, a faithful senate, an honest people, a quiet world—and every-
on being verbally precise. Tertullian here states another conception of prayer.

orbem quietum, quaecunque hominis et Caesaris vota
 5 sunt, haec ab alio orare non possum quam a quo me
 scio consecuturum, quoniam et ipse est qui solus
 praestat et ego sum cui impetrare debetur, famulus
 eius, qui eum solus observo, qui propter disciplinam
 eius occidit, qui ei offero opimam et maiorem hostiam
 quam ipse mandavit, orationem de carne pudica, de
 6 anima innocenti, de spiritu sancto profectam, non
 grana thuris unius assis, Arabicae arboris lacrimas,
 nec duas meri guttas, nec sanguinem reprobi bovis
 mori optantis, et post omnia inquinamenta etiam
 conscientiam spurcam: ut mirer, cum hostiae pro-
 bantur penes vos a vitiosissimis sacerdotibus, cur¹
 praecordia potius victimarum quam ipsorum sacri-
 7 ficientium examinentur. Sic itaque nos ad deum
 expansos ungulae fodiant, cruces suspendant, ignes
 lambant, gladii guttura detruncent, bestiae insiliant:
 paratus est ad omne supplicium ipse habitus orantis
 Christiani. Hoc agite, boni praesides, extorque-
 te animam deo supplicantem pro imperatore. Hoc erit
 crimen, ubi veritas dei et devotio est.

1 XXXI. Adolati nunc sumus imperatori et mentiti
 vota quae diximus, ad evadendam scilicet vim. Plane
 proficit ista fallacia. Admittitis nos enim probare
 quodcunque defendimus. Qui ergo putaveris nihil
 nos de salute Caesarum curare, inspicite dei voces,
 litteras nostras, quas neque ipsi suppressimus et
 2 plerique casus ad extraneos transferunt. Scitote ex
 illis praeceptum esse nobis ad redundantiam benigni-

¹ This is a correction, the simplest correction: Oehler
 prefers to read cum cuivis.

^a The two sentences are obscure; this is Rauschen's
 explanation.

thing for which a man and a Caesar can pray. All this 5
 I cannot ask of any other but only of Him, from whom
 I know I shall receive it, since He it is who alone gives
 and I am one to whom the answer to prayer is due,
 His servant, who alone worships Him, who for His
 teaching am slain, who offer to Him that rich and
 better sacrifice which He himself commanded—I
 mean prayer, proceeding from flesh pure, soul inno-
 cent, spirit holy. Not grains of incense worth one 6
 halfpenny, tears of an Arabian tree, not two drops of
 wine, not blood of a worthless ox longing to die, and
 on top of all sorts of pollution a conscience unclean;—
 so that I wonder why, when among you victims are
 being examined by the most vicious of priests, the
 breasts of the victims rather than of the sacrificers
 should be inspected. While thus, then, we spread our- 7
 selves before God, let the hooks pierce us, the crosses
 suspend us, the fires play upon us, the swords gash our
 throats, the beasts leap on us. The very posture of
 the Christian at prayer is readiness for any torture.
 Go to it, my good magistrates, rack out the soul that
 prays to God for the Emperor. Here lies the crime—
 where God's truth is, where devotion to God is.

XXXI. Ah! but we have been flattering the 1
 Emperor; we lied about those prayers we alleged—
 to avoid being roughly dealt with, of course. Your
 cleverness, in so saying, helps us however. For you
 give us a chance to prove whatever point we bring
 up in our defence.^a You, sir, then, who fancy we
 care nothing for Caesar's safety, look into the words
 of God, into our books, which we do not hide, and
 which many a chance throws into the hands of out-
 siders. Learn from them, that the precept is given 2
 us (to the point of overflow of kindness) to pray to

tatis etiam pro inimicis deum orare et persecutoribus nostris bona precari. Qui magis inimici et persecutores Christianorum quam de quorum maiestate 3 convenimur in crimen? Sed etiam nominatim atque manifeste, Orate, inquit, pro regibus et pro principibus et potestatibus, ut omnia tranquilla sint vobis. Cum enim concutitur imperium concussis etiam ceteris membris eius utique et nos, licet extranei a turbis aestimemur,¹ in aliquo loco casus invenimur.

1 XXXII. Est et alia maior necessitas nobis orandi pro imperatoribus, etiam pro omni statu imperii rebusque Romanis, qui vim maximam universo orbi imminentem ipsamque clausulam saeculi acerbitates horrendas comminantem Romani imperii commeatu scimus retardari. Itaque nolumus experiri, et dum precamur differri, Romanae diuturnitati favemus.

2 Sed et iuramus, sicut non per genios Caesarum, ita per salutem eorum, quae est augustior omnibus geniis. Nescitis genios daemones dici et inde diminutiva voce daemonia? Nos iudicium dei suspicimus in 3 imperatoribus, qui gentibus illos praefecit. Id in eis scimus esse quod deus voluit, ideoque et salvum volumus esse quod deus voluit et pro magno id

¹ Oehler with some MS. warrant retains aestimemur: others with other MS. warrant omit it. It would be easier without it, but that does not make it more probable in Tertullian's writing.

^a 1 Timothy ii. 2.

^b Or "though we are counted foreigners by the crowds."

^c Or the Roman world.

^d Cf. 2 Thess. ii. 6-8. Tertullian elsewhere (*Ad Scapulam*, 2) indicates the belief that the Roman Empire is to last as long as the world. It is to be noted that, apart from the author of the canonical *Apocalypse*, the early Christian

God even for our enemies, to beseech His blessings for our persecutors. Who are more the enemies and the persecutors of Christians, than those against whose majesty we are accused of treason? But here 3 it is explicitly named and in plain terms. "Pray," he says "for kings, and for princes and powers, that all things may be tranquil for you."^a For when the empire is shaken, when the rest of its members are shaken, we, too, of course, though we are supposed not to have anything to do with the disorder,^b are found in some corner of the disaster.

XXXII. There is another need, a greater one, for 1 our praying for the Emperors, and for the whole estate of the empire and the interests of Rome.^c We know that the great force which threatens the whole world, the end of the age itself with its menace of hideous suffering, is delayed by the respite which the Roman empire means for us.^d We do not wish to experience all that; and when we pray for its postponement are helping forward the continuance of Rome.

We make our oaths, too, not by "the genius of 2 the Caesar," but by his health, which is more august than any genius. Do you not know that *genius* is a name for *demon*, or in the diminutive *daemonium*? We respect the judgement of God in the Emperors, who has set them over the nations. We know that to 3 be in them which God wished to be there, and so we wish that safe, which God wished; and we count that

writers are *not* hostile to the Roman Empire; they wish not to be persecuted naturally, but otherwise they recognize the value of the government and do not wish it to be changed. The Pauline view prevails as against the purely Jewish.

iuramento habemus. Ceterum daemones, id est genios, adiurare consuevimus, ut illos de hominibus exigamus, non deierare, ut eis honorem divinitatis conferamus.

1 XXXIII. Sed quid ego amplius de religione atque pietate Christiana in imperatore? quem necesse est suspiciamus ut eum quem dominus noster elegit, ut merito dixerim: Noster est magis Caesar, a nostro
2 deo constitutus. Itaque ut meo plus ego illi operor in salutem, siquidem non solum ab eo postulo eam qui potest praestare, aut quod talis postulo qui merear impetrare, sed etiam quod temperans maiestatem Caesaris infra deum magis illum commendo deo, cui soli subicio. Subicio autem cui non adaequo.
3 Non enim deum imperatorem dicam, vel quia mentiri nescio, vel quia illum deridere non audeo, vel quia nec ipse se deum volet dici. Si homo sit, interest homini deo cedere. Satis habeat appellari imperator. Grande et hoc nomen est, quod a deo traditur. Negat illum imperatorem qui deum dicit; nisi homo
4 sit non est imperator. Hominem se esse etiam triumphans in illo sublimissimo curru admonetur. Suggestur enim ei a tergo: Respice post te! Hominem te memento! Et utique hoc magis gaudet tanta se gloria coruscare, ut illi admonitio condicionis suae sit necessaria. Minor erat, si tunc deus diceretur quia non vere diceretur. Maior est qui revocatur, ne se deum existimet.

1 XXXIV. Augustus, imperii formator, ne dominum

^a Juvenal, iii. 41; if (which is uncertain) Tertullian has Juvenal in mind.

a great oath. But demons, or geniuses, we are accustomed to exorcize, in order to drive them out of men—not to swear by them and so give them the honour of divinity.

XXXIII. But why need I say more of the religious 1 awe, the piety, of Christians, where the Emperor is concerned? We must needs respect him as the chosen of our Lord. So I have a right to say, Caesar is 2 more ours than yours, appointed as he is by our God. He is mine; and so I do more for his safety,—not only because I seek it from Him only who can give it; or because I who ask am one who deserve to receive; but also because I set the majesty of Caesar below God and the more commend him to God to Whom alone I subordinate him. This I do, in that I do not make him equal to God. For I will not call 3 the Emperor God for various reasons, as that I “know not to lie,”^a that I dare not mock him, that he himself will not wish to be called God. If he is a man, it is a man’s interest to yield place to God. Let him be satisfied to be called Emperor. And a great name it is, too, that God gives him! The man denies he is Emperor, who says he is God. Unless he is a man, he is not Emperor. Even in the triumph, as 4 he rides in that most exalted chariot, he is reminded that he is a man. It is whispered to him from behind: “Look behind thee; remember thou art a man.” That he is in such a blaze of glory that the reminder of his mortal state is necessary for him—makes it the more delightful to him. He would be less, if he were at that moment called a god, because it would not be true. He is greater, who is called to look back, lest he think himself a god.

XXXIV. Augustus, who framed the empire, was 1

- quidem dici se volebat ; et hoc enim dei est cognomen. Dicam plane imperatorem dominum, sed more communi, sed quando non cogor, ut dominum dei vice dicam. Ceterum liber sum illi. Dominus enim meus unus est, deus omnipotens aeternus, idem qui et
 2 ipsius. Qui pater patriae est, quomodo dominus est ? Sed et gratius est nomen pietatis quam potestatis. Etiam familiae magis patres quam domini vocantur. Tanto abest ut imperator deus debeat dici, quod non potest credi non modo turpissima sed et pernicio-
 3 adulatione. Tamquam si habens imperatorem alterum appelles, nonne maximam et inexorabilem offensam contrahes eius quem habuisti, etiam ipsi timendam quem appellasti ? Esto religiosus in deum, qui vis illum propitium imperatori. Desine alium deum credere atque ita et hunc deum dicere cui deo opus
 4 est. Si non de mendacio erubescit adulatio eiusmodi hominem deum appellans, timeat saltem de infausto. Maledictum est ante apotheosin deum Caesarem nuncupari.
- 1 XXXV. Propterea igitur publici hostes Christiani, quia imperatoribus neque vanos neque mentientes neque temerarios honores dicant, quia verae religionis homines etiam solemnia eorum conscientia

^a See Suetonius, *Augustus*, 53, an interesting chapter. The word *dominus* was associated with the ownership of slaves and with political tyranny. Dio Cassius, lvi. 8. 1, says that Tiberius said he was not *δεσπότης* = *dominus* to free men, nor *imperator* except to his soldiers.

^b So Brutus in Cic. *Epp. ad Brut.* i. 17. 6 "sed dominum ne parentem quidem maiores nostri voluerunt esse."

^c The text is shaky here ; but the version, if not exact translation, gives the gist.

^d Cf. Tacitus, *Annals*, xv. 74. 4. When a consul designate proposed the building of a temple to the deified Nero, 158

unwilling to be called so much as Lord ^a ; for that also is a name of God. I will frankly call the Emperor Lord, but only in the ordinary way. but only when force is not brought to bear on me to call him Lord in the sense of God. But I am a free man as far as the Emperor is concerned ; for my Lord is One, God omnipotent, eternal, who is also the Emperor's Lord. He who is "Father of his Country," how is 2 he its *lord* ? But there is more pleasure in the name of affection than in the name of power. Even in the family we say *paterfamilias* rather than *lord*.^b So far is it from being right for the Emperor to be called god,—a name incredible save in flattery not merely abject but injurious.^c It would be much the 3 same as if, when one man was Emperor, you called another man by that name—would you not incur the deepest displeasure, and quite inexorable, in the real Emperor, not without danger at the same time for the man to whom you have given the name ? Be you religious toward God, you who wish Him propitious to the Emperor. Cease to believe there is another God ; and cease in the same way to call him God, who needs God. If flattery does not 4 blush at the lie, when it calls such a man God, let it fear the uncanny side of it ; it is a curse before his apotheosis to call Caesar god.^d

XXXV. So that is why Christians are public 1 enemies,—because they will not give the Emperors vain, false and rash honours ; because, being men of a true religion, they celebrate the Emperors' festivals

Nero vetoed it, afraid (Tacitus says) that someone would twist the proposal into an omen portending his death ; for divine honours were not given to an Emperor till his career among men was ended.

2 potius quam lascivia celebrant. Grande videlicet officium focos et toros in publicum educere, vicatim epulari, civitatem tabernae habitu abolefacere, vino lutum cogere, catervatim cursitare ad iniurias, ad impudentias, ad libidinis inlecebras. Sicine exprimitur publicum gaudium per dedecus publicum? Haecine solemnes dies principum decent, quae alios dies non
3 decent? Qui observant disciplinam de Caesaris respectu, hi eam propter Caesarem deserunt, et malorum morum licentia pietas erit, occasio luxuriae
4 religio deputabitur? O nos merito damnandos! Cur enim vota et gaudia Caesarum casti et sobrii et probi expungimus? cur die laeto non laureis postes obumbramus nec lucernis diem infringimus? Honesta res est solemnitate publica exigente induere domui tuae habitum alicuius novi lupanaris.

5 Velim tamen in hac quoque religione secundae maiestatis, de qua in secundum sacrilegium convenimur Christiani non celebrando vobiscum solemnia Caesarum quo more celebrari nec modestia nec verecundia nec pudicitia permittunt, sed occasio voluptatis magis quam digna ratio persuasit, fidem et veritatem vestram demonstrare, ne forte et isthic deteriores Christianis deprehendantur qui nos nolunt Romanos
6 haberi, sed ut hostes principum Romanorum. Ipsos Quirites, ipsam vernaculam septem collium plebem convenio, an alicui Caesari suo parcat illa lingua

^a Cf. ch. 42. 5; Tacitus, *Ann.* xv. 37. 1, Nero's feasts in public thoroughfares.

