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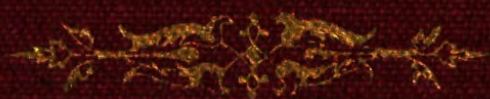
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CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

Selections



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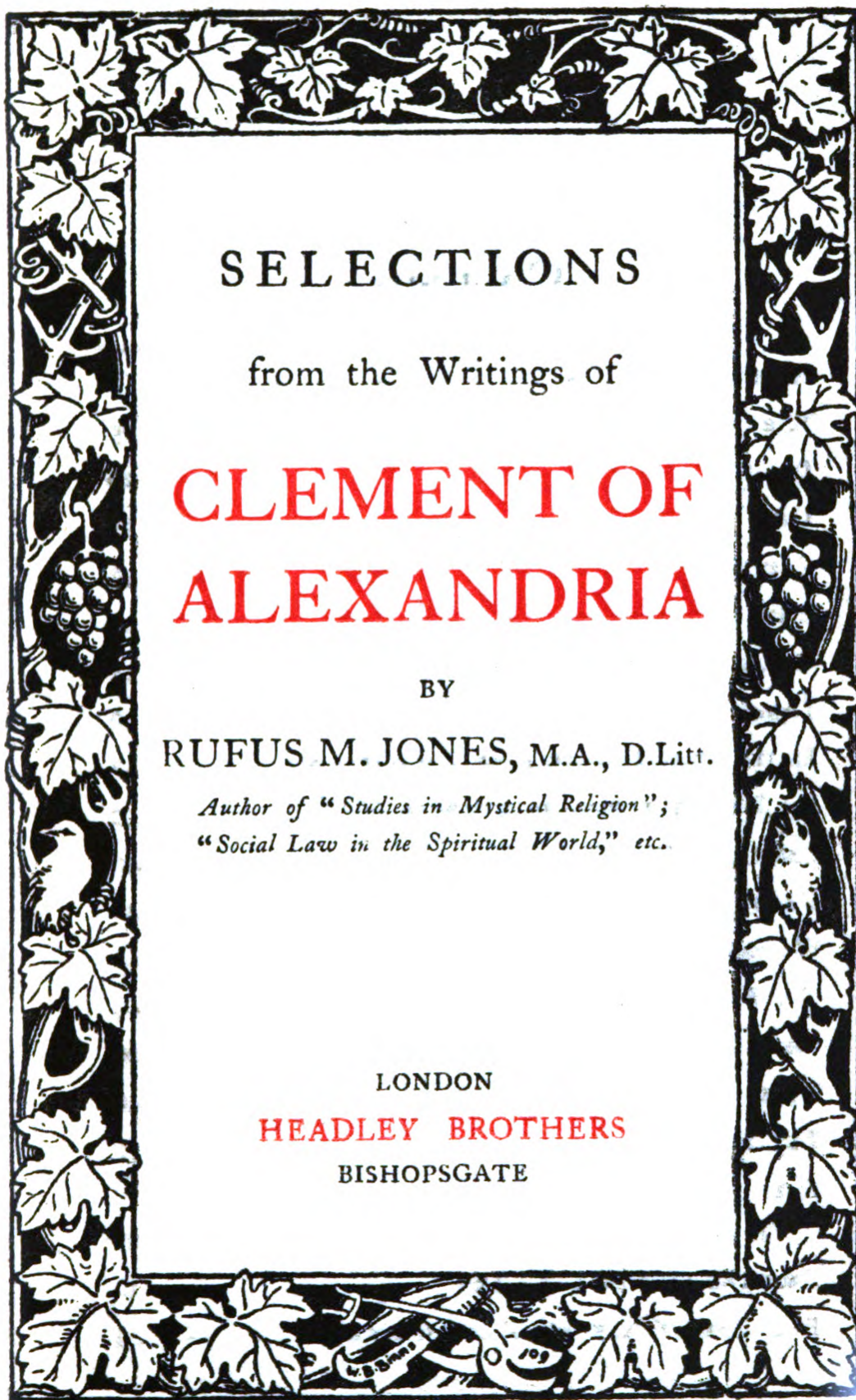
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“ On the whole, I do not know where we shall look for a purer and truer man than this Clemens of Alexandria. I should like to be able to tell you something of his countenance and of his manner, as well as to give you more particulars of his history. But the facts are few and unimportant which his modesty has made known to us, or which his successors have preserved. We must be content to make his acquaintance through the words which he has spoken. Judging from them, he seems to me that one of the old Fathers whom we should all have revered most as a teacher, and loved best as a friend.”

F. D. MAURICE.

(Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, p. 238).

Introduction.

I.

The prophets of the race have a "deathless element" in their message. They are always modern, and spiritual men of all lands and citizenships understand their tongue.

Clement of Alexandria is one of these prophets who live above dates. Much of what he wrote is no doubt "dead," but there is a spiritual kernel in his writings which is still quick and powerful, fresh and modern and in the speech and intellectual coinage of our age. He did in his century what we are trying to do now. He expressed the Christian message in terms of prevailing thought. He took up the hard task—hard in every age—of spiritualising the gathered knowledge of the world, of pouring the wine of the spirit into the thought of his age.

We are all asking, some in high faith and some in doubt, whether there is an eternal power in

Christianity which can carry it through *this* crisis of expanding scientific knowledge—can more than carry it through ; can make it permeate the knowledge that has come to us, conquer it and make it the medium for a fresh and convincing interpretation of “the gospel of the glory of the blessed God.” Clement’s problem was no less urgent than ours. It was becoming very obvious, when he lived and laboured, that if Christianity was to be a world-religion it must make its appeal to the wise as well as to the ignorant, it must be able to live in the academy as well as in the catacombs. He boldly claimed all sound philosophy of the past and of the present as a Divine “preparation” for the Christianity which he was interpreting, and he took his gospel straight into the circle of the learned, and showed them how it fulfilled and completed the best which they had found.