^b Cf. Tertullian, *De Idololatria*, 15; Juvenal, vi. 79, 227; xii. 91.

more in heart than in frolic. Splendid service, I 2 assure you! to bring braziers and couches out into the open air, street by street to dine together,^a to make the city look like nothing but a tavern, to make mud with wine, to rush about in droves for outrage, impudence and the incitements to lust. Is it thus that a people's joy is expressed in public shame? Does such conduct befit the festal days of princes, when it ill befits other days? Men who maintain order out of regard 3 for Caesar, are they to abandon it for Caesar's sake? Shall their good feeling for him be their licence to follow bad ways? shall religion be reckoned as an occasion for indulgence? Oh it is we deserve to be 4 condemned! For why do we perform our vows and celebrate our joys for the Caesars, chaste, sober and decent? Why on the glad day do we not hang our doors with laurels and intrude upon the daylight with lamps?^b It is the honest man's duty, when a great public occasion calls, to rig your house up like some new brothel!

I should like, though, in dealing with this religion of 5 a second majesty,^c in which we Christians are charged with a second sacrilege because we do not celebrate the holidays of the Caesars with you in a way which neither modesty, decency, nor chastity permits—a way recommended by the chance of pleasure rather than by proper thought—I should like, I say, to exhibit *your* loyalty and truth, in case here, too, those who will not allow us to be counted Romans but enemies of the Roman princes, may be proved worse even than Christians. I arraign the Quirites 6 themselves, and the native plebs of the seven hills—does that Roman tongue spare any one of its Caesars?

^c i.e., next after the gods.

Romana? Testis est Tiberis, et scholae bestiarum.

- 7 Iam si pectoribus ad translucendum quandam specularem materiam natura obduxisset, cuius non praecordia insculpta apparent novi ac novi Caesaris scenam congiario dividendo praesidentis? Etiam illa hora qua adclamant:

de nostris annis augeat tibi Iupiter annos!

Haec Christianus tam enuntiare non novit quam de novo Caesare optare.

- 8 Sed vulgus, inquis. Ut vulgus, tamen Romani, nec ulli magis depostulatores Christianorum quam vulgus. Plane ceteri ordines pro auctoritate religiosi ex fide. Nihil hosticum de ipso senatu, de equite, 9 de castris, de palatiis ipsis spirat. Unde Cassii et Nigri et Albini? unde qui inter duas laurus obsident Caesarem? unde qui faucibus eius exprimendis palaestricam exercent? unde qui armati palatium inrumpunt, omnibus tot Sigeriis atque Partheniis audaciores? De Romanis, nisi fallor, id est de non

^a The Tiber is in the mss.; but the Circus is thought more probable; cf. Tertullian, *De Spectaculis*, 16; in *Ad Nationes*, i. 17, he refers to pasquinades hung on statues: "Ipsius vernaculae gentis inreverentiam recognoscant et festivos libellos quos statuæ sciunt et illa obliqua nonnunquam dicta a concilio atque maledicta quae circi sonant." See W. W. Story, *Roba di Roma*, chap. xi; Roman wit, he says, is essentially satirical, and its true type is *Pasquino*—from the Middle Ages to Pio Nono, with abundant examples in Latin and Italian. "Quod non fecerunt barbari fecerunt Barberini" comes from the famous statue associated with the name Pasquino.

^b The authorship of this hexameter seems unknown; something slightly like it in Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 613. The reader will readily correct the metre, but the line was used by the Arval Brothers as it stands.

^c Because he cannot pray to Jupiter.

The Tiber ^a shall be witness, and the training-schools of the beasts. If Nature had covered our breasts 7 with some transparent material that would let the light through, whose heart would not appear engraved with the picture of one new Caesar after another, presiding over the distribution of largesse? Yes, even in the very hour when they are shouting:

Jupiter take our years to add to thine.^b

A Christian can no more utter these words than wish for a new Caesar.^c

But that is the common herd, you say. Common 8 herd, if you will, but Romans; and there are none more apt to shout for the death of the Christians than the common herd. But, of course, the other orders of society stand religiously for authority, as their loyalty requires! There is never a whiff of hostility from Senate, knight, camp, or the palace itself! And 9 whence a Cassius, a Niger, an Albinus? Whence those who between two laurels lie in wait for Caesar? Whence those who practise wrestling with a view to strangling him? Whence those who, with weapon in hand, break into his palace, more daring than any Sigerius or Parthenius?^d From among Romans,

^d The laurels are an unsolved riddle (cf. Martial, iv. 78). Commodus was strangled in A.D. 192 by a wrestler with whom he used to train. *Script. Hist. August., Commodus*, 17. Avidius Cassius was a usurper in the time of Marcus Aurelius (his life is in the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*); Pescennius Niger and Clodius Albinus attempted to seize the imperial throne on the death of Commodus, the one supported by the army in Syria, the other by that of Britain. Those who broke into the palace killed the Emperor Pertinax (Dio Cass. lxxiv. 9). So much was quite recent history. Sigerius and Parthenius were among the murderers of Domitian. See Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chapter v.

- 10 Christianis. Atque adeo omnes illi sub ipsa usque impietatis eruptione et sacra faciebant pro salute imperatoris et genium eius deierabant, alii foris alii intus, et utique publicorum hostium nomen Christianis dabant.
- 11 Sed et qui nunc scelestarum partium socii aut plausores cotidie revelantur, post vindemiam parri-cidarum racematio superstes, quam recentissimis et ramosissimis laureis postes praestruébant, quam elatissimis et clarissimis lucernis vestibula nebula-bant, quam cultissimis et superbissimis toris forum sibi dividebant, non ut gaudia publica celebrarent, sed ut vota propria iam ediscerent in aliena sollemni-tate et exemplum atque imaginem spei suae inaugu-rarent nomen principis in corde mutantes.
- 12 Eadem officia dependunt et qui astrologos et aru-spices et augures et magos de Caesarum capite consul-tant, quas artes ut ab angelis desertoribus proditas et a deo interdictas ne suis quidem causis adhibent Christiani. Cui autem opus est perscrutari super Caesaris salute, nisi a quo aliquid adversus illam cogitatur vel optatur, aut post illam speratur et sustinetur? Non enim ea mente de caris consulitur

^a Kellner takes the adverbs to mean "officially" and "privately"; the Ante-Nicene Library translation has it that the plotters were "one thing in profession and another in the heart," which is attractive.

^b The commentators cite Spartianus, *Life of Severus*, 15 (in *Script. Hist. August.*): "inter haec Pescennianas reliquias Plautiano auctore persequēbatur ita ut nonnullos etiam ex amicis suis quasi vitae suae insidiatores appeteret." The details seem unknown. But Spartianus's next sentence says

unless I am mistaken, from among non-Christians. Yes, yes, every one of them, right up to the moment 10 of the outburst of impiety, was offering sacrifice for the health of the Emperor, was swearing by his genius, some outdoors, some indoors,^a and you may be sure they were giving the Christians the name of public enemies.

But to come to our own times, and the daily 11 revelations as to the accomplices in guilty plots and those who applaud them (the gleanings that remain after a whole vintage of assassins!)—how very fresh, how very bushy, were the laurels with which they decked their doors! how very high, how very bright, the lamps with which they smoked the halls! how very splendid and how very proud the couches with which they divided the forum among them! No, not to celebrate the people's joys, but to study some private prayers of their own; in the midst of the festival of others to inaugurate the pattern and picture of their own hopes, changing the *name* of the Emperor in their hearts.^b

The same duty and service are rendered by those 12 who consult the astrologers, the soothsayers, the augurs and the magicians as to the life of the Caesars—arts made known by the angels that forsook God, arts which God has forbidden, which Christians never use even in their own private affairs. What man has any need to pry into the question of Caesar's safety, unless it be one whose thoughts or wishes are hostile to Caesar's safety, or whose hopes or expectations look to something later? For very different is the spirit in which such inquiries are made where men's the Emperor killed many on the charge "quasi Chaldaeos aut vates de sua salute consuluisse."

qua de dominis. Aliter curiosa est sollicitudo sanguinis, aliter servitutis.

- 1 XXXVI. Si haec ita sunt, ut hostes deprehendantur qui Romani vocabantur, cur nos, qui hostes existimamur, Romani negamur? Non possumus et Romani non esse et hostes esse, cum hostes reperiantur qui
- 2 Romani habebantur. Adeo pietas et religio et fides imperatoribus debita non in huiusmodi officiis consistit quibus et hostilitas magis ad velamentum sui potest fungi, sed in his moribus quibus divinitas imperat tam vere quam circa omnes necesse habent exhiberi.
- 3 Neque enim haec opera bonae mentis solis imperatoribus debentur a nobis. Nullum bonum sub exceptione personarum administramus, quia nobis praestamus, qui non ab homine aut laudis aut praemii expensum captamus, sed a deo exactore et remun-
- 4 neratore indifferentis benignitatis. Idem sumus imperatoribus qui et vicinis nostris. Male enim velle, male facere, male dicere, male cogitare de quoquam ex aequo vetamur. Quodcumque non licet in imperatorem, id nec in quemquam: quod in neminem, eo forsitan magis nec in ipsum qui per deum tantus est.
- 1 XXXVII. Si inimicos, ut supra diximus, iubemus diligere, quem habemus odisse? Item si laesi vicem referre prohibemur, ne de facto pares simus, quem
- 2 possumus laedere? Nam de isto ipsi recognoscite. Quotiens enim in Christianos desaevis partim

^a The translation is a very free attempt to render what seems to lie behind the Latin text. Various expedients are tried—the shifting of *non* (with some quite silly results), its omission, its transformation into *nos*—but none seems satisfactory. Oehler, Rauschen, and Waltzing keep the *ms.* reading as above.

dear ones are involved and where their masters. A kinsman's anxiety and a slave's show different types of curiosity.

XXXVI. If it comes to this that men who were 1 called Romans are found to be enemies, why are we, who are thought to be enemies, denied the name of Romans? It is impossible to say that we are not Romans because we are enemies, when enemies are discovered who were counted Romans.^a The piety, 2 the religious attitude, the loyalty, owed to Emperors does not consist of such observances as hostility may perform to cloak its intentions; but in that type of character which God as truly requires of us to show our right feeling towards the Emperor as He requires it in the case of all men. For it is not 3 to Emperors alone that we owe these works of a good heart. No exception of persons is allowed in any good action we discharge; for we do it for ourselves—not that we plan to get any return in praise or recompense from man, but from God, who requires and rewards a benevolence that makes no distinction between persons. We are the same to the Emperors 4 as we are to our neighbours. For to wish evil, to do evil, to speak evil, to think evil of any—are all equally forbidden to us. What we may not do to the Emperor, we may not do to any man. What we may do to no man, so much the more, I take it, must we not do to him, who through God is so great.

XXXVII. If, as we said above, we are bidden love 1 our enemies, whom have we to hate? Again, if, when a man injures us, we are forbidden to retaliate, that the action may not make us alike, whom then can we injure? Look at this, yourselves, and think 2 it over! How often do you wreak your fury on the

- animis propriis, partim legibus obsequentes? Quotiens etiam praeteritis vobis suo iure nos inimicum vulgus invadit lapidibus et incendiis? Ipsis Bacchanalium furiis nec mortuis parcunt Christianis, quin illos de requie sepulturae, de asylo quodam mortis, iam alios, iam nec totos avellant, dissecant, distrahant.
- 3 Quid tamen de tam conspiratis umquam denotatis, de tam animatis ad mortem usque pro iniuria repensatum, quando vel una nox pauculis faculis largiter ultionis posset operari, si malum malo dispungi penes nos liceret? Sed absit ut aut igni humano vindicetur divina secta aut doleat pati in quo probatur.
- 4 Si enim et hostes exertos, non tantum vindices occultos agere vellemus, deesset nobis vis numerorum et copiarum? Plures nimirum Mauri et Marcomanni ipsique Parthi, vel quantaecunque unius tamen loci et suorum finium gentes quam totius orbis. Hesterni sumus, et vestra omnia implevimus, urbes, insulas, castella, municipia, conciliabula, castra ipsa, tribus, decurias, palatium, senatum, forum; sola vobis
- 5 reliquimus templa.¹ Cui bello non idonei, non prompti fuissimus, etiam in pares copiis, qui tam libenter trucidamur, si non apud istam disciplinam magis occidi liceret quam occidere?
- 6 Potuimus et inermes nec rebelles, sed tantummodo

¹ *The codex Fuldensis inserts:* Possumus dinumerare exercitus vestros; unius provinciae plures erunt.

^a The *Apology* is addressed to the magistrates, it will be recalled; and the mob would give them the go-by.

^b Or possibly in the urban sense, "blocks" of buildings, lodging houses.

^c Roughly, town councils.

Christians, in part obeying your own instincts, in part the laws? How often, too, without regard to you,^a does the unfriendly mob on its own account assail us with stones and fire? Mad as Bacchanals, they spare not even the Christian dead; no! from the repose of the grave, from what I may call death's asylum, changed as the bodies may be, or mere fragments—they will have them out, rip and rend them. Yet I ask, though Christians are so sworn to 3 one purpose, so ready for death itself, what retaliation for injury can you charge against us, though a single night and a few little torches could work a lavish revenge, if among us wrong might be wiped out with wrong? But away with the thought that God's school should either avenge itself with man's fire, or resent the suffering that is its probation!

For if we wished to play the part of open enemies, 4 and not merely hidden avengers, should we lack the power that numbers and battalions give? Oh, of course, the Moors, the Marcomanni, yes, and the Parthians—or any other races, as great as you please, but of one region with their own frontiers—are more numerous than the race that covers the world! We are but of yesterday, and we have filled everything you have—cities, islands,^b forts, towns, exchanges, yes! and camps, tribes, decuries,^c palace, senate, forum. All we have left to you is the temples! [We can count your troops; the Christians of one province will be more in number.] For what war 5 should we not have been fit and ready even if unequal in forces—we who are so glad to be butchered—were it not, of course, that in our doctrine we are given ampler liberty to be killed than to kill?

Why! without taking up arms, without rebellion, 6

discordes solius divortii invidia adversus vos dimicasse. Si enim tanta vis hominum in aliquem orbis remoti sinum abruptissemus a vobis, suffudisset utique dominationem vestram tot qualiumcumque civium amissio, immo et ipsa destituitio punisset.

7 Procul dubio expavissetis ad solitudinem vestram, ad silentium rerum et stuporem quendam quasi mortui orbis. Quaesissetis quibus imperaretis. Plures hostes
8 quam cives vobis remansissent. Nunc enim pauciores hostes habetis prae multitudine Christianorum, paene omnium civitatum paene omnes cives Christianos habendo. Sed hostes maluistis vocare generis humani potius quam erroris humani.

9 Quis autem vos ab illis occultis et usquequaque vastantibus mentes et valitudines vestras hostibus raperet, a daemoniorum incursibus dico, quae de vobis sine praemio, sine mercede depellimus? Suffecisset hoc solum nostrae ultioni, quod vacua
10 exinde possessio immundis spiritibus pateret. Porro nec tanti praesidii compensationem cogitantes non modo non molestum vobis genus, verum etiam necessarium hostes iudicare maluistis, quia sumus plane, non generis humani tamen, sed potius erroris.