II.

We have very scant biographical data for the story of his life, which was probably not crowded with events. Clement was a teacher, and the main event for any teacher is the discovery

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that he has in the group before him keen and penetrating pupils who are bent on getting to the bottom of things and whose minds unfold, expand and kindle as they are taught! His full name was Titus Flavius Clemens. He was a Greek, probably an Athenian, and very likely in his early youth a "pagan." At least that is what his own words imply when he says, "We rejoice exceedingly and renounce our old opinions, growing young again for salvation, singing with the prophecy 'How good is God to Israel.' "*"

He was born about 150 A.D., though the exact date is unknown. He alludes in his writings to the death of the Emperor Commodus, an event which occurred in 192. Eusebius gives us to understand that his period of activity as a teacher in Alexandria lasted from 180 to 202. We know further that he was alive in 211, and that he was dead in 215. He tells us with enthusiasm of the "living discourses" which he heard from "the truly remarkable men," who were his teachers. Of one of these teachers (undoubtedly Pantaenus the Alexandrian) he

* *The Instructor* I. 1.

uses these happy words : “ The last of all (in power he was the first) I met, and found my rest in him, when I had caught him hidden away in Egypt. He the true Sicilian bee, culling the flowers of the prophetic and apostolic meadow, *engendered in his hearers a deathless element of knowledge ?**

This Pantaenus, who, like Dante’s teacher, “ taught men how mortals are immortalised,” was one of the first great names in the famous Catechetical School of Alexandria. Who was back of him in the noble line of torch-bearers we do not know, for the origins of the school, as well as of Christianity in Alexandria, are enveloped in “ the dim magnificence of legend.” But what we do know is that there was a school here for training young Christians in the period of Clement’s youth, and that it became one of the greatest intellectual forces in the Ante-Nicene Church. It was, Harnack says, of inestimable importance for the transformation of the heathern empire into a Christian one and for the transformation of Greek philosophy into Christian philosophy. It was largely through the

* *Strom.* I. 1.

Introduction.

II

work of the great teachers who came in succession in this school that Christianity was made a part of the thought and civilisation of the ancient world. Alexandria was at this period the seat of the most virile Jewish culture of the time, and it was also the head centre of Neo-Platonism, the profoundest and purest expression of the culture of the ancient non-Christian world—a movement which formed the apotheosis of paganism and, as the event proved, its end. It was a masterly rival to Christianity, and though finally conquered by the expanding Church, it in a subtle way conquered its conquerors, and left a deep tinge of Hellenism in the future thought of Christianity. Clement appears to have become a teacher in the Catechetical School about 180, at first perhaps as assistant to Pantaenus, a little later as head of the school, and he had the glory of having Origen among his scholars. He was possessed of rich humour, a nobility of spirit and a moral earnestness which must have given him a great power over his scholars, and, if Origen is a fair sample of the product of his work as master, we may conclude that he, too, “engendered a deathless

element of knowledge" in the minds of his boys ! Our actual knowledge of what he thought and what he taught is confined to the message which has survived in his writings.

III.

His extant writings consist, besides some fragments, of three works which form a more or less connected series. The first of the series is *An Address to the Greeks*. This treatise undertakes to prove the superiority of Christianity to the religion and philosophy of the pagan world—the New Song is a higher strain than that of Orpheus or Amphion. Man has godlike possibilities ; is meant for God, may imitate Him and be formed into his image—"a noble hymn of God is an immortal man, established in righteousness, with truth engraved in his heart." "Strip yourselves, then," is his appeal to the Greek athletes, "for the contest, and nobly strive in the arena of truth."

The second treatise is the *Pedagogue* or *Instructor*. It was designed he says, "to furnish training and nurture for the early childhood years—an elementary instruction expanding as faith

grows—and to fit those souls on the verge of manhood with virtue and insight to go on to the higher pursuit of spiritual philosophy.” The “Pedagogue” is not Clement himself, nor is it some ideal teacher; it is the Word of God—the living, immanent, ever-present, ever-active Spirit of truth, educating the race and instructing the individual in the things of God. It is, incidentally, a treatise on ethics and good manners—a second century persuasive to the Simple Life. Fish and honeycomb—the Redeemer’s fare—are recommended as admirable for diet. Water is the medicine of temperance. The Lord is our example. He ate from a cheap bowl. He drank from the Samaritan woman’s vessel of clay. “He brought no silver foot bath from heaven with Him.” “He did not wear garlands on His head, but a crown of thorns.” Men who are dignified by the presence of the Eternal Word “ought not to giggle or chatter or fidget;” they ought rather to imitate God and live a life of true *peace*.

The third Treatise is the *Stromata* or *Miscellanies* “a Scrap-bag,” as the word perhaps means, of odds and ends. It is a rambling,

unmethodical book, full of irregularities and strange growths, like a wooded mountain, as the writer himself says, but also full of passages of great beauty and inspiration. Its central aim is to perfect the Christian in Divine philosophy and in the normal practice of the presence of God.

IV.

The range of Clement's knowledge is very impressive. He shows intimate acquaintance, not only with all the schools of Greek philosophy, but with almost the entire literature of the ancient world. His writings are a rich mine for the classical scholar, for in them are preserved many precious fragments of lost poems and books. He makes no distinction between sacred and profane literature, divine and secular writings. He culls his flowers of truth from any soil where they happen to grow. Truth for him, by whomsoever spoken, is from God. Homer and Isaiah, Heraclitus and St. John, alike bear witness in his pages to the presence of an immortal Divine Word, breathing through men and guiding the race.

This doctrine of an immanent God, moving through all life and in immediate relation with the souls of men is fundamental to his thought. He was no doubt powerfully influenced by Stoic philosophy, with its doctrine of a Divine, ever-living, immanent, permeative Soul of the universe—a World Reason, or Logos, which makes the entire universe one great rational living organism, but he was also as powerfully influenced in the same direction by the teaching of St. John and St. Paul: “In the beginning was the Logos; all things were made by Him.” “In God we live and move and are.”*

The Divine Word, for Clement, is an eternal *Paedagogus*, or Tutor of the race, shaping all history, present even in the dawning thought of man, foreshadowing the unfolding future and hinting the *fulness* some day to be realised. What the “law” was for the Hebrews, philosophy was for the Greeks. “Before the coming of the Lord,” he says, “philosophy was necessary to the Greeks for righteousness . . . being a kind of preparatory training for the attainment of faith through demonstration. Philosophy was

* John i. 1-18; Acts xvii. 28.

a tutor to bring the Hellenic mind, as the law was to bring the Hebrews, to Christ." In another striking passage showing his cosmopolitan mind, he says : " Faith is one. The sects of philosophy have torn it asunder, and each vaunts as the whole truth the part which has fallen to his lot, but all are illumined by the same Light." " Greek philosophy has torn off a fragment of the Eternal Truth of the everlasting Word."

The Incarnation was the breaking forth *in a definite Person* of the God who had through all previous history been an immanent Word and who had all along been preparing for such a consummation. This Incarnation is the central event of history, but it is no abrupt, inexplicable, mysterious marvel—no sudden "scheme" adopted in the councils of heaven. The same God who was in Christ has always been manifesting Himself, has always been showing Himself, though in lower degree, and has always been making men hunger and thirst for Himself and has been drawing them to Himself. Christ, the Immanuel God, is the fullest manifestation possible in the limitations of space and time. He is the head of a spiritual humanity, the goal

of human possibility : “ He became man that we might become divine.”* He and not Adam is the true type-man, the normal being, the head of the race. We are, though Christ has become invisible, still under His Divine tuition. The *Paedagogus* who exhibited in a definite life the mind and will of God, is even yet the real Presence in the world. With infinite patience He is teaching humanity and is slowly “ *working all things up to better.*”

Clement’s treatment of sin is characteristically Greek, and lacks the tragic depth of the Hebrew or the Augustinian diagnosis of it. Sin is missing the mark—it is failure to realise the goal of our true being. “ Man’s proper nature is to be at home with God.” “ Man is born for divine things ; for a sight of heaven.” If he misses the destined goal it is for one of two reasons : either he is ignorant of the truth, or he refuses to follow the light when he sees it. The Divine redemptive process meets these two sources of human weakness. It gives illumination and it is a moral dynamic, it enlightens the mind and directs the will. It reveals the full measure of

* *Address to the Greeks*, Chap. i.

life—the perfect normal stature. It is an Epiphany—a shining out of the God-life for our everlasting enlightenment. And at the same time it *moves* us with its revelation of Divine Love and suffering. Our tender, loving Father, “Our Abba Father” makes His appeal of love to our hearts and *draws* us. “He travails for our re-birth.” Even the “goad” which is sometimes used to drive us to salvation is used in love, for there is no schism between “love” and “judgment.” God’s dealings in judgment are as much a manifestation of love as His gifts of grace are. Punishment is always instructive and disciplinary in all its purposes.

“Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent.”

“The judgments of God,” he says in the *Pedagogue*, “purify the spiritual atmosphere and adapt the earthly environment of man to his spiritual life.”

Salvation, then, means complete spiritual health—a life in which all the godlike faculties of the being reach their normal functions—He became like us that we might become like Him ! The person who attains the true goal of life,

Clement calls “the man of knowledge”* who has the vision of God and holds communion with Him. He also calls him, in a noble phrase, “the harmonised man.” Clement’s “harmonised man” is a profound conception. He is a man who *sees*—has the vision of God, and whose life is harmoniously *adjusted* to God’s purposes. In a beautiful figure he says : “As those who at sea are held by an anchor, pull at the anchor, yet do not drag it to them, but rather drag themselves to the anchor, so those who, *according to the life of spiritual knowledge* try to draw God toward them imperceptibly bring themselves to God.”†

But *vision* is not enough to constitute a “harmonised man”; the entire self must be won to holy ends until goodness becomes natural and habitual. The highest degree of sanctity, he says, is sinlessness in dreams ! The whole inward self is so adjusted to the will of God that it holds toward the good, even when the control of the will is absent. It is the ethical

* *Gnostic*, used in the good sense. I have rendered it “the complete Christian.”

† *Strom.* iv. 23.

consummation which Aristotle calls "moral dexterity of the soul"; and the Psalmist calls "truth in the inward parts!" "Doing good," Clement says, "consists in the habit of doing good, not for glory, nor for reputation, nor for reward either from men or from God—but to be like the Lord." This conception of "the harmonised man" gives Clement a noble estimation of the body. "Those who vilify the body are wrong," he says, "since it is created for knowledge, contrived for goodness, the abode of the soul, dignified by the Holy Spirit, and made perfect in the Saviour." "The body is the soul's consort and ally." In a passage of striking beauty he declares: "The true athlete is he who *in the stadium of this fair world* is crowned for the true victory over all the passions." This view makes all life a sacrament and a ministry: "We honour God, not on special days, as others do, but continually in our whole life. Since God is everywhere present we cultivate our fields praising Him, we sail the sea singing hymns." The person who attains this life of spiritual health has no need of outward observances, or if he uses special sacraments, he uses

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them only as symbols, as fragmentary means, by which he rises to immediate experience of the true realities—"the true altar on earth is the congregation of those who devote themselves to prayer, with a common voice and mind."