1 XXXVIII. Proinde nec paulo lenius inter licitas factiones sectam istam deputari oportebat, a qua nihil tale committitur quale de illicitis factionibus

^a *Suffundere*, as "put to the blush," without a *rubore* or *pudore*, in ch. 4. Oehler, on Tertullian, *Scorpiace*, 10, collects a number of other instances.

^b Kellner notes that in the western world decline of population was already beginning to be remarked.

^c If this seems exaggeration, a touch of rhetoric (which is very possible), it must be remembered (as the word *pagan* should remind us) that Christianity flourished best where cities were most numerous.

simply by standing aside, by mere ill-natured separation, we could have fought you! For if so vast a mass of people as we had broken away from you and removed to some recess of the world apart, the mere loss of so many citizens of whatever sort would have brought a blush^a to your rule—yes, that it would, and punished you, too, by sheer desertion! Beyond 7 doubt, you would have shuddered at your solitude, at the silence in the world, the stupor as it were of a dead globe. You would have had to look about for people to rule.^b You would have had more enemies left than citizens. For, as things are, you have fewer 8 enemies because of the multitude of the Christians, when nearly all the citizens you have in nearly all the cities are Christian.^c But you have preferred to call us enemies of the human race rather than of human error.

But who would rescue you from those secret enemies 9 that everywhere lay waste your minds and your bodily health? I mean, from the assaults of demons, whom we drive out of you, without reward, without pay. Why, this alone would have sufficed to avenge us—to leave you open and exposed to unclean spirits with immediate possession! But no such thing! 10 Far from thinking of any reward for us for protection so great, you have preferred to account a race of men, not merely harmless to you, but necessary, to be enemies. And so we are—enemies, that is, not of the human race, but of human error.

XXXVIII. I proceed. Was not a rather gentler 1 treatment in order? Should not this school have been classed among tolerated associations, when it commits no such actions as are commonly feared from un-

2 timeri solet? Nisi fallor enim, prohibendarum factionum causa de providentia constant modestiae publicae ne civitas in partes scinderetur, quae res facile comitia, concilia, curias, contiones, spectacula etiam aemulis studiorum compulsationibus inquietaret, cum iam et in quaestu habere coepissent venalem et
3 mercenariam homines violentiae suae operam. At enim nobis ab omni gloriae et dignitatis ardore frigentibus nulla est necessitas coetus, nec ulla magis res aliena quam publica. Unam omnium rempublicam agnoscimus mundum.

4 Aequè spectaculis vestris in tantum renuntiamus in quantum originibus eorum, quas scimus de superstitione conceptas, cum et ipsis rebus, de quibus transiguntur, praetersumus. Nihil est nobis dictu, visu, auditu cum insania circi, cum impudicitia theatri, cum atrocitate arenae, cum xysti vanitate. Quo vos
5 offendimus, si alias praesumimus voluptates? Si oblectari novisse nolumus, nostra iniuria est, si forte, non vestra. Sed reprobamus quae placent vobis. Nec vos nostra delectant. Sed licuit Epicureis aliquam decernere voluptatis veritatem, id est animi aequitatem, †et ampla negotia Christianae.†¹

1 XXXIX. Edam iam nunc ego ipse negotia Christianae factionis, ut qui mala refutaverim, bona ostendam.

¹ The text is uncertain; different nouns are added to explain Christianae. Perhaps words are thrown back from ch. 39 or a title it may once have had. What seems required by the sense is some suggestion that, if the Epicureans were allowed their theory of pleasure, the Christian has the same right to his idea of it. The codex Fuldensis has the Sed licuit sentence before the Quo vos offendimus. Rauschen and Waltzing follow it, and cut away the four words obelized.

^a Cf. Pliny to Trajan, *Epp.* 96. 7.

^b One of many Stoic turns in Tertullian.

lawful associations? ^a For, unless I am mistaken, 2 the reason for prohibiting associations clearly lay in forethought for public order—to save the State from being torn into parties, a thing very likely to disturb election assemblies, public gatherings, local senates, meetings, even the public games, with the clashing and rivalry of partisans, especially since men had begun to reckon on their violence as a source of revenue, offering it for sale at a price. We, how- 3 ever, whom all the flames of glory and dignity leave cold, have no need to combine; nothing is more foreign to us than the State. One state we know, of which all are citizens—the universe.^b

Your public games, too, we renounce, as heartily 4 as we do their origins; we know these origins lie in superstition; we leave on one side the matters with which they are concerned. We have nothing to do, in speech, sight or hearing, with the madness of the circus, the shamelessness of the theatre, the savagery of the arena, the vanity of the gymnasium. Why should we offend you, if we assume 5 the existence of other pleasures? If we do not wish to know delight, it is our loss; in any case, not yours. But we reject what pleases you; what pleases us gives you no delight. But the Epicureans were allowed to maintain their theory of what true pleasure is; they found it in calm of mind; † and for Christian there is ample occupation.†

XXXIX. I will now show you the proceedings with 1 which the Christian association occupies itself^c; I have proved they are not wrong; so now I will make you

^c Compare the account of Christian worship given by Pliny to Trajan, *Epp.* x. 96, and by Justin (mid second century), *Apology*, 67.

Corpus sumus de conscientia religionis et disciplinae unitate et spei foedere. Coimus in coetum et congregationem, ut ad deum quasi manu facta precationibus ambiamus orantes. Haec vis deo grata est. Oramus etiam pro imperatoribus, pro ministris eorum et potestatibus, pro statu saeculi, pro rerum quiete, pro mora finis. Coimús ad litterarum divinarum commemorationem, si quid praesentium temporum qualitas aut praemonere cogit aut recognoscere. Certe fidem sanctis vocibus pascimus, spem erigimus, fiduciam figimus, disciplinam praeceptorum nihilominus inculcationibus densamus; ibidem etiam exhortationes, castigationes et censura divina. Nam et iudicatur magno cum pondere, ut apud certos de dei conspectu, summumque futuri iudicii praeiudicium est, si quis ita deliquerit, ut a communicatione orationis et conventus et omnis sancti commercii relegetur. Praesident probati quique seniores, honorem istum non pretio, sed testimonio adepti. Neque enim pretio ulla res dei constat.

Etiam si quod arcae genus est, non de honoraria summa quasi redemptae religionis congregatur. Modicam unusquisque stipem menstrua die, vel cum velit, et si modo velit, et si modo possit, apponit; nam nemo compellitur, sed sponte confert. Haec quasi deposita pietatis sunt. Nam inde non epulis nec potaculis nec ingratis voratrinis dispensatur, sed

^a *Nihilominus*, perhaps, because faith, hope, confidence, need to be related to something solid (*densamus*), something less subjective, and this need is met by God's law.

^b Cf. Pliny to Trajan, *Epp.* x. 112, 113, on entrance fees paid by members added to town senates in Asia, *honorarium decurionatus*.

see they are good. We are a society (*corpus*) with a common religious feeling, unity of discipline, a common bond of hope. We meet in gathering and congregation to approach God in prayer, massing our forces to surround Him. This violence that we do Him pleases God. We pray also for Emperors, for their ministers and those in authority, for the security of the world, for peace on earth, for postponement of the end. We meet to read the books of God—if anything in the nature of the times bids us look to the future or open our eyes to facts. In any case, with those holy words we feed our faith, we lift up our hope, we confirm our confidence; and no less we reinforce our teaching by inculcation of God's precepts.^a There is, besides, exhortation in our gatherings, rebuke, divine censure. For judgement is passed, and it carries great weight, as it must among men certain that God sees them; and it is a notable foretaste of judgement to come, if any man has so sinned as to be banished from all share in our prayer, our assembly, and all holy intercourse. Our presidents are elders of proved character, men who have reached this honour not for a price, but by character; for nothing that is God's goes for a price.

Even if there is a chest of a sort, it is not made up of money paid in entrance-fees, as if religion were a matter of contract.^b Every man once a month brings some modest coin—or whenever he wishes, and only if he does wish, and if he can; for nobody is compelled; it is a voluntary offering.^c You might call them the trust funds of piety. For they are not spent upon banquets nor drinking-parties nor

^c Cf. 2 Cor. ix. 7.

egenis alendis humandisque et pueris ac puellis re ac parentibus destitutis, iamque domesticis senibus, item naufragis, et si qui in metallis, et si qui in insulis vel in custodiis, dumtaxat ex causa dei sectae, alumni confessionis suae fiunt.

- 7 Sed eiusmodi vel maxime dilectionis operatio notam nobis inurit penes quosdam. Vide, inquit, ut invicem se diligant; ipsi enim invicem oderunt: et ut pro alterutro mori sint parati; ipsi enim ad
8 occidendum alterutrum paratiores erunt. Sed et quod fratres nos vocamus, non alias, opinor, insaniunt quam quod apud ipsos omne sanguinis nomen de affectione simulatum est. Fratres autem etiam vestri sumus, iure naturae matris unius, etsi vos parum
9 homines, quia mali fratres. At quanto dignius fratres et dicuntur et habentur qui unum patrem deum agnoverint, qui unum spiritum biberint sanctitatis, qui de uno utero ignorantiae eiusdem ad unam lucem
10 expaverint veritatis. Sed eo fortasse minus legitimi existimamur, quia nulla de nostra fraternitate tragoedia exclamat, vel quia ex substantia familiari fratres sumus, quae penes vos fere dirimit fraternitatem.
11 Itaque qui animo animaque miscemur nihil de rei communicatione dubitamus. Omnia indiscreta sunt

^a See S. Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to M. Aurelius*, pp. 264-268, for trade and dining clubs, e.g., the "late drinkers" of Pompeii, also S. Angus, *Mystery Religions and Christianity*, pp. 196-199.

^b Kellner takes this as "old people confined to the house." But the example of Cato's treatment of old slaves suggests the rendering in the text.

^c i.e., something of a stigma.

thankless eating-houses^a; but to feed the poor and to bury them, for boys and girls who lack property and parents, and then for slaves grown old^b and shipwrecked mariners; and any who may be in mines, islands or prisons, provided that it is for the sake of God's school, become the pensioners of their confession.

Such work of love (for so it is) puts a mark upon us, 7 in the eyes of some.^c "Look," they say, "how they love one another" (for themselves hate one another); "and how they are ready to die for each other" (for themselves will be readier to kill each other). Yes, their indignation at us for using among 8 ourselves the name of "Brothers" must really, I take it, come from nothing but the fact that among them every name of kinship so far as affection goes is false and feigned. But we are your brothers, too, by right of descent from the one mother, Nature—even if you fall short of being men because you are bad brothers. But how much more fittingly are those 9 both called brothers and treated as brothers who have come to know one Father God, who have drunk of one Spirit of holiness,^d who from one womb of common ignorance have come with wonder to the one light of Truth! But perhaps the reason for our 10 being thought not quite legitimate brothers may be that no tragedy cries aloud of our brotherhood, or because our brotherhood is upheld by the family substance, which among you as a rule dissolves the fraternal tie.

So we, who are united in mind and soul, have no 11 hesitation about sharing property. All is common

^d Cf. 1 Cor. xii. 13; in the Vulgate, "et omnes in uno spiritu potati sumus."

- 12 apud nos praeter uxores. In isto loco consortium solvimus in quo solo ceteri homines consortium exercent, qui non amicorum solummodo matrimonia usurpant, sed et sua amicis patientissime subministrant; ex illa, credo, maiorum et sapientissimorum disciplina, Graeci Socratis et Romani Catonis, qui uxores suas amicis communicaverunt, quas in matrimonium duxerant liberorum causa et alibi creandorum, nescio quidem an invitas. Quid enim de castitate curarent, quam mariti tam facile donaverant? O sapientiae Atticae, o Romanae gravitatis exemplum: lenones philosophus et censor!
- 13 Quid ergo mirum, si tanta caritas convivatur¹? Nam et coenulas nostras praeterquam sceleris infames ut prodigas quoque suggillatis. De nobis scilicet Diogenis dictum est: Megarenses obsonant quasi crastina die morituri, aedificant vero quasi numquam morituri. Sed stipulam quis in alieno oculo facilius perspicit quam in suo trabem. Tot tribubus et curiis et decuriis ructantibus acescit aër: Saliis coenaturis creditor erit necessarius: Herculaneum decimarum et pollutorum sumptus tabularii supputabunt: Apaturis, Dionysiis, mysteriis Atticis cocorum dilectus indicitur: ad fumum coenae Sarapiacae sparteoli excitabuntur. De solo triclinio Christianorum retrahatur.

¹ *Oehler prints conviolatur, yet takes tanta caritas to refer to Christians: Kellner joins the sentence to the previous paragraph: Rauschen and Waltzing follow the Fuldensis.*

^a Here Tertullian confuses the two Catos; it was the younger Cato who did this with his wife (Quintilian, x. 5. 13, and Strabo, 515), but he was not the Censor. Oehler suggests that the reference in ch. 11. 16 to Scipio may be blending the two Scipios. The story as to Socrates may be a loose deduction from Plato, *Rep.* v. 457.

among us—except our wives. At that point we dissolve our partnership, which is the one place where the rest of men make it effective. Not only do they use the wives of their friends, but also most patiently yield their own to their friends. They follow (I take it) the example of those who went before them, the wisest of men—Greek Socrates and Roman Cato, who shared with their friends the wives they had taken in marriage, to bear children in other families too. And I don't know whether the wives objected; for why should they care about a chastity, which their husbands gave away so easily? O model of Attic wisdom! O pattern of Roman dignity! The philosopher a pander, and the censor,^a too!

What wonder then, if friends so dear have a 14 common meal? For you attack our small feasts, quite apart from the infamy of the crimes committed at them, as being extravagant. Of course it was of Christians that Diogenes said that the Megarians market as if to die to-morrow, and build as if they were never to die at all. But any man sees a mote in another's eye more easily than a beam in his own. With all those tribes and senates and 15 decurions belching the air grows sour. When the Sali^b dine, the money-lender will be needed. Actuaries will have to reckon the cost of Hercules' tithes^c and banquets. At the Attic Apaturia, Dionysia and mysteries, conscription is proclaimed—for cooks. The smoke of a dinner of Serapis will fetch out the firemen. It is only the banquet of Christians that calls for criticism.

^b Cf. Horace, *Odes*, i. 37. 2.