In nothing is Clement more "modern" than in his view of *faith*—a view in sharp contrast with the conception of faith which has come down through the Latin Church. "Faith," he says, "*is the assent of the soul*"—it is the spiritual perception of the inner eye, by which we arrive at ultimate and undemonstrable truths. It is the product of "the exercise of obedience," and it becomes "a kind of divine mutual and reciprocal *correspondence*." It is no less rational than knowledge. In fact, if there are any grades of high and low, faith is superior to knowledge, since all knowledge in the last analysis rests upon it and is possible through it, for "the very knowledge by which we live is due to *assent*." Faith is far removed from "conjecture," which is "spurious faith"; it is an inward power, "an unfailing energy," which has its own criterion of certitude

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in itself—it is a sort of *pre-conception* that verifies itself through the enlarging experience which it initiates—“the exercise of faith directly becomes knowledge”; that is, it begins in an experiment and ends in an experience. There is no schism between faith and works, for, as he says, *Faith is the beginning of action*—faith is merely the inward aspect of deeds. Prayer, too, is only another aspect of faith, which we have already seen is “mutual correspondence” between the Divine and the human. So, also, of prayer he says, “Prayer, to speak boldly, is inward converse with God.” The aim of prayer is “not to get things that are good, but to *be good and to attain the habit of goodness*.” The Church itself is the world-wide congregation of spiritual persons, who *live by the Eternal Word*. It grows and enlarges as fast as men become responsive and obedient to the Divine Tutor, who is forever demonstrating His power, triumphing over evil, furthering the good and leading into all the truth. The supreme evidence that Christianity is a Divine religion must always be sought in its spiritual victories.

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There is in Greek legend a beautiful story of a lost river that plunged underground and disappeared. But it was never really lost, it was only hidden, and finally streamed forth, the same and yet not the same, under the new name of Arethusa. Somewhat so, the Christianity which Clement taught when the Church was in its youth, dropped out of sight, was submerged under ecclesiastical systems, became lost under pagan superstitions, but finally has burst forth again, clarified and somewhat transformed, and is bubbling afresh in lands undreamed of, by those who sat at Clement's feet in that strange oriental city !

Selections from the Writings of Clement of Alexandria.

The Story of the Pursuit of a Soul.

Listen to a tale, which is not a tale but a narrative, handed down and committed to the custody of memory, about the Apostle John. For when on the tyrant's death, he returned to Ephesus from the Isle of Patmos, he went away, being invited, to the contiguous territories of the nations, here to appoint bishops, there to set in order whole Churches, there to ordain such as were marked out by the Spirit.

Having come to one of the cities not far off (the name of which some give), and having put brethren to rest in other matters, at last, looking to the bishop appointed, and seeing a youth, powerful in body, comely in appearance, and ardent in spirit, said, " This youth I commit to

you in all earnestness, in the presence of the Church, and with Christ as witness." The bishop accepted the charge, and promised to do all that was enjoined. And John set out for Ephesus.

The presbyter taking home the youth committed to him, reared, kept, cherished, and finally baptised him. After this he relaxed his stricter care and guardianship, under the idea that the seal of the Lord he had set on him was a complete protection to him. But on his obtaining premature freedom, some youths of his age, idle, dissolute, and adepts in evil courses, corrupted him. First they enticed him by many costly entertainments ; then afterwards by night issuing forth for highway robbery, they took him along with them. Then they dared to execute together something greater. And by degrees he got accustomed ; and from greatness of nature, when he had gone aside from the right path, and like a hard-mouthed and powerful horse, had taken the bit between his teeth, rushed with all the more force down into the depths. And having entirely despaired of salvation in God, he no longer meditated what

was insignificant, but having perpetrated some great exploit, now that he was once lost, he made up his mind to a like fate with the rest. Taking them and forming a band of robbers, he was the prompt captain of the bandits, the fiercest, the bloodiest, the cruelest.

Time passed, and some necessity having emerged, they sent again for John. He, when he had settled the other matters on account of which he came, said, "Come now, O bishop, restore to us the *deposit* which I and the Saviour committed to thee in the face of the Church as witness."

The bishop was at first confounded, thinking that it was a false charge about money. But when John said, "I demand the young man, and the soul of the brother," the old man, groaning deeply, and bursting into tears, said, "He is dead."

"How, and what kind of death?"

"He is dead," he said, "to God. For he turned wicked and abandoned, and at last he became a robber; and now instead of the Church he has taken possession of the mountain, along with a band like him."

Rending his clothes, and striking his head with great lamentation, the apostle said, "It was a fine guard of a brother's soul I left ! But let a horse be brought me, and let some one be my guide on the way."

He rode away, just as he was, straight from the church. On coming to the place, he was arrested by the robbers' outpost, neither fleeing or entreating, but crying, "It was for this I came. Lead me to your captain," who meanwhile was waiting, all armed as he was. But when he recognised John as he advanced, he turned, ashamed, to flight. John followed with all his might, forgetting his age, crying, "Why, my son, dost thou flee from me, thy father, unarmed and old ? Son, pity me. Fear not ; thou hast still hope of life. I will give account to Christ for thee. If needs be, I will willingly endure thy death, as the Lord did death for us. For thee I will surrender my life. Stand, believe ; Christ hath sent me."