^c See note on 14, 1,

- 16 Coena nostra de nomine rationem sui ostendit. Id vocatur quod dilectio penes Graecos. Quantis-
cumque sumptibus constet, lucrum est pietatis
nomine facere sumptum, siquidem inopes quosque
refrigerio isto iuvamus, non qua penes vos parasiti
adfectant ad gloriam famulandae libertatis sub aucto-
ramento ventris inter contumelias saginandi, sed qua
penes deum maior est contemplatio mediocrium.
- 17 Si honesta causa est convivii, reliquum ordinem
disciplinae de causa aestimate. Quod sit de religionis
officio, nihil vilitatis, nihil immodestiae admittit. Non
prius discumbitur quam oratio ad deum praegustetur.
Editur quantum esurientes capiunt, bibitur quantum
- 18 pudicis utile est. Ita saturantur, ut qui meminerint
etiam per noctem adorandum deum sibi esse; ita
fabulantur, ut qui sciant dominum audire. Post
aquam manualet et lumina, ut quisque de scripturis
sanctis vel de proprio ingenio potest, provocatur in
medium deo canere; hinc probatur quomodo biberit.
- 19 Aequae oratio convivium dirimit. Inde disceditur
non in catervas caesionum nec in classes discursationum
nec in eruptiones lasciviarum, sed ad eandem
curam modestiae et pudicitiae, ut qui non tam
coenam coenaverint quam disciplinam.
- 20 Haec coitio Christianorum merito sane illicita, si
illicitis par, merito damnanda, si quis de ea queritur
- 21 eo titulo quo de factionibus querela est. In cuius
perniciem aliquando convenimus? Hoc sumus con-

^a It will be noted that Tertullian does not here describe the eucharist, but, as he says, the *agape*.

^b In one or two places of this *Apology*, *cano* means prophecy.

Our dinner shows its idea in its name; it is called 16
by the Greek name for love (*agape*).^a Whatever the
cost, it is gain to spend in piety's name, for with
that refreshment we help the needy. No, not, as
among you, parasites aspire for the glory of selling
their freedom, authorized by their belly to fatten
themselves at the cost of any insult; no, because
with God there is greater consideration for those
of lower degree. If the motive of the banquet is 17
honest, take the motive as the standard of the
other proceedings required by our rule of life. Since
it turns on the duty of religion, it allows nothing vile,
nothing immodest. We do not take our places at
table until we have first tasted prayer to God. Only 18
so much is eaten as satisfies hunger; only so much
drunk as meets the need of the modest. They satisfy
themselves only so far as men will who recall that
even during the night they must worship God;
they talk as those would who know the Lord listens.
After water for the hands come the lights; and
then each, from what he knows of the Holy Scrip-
tures, or from his own heart, is called before the
rest to sing ^b to God; so that is a test of how much
he has drunk. Prayer in like manner ends the
banquet. Then we break up; but not to form 19
groups for violence nor gangs for disorder, nor out-
bursts of lust; but to pursue the same care for
self-control and chastity, as men who have dined
not so much on dinner as on discipline.

This gathering of Christians may properly be called 20
illegal, if it is like illegal gatherings; may properly
be condemned, if any complain of it on the score on
which complaint is made of factious clubs. To whose 21
hurt have we ever met? We are when assembled

gregati quod et dispersi, hoc universi, quod et singuli, neminem laedentes, neminem contristantes. Cum probi, cum boni coeunt, cum pii, cum casti congregantur, non est factio dicenda, sed curia.

- 1 XL. At e contrario illis nomen factionis accommodandum est qui in odium bonorum et proborum conspirant, qui adversum sanguinem innocentium conclamant, praetexentes sane ad odii defensionem illam quoque vanitatem, quod existiment omnis publicae cladis, omnis popularis incommodi Christianos
- 2 esse in causam. Si Tiberis ascendit in moenia, si Nilus non ascendit in arva, si caelum stetit, si terra movit, si fames, si lues, statim Christianos ad leonem! adclamatur. Tantos ad unum?
- 3 Oro vos, ante Tiberium, id est ante Christi adventum quanta clades orbem et urbes ceciderunt? Legimus Hieran, Anaphen et Delon et Rhodon et Co insulas¹ multis cum milibus hominum pessum abisse.
- 4 Memorat et Plato maiorem Asiae vel Africae terram Atlantico mari ereptam. Sed et mare Corinthium terrae motus exhibit, et vis undarum Lucaniam abscisam in Siciliae nomen relegavit. Haec utique non sine iniuria incolentium accidere potuerunt.
- 5 Ubi vero tunc, non dicam deorum vestrorum contemptores Christiani, sed ipsi dei vestri, cum totum orbem cataclysmus abolevit, vel, ut Plato putavit,

¹ *v.l.* Ophiusam for Co insulas.

^a Cf. Horace, *Odes*, i. 2. 13.

^b *i.e.*, no rain. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, ii. 3, quotes the proverb: "Pluvia deficit, causa Christiani sunt."

^c Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 90. 205, refers to Plato's Atlantis as overwhelmed by the Atlantic, and compares other more

just what we are when apart; taken together the same as singly; we injure none; we grieve none. When decent people, when good men, gather, when the pious and when the chaste assemble, that is not to be called a faction; it is a Senate.

XL. On the other hand the name faction may ¹ properly be given to those who join to hate the good and honest, who shout for the blood of the innocent, who use as a pretext to defend their hatred the absurdity that they take the Christians to be the cause of every disaster to the State, of every misfortune of the people. If the Tiber reaches the ² walls,^a if the Nile does not rise to the fields, if the sky doesn't move^b or the earth does, if there is famine, if there is plague, the cry is at once: "The Christians to the lion!" What, all of them to one lion?

I ask you—before Tiberius, that is before Christ ³ came, what great disasters smote the world and the city? We read that Hiera, Anaphe, and Delos and Rhodes and Cos, whole islands with thousands of inhabitants went to ruin. Plato tells of a land greater ⁴ than Asia or Africa swept away by the Atlantic.^c More still, an earthquake swallowed the Corinthian sea, and the force of the waters tore off Lucania from Italy and banished it to bear the name Sicily. I hardly suppose these things could have happened without hurt to the inhabitants.

Where, then, in those days, were—I won't say the ⁵ Christians who despise your gods—but your gods themselves, where were they when the deluge blotted out a whole world, or, as Plato thought, merely the historical disasters of the same kind in the Mediterranean area.

- 6 campestre solummodo? Posteriores enim illos clade diluvii contestantur ipsae urbes in quibus nati mortuique sunt, etiam quas condiderunt; neque enim alias hodiernum manerent nisi et ipsae posthumae
 7 cladis illius. Nondum Iudaeum ab Aegypto examen Palaestina suscepit nec illic Christianae sectae origo consederat, cum regiones adfines eius Sodoma et Gomorra igneus imber exussit. Olet adhuc incendio terra, et si qua illic arborum poma, conantur oculis
 8 tenus, ceterum contacta cinerescunt. Sed nec Tuscia iam tunc atque Campania de Christianis querebantur, cum Vulsinius de caelo, Pompeios de suo monte perfudit ignis. Nemo adhuc Romae deum verum adorabat cum Hannibal apud Cannas per Romanos
 9 anulos caedes suas modio metiebatur. Omnes dei vestri ab omnibus colebantur, cum ipsum Capitolium Senones occupaverant. Et bene quod, si quid adversi urbibus accidit, eadem clades templorum quae et moenium fuerunt, ut iam hoc revincam non ab eis evenire, quia et ipsis evenit.
- 10 Semper humana gens male de deo meruit. Primo quidem ut inofficiosa eius, quem cum intellegeret ex parte, non requisivit, sed et alios insuper sibi commentata quos coleret; dehinc quod non inquirendo innocentiae magistrum et nocentiae iudicem et exactorem omnibus vitiis et criminibus inolevit.
- 11 Ceterum si requisisset, sequebatur, ut cognosceret requisitum et recognitum observaret et observatum

^a Here, it is pointed out, he slips. The Gauls took all but the Capitol. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, ii. 22, asks where "haec numinum turba" was when the Gauls captured and burnt Rome; "an praesentes forte dormiebant?"

plains? For your gods are later than the catastrophe 6 of the flood, and that is proved by the actual cities in which they were born and died, yes, and which they founded; for otherwise they would not remain till to-day, unless they were later than that catastrophe. Not yet had Palestine received the swarm of Jews 7 from Egypt, the race whence came the Christian school had not yet settled there, when a rain of fire burnt up Sodom and Gomorra, the regions on its borders. The land still smells of burning; and, if any apples are on the trees, the trees' endeavour is but to reach the eye; touch them, and they are ashes. Nor were Tuscany in those old days and Campania 8 complaining of the Christians, when fire from heaven drenched Volsinii, fire from its own mountain Pompeii. No one yet in Rome was worshipping the true God, when Hannibal at Cannae measured his massacre by the bushels of Roman rings. All your gods were 9 being worshipped by all of you, when the Senones took the Capitol itself.^a And it is just as well that, whatever disaster befel the cities, there was the same ruin for temples as for city walls; so that I can make the point, that this did not come from the gods because it came to them.

The human race has always deserved ill of God, 10 first as being careless of Him—for, though understanding Him in part, it not only failed to seek Him but quickly devised other gods for its worship; next,—because, refusing to seek the Teacher of innocence, the Judge and Avenger of guilt, it grew inured to every vice and crime. But if it 11 had sought Him out, it would follow that it would recognize Him when found; and, known, it would worship Him; and God worshipped it would find

propitium magis experiretur quam iratum. Eundem
 igitur nunc quoque scire debet iratum quem et retro
 12 semper, priusquam Christiani nominarentur. Cuius
 bonis utebatur ante editis quam sibi deos fingeret,
 cur non ab eo etiam mala intellegat evenire cuius
 bona esse non sensit? Illius rea est cuius et ingrata.
 13 Et tamen si pristinas clades comparemus, leviora
 nunc accidunt, ex quo Christianos a deo orbis accepit.
 Ex eo enim et innocentia saeculi iniquitates tempe-
 14 ravit et deprecatores dei esse coeperunt. Denique
 cum ab imbribus aestiva hiberna suspendunt et annus
 in cura est, vos quidem cotidie pasti statimque
 pransuri, balneis et cauponiis et lupanaribus operan-
 tibus, aquilicia Iovi immolatis, nudipedalia populo
 denuntiatis, caelum apud Capitolium quaeritis, nubila
 de laquearibus exspectatis, aversi ab ipso et deo et
 15 caelo: nos vero ieiuniis aridi et omni continentia
 expressi, ab omni vitae fruge dilati, in sacco et cinere
 volutantes invidia caelum tundimus, deum tangimus,
 et cum misericordiam extorserimus, Iupiter honoratur.
 1 XLI. Vos igitur inportuni rebus humanis, vos rei
 publicorum incommodorum indices semper, apud
 quos deus spernitur, statucae adorantur. Etenim
 credibilius haberi debet eum irasci qui neglegatur
 quam qui coluntur, aut nae illi iniquissimi, si propter

^a This is the agreed translation, reached by the aid of Cyprian, who twice copies the passage but in more ordinary Latin; *De Mortalitate*, 8 "et quando imbrem nubila serena suspendunt, omnibus siccitas una est"; and *Ad Demetrianum*, 2 "imbres et pluvias serena longa suspendunt."

^b For this use of *annus* cf. Tacitus, *Germania*, 14. 5 "nec arare terram aut expectare annum."

more propitious than God angry. Mankind should know the same God to be angry to-day, who was ever angry of old, before ever Christians were named. It was His blessings that mankind used, 12 given before ever men fashioned gods for themselves; then why does humanity not understand that evils also come from Him, whom it did not realize to be author of the blessings? The race is guilty before Him to whom it is ungrateful.

And yet if we compare ancient disasters, the 13 troubles nowadays are lighter, since the world received the Christians from God. Since that day innocence has tempered the sins of the world, and there have begun to be intercessors with God. For in- 14 stance, when prolonged summer delays winter's rain^a and the crops cause anxiety,^b you, well fed every day, and soon to eat again—baths, taverns, brothels all at work—you sacrifice rain-offerings to Jove, enjoin the bare-foot procession on the people, seek heaven at the Capitol, look for rain from the temple ceilings, with your backs turned to God Himself and to heaven. We, parched with fasting, pinched with every austerity, abstaining from all food that sustains life, wallowing in sackcloth and ashes, importune heaven 15 with reproach, we touch God; and then, when we have wrung mercy from Him,—Jupiter has all the glory!

XLI. It is you, then, who are the danger to 1 mankind, it is you who bring upon us public misfortunes—you, by your contempt for God and your worship of statues. In any case it ought to be more credible that He is angry, seeing that He is neglected rather than they who are worshipped. Otherwise, your gods are most unjust, if because of the Christians

Christianos etiam cultores suos laedunt, quos separare deberent a meritis Christianorum.

- 2 Hoc, inquit, et in deum vestrum repercutere est, si quod et ipse patiatur, propter profanos etiam suos cultores laedi. Admittite prius dispositiones eius, et
3 non retorquebitis. Qui enim semel aeternum iudicium destinavit post saeculi finem, non praecipit discretionem, quae est condicio iudicii, ante saeculi finem. Aequalis est interim super omne hominum genus et indulgens et increpans. Communia voluit esse et commoda profanis et incommoda suis, ut pari consortio omnes et lenitatem eius et severitatem ex-
4 periremur. Quia haec ita didicimus apud ipsum, diligimus lenitatem, metuimus severitatem, vos contra utramque despicitis : et sequitur ut omnes saeculi plagae nobis, si forte, in admonitionem, vobis in castigationem a deo obveniant.
- 5 Atquin nos nullo modo laedimur ; inprimis quia nihil nostra refert in hoc aevo nisi de eo quam celeriter excedere, dehinc, quia si quid adversi infligitur, vestris meritis deputatur. Sed etsi aliqua nos quoque praestringunt ut vobis cohaerentes, laetamur magis recognitione divinarum praedicationum, confirmantium scilicet fiduciam et fidem
6 spei nostrae. Sin vero ab eis quos colitis omnia vobis mala eveniunt nostri causa, quid colere perseveratis tam ingratos, tam iniustos, qui magis vos in dolore Christianorum iuvare et adserere debuerant¹?

¹ *Oehler prints here six words, quos separare deberent a meritis Christianorum, which the Fuldensis omits. The change from debuerant to deberent is odd, and it seems likely that the words are an accidental repetition from § 1.*

they injure their own worshippers too, whom they ought to keep clear of the punishment of the Christians.

"But this," you say, "can be retorted upon your God too, since He Himself because of the profane suffers His own worshippers to be injured." First admit His disposition of events, and then you will not turn this against Him. For He who has ordained 3 eternal judgement once for all after the end of the world does not hasten to make that separation (which is the essence of the judgement) before the end of the world. Meantime He treats all mankind equally, both in concession and in warning. He has wished the pleasant things of life to be shared by the profane, the unpleasant by His own, that by an equality of lot we might make trial of His gentleness and His severity. Because we have thus learnt of Him, we love His 4 gentleness, we dread His severity ; you, on the other hand, despise both the one and the other. It follows that all the plagues of the world (it may be) come on us for admonition, on you for chastisement, from God.