And he, when he heard, first stood, looking down ; then threw down his arms, then trembled and wept bitterly. And as the old man approached him, he embraced him, spoke with

The New Song.

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sorrow, and was baptised a second time with tears. The old apostle pledging and assuring him that he would find forgiveness from the Saviour, led him back to the church.

From Who is the Rich Man that shall Be Saved ? chap. xlii.

The New Song.

I might tell you the story of a minstrel—Eunomos the Locrian, and the Pythic grasshopper. A solemn Hellenic assembly had met at Pytho, to celebrate the death of the Pythic serpent, when Eunomos sang the reptile's epitaph. Whether his ode was a hymn in praise of the serpent, or a dirge, I am not able to say. But there was a contest, and Eunomos was playing the lyre in the summer time : it was when the grasshoppers, warmed by the sun, were chirping beneath the leaves along the hills ; but they were singing not to that dead dragon, but to God-All-wise,—a lay unfettered by rule, better than the numbers of Eunomos. The Locrian breaks a string. The grasshopper sprang on the neck of the instrument, and sat on it as on a branch ; and the minstrel, adapting

his strain to the grasshopper's song, made up for the want of the missing string. The grasshopper then was attracted by the song of Eunomos, as the fable represents, according to which also a brazen statue of Eunomos with his lyre, and the Locrian's ally in the contest, was erected at Pytho. But of its own accord it flew to the lyre, and of its own accord sang, and was regarded by the Greeks as a musical performer.

How, let me ask, have you believed vain fables, and supposed animals to be charmed by music; while Truth's shining face alone, as would seem, appears to you disguised, and is looked on with incredulous eyes?

But let us bring from above out of heaven Truth, with Wisdom in all its brightness, and the sacred prophetic choir, down to the holy mount of God; and let Truth, darting her light to the most distant points, cast her rays all around on those that are involved in darkness, and deliver men from delusion, stretching out her very strong right hand, which is wisdom, for their salvation. And raising their eyes, and looking above, let them abandon Helicon and Cithaeron,

The Word became Man.

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and take up their abode in Sion. "For out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem,"—the celestial Word, the true athlete crowned in the theatre of the whole universe. What my Eunomos sings is not the measure of Terpander, nor that of Capito, nor the Phrygian, nor Lydian, nor Dorian, but the immortal measure of the new harmony which bears God's name—the new song.

From Address to the Greeks, chap i.

The Word became Man that Man might become God.

Inasmuch as the Word was from the first, He was and is the divine source of all things ; but inasmuch as He has now assumed the name Christ, consecrated of old, and worthy of power, He has been called by me the New Song. This Word, then, the Christ, the cause of both our being at first (for He was in God) and of our well-being, this very Word has now appeared as man, He alone being both, both God and man—the Author of all blessings to us ; by whom we, being taught to live well, are sent on our way to life eternal. For, according to that inspired

apostle of the Lord, "the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, looking for the blessed hope, and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

This is the New Song, the manifestation of the Word that was in the beginning, and before the beginning. The Saviour, who existed before, has in recent days appeared. He, who really is has appeared; for the Word, who "was with God," and by whom all things were created, has appeared as our Teacher. The Word, who in the beginning bestowed on us life as Creator when He formed us, taught us to live well when He appeared as our Teacher; that as God He might afterwards supply to us the life which never ends. He, the merciful God, "emptied Himself" to save men. And now the Word Himself clearly speaks to thee, shaming thy unbelief; yea, I say, the Word of God became man, that thou mayest learn from man how man may become God.

From Address to the Greeks, chap. i.

The Search for God.

I seek after God, not the works of God. Whom shall I take as a helper in my inquiry ? We do not, if you have no objection, wholly disown Plato. How, then, is God to be searched out, O Plato ? “For both to find the Father and Maker of this Universe is a work of difficulty ; and having found Him, to declare Him fully, is impossible.”

Why so ? by Himself, I beseech you ! For He can by no means be expressed. Well done, Plato ! Thou hast touched on the truth. But do not flag. Undertake with me the inquiry respecting the Good. For into all men whatever, especially those who are occupied with intellectual pursuits, a certain divine effluence has been instilled ; wherefore, though reluctantly, they confess that God is one, indestructible, unbegotten, and that somewhere above in the tracts of heaven, in His own peculiar eminence, whence He surveys all things, He has an existence true and eternal.

From *Address to the Greeks*, chap. vi.

Like as a Mother-bird.

The union of many in one, issuing in the production of divine harmony out of a medley of sounds and division, becomes one symphony following one choir-leader and teacher, the Word, reaching and resting in truth itself, and crying Abba, Father. This, the true utterance of His children, God accepts with gracious welcome—the first-fruits He receives from them.

For God, of His great love to man, comes to the help of man, as the mother-bird flies to one of her young that has fallen out of the nest ; and if a serpent opens its mouth to swallow the little bird, “ the mother flutters round, uttering cries of grief over her dear progeny ; ” and God the Father seeks His creature, and heals his transgression, and pursues the serpent, and recovers the young one, and incites it to fly up to the nest.

From Address to the Greeks, chaps. ix. and x.

O Child, thirst for thy Father.