Yet we are none the worse for it ; first, because 5 nothing matters to us in this age but to escape from it with all speed ; and next, because, if any trouble is inflicted upon us, we set it down to your sins. But, even if things now and then touch us in passing because we live so close to you, we only rejoice the more to recognize the divine predictions, and they (to be sure) confirm our confidence, our faith in our hope. But if, on the other hand, all these evils come on you 6 from the gods you worship, and come because of us, why persevere in worshipping gods so unjust and so ungrateful, who ought rather to be helping and supporting you while the Christians are suffering?

1 XLII. Sed alio quoque iniuriarum titulo postula-
mur, et infructuosi in negotiis dicimur. Quo pacto
homines vobiscum degentes, eiusdem victus, habitus,
instructus, eiusdem ad vitam necessitatis? Neque
enim Brachmanae aut Indorum gymnosophistae
2 sumus, silvicolae et exules vitae. Meminimus
gratiam debere nos deo, domino, creatori: nullum
fructum operum eius repudiamus: plane temperamus,
ne ultra modum aut perperam utamur. Itaque non
sine foro, non sine macello, non sine balneis, tabernis,
officinis, stabulis, nundinis vestris ceterisque commer-
3 ciis cohabitamus in hoc saeculo. Navigamus et nos
vobiscum et militamus et rusticamur et mercamur;
proinde miscemus artes, operas nostras publicamus
usui vestro.¹ Quomodo infructuosi videmur negotiis
vestris, cum quibus et de quibus vivimus, non scio.
4 Sed si caerimonias tuas non frequento, attamen et
illa die homo sum. Non labor diluculo Saturnalibus,
ne et noctem et diem perdam, attamen labor honesta
hora et salubri, quae mihi et calorem et sanguinem
servet; rigere et pallere post lavacrum mortuus
5 possum. Non in publico Liberalibus discumbo, quod
bestiariis supremam coenantibus mos est, attamen
6 ubiubi² de copiis tuis coeno. Non emo capiti coronam.
Quid tua interest, emptis nihilominus floribus quo-
modo utar? Puto gratius esse liberis et solutis et
undique vagis. Sed etsi in coronam coactis, nos

¹ The text is that adopted by Waltzing: Oehler reads et mercatus proinde miscemus, artes, opera nostra.

² Oehler keeps ubi.

^a For the Brahmins cf. Strabo, xv. pp. 712 ff.

XLII. But there is another charge of wrong-doing 1
upon the sheet against us. We are said to be un-
profitable in business. How so—when we are human
beings and live alongside of you—men with the same
ways, the same dress and furniture, the same neces-
sities, if we are to live? For we are not Brahmins,
naked sages of India, forest-dwellers, exiles from life.^a
We remember that we owe gratitude to God, the 2
Lord, the Creator. We reject no fruit of His labours.
We are of course temperate—not to use His gifts to
excess or amiss. So, not without your forum, not
without your meat-market, not without your baths,
shops, factories, your inns and market-days, and the
rest of the life of buying and selling, we live with you
—in this world. We sail ships, we as well as you, and 3
along with you; we go to the wars, to the country, to
market with you. Our arts and yours work together;
our labour is openly at your service. How we can
seem unprofitable to your business, when we live with
you and our living depends on you, I do not know.

Even if I do not attend your rituals, well, I am a 4
man on that day as much as any other. I do not bathe
at dawn on the Saturnalia—I do not wish to lose both
night and day; but I do bathe at the proper and
healthful hour, which will keep my bodily heat and
my blood in order; I can be stiff and pale after my
bath when I am dead. Nor do I recline to eat in 5
public at the Liberalia, which is the habit of the
beast-fighters taking their last meal; but wherever
I dine, it is on your supplies. I do not buy a garland 6
for my head. What difference does it make to you,
how I use the flowers, if in any case I buy them? I
think them more delightful when free, untied, wander-
ing as they will. But suppose they please also when

coronam naribus novimus ; viderint qui per capillum
7 odorantur. Spectaculis non convenimus ; quae
tamen apud illos coetus venditantur si desideravero,
liberius de propriis locis sumam. Thura plane non
eminus. Si Arabiae queruntur, sciant Sabaei pluris
et carioris suas merces Christianis sepeliendis pro-
fligari quam deis fumigandis.

8 Certe, inquitis, templorum vectigalia cotidie deco-
quunt : stipes quotusquisque iam iactat ? Non enim
sufficimus et hominibus et deis vestris mendicantibus
opem ferre, nec putamus aliis quam petentibus
inpertendum. Denique porrigat manum Iupiter et
accipiat, cum interim plus nostra misericordia insumit
9 vicatim quam vestra religio templatim. Sed cetera
vectigalia gratias Christianis agent ex fide depen-
dentibus debitum, qua alieno fraudando abstinemus,
ut, si ineatur quantum vectigalibus pereat fraude et
mendaciostrarum professionum, facile ratio haberi
possit, unius speciei querela compensata pro comodo
ceterarum rationum.

1 XLIII. Plane confitebor, quinam, si forte, vere de
sterilitate Christianorum conqueri possint. Primi
erunt lenones, perductores, aquarioli, tum sicarii,
venenarii, magi, item aruspices, arioli, mathematici.
2 His infructuosos esse magnus est fructus. Et tamen
quodcunque dispendium est rei vestrae per hanc
sectam, cum aliquo praesidio compensari potest.
Quanti habetis, non dico iam qui¹ de vobis daemonia

¹ *Oehler reads qui iam.*

worked up into a garland, *we* know a garland by our
noses ; let them see to it who smell through their
hair ! We do not gather at the games ; but the wares 7
hawked at those assemblages, if I should wish them,
I shall get more freely from their proper places.
We certainly don't buy incense. If the lands of
Araby complain, let the Sabaeans know that their
wares are lavished at a higher and dearer price on
burying Christians than on fumigating gods.

"At any rate," you say, "the revenues of the 8
temples are breaking down daily ; how many are
they who toss their coins in there ?" We cannot
cope with both men and your gods begging together ;
and do not think alms should be given to others
than those who ask. Come, let Jupiter hold out his
hand and receive ! In the meantime our compassion
spends more street by street than your religion
temple by temple. But the other revenues may be 9
grateful to Christians paying what is due with the
same good faith that keeps us from cheating other
men ; so that, if an inquiry were made, how much is
lost to the public exchequer by the fraud and lying
of your declarations, an account could easily be
struck—the complaint on one side balanced by the
gain in the rest of the accounts.

XLIII. I will tell you plainly, who they are who 1
may perhaps truly complain of the unprofitableness
of Christians. First will come the panders, the pimps,
and their agents ; next assassins, poisoners, magicians ;
thirdly wizards, soothsayers, astrologers. That we 2
should be unprofitable to these is a great profit. And
yet whatever loss your interests may show due to this
sect, it can be balanced by a certain protection, I
think. What price do you put—I do not say now,

excutiant, non dico iam qui pro vobis quoque vero deo preces sternant, quia forte non creditis, sed a quibus nihil timere possitis?

1 XLIV. At enim illud detrimentum reipublicae tam grande quam verum nemo circumspicit, illam iniuriam civitatis nullus expendit, cum tot iusti im-
2 pendimur, cum tot innocentes erogamur. Vestros enim iam contestamur actus, qui cotidie iudicandis custodiis praesidetis, qui sententiis elogia dispungitis. Tot a vobis nocentes variis criminum elogiis recensentur: quis illic sicarius, quis manticularius, quis sacrilegus aut corruptor aut lavantium praedo, quis ex illis etiam Christianus adscribitur? aut cum
3 talis quales tot nocentes? De vestris semper aestuat carcer, de vestris semper metalla suspirant, de vestris semper bestiae saginantur, de vestris semper munerarii noxiorum greges pascunt. Nemo illic Christianus nisi plane tantum Christianus, aut si et aliud, iam non Christianus.

1 XLV. Nos ergo soli innocentes. Quid mirum, si necesse est? Enimvero necesse est. Innocentiam a deo edocti et perfecte eam novimus, ut a perfecto magistro revelatam, et fideliter custodimus,
2 ut ab in contemptibili dispectore mandatam. Vobis autem humana aestimatio innocentiam tradidit,
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on those who drive demons out of you—I do not say now, on those who offer prayers to the true God for you as well as for themselves, because, perhaps, you don't believe it—but on those from whom you can have nothing to fear?

XLIV. Yet there is one loss to the State, as great 1 as it is real, and no one gives it a thought; one injury to the common weal, and nobody computes it; when upright men, such as we, are wasted in such numbers, in such numbers are done to death, innocent as we are. We challenge you to produce your records, 2 you who day by day preside over the trial of prisoners, who pass the sentence and clear the calendar. So many guilty persons are examined by you, with such and such crimes charged against them; what assassin on the list, what cutpurse, what temple-robber, or bribery agent, or bath-thief, is also described as a Christian? Or when Christians, charged as Christians, are brought into court, who among them is of the same sort as all those criminals? It is with your kind that 3 the jail is always steaming; with the sighs of your kind the mines always resounding; with your kind the wild beasts are fed; from your kind the givers of public shows always maintain their herds of the condemned. Not a Christian on that list, unless it be simply as a Christian; or, if any further charge be entered against him, he is no Christian.

XLV. We, then, alone are innocent. What is 1 surprising in that, if it must be so? And it must be. Innocence we have been taught by God; in its perfection we know it, as revealed by a perfect teacher; faithfully we keep it as committed to us by one who reads the heart and cannot be despised. It was but man's opinion that gave you your idea of 2

humana item dominatio imperavit ; inde nec plenae nec adeo timendae estis disciplinae ad innocentiae veritatem. Tanta est prudentia hominis ad demonstrandum bonum quanta auctoritas ad exigendum ;
 3 tam illa falli facilis quam ista contemni. Atque adeo quid plenius, dicere : Non occides, an docere : Ne irascaris quidem ? Quid perfectius, prohibere adulterium, an etiam ab oculorum solitaria concupiscentia arcere ? Quid eruditius, de maleficio, an et de maliloquio interdicere ? Quid instructius, iniuriam non
 4 permittere, an nec vicem iniuriae sinere ? Dum tamen sciatis ipsas leges quoque vestras quae videntur ad innocentiam pergere de divina lege, ut antiquiore forma, mutuatas. Diximus iam de Moysi aetate.
 5 Sed quanta auctoritas legum humanarum, cum illas et evadere homini contingat et plerumque in admissis delitescenti, et aliquando contemnere ex
 6 voluntate vel necessitate deliquenti ? Recogitate ea etiam pro brevitate supplicii cuiuslibet, non tamen ultra mortem remansuri. Sic et Epicurus omnem cruciatum doloremque deprecat, modicum quidem contemptibilem pronuntiando, magnum vero non
 7 diuturnum. Enimvero nos qui sub deo omnium speculatore dispungimur, quique aeternam ab eo poenam providemus merito, soli¹ innocentiae occurrimus, et pro scientiae plenitudine et pro latebrarum difficultate et pro magnitudine cruciatu non diuturni, verum sempiterni, eum timentes quem timere debebit et ipse qui timentes iudicat, deum, non proconsulem timentes.

¹ *Perhaps better punctuate* : providemus, merito soli.

² Cf. Cicero, *De Finibus*, ii. 7. 22 "iam doloris medicamenta illa Epicurea tamquam de narthecio proment : 'si gravis, brevis ; si longa, levis.'"

innocence, man's authority that enjoined it. So your rule of life is neither complete nor does it inspire such fear as to lead to true innocence. Man's skill to make clear what is truly good is no more than his authority to enforce it ; the one may as easily be mistaken as the other despised. And to come to the 3 point, which is the ampler saying : Thou shalt not kill, or, Do not even be angry ? Which is more perfect, to forbid adultery or to prohibit a single lustful look ? Which is the deeper law, to restrain from doing evil or from even speaking it ? Which is the more thorough, not to permit the doing of an injury or to allow no retaliation ? Though at the same time 4 you must recognize that your own laws, which seem to tend to innocence, drew from the divine law, which is the more ancient pattern. We have spoken already of the date of Moses.

But what authority can man's laws have, when a 5 man may have the luck to evade them, again and again undiscovered in his guilt, sometimes to despise them, as he breaks them of choice or of necessity ? Think over all this, remembering how short is any 6 punishment that will not continue after death. That is why Epicurus makes light of all torture and pain ; if it is slight, he says, you may despise it, if it is great it will not be long.² Yes ! We who are examined 7 in the sight of God who sees all, we who foresee an eternal punishment from His hand, we well may be the only ones to attain innocence ; since, at once from fullness of knowledge, from the difficulty of concealment, from the greatness of the torture (not long, but eternal), we fear Him, whom he, too, must fear who judges us who fear—who fear God, that is, and not the proconsul.

- 1 XLVI. Constitimus, ut opinor, adversus omnium
 criminum intimationem, quae Christianorum sanguinem
 flagitat. Ostendimus totum statum nostrum, et
 quibus modis probare possimus ita esse sicut ostendi-
 mus, ex fide scilicet et antiquitate divinarum litterarum,
 item ex confessione spiritualium potestatum. Qui nos
 revincere audebit, non arte verborum, sed eadem
 forma qua probationem constituimus, de veritate?
- 2 Sed dum unicuique manifestatur veritas nostra,
 interim incredulitas, dum de bono sectae huius
 obducitur, quod usui iam et de commercio innotuit,
 non utique divinum negotium existimat, sed magis
 philosophiae genus. Eadem, inquit, et philosophi
 monent atque profitentur, innocentiam, iustitiam,
 3 patientiam, sobrietatem, pudicitiam. Cur ergo
 quibus comparatur de disciplina, non proinde illis ad-
 acquamur ad licentiam impunitatemque disciplinae?
 vel cur et illi, ut pares nostri, non urgentur ad officia
 4 quae nos non obeuntes periclitamur? Quis enim
 philosophum sacrificare aut deicere aut lucernas
 meridie vanas proferre compellit? Quinimmo et deos
 vestros palam destruunt et superstitiones vestras
 commentariis quoque accusant laudantibus vobis.
 Plerique etiam in principes latrant sustinentibus
 vobis, et facilius statuis et salariis remunerantur
 5 quam ad bestias pronuntiantur. Sed merito. Philo-
 sophi enim non Christiani cognominantur. Nomen
 hoc philosophorum daemonia non fugat. Quidni?

XLVI. We have stood our ground, I think, on 1
 every charge brought against us, and the demand
 therewith made for the blood of the Christians. We
 have set forth our whole position and our method of
 proving the case set forth—to wit, by the evidence
 and antiquity of the divine books, and by the con-
 fession of spiritual powers. Who will undertake to
 refute this case,—not by dialectic, but in the same
 form in which we have established our proof, on the
 basis of truth?