Let us not then be enslaved or become swinish ; but, as true children of the light, let us raise our eyes and look on the light, lest the Lord discover

O Child, thirst for thy Father. 35

us to be spurious, as the sun does the eagles. Let us therefore repent, and pass from ignorance to knowledge, from foolishness to wisdom, from licentiousness to self-restraint, from unrighteousness to righteousness, from godlessness to God. It is an enterprise of noble venture to take our way to God ; and the enjoyment of many other good things is within the reach of the lovers of righteousness who pursue eternal life, specially those things to which God Himself alludes, speaking by Isaiah : “ There is an inheritance for those who serve the Lord.” Noble and desirable is this inheritance : not gold, not silver, not raiment, which the moth assails, and things of earth which are assailed by the robber, whose eye is dazzled by worldly wealth ; but it is that treasure of salvation to which we must hasten, by becoming lovers of the Word. Thence praiseworthy works descend to us, and fly with us on the wing of truth. This is the inheritance with which the eternal covenant of God invests us, supplying the everlasting gift ; and this loving Father of ours—the true Father—ceases not to exhort, admonish, train, love us. For He ceases not to save, and advises the best

course : "Become righteous," says the Lord. "Ye that thirst, come to the water ; and ye that have no money, come, and buy and drink without money." He invites to the laver, to salvation, to illumination, all but crying out and saying, "The land I give thee, and the sea, my child, and heaven too ; and all the living creatures in them I freely bestow upon thee." Only, O child, thirst for thy Father ; God shall be revealed to thee without price ; the truth is not made merchandise of. He gives thee all creatures that fly and swim, and those on the land. These the Father has created for thy thankful enjoyment.

From *Address to the Greeks*, chap. x.

Trust the Inborn Witness.

You ought, O men, when reflecting on the Good, to have brought forward a witness inborn and competent, *viz.*, faith, which of itself, and from its own resources, chooses at once what is best, instead of occupying yourselves in painfully inquiring whether what is best ought to be followed. For, allow me to tell you, you ought to doubt whether you should get drunk, but you

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get drunk before reflecting on the matter ; and whether you ought to do an injury, but you do injury with the utmost readiness. The only thing you make the subject of question is, whether God should be worshipped, and whether this wise God and Christ should be followed : and this you think requires deliberation and doubt, and know not what is worthy of God. Have faith in us, as you have in drunkenness, that you may be wise ; have faith in us, as you have in injury, that you may live.

Let us then openly strip for the contest, and nobly strive in the arena of truth, the holy Word being the judge, and the Lord of the universe prescribing the contest. For 'tis no insignificant prize, the guerdon of immortality, which is set before us.

From Address to the Greeks, chap. x.

Truth is the Medicine of Immortality.

No hindrance stands in the way of him who is bent on the knowledge of God. Neither childlessness, nor poverty, nor obscurity, nor want, can hinder him who eagerly strives after the knowledge of God ; nor does anyone who has

“conquered by brass or iron” the true wisdom for himself choose to exchange it, for it is well preferred to everything else. Christ is able to save in every place. For he that is fired with ardour and admiration for righteousness being the lover of One who needs nothing, needs himself but little, having treasured up his bliss in nothing but himself and God, where is neither moth, robber, nor pirate, but the eternal Giver of good. With justice, then, have you been compared to those serpents who shut their ears against the charmers. For “their mind,” says the Scripture, “is like the serpent, like the deaf adder, which stoppeth her ear, and will not hear the voice of the charmers.” But allow yourselves to feel the influence of the charming strains of sanctity, and receive that mild word of ours, and reject the deadly poison, that it may be granted to you to divest yourselves as much as possible of destruction, as they have been divested of old age. Hear me, and do not stop your ears; do not block up the avenues of hearing, but lay to heart what is said. Excellent is the medicine of immortality !

From *Address to the Greeks*, chap. x.

An Immortal Man is a noble Hymn to God.

Believe Him who is man and God ; believe, O man. Believe, O man, the living God, who suffered and is adored. Believe, ye slaves, Him who died ; believe, all ye of human kind, Him who alone is God of all men. Believe, and receive salvation as your reward. Seek God, and your soul shall live. He who seeks God is busying himself about his own salvation. Hast thou found God ?—then thou hast life. Let us then seek, in order that we may live. The reward of seeking is life with God. “ Let all who seek Thee be glad and rejoice in Thee ; and let them say continually, God be magnified.” A noble hymn of God is an immortal man, established in righteousness, in whom the oracles of truth are engraved. For where but in a soul that is wise can you write truth ? where love ? where reverence ? where meekness ? Those who have had these divine characters impressed on them, ought, I think, to regard wisdom as a fair port whence to embark, to whatever lot in life they turn ; and likewise to deem it the calm haven of

salvation : wisdom, by which those who have betaken themselves to the Father, have proved good fathers to their children ; and good parents to their sons, those who have known the Son ; and good husbands to their wives, those who remember the Bridegroom ; and good masters to their servants, those who have been redeemed from utter slavery.

From Address to the Greeks, chap. x.

Seek the Greatest of all Goods.

Let us aspire, then, after what is good ; let us become God-loving men, and obtain the greatest of all things which are incapable of being harmed—God and life. Our helper is the Word ; let us put confidence in Him ; and never let us be visited with such a craving for silver and gold, and glory, as for the Word of truth Himself. For it will not, it will not be pleasing to God Himself if we value least those things which are worth most, and hold in the highest estimation the manifest enormities and the utter impiety of folly, and ignorance, and indifference, and idolatry. For not improperly the sons of the philosophers consider

Seek the Greatest of All Goods. 41

that the foolish are guilty of profanity and impiety in whatever they do ; and describing ignorance itself as a species of madness, allege that the multitude are nothing but madmen. There is therefore no room for doubt, the Word will say, whether it is better to be sane or insane ; but holding on to truth with our teeth, we must with all our might follow God, and in the exercise of wisdom regard all things to be, as they are, His ; and besides, having learned that we are the most excellent of His possessions, let us commit ourselves to God, loving the Lord God, and regarding this as our business all our life long. And if what belongs to friends be reckoned common property, and man be the friend of God—for through the mediation of the Word has he been made the friend of God—then accordingly all things become man's, because all things are God's, and the common property of both the friends, God and man.

It is time, then, for us to say that the pious Christian alone is rich and wise, and of noble birth, and thus call and believe him to be God's image, and also His likeness, having become

righteous and holy and wise by Jesus Christ, and so far already like God.

From Address to the Greeks, chap. xii.

Translated into God's Commonwealth.

Be gracious, O Instructor, to us Thy children, Father, Charioteer of Israel, Son and Father, both in One, O Lord. Grant to us who obey Thy precepts, that we may perfect the likeness of the image, and with all our power know Him who is the good God and not a harsh Judge. And do Thou Thyself cause that all of us who have our conversation in Thy peace, who have been translated into Thy commonwealth, having sailed tranquilly over the billows of sin, may be wafted in calm by Thy Holy Spirit, by the ineffable wisdom, by night and day, to the Perfect Day; and giving thanks may praise, and praising thank the Alone Father and Son, Son and Father, the Son, Instructor and Teacher, with the Holy Spirit. To the All-One, in whom are all things, because of whom all things are one, because of whom is Eternity, whose members we all are, whose glory the æons are; to the All-good,

Our Own Condemnation.

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All-lovely, All-wise, All-just One. To Him
be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

From The Instructor, B. III., chap xii.

We are the Cause of our own Con- demnation.

For as the mirror is not evil to an ugly man because it shows him what like he is ; and as the physician is not evil to the sick man because he tells him of his fever,—for the physician is not the cause of the fever, but only points out the fever,—so neither is He, that reproves, ill-disposed towards him who is diseased in soul. For He does not put the transgressions on him, but only shows the sins which are there ; in order to turn him from similar practices. So God is good on His own account, and just also on ours, and He is just because He is good. And His justice is shown to us by His own Word, who came from the Father. For before He became Creator He was God and was good. And for that reason He wished to be Creator and Father. And the nature of that love was the source of righteousness—the cause, too, of His lighting up His sun, and sending down His own Son.

He first announced the righteousness that is from heaven when He said, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father ; nor the Father, but the Son." This mutual and reciprocal knowledge is the symbol of primeval justice. Then justice came down to men both in the letter and in the body, in the Word and in the law, constraining humanity to a saving repentance ; for it was good. But you do not obey God. Then blame yourself, who drag to yourself the judge.

From *The Instructor*, B. I., chap. ix.

The Perennial Immortal Bloom of Gladness.

But let us, O children of the good Father—nurslings of the good Instructor—fulfil the Father's will, listen to the Word, and express the truly saving life of our Saviour ; and meditating on the heavenly mode of life according to which we have been deified, let us anoint ourselves with the perennial immortal bloom of gladness—that ointment of sweet fragrance—having a clear example of immortality in the walk and conversation of the Lord, and following the Divine footsteps.

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Besides, our Instructor makes preparation for a self-sufficing mode of life, for simplicity and for girding up our loins, and for free and unimpeded readiness for our journey; in order that we may attain an eternity of beatitude, teaching each one of us to be his own storehouse. For he says, "Take no anxious thought for to-morrow," meaning that the man who has devoted himself to Christ ought to be sufficient to himself, and servant to himself, and, moreover, ought to lead a life which provides for each day by itself.

For what else do we say is incumbent on the rational creature—I mean man—than the contemplation of the Divine? I say, too, that we need to contemplate human nature, and to live as the truth directs, and to admire the Instructor and His teachings, for the human and the Divine are suitable and harmonious to each other. According to this Divine image, and conforming ourselves to the Instructor, and making the Word and our deeds agree, we ought *to live a real life*.

From *The Instructor*, B. I., chap. xii.

Sin and Virtue.

Everything that is contrary to right reason is sin. Accordingly, therefore, the philosophers think fit to define the most generic passions thus : lust, as desire disobedient to reason ; pleasure, as an elation of the spirit disobedient to reason ; fear, as weakness disobedient to reason. If, then, disobedience to reason is the generating cause of sin, how shall we escape the conclusion that obedience to reason—the Word—which we call faith, will of necessity be the efficacious cause of duty ? For virtue itself is a state of the soul harmonious to reason in respect to the whole life.

From *The Instructor*, B. I., chap. xiii.

Virtue is a Conformed Will.

The end of piety is eternal rest in God. And the beginning of eternity is our end. The right operation of piety perfects duty by actions ; whence, according to just reasoning, duties consist in actions, not in sayings. And Christian conduct is the operation of the rational soul in accordance with a correct judgment and aspira-

The Simple Life.

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tion after the truth, which attains its destined end through the body, the soul's consort and ally. Virtue is a will in conformity to God and Christ in life, rightly adjusted to life everlasting. For the life of Christians, in which we are now trained, is a system of reasonable actions—that is, of those things taught by the Word—*an unfailing energy which we call faith.*

From *The Instructor*, B. I., chap. xiii.

The Simple Life.

Some men, in truth, live that they may eat, as the irrational creatures do, “whose life is their belly and nothing else.” But the Instructor enjoins us to eat that we may live. For neither is food our business, nor is pleasure our aim; but both are on account of our *life*, which the Word is training up to immortality. Wherefore also there is discrimination to be employed in reference to food. It is to be simple, truly plain, suiting precisely simple and artless children—as ministering to life, not to luxury. And the life to which it conduces consists of two things—health and strength; to which plainness of fare is most suitable, being conducive both to digestion

and lightness of body, from which come growth and health, and right strength, not strength that is wrong or dangerous and wretched, as is that of athletes produced by compulsory feeding.