Still, while every man recognizes our truth, mean- 2
 while unbelief (convinced though it be of the goodness
 of our school, which experience and intercourse by
 now have established) counts our school no divine
 affair at all, but rather a variety of philosophy. "The
 philosophers," says he, "they teach the same things,
 make the same professions—innocence, justice,
 patience, sobriety, chastity." Then why, if, so far 3
 as teaching goes, we are compared with them, why
 are we not put on an equality with them in freedom
 and impunity of teaching? Or why, since we are all
 on one level, why are not they compelled to dis-
 charge those duties, our refusal of which brings us into
 danger? For who compels a philosopher to sacrifice, 4
 or to take an oath, or to set out silly lamps at mid-
 day? Not a bit of it! They openly destroy your
 gods, they attack your superstitions in their treatises,
 and you applaud. Yes, and many of them bark
 against the Emperors too, and you sustain them.
 You are more ready to reward them with statues and
 stipends than to condemn them to the beasts.
 Quite right too! Philosophers is what they are
 called, not Christians. This name of "philosopher" 5
 does not drive out demons. Why not, seeing that

cum secundum deos philosophi daemones deputent. Socratis vox est: Si daemonium permittat. Idem et cum aliquid de veritate sapiebat deos negans, Aesculapio tamen gallinaceum prosecari iam in fine iubebat, credo ob honorem patris eius, quia Socratem
 6 Apollo sapientissimum omnium cecinit. O Apollinem inconsideratum! Sapientiae testimonium reddidit ei viro qui negabat deos esse.

In quantum odium¹ flagrat veritas, in tantum qui eam ex fide praestat offendit; qui autem adulterat et adfectat, hoc maxime nomine gratiam pangit
 7 apud insectatores veritatis. Quam inlusores et corruptores inimice² philosophi adfectant veritatem et adfectando corrumpunt, ut qui gloriam captant, Christiani et necessario appetunt et integre praestant,
 8 ut qui saluti suae curant. Adeo neque de scientia neque de disciplina, ut putatis, aequamur. Quid enim Thales ille princeps physicorum sciscitanti Croeso de divinitate certum renuntiavit, com-
 9 meatu deliberandi saepe frustratus? Deum quilibet opifex Christianus et invenit et ostendit et exinde totum quod in deum quaeritur re quoque adsignat; licet Plato adfirmet factitorem universitatis neque

¹ odio also is read, and is easier, and perhaps right.

² Text uncertain; inimice has the same number of strokes, is very attractive, and not unattested. "The philosophers have the actor's spirit."

^a They destroy the gods, why not expel the demons, who are inferior to the gods?

^b Cf. Plato, *Phaedo*, 118. Aesculapius was the son of Apollo and Coronis. At Delphi Apollo declared to Chaere-

philosophers rank demons below gods?^a It is the voice of Socrates: "if the *daemonion* permit." Socrates, again,—though he did know something of the truth and denied the gods—at the end of his life he ordered a cock to be sacrificed to Aesculapius^b—I suppose, out of compliment to Aesculapius's father; for Apollo declared Socrates to be the wisest of men. Absent-minded Apollo! He bore 6 witness to the wisdom of the man who denied the existence of gods!

The measure of the hatred that Truth sets ablaze gives the measure of his offence who believes it and maintains it. The man who corrupts Truth, who makes a false show of it, on this very score wins goodwill among the enemies of Truth. Truth? The philo- 7 sophers, in their ill-will, mock it and corrupt it; they pretend to truth; their pretending to it means its corruption; it is glory that is their real aim. But Christians are bound to seek Truth, and they offer it uncorrupted, as those needs must who think of their salvation. So we are not on a level, as you suppose, 8 either as to knowledge or way of life. Take Thales,^c first of natural philosophers; what certain word had he for Croesus who asked him about godhead,—and all those adjournments conceded to him for reflexion were in vain? But God—there is no Christian 9 working-man but finds God, shows Him, assigns to Him in actual deed all that is sought for in God; though Plato affirms that the maker of the universe

phon, ἀνδρῶν ἀπάντων Σωκράτης σοφώτατος; cf. Diogenes Laertius, ii. 18. 37.

^c Cf. ch. 19, the passage inserted from codex Fuldensis. Minucius Felix ch. 13 tells the story of Simonides and Hiero as does Cicero, *De Nat. Deorum*, i. 22. 60.

inveniri facilem et inventum enarrari in omnes difficilem.

- 10 Ceterum si de pudicitia provocemus, lego partem sententiae Atticae, in Socratem corruptorem adolescentium pronuntiatum. Sexum nec femineum mutat Christianus.¹ Novi et Phrynen meretricem Diogenis supra recumbentis ardori subantem, audio et quendam Speusippum de Platonis schola in adulterio
11 perisse. Christianus uxori suae soli masculus nascitur. Democritus excaecando semetipsum, quod mulieres sine concupiscentia aspicere non posset et doletet si non esset potitus, incontinentiam emendatione profitetur. At Christianus salvis oculis feminas non videt;
12 animo adversus libidinem caecus est.
- 13 Si de probitate defendam, ecce lutulentis pedibus Diogenes superbos Platonis toros alia superbia deculcat: Christianus nec in pauperem superbit. Si de modestia certem, ecce Pythagoras apud Thurios, Zenon apud Prienenses tyrannidem adfectant:
14 Christianus vero nec aedilitatem. Si de aequanimitate congrediar, Lycurgus apocarteresin optavit, quod leges eius Lacones emendassent; Christianus

¹ *The Fuldensis reads*: Christianus ad sexum nec femina mutat. *The commoner reading above looks like a desperate correction.*

^a Plato, *Timaeus*, 28 E, a sentence most frequently quoted in this period.

^b This is surely *argumentum ad hominem*; Tertullian, a lawyer, addresses magistrates, and cites the decision of a court, as such. Ordinary people will not be impressed with this sort of pleading, but he means to hurt.

is not easy to be found, and, when found, he is hard to declare to all men.^a

But if we challenge on the ground of chastity, 10 I read a part of the Athenian sentence on Socrates, declared a corrupter of lads.^b The Christian, so far as sex is concerned, is content with the woman.^c I know the story of Phryne, the harlot, submitting to the passions of Diogenes. I am also told that one Speusippus, of Plato's school, was killed in the act of adultery. The Christian is born masculine for his 11 wife and for no other woman. Democritus blinded himself, because he could not look on women without desire, and found it pain not to be satisfied; he admitted his incontinence by his cure for it. But 12 the Christian keeps his eyes and does *not* see women; in his mind lies his blindness to lust.

If I am to make a defence as to modesty of 13 behaviour, look! there is Diogenes with muddy feet trampling the proud couches of Plato—with another pride^d; the Christian has no pride, even where the poor man is concerned. If self-restraint is the issue, why, there is Pythagoras at Thurii, and there is Zeno in Priene, aiming at tyranny; the Christian does not even aspire to be aedile. If I am to meet you on 14 the issue of the calm mind, Lycurgus wished to starve himself to death, because the Spartans had altered his laws; the Christian even when condemned to

^a What exactly Tertullian wrote here seems beyond recovery. The two French translators take different views of the meaning. The Abbé de Gourcy: "Jamais on ne reprochera à un chrétien de violer les lois de la nature;" and Waltzing: "Un chrétien ne change pas même de femme."

^d Cf. Diogenes Laertius, vi. 2. 26; Plato rejoins: ἐτέρω γε τύφω, Διόγηνες.

etiam damnatus gratias agit. Si de fide conparem, Anaxagoras depositum hospitibus¹ denegavit : Christianus et extra fidelis vocatur. Si de simplicitate consistam, Aristoteles familiarem suum Hermian turpiter loco excedere fecit : Christianus nec inimicum suum laedit. Idem Aristoteles tam turpiter Alexandro regendo potius adolatur, quam Plato Dionysio² ventris gratia venditur. Aristippus in purpura sub magna gravitatis superficie nepotatur, et Hippias dum civitati insidias disponit, occiditur. Hoc pro suis omni atrocitate dissipatis nemo unquam temptavit Christianus.

- 17 Sed dicet aliquis etiam de nostris excedere quosdam a regula disciplinae. Desinunt tamen Christiani haberi penes nos, philosophi vero illi cum talibus factis in nomine et honore sapientiae perseverant. Adeo quid simile philosophus et Christianus ? Graeciae discipulus et caeli ? famae negotiator et vitae ? verborum et factorum operator, et rerum aedificator et destructor ? amicus et inimicus erroris ? veritatis interpolator et integrator et expressor, et furator eius et custos ?³
- 1 XLVII. Antiquior omnibus veritas, nisi fallor, et

¹ *The Fuldensis reads hospitibus, which is almost demanded by the antithesis: Oehler keeps hospitibus.*

² *The Fuldensis reads Dionysio, and the translation is supported by Kellner and Waltzing. The reading a Dionysio, which Oehler prints, seems to spoil the parallel. The passage in Tatian is explicit: ἐν τῷ Διονυσίου δὲ ἡ ἀσχηματίζουσα ἐν τῷ πάτρῳ, but the last word is a restoration.*

³ *The text in these last lines shows variants.*

* Cf. ch. 1. 12. In the *Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs*, a very brief story, not "written up" at all, the Christians say very little, beyond confessing their faith, and ejaculating, on condemnation, *Deo gratias*.

^b Cf. Pliny to Trajan, *Epp.* 96, on Christian honesty.

^c This may be a reference to a tale in Diogenes Laertius,

death gives thanks.^a If I make the comparison on honesty, Anaxagoras refused to return the deposit to his guests ; the Christian outside his group as well as inside it is called faithful.^b If I take my stand on plain dealing, Aristotle shamelessly made his friend Hermias yield him place^c ; the Christian injures not even his enemy. The same Aristotle's shameful tutorship of Alexander is equivalent to flattery ; Plato—no better—fawns upon Dionysius to gratify his belly. Aristippus in purple, with great affectation of seriousness, lives a wanton life ; and Hippias^d is killed for plotting against his city—a thing no Christian ever attempted in revenge for his friends scattered with every kind of cruelty.

But someone will say that in our case too there are some who desert the rule of our teaching. Then they cease to be counted Christians among us ; but those philosophers, despite deeds such as those mentioned, continue in all the name and fame of wisdom among you. But then what have philosopher and Christian in common,—the disciple of Greece and the disciple of heaven,—the business of the one with reputation, of the other with salvation,—the man of words and the man of deeds,—the builder and the destroyer,—the friend and the foe of error,—the man who corrupts the truth, and the man who restores it and proclaims it—the thief of truth and its guardian ?

XLVII. Truth is older than all else, if I mistake it v. 1. 4, of Aristotle marrying a woman from the harem of Hermias ; but what has it to do with *simplicitas* ?

^d He seems to mix two men of this name, Hippias, the tyrant, son of Pisistratus, and the sophist Hippias of Elis. These scandals about the philosophers seem to lack attestation in extant literature. It looks very much as if Tertullian had Tatian's *Oratio ad Graecos*, ch. 2, before him.

hoc mihi proficit antiquitas praestructa divinae litteraturae, quo facile credatur thesaurum eam fuisse posteriori cuique sapientiae. Et si non onus iam voluminis temperarem, excurrerem in hanc quoque probationem. Quis poëtarum, quis sophistarum, qui non omnino de prophetarum fonte potaverit? Inde igitur philosophi sitim ingenii sui rigaverunt, ut quae de nostris habent, ea nos comparent illis. Inde, opinor, et a quibusdam philosophia quoque eiecta est, a Thebaeis dico, et a Spartiatis et Argivis, dum ad nostra conantur, et homines gloriae, ut diximus, et eloquentiae solius libidinosi, si quid in sanctis [scripturis]¹ offenderunt digestis, ex proprio instituto curiositatis ad propria opera verterunt, neque satis credentes divina esse, quo minus interpolarent, neque satis intellegentes, ut adhuc tunc subnubila, etiam ipsis Iudaeis obumbrata, quorum propria videbantur. Nam et si qua simplicitas erat veritatis, eo magis scrupulositas humana fidem aspernata mutabat,² per quod in incertum miscuerunt etiam quod invenerant certum.

5 Inventum enim solummodo deum non ut invenerant disputaverunt, ut et de qualitate et de natura eius et 6 de sede disceptent. Alii incorporealem adseverant, alii corporalem, ut tam Platonici quam Stoici; alii ex atomis, alii ex numeris, qua Epicurus et Pythagoras, alius ex igni, qua Heraclito visum est: et Platonici

¹ scripturis, which Oehler keeps, looks very like an explanation. It is not in the codex Fuldensis.

² mutabat is so obvious and easy a correction that the variant nutabat may very well be Tertullian's word.

^a i.e., before Christ's coming.

not; and the antiquity (already shown) of the divine literature helps me here, in making it credible that it was the storehouse for all later wisdom. And if I were not for moderating the weight of my volume, here is another line of proof on which I could digress. Who 2 among the poets, who among the sophists, has not drunk from the fountain of the prophets? From them the philosophers have slaked their thirst of mind; with the result that what they borrow from our books sets you comparing us with them. Hence, I opine, some have driven out philosophy — the Thebans I mean, the Spartans and Argives. In 3 rivalry with our authors, and being men with a passion (as I said) for vainglory and eloquence and nothing else,—whatever they stumbled on in the sacred digests they took it, they recast it to match the plan of their fancy, turned it to their own purposes. They had not enough belief in these passages being divine to abstain from interpolation, nor enough intelligence of what at that time^a was still rather cloudy,—full of darkness, even for the Jews themselves, whose own the scriptures seemed to be. For wherever there was the simplicity of truth, there all 4 the more, in its scorn for faith, human fastidiousness made changes; and as a result they involved in uncertainty what they had found definite.

They found God there; that was all; but they 5 would not speak of Him as they found Him; so they must discuss His quality, His nature, His abode. Some are sure He is incorporeal, others that He has 6 a body—the Platonists, that is, and the Stoics. Others say He consists of atoms, others of numbers, as do Epicurus and the Pythagoreans. Another says, of fire,—the view of Heraclitus. The Plato-

quidem curantem rerum, contra Epicurei otiosum et
 7 rebus ; positum vero extra mundum Stoici, qui figuli
 modo extrinsecus torqueat molem hanc ; intra mun-
 dum Platonici, qui gubernatoris exemplo intra id
 8 maneat quod regat. Sic et de ipso mundo natus
 innatusve sit, decessurus mansurusve sit, variant.
 Sic et de animae statu, quam alii divinam et aeternam,
 alii dissolubilem contendunt, ut quis sensit, ita et
 intulit aut reformavit.

9 Nec mirum, si vetus instrumentum ingenia philo-
 sophorum interverterunt. Ex horum semine etiam
 nostram hanc novitiolam paraturam viri quidam suis
 opinionibus ad philosophicas sententias adultera-
 verunt et de una via obliquos multos et inexplicabiles
 tramites sciderunt. Quod ideo suggesserim, ne cui
 nota varietas sectae huius in hoc quoque nos philo-
 sophis adaequare videatur et ex varietate defensio-
 10 num iudicet veritatem. Expedite autem praescri-
 bimus adulteris nostris illam esse regulam veritatis
 quae veniat a Christo transmissa per comites ipsius,
 quibus aliquanto posteriores diversi isti commenta-
 tores probabuntur.

11 Omnia adversus veritatem de ipsa veritate con-
 structa sunt, operantibus aemulationem istam spiriti-
 bus erroris. Ab his adulteria huiusmodi salutaris
 disciplinae subornata, ab his quaedam etiam fabulae
 inmissae quae de similitudine fidem infirmarent
 veritatis vel eam sibi potius evincerent, ut quis ideo

^a The Old Testament.

^b An interesting phrase, the New Testament. He thinks
 of heretics.

nists represent Him as taking care of the world ; on
 the other hand the Epicureans picture Him as idle and
 unemployed, a nobody (so to say) as regards human
 affairs. The Stoics set Him outside the world, 7
 like a potter to whirl this fabric round from outside ;
 the Platonists put Him inside the world, like a pilot,
 to stay inside of what He guides. So too about the 8
 universe—they do not agree whether it is born or
 unborn, to depart or to remain. So too about the
 status of the soul, which some will have to be divine
 and eternal, and some subject to dissolution. Every
 man, as he felt, interpolated or remodelled.

But it is nothing surprising if the older literature^a 9
 is misused by these clever philosophers. Some men
 of their breed have corrupted this more modern
 literature of ours^b with opinions of their own to match
 the views of the philosophers ; and from the one way
 have hacked out many tracks crooked and involved.
 I would put this forward lest the known variety
 within our school should seem to any man to set us on
 a level with the philosophers, and from the variety of
 defence made he should condemn the Truth. But 10
 we at once lodge a demurrer against our falsifiers that
 that is the rule of Truth, which comes from Christ,
 transmitted through his companions. These various
 inventors of doctrines will be proved to be of a later
 date.

Everything against the Truth is built up from the 11
 Truth, and it is the spirits of error that produce this
 rivalry. It is they who have produced these falsifica-
 tions of wholesome doctrine ; they who have launched
 the fables, which by their resemblance weaken the
 credibility of Truth or rather capture belief for
 themselves. So a man may think the Christians

non putet Christianis credendum quia nec poëtis nec philosophis, vel ideo magis poëtis et philosophis existimet credendum quia non Christianis.

- 12 Itaque ridemur praedicantes deum iudicaturum. Sic enim et poëtae et philosophi tribunal apud inferos ponunt. Et gehennam si comminemur, quae est ignis arcani subterraneam ad poenam thesaurus, proinde decachinnamur. Sic enim et Pyriphlegethon
 13 apud mortuos amnis est. Et si paradisum nomine-mus, locum divinae amoenitatis recipiendis sanctorum spiritibus destinatum, maceria quadam igneae illius zonae a notitia orbis communis segregatum, Elysii campi fidem occupaverunt. Unde haec, oro vos, philosophis aut poëtis tam consimilia? Nonnisi de
 14 nostris sacramentis. Si de nostris sacramentis, ut de prioribus, ergo fideliora sunt nostra magisque credenda quorum imagines quoque fidem inveniunt. Si de suis sensibus, iam ergo sacramenta nostra imagines posteriorum habebuntur, quod rerum forma non sustinet. Nunquam enim corpus umbra aut veritatem imago praecedit.
- 1 XLVIII. Age iam, si qui philosophus adfirmet, ut ait Laberius de sententia Pythagorae, hominem fieri ex mulo, colubram ex muliere, et in eam opinionem omnia argumenta eloquiū virtute distorsit, nonne consensum movebit et fidem infiget etiam ab animalibus abstinendi propterea? Persuasum quis habeat,

^a He seems to be the comic poet, Caesar's contemporary and critic.

unworthy of belief because the poets and philosophers are unworthy of it; or he may think that poets and philosophers deserve the more belief because they are not Christians.

So comes it that we are laughed at for proclaiming 12 that God will be judge. For just so the poets and philosophers set up a tribunal in the world below. And if we raise the threat of Gehenna, which is a treasury of hidden fire for punishment underground, in just the same way we meet with utter derision. For just so Pyriphlegethon is a river among the dead. And if we name Paradise, a place of divine beauty, 13 reserved for the reception of the spirits of the holy, kept from the knowledge of this common world by the fiery zone as it were by a wall,—the Elysian fields are before us in capturing belief. Now whence, I ask you, do the philosophers and poets find things so similar? Whence, indeed, unless it be from our mysteries? And if from our mysteries, which are 14 the older, then ours are truer and more credible when the mere copies of them win credence. If they invented these things out of their own feelings, then our mysteries must be counted copies of what came later—a thing contrary to nature. For the shadow never exists before the body, nor the copy before the truth.

XLVIII. Come, suppose some philosopher affirm 1 (like Laberius ^a talking of Pythagoreanism) that a mule becomes a man, and a woman a snake; suppose that by force of eloquence he twists all the arguments to support that opinion; it will find (won't it?) acceptance, it will implant the conviction that we must on that account abstain from eating animals. The persuasion (is it?) that a man must be careful

ne forte bubulam de aliquo proavo suo obsonet? At enim Christianus si de homine hominem ipsumque de Gaio Gaium reducem repromittat, lapidibus magis, nec saltem coetibus¹ a populo exigetur.

- 2 Si quaecunque ratio praeest animarum humanarum reciprocandarum² in corpora, cur non in eandem substantiam redeant, cum hoc sit restitui, id esse quod fuerat? Iam non ipsae sunt quae fuerant, quia non potuerunt esse quod non erant, nisi desinant
3 esse quod fuerant. Multis etiam locis³ ex otio opus erit, si velimus ad hanc partem lascivire, quis in quam bestiam reformari videretur. Sed de nostra magis defensione, qui proponimus multo utique dignius credi hominem ex homine rediturum, quemlibet pro quolibet, dum hominem, ut eadem qualitas animae in eandem restauraretur conditionem, etsi
4 non effigiem. Certe quia ratio restitutionis destinatio

¹ *All sorts of variants and conjectures; nothing convincing; caedibus, caestibus, copiis, calcibus. But Tertullian (as Kellner points out) has thought of the stage; so Waltzing's conjecture clamoribus may be right. But I prefer to leave the reader to fill the gap.*

² *The Fuldensis reads at this point: Quasi non, quaecunque ratio praeest animarum humanarum in corpora reciprocandarum, ipsa exigit illas in eadem corpora revocari; quia hoc sit revocari id est esse quod fuerant. Nam si non id sunt quod fuerunt, id est humanum et id ipsum corpus indutae, iam non ipsae erunt quae fuerant. Porro quae iam non erunt ipsae, quomodo redisse dicentur? Aut aliud factae non erunt ipsae, aut manentes ipsae non erunt aliunde. Multis, etc. Whoever is responsible for the Fuldensis, Tertullian or a reviser, its text here must be simply an attempt to make the other version more intelligible. The form in the text can hardly be the later, an adaptation; and it is certainly not beyond*

not to be eating a bit of his great-grandfather in his beef? But supposing a Christian assures you that from a man a man comes, and from Gaius it is Gaius himself that returns,—won't the people drive him out with stones rather, and not with . . .

If there is any reason to suppose the return of souls² into bodies, why should they not return into the same substance, when restoration means that a thing is what before it had been? But they are not now what they were,—because they could not become what they were not before, unless they ceased to be what they had been. Much reference to books would be needed, and leisure, if we wished to play with the³ fancy as to the various beasts into which various people might seem to be re-made. But rather, to stick to our defence, it is our proposition that it is altogether more worthy of belief that what was a man will come back a man—any given person from any given person—human at all events—so that the same quality of soul should be restored to the same condition, if not also to the same likeness. Certainly, since the⁴ reason for restoration is preparation for judgement,

Tertullian's occasional fancy for intricate antithesis. The variant may be rendered: "As if the reason, whatever it is, that justifies the return of souls into bodies, does not require that the souls should be recalled to the same bodies! Because to be recalled means to be what they were before. But if they are not what they were before, that is, clad with a human body, and the same body, the souls will not be what they were before. Then, if they are not what they were before, how shall they be said to have returned? Either they will have been made something different and will not be the same, or they will remain the same and will not re-appear from other bodies."

³ *iocis is an emendation here which Kellner adopts—"many a jest would be needed." Perhaps locis means passages from writers.*

iudicii est, necessario idem ipse qui fuerat exhibebitur, ut boni seu contrarii meriti iudicium a deo referat. Ideoque repraesentabuntur et corpora, quia neque pati quicquam potest anima sola sine materia stabili, id est carne, et quod omnino de iudicio dei pati debent animae, non sine carne meruerunt intra quam omnia egerunt.

5 Sed quomodo, inquis, dissoluta materia exhiberi potest? Considera temetipsum, o homo, et fidem rei invenies. Recogita quid fueris antequam esses. Utique nihil. Meminisses enim, si quid fuisses. Qui ergo nihil fueras priusquam esses, idem nihil factus cum esse desieris, cur non possis rursus esse de nihilo eiusdem ipsius auctoris voluntate qui te voluit esse de
6 nihilo? Quid novi tibi eveniet? Qui non eras, factus es; cum iterum non eris, fies. Redde si potes rationem qua factus es, et tunc require qua fies. Et tamen facilius utique fies quod fuisti aliquando, quia aequè non difficile factus es quod nunquam fuisti aliquando.

7 Dubitabitur, credo, de dei viribus, qui tantum corpus hoc mundi de eo quod non fuerat non minus quam de morte vacationis et inanitatis inposuit, animatum spiritu omnium animarum animatore, signatum et ipsum humanae resurrectionis exemplum
8 in testimonium vobis. Lux cotidie interfecta re-

it must necessarily be the very same man, who once was, that will be produced, so as to receive judgement from God upon the good he has done or the opposite. Accordingly their bodies, too, will be re-fashioned, because the soul by itself alone cannot suffer anything without some solid matter, that is the flesh; and because, whatever souls deserve in the judgement of God to suffer, they did not earn it without the flesh, clothed with which they committed all their acts.

"But how," you say, "how can the material of the 5 body, once distributed, be visibly produced?" Think of yourself, sir, and you will find assurance of it. Reflect what you were, before you were *you*. Nothing at all, wasn't it? For you would remember, if you had existed. You were nothing before you came into being; you become nothing when you have ceased to be; why could you not again come out of nothing into being, by the will of the very same Author whose will brought you into being out of nothing? What will be new about it in your experi- 6 ence? You were not; you were made; and once again when you are not, you will be made. Give, if you can, an account of how you were made, and then ask how you will be made. And yet, I would think, it will be easier for you to be made what you once were, because, with no difficulty at all, you were just as much made what once you were not.

Your doubts, I suppose, will be about the power 7 of God? of God, who set together the mighty frame of this universe out of what was not, as if out of the deadness of emptiness and chaos, who gave it the breath of life by that spirit, which gives life to all lives (souls), who sealed it to be itself a testimony for you, a type of human resurrection. Day by day 8

- splendet et tenebrae pari vice decedendo succedunt, sidera defuncta vivescunt, tempora ubi finiuntur incipiunt, fructus consummantur et redeunt, certe semina non nisi corrupta et dissoluta fecundius surgunt, omnia pereundo servantur, omnia de interitu
 9 reformantur. Tu homo, tantum nomen, si intellegas te vel de titulo Pythiae discens, dominus omnium morientium et resurgentium, ad hoc morieris, ut pereas? Ubicumque resolutus fueris, quaecunque te materia destruxerit, hauserit, aboleverit, in nihilum prodegerit, reddet te. Eius est nihilum ipsum cuius et totum.
- 10 Ergo, inquit, semper moriendum erit et semper resurgendum? Si ita rerum dominus destinasset, ingratis experireris conditionis tuae legem. At nunc
 11 non aliter destinavit quam praedicavit. Quae ratio universitatem ex diversitate composuit, ut omnia aemulis substantiis sub unitate constarent ex vacuo et solido, ex animali et inanimali, ex comprehensibili et incomprehensibili, ex luce et tenebris, ex ipsa vita et morte: eadem aevum quoque ita destinata et distincta condicione conseruit, ut prima haec pars, ab exordio rerum quam incolimus, temporali aetate ad finem defluat, sequens vero, quam expectamus, in infinitam aeternitatem propagetur.
- 12 Cum ergo finis et limes, medius qui interhiat, adfuerit, ut etiam ipsius mundi species transferatur aequae temporalis, quae illi dispositioni aeternitatis

light is slain and shines once more; darkness in due turn departs and follows on again; and the dead stars come to life; seasons, when they end, begin anew; crops are matured and return; assuredly the seed must be wasted and dissolved to grow more fruitfully; everything is saved by being lost; everything is re-fashioned out of death. You, O man! (mighty 9 name!) if you understand yourself (if you will "learn yourself," as the inscription of the Delphic priestess bids), will you, the lord of all things that die and rise again, will *you* die to perish utterly? Wherever you have been dissolved,—whatever material body shall have destroyed you, consumed you, abolished you, reduced you to nothing, it shall restore you. To Him belongs that very *nothing*, Whose is the whole.

"Then," do you say? "will it always be dying 10 and rising again?" If the Lord of all things had so determined you would have perforce to submit to the law that governed your being. But, as it is, He has so determined, as He has proclaimed to us. His Reason made this universe of things diverse,^a that 11 all things should consist of a unity made of rival natures, such as void and solid, animate and inanimate, tangible and intangible, light and darkness, yes! of life and death, too. The same Reason made a unity of Time also, mapping out and distinguishing the terms of its course, so that this first part of it from the beginning of the world, the part of our habitation, should flow on age by age to an end, but the later part of it, to which we look forward, should stretch out to an endless eternity.

When, then, the end, that border-line that gapes 12 between,^b shall have come, and the fashion of the universe itself, temporal as all other things, hung

^a The assonance in the Latin seems beyond us.

^b Oehler and others take this to be the millennial interval. Not necessarily.

- aulaei vice oppansa est, tunc restituetur omne humanum genus ad expungendum quod in isto aevo boni seu mali meruit, et exinde pendendum in immensam
 13 aeternitatis perpetuitatem. Ideoque nec mors iam, nec rursus ac rursus resurrectio, sed erimus idem qui nunc, nec alii post, dei quidem cultores apud deum semper, superinduti substantia propria aeternitatis : profani vero, et qui non integre ad deum, in poena aequae iugis ignis, habentes ex ipsa natura eius divinam scilicet subministrationem incorruptibilitatis.
- 14 Noverunt et philosophi diversitatem arcani et publici ignis. Ita longe alius est qui usui humano, alius qui iudicio dei apparet, sive de caelo fulmina stringens, sive de terra per vertices montium eructans; non enim absument quod exurit, sed dum erogant, re-
 15 parant. Adeo manent montes semper ardentes, et qui de caelo tangitur, salvus est, ut nullo iam igni decinerescat. Et hoc erit testimonium ignis aeterni, hoc exemplum iugis iudicii poenam nutrientis. Montes uruntur et durant. Quid nocentes et dei hostes ?
- 1 XLIX. Hae sunt quae in nobis solis praesumptiones vocantur, in philosophis et poetis summae scientiae et insignia ingenia. Illi prudentes, nos inepti ; illi honorandi, nos inridendi, immo eo amplius et puni-
 2 endi. Falsa nunc sint quae tumentur et merito praesumptio, attamen necessaria ; inepta, attamen utilia ;

^a Cf. 2 Cor. v. 2 ; the word *superinduti* survives in the Vulgate.

^b A fancy about persons struck by lightning.

like a curtain before that eternal dispensation, shall pass away, then shall all mankind be restored, for the determination of what good or evil it has done in this age, and for its requital, in strict accord, throughout the boundless continuance of eternity. So it 13 is not death now, and then resurrection after resurrection. We shall be the same persons that now we are, and not others in succession,—the worshippers of God, we shall ever be with God, clothed upon^a with the nature proper to eternity ; but the profane, and those who are not right with God, shall be punished with fire as lasting, and from its nature they too, as God ordains, shall derive incorruptibility.

The philosophers know the distinction between 14 mysterious and common fire. The fire that serves man's use is one thing ; the fire that ministers to the judgement of God is another, whether flashing the thunder-bolts from heaven, or rushing up from the earth through the mountain-tops. For it does not consume what it burns, but, even while it spends it, repairs the loss. So the mountains remain, ever 15 burning ; and he who is touched by fire from heaven, is safe—no fire shall turn him to ashes.^b Take this as evidence for fire eternal, this as a type of endless judgement with punishment ever renewing. The mountains burn and endure. What of the guilty, what of God's enemies ?

XLIX. All this you call presumption in our case, but 1 only in our case ; in the case of philosophers and poets it is supreme knowledge, it is unique genius ! They are wise, we are silly ; honour is their due ; mockery is ours, yes, and punishment into the bargain. But 2 now suppose what protects us to be false, and really presumption ; still it is necessary : silly—but useful !

- siquidem meliores fieri coguntur qui eis credunt, metu aeterni supplicii et spe aeterni refrigerii. Itaque non expedit falsa dici nec inepta haberi quae expedit vera praesumi. Nullo titulo damnari licet omnino
- 3 quae prosunt. In vobis itaque praesumptio est haec ipsa quae damnat utilia. Proinde nec inepta esse possunt; certe etsi falsa et inepta, nulli tamen noxia. Nam et multis aliis similia quibus nullas poenas inrogatis, vanis et fabulosis, inaccusatis et inpunitis,
- 4 ut innoxiiis. Sed in eiusmodi enim, si utique, inrisui iudicandum est, non gladiis et ignibus et crucibus et bestiis, de qua iniquitate saevitiae non modo caecum hoc vulgus exsultat et insultat, sed et quidam vestrum, quibus favor vulgi de iniquitate captatur, gloriantur.
- 5 Quasi non totum quod in nos potestis nostrum sit arbitrium. Certe, si velim, Christianus sum. Tunc ergo me damnabis, si damnari velim; cum vero quod in me potes, nisi velim, non potes, iam meae voluntatis est quod potes, non tuae potestatis. Proinde et
- 6 vulgus vane de nostra vexatione gaudet. Proinde enim nostrum est gaudium, quod sibi vindicat, qui malumus damnari quam a deo excidere: contra illi, qui nos oderunt, dolere, non gaudere debebant, consecutis nobis quod elegimus.
- 1 L. Ergo, inquit, cur querimini quod vos insequamur, si pati vultis, cum diligere debeatis per quos patimini quod vultis? Plane volumus pati,
- 220

since those who believe in it are driven to be better men, by fear of eternal punishment, by hope of eternal refreshment. So it is in no one's interest that tenets should be called false or judged silly, which it is in the interests of all to be presumed true. What is beneficial cannot be condemned on any grounds. It is with you that the presumption lies, in condemning 3 what is useful. In the same way, neither can these tenets be silly. At all events, even if they are false and silly, they are harmful to no one. For they are just like many other tenets on which you lay no penalties, vain tenets, sheer fable, but exempt from accusation and punishment, because harmless. In error of this 4 sort, if there is to be sentence passed, the fit sentence is laughter—not sword and fire, not cross and beast! And it is in savagery and injustice of that sort that this blind rabble exults and triumphs over us—and not they alone, but some among you, who make use of this injustice to win the favour of the rabble, boast of it.

As if all your power against us were not in our 5 control! I am a Christian certainly,—but if I wish to be. Then only can you condemn me, if I wish to be condemned. When then your power against me is, unless I so will, no power at all, your power depends on my will, not on power in you. Similarly the joy of 6 the rabble in our persecution is not a real joy; the joy they count theirs, is ours, who prefer to be condemned rather than to fall from God. On the other hand those who hate us ought to be sorry, not glad, when we have achieved what we have chosen.

L. "Then," you say, "why complain that we perse- 1 cute you, if you wish to suffer? You ought to love those who secure that you suffer what you wish!" Certainly

verum eo more, quo et bellum miles. Nemo quidem libens patitur, cum et trepidare et periclitari sit
2 necesse. Tamen et proeliatur omnibus viribus, et vincens in proelio gaudet qui de proelio querebatur, quia et gloriam consequitur et praedam. Proelium est nobis quod provocamur ad tribunalia, ut illic sub discrimine capitis pro veritate certemus. Victoria est autem pro quo certaveris obtinere. Ea victoria habet et gloriam placendi deo et praedam vivendi in aeternum.

3 Sed obducimur. Certe cum obtinuimus. Ergo vicimus, cum occidimur, denique evadimus, cum obducimur. Licet nunc sarmenticios et semaxios appelletis, quia ad stipitem dimidii axis revincti sarmentorum ambitu exurimur. Hic est habitus victoriae nostrae, haec palmata vestis, tali curru
4 triumphamus. Merito itaque victis non placemus; propterea enim desperati et perditii existimamur. Sed haec desperatio et perditio penes vos in causa gloriae et famae vexillum virtutis extollunt.

5 Mucius dexteram suam libens in ara reliquit: o sublimitas animi! Empedocles totum sese Catanensium Aetnaeis incendiis donavit: o vigor mentis! Aliqua Carthaginis conditrix rogo se secundum matrimonium dedit: o praeconium castitatis! Regulus,
6 ne unus pro multis hostibus viveret, toto corpore cruces patitur: o virum fortem et in captivitate

^a For these ornaments of a Roman triumph see Livy, x. 7; xxx. 15; the *palmata tunica* is in both passages.

^b For Mucius *cf.* p. 428 note *a*, and for Regulus p. 392 note *b*.

^c The text may be wrong in these two places, or perhaps the translation; but the general drift is clear enough.

we wish to suffer; but it is exactly the case of the soldier and war. Nobody is glad to face it with all its inevitable anxiety and danger. Yet he battles with 2 all his might and, victorious in the battle, he rejoices, —though but now he was grumbling about the battle —because he achieves glory and spoil. Our battle consists in being challenged to face the tribunals; that there, in peril of life, we may fight it out for truth. Victory is the achievement of the thing for which you have fought. Our victory means the glory of pleasing God, and the spoils are eternal life.

But we are condemned. Yes, when we have 3 achieved our purpose. So we have conquered, when we are killed; we escape when we are condemned. So you may now call us "faggot-fellows" and "half-axle-men," because we are tied to a half-axle-post, the faggots are piled round us, and we are burnt. This is our garb of victory, the robe embroidered with the palm; this our triumphal chariot.^a It is 4 right and reasonable that we do not please the conquered; that is why we pass for desperate fellows, a forlorn hope. But desperation and recklessness of this sort, when it is on your side, when glory and renown are at stake,—oh! then it is holding high the standard of courage.

Mucius ^b gladly left his right hand upon the altar; 5 O the sublimity of that spirit! Empedocles gave the whole of himself to the flames of Etna, at Catana; O the strength of that mind! There was a foundress of Carthage who gave herself to the funeral pyre in wedlock ^c; O the glory of that chastity! Regulus ^b 6 refused to have his own single life spared in exchange for many of the enemy and suffered torture all over his body ^c; O heroic soul, a prisoner but a conqueror!

- victorem! Anaxarchus, cum in exitum tisanæ pilo contunderetur: Tunde, tunde, aiebat, Anaxarchi follem, Anaxarchum enim non tundis: o philosophi magnanimitatem, qui de tali exitu suo etiam iocabatur! Omitto eos qui cum gladio proprio vel alio genere mortis mitiore de laude pepigerunt. Ecce enim et tormentorum certamina coronantur a vobis.
- 8 Attica meretrix carnifice iam fatigato postremo linguam suam comesam in faciem tyranni saevientis expuit, ut expueret et vocem, ne coniuratos confiteri posset, si etiam victa voluisset. Zeno Eleates concessus a Dionysio, quidnam philosophia praestaret, cum respondisset contemptum mortis, impassibilis flagellis tyranni obiectus sententiam suam ad mortem usque signabat. Certe Laconum flagella sub oculis etiam hortantium propinquorum acerbata tantum honorem tolerantiae domui conferunt quantum sanguinis fuderint.
- 10 O gloriam licitam, quia humanam, cui nec praesumptio perdita nec persuasio desperata reputatur in contemptu mortis et atrocitatis omnimodae, cui tantum pro patria, pro imperio, pro amicitia pati
- 11 permissum est quantum pro deo non licet! Et tamen illis omnibus et statuas defunditis, et imagines inscribitis, et titulos inciditis in aeternitatem. Quantum de monumentis potestis scilicet, praestatis et

^a See Diogenes Laertius, ix. 59 *ἐκεῖνο δὴ τὸ περιφερόμενον, "πίσσε τὸν Ἀναξάρχου θύλακον, Ἀνάξαρχον δὲ οὐ πτίσσει."*

^b *Certamina* suggests the various contests at the Games.

^c Cf. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxiv. 72 (12) and vii. 23, 87; the occasion was the conspiracy of Harmodius and Aristogiton.

^d Other ancient writers assign this experiment to other tyrants.

^e On the lashing of boys at the altar of Artemis Orthia

Anaxarchus, when they pounded him like barley groats with a pestle, "Pound away!" he cried, "pound away! it is Anaxarchus's outside case you are pounding, not Anaxarchus!"^a O the splendid spirit of the philosopher, jesting about his own death, and such a death! I pass over those who with their own swords, or some milder form of death, have bargained for praise. For look! contests^b in torture win crowns from you. The Attic harlot, when the torturer was tired out, at last chewed off her own tongue and spat it in the face of the raging tyrant—so to say, to spit out her voice, so that she could not now betray the conspirators, even if overcome by pain she had wished to do it.^c Zeno of Elea, when Dionysius^d asked him what philosophy gave a man and he answered "contempt for death," was subjected to the lashes of the tyrant and proved his dogma by dying impassive. Assuredly the lashes of the Spartans, laid on with utmost cruelty under the eyes of a boy's kinsfolk, who cheer as they watch, win for his house the fame of endurance in exact ratio to the blood shed.^e

O that indeed is glory, lawful glory because human! There no reckless presumption, no desperate delusion, is to be thought of, in that contempt for death and for every cruelty! No, there it is permissible to suffer for one's country, for the empire, for friendship, what it is not permitted to suffer—for God! And yet for every man of them you cast a statue, you paint a picture, you carve an inscription, to give them immortality. So far as you can manage it with monuments, you yourselves give

at Sparta see Pausanias, iii. 16. 10. Cicero records (*Tuscul. Disput.* ii. 14. 34) that it was said some lads had died without a sound under the scourge at the altar.

ipsi quodammodo mortuis resurrectionem. Hanc qui veram a deo sperat, si pro deo patiatur, insanus est.

- 12 Sed hoc agite, boni praesides, meliores multo apud populum si illis Christianos immolaveritis, cruciate, torquete, damnate, atterite nos: probatio est enim innocentiae nostrae iniquitas vestra. Ideo nos haec pati deus patitur. Nam et proxime ad leonem damnando Christianam potius quam ad leonem confessi estis labem pudicitiae apud nos atrocior omnino poena et omni morte reputari. Nec quicquam tamen proficit exquisitor quaeque crudelitas vestra; inlecebra est magis sectae. Plures efficimur quotiens metimur a vobis; semen est sanguis Christianorum.
- 14 Multi apud vos ad tolerantiam doloris et mortis hortantur ut Cicero in Tusculanis, ut Seneca in Fortuitis, ut Diogenes, ut Pyrrhon, ut Callinicus. Nec tamen tantos inveniunt verba discipulos quantos
- 15 Christiani factis docendo. Illa ipsa obstinatio, quam exprobratis, magistra est. Quis enim non contemplatione eius concutitur ad requirendum quid intus in re sit? quis non, ubi requisivit, accedit? ubi accessit, pati exoptat, ut totam dei gratiam redimat, ut omnem veniam ab eo compensatione sanguinis sui
- 16 expediat? Omnia enim huic operi delicta donantur. Inde est, quod ibidem sententiis vestris gratias agimus. Ut est aemulatio divinae rei et humanae, cum damnamur a vobis, a deo absolvimur.

^a As one reads Tertullian, one feels more and more clearly that these last three sections tell his own story. Fourteen years later his last words to Scapula (*Ad Scapulam*, 5) are in the same tenor: "Quisque enim tantam tolerantiam spectans, ut aliquo scrupulo percussus, et inquirere accenditur quid sit in causa, et ubi cognoverit veritatem et ipse statim

dead men a sort of resurrection. But the man who hopes for a real resurrection from God, if he suffers for God—he is a mere fool!

But go to it! my good magistrates; the populace 12 will count you a deal better, if you sacrifice the Christians to them. Torture us, rack us, condemn us, crush us; your cruelty only proves our innocence. That is why God suffers us to suffer all this. Yes, but lately, when you condemned a Christian girl to the pander rather than the panther, you admitted that we count an injury to our chastity more awful than any penalty, than any death. But nothing what- 13 ever is accomplished by your cruelties, each more exquisite than the last. It is the bait that wins men for our school. We multiply whenever we are mown down by you; the blood of Christians is seed. Many 14 among you preach the endurance of pain and of death—such as Cicero in his *Tusculans*, Seneca in his *Fortuita*, Diogenes, Pyrrho, Callinicus. And yet their words never find so many disciples as the Christians win, who teach by deeds. That very "obstinacy" 15 with which you taunt us, is your teacher. For who that beholds it is not stirred to inquire, what lies indeed within it? Who, on inquiry, does not join us, and joining us, does not wish to suffer, that he may purchase for himself the whole grace of God, that he may win full pardon from God by paying his own blood for it? For all sins are forgiven to a deed like this. That 16 is why, on being sentenced by you, on the instant we render you thanks. There is a rivalry between God's ways and man's; we are condemned by you, we are acquitted by God.^a

sequitur." Cf. *Scorpiace*, 8 "nemo voluisset occidi nisi compos veritatis."