From *The Instructor*, B. II., chap. i.

The Greatest of all Lessons,—to know Oneself.

It is then, as appears, the greatest of all lessons to know one's self. For if one knows himself, he will know God; and knowing God, he will be made like God, not by wearing gold or long robes, but by well doing and by requiring as few things as possible.

From *The Instructor*, B. III., chap. i.

Growing Old in the Lord.

For it is not dreadful to appear old, when you are not able to shut your eyes to the fact that you *are* so.

The more, then, a man hastens to the end, the more truly venerable is he, having God alone as his senior, since He is the eternal aged One, He who is older than all things. Prophecy has called Him the "Ancient of days"; "and

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the hair of His head was as pure wool," says the prophet.

From *The Instructor*, B. III., chap. iii.

The Fair Staff of Beneficence.

He who climbs to the heavens by force, must carry with him the fair staff of beneficence, and attain to the true rest by communicating to those who are in distress. For the Scripture avouches, "that the true riches of the soul are a man's ransom," that is, if he is rich, he will be saved by distributing. For as gushing wells, when pumped out, rise again to their former measure, so giving away, being the benignant spring of love, by communicating of its drink to the thirsty, again increases and is replenished, just as the milk is wont to flow into the breasts that are sucked or milked. For he who has the Almighty God, the Word, is in want of nothing, and never is in straits for what he needs. For the Word is a possession that wants nothing, and is the cause of all abundance. If one say that he has often seen the righteous man in need of food, this is rare, and happens only where there is not another righteous man. Notwithstanding let him read

what follows : “ For the righteous man shall not live by bread alone, but by the word of the Lord,” who is the true bread and heavenly. The good man, then, can never be in difficulties so long as he keeps intact his confession toward God. For it appertains to him to ask and to receive whatever he requires from the Father of all ; and to enjoy what is his own, if he keep the Son. And having Him, he feels no want.

This Word, who trains us, confers on us the true riches. Nor is the growing rich an object of envy to those who possess through Him the privilege of wanting nothing. He that has this wealth shall inherit the kingdom of God.

From *The Instructor*, B. III., chap. vii.

God Fulfills Himself in Many Ways.

Before the advent of the Lord, philosophy was necessary to the Greeks for righteousness, being a kind of preparatory training to those who were to attain to faith through demonstration. God is the cause of all good things ; but of some good things primarily, as of the Old and the New Testament ; and of other good things by consequence, as philosophy. Perchance, too, philo-

The Dawn of Light.

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sophy was given to the Greeks directly and primarily, till the Lord should call the Greeks. For philosophy was a schoolmaster to bring the Hellenic mind, as the law, the Hebrews, to Christ. Philosophy, therefore, was a preparation, paving the way for him who is perfected in Christ.

From *The Stromata*, B. I., chap. v.

All are illuminated by the Dawn of Light.

Truth is one, though falsehood has ten thousand by-paths. And just as the Bacchantes tore asunder the limbs of Pentheus, so the sects, both of barbarian and Hellenic philosophy, have done with Truth, and each vaunts as the whole truth the portion which has fallen to its lot. But all, in my opinion, are illuminated by the dawn of Light. Let all, therefore, both Greeks and barbarians, who have aspired after the truth,—both those who possess much and those who have any portion at all—*produce* whatever they have of the Word of Truth.

So, then, the barbarian and Hellenic philosophy has each torn off a fragment of the eternal truth, not from the mythology of Dionysius, but

from the theology of the ever-living Word. And He who brings again together the separate fragments, and makes them one, will, without peril, contemplate the perfect Word, the Truth.

From *The Stromata*, B. I., chap. xiii.

The Cure of the Soul.

For shall he who drives away bodily disease appear a benefactor ; and shall not he who attempts to deliver the soul from iniquity, as much more appear a friend, as the soul is a more precious thing than the body ? Besides, for the sake of bodily health we submit to incisions, and cauterizations, and medicinal draughts ; and he who administers them is called saviour and healer, even though he amputates parts (not from grudge or ill-will towards the patients, but as the principles of the art prescribe), so that the sound parts may not perish along with them, and no one accuses the physician's art of wickedness ; and shall we not similarly submit, for the soul's sake, to either banishment or punishment, or bonds, provided only from unrighteousness we shall attain to righteousness.

From *The Stromata*, B. I., chap. xxvii.

Faith as the Assent of the Soul. 53

A God Who is Near.

He who is far off has—oh, ineffable marvel !—come very near. “ I am a God that draws near,” says the Lord. He is very near in virtue of that power which holds all things in its embrace. “ Shall one do aught in secret, and I see him not ? ” For the power of God is always present, in contact with us, in the exercise of inspection, of beneficence, of instruction. “ What house will ye build to Me ? ” saith the Lord. Nay, He has not even built one for Himself, since He cannot be contained in any place. And though heaven be called His throne, not even thus is He contained, but he rests delighted in the whole creation.

From *The Stromata*, B. II., chap. ii.

Faith as the Assent of the Soul.

Faith, which the Greeks disparage, deeming it futile and barbarous, is a pre-conception through the will, the assent of the soul—“ the assurance of things hoped for, and conviction of things not seen,” according to the divine apostle. Others have defined faith to be an

intellectual *assent* to an unseen object, just as the proof of an unknown thing is an evident assent. Faith is, in fact, a form of choice, the desire in this instance being intellectual. And since choice is the beginning of action, *faith is discovered to be the beginning of action*, being the foundation of rational choice. Faith as unswerving choice, then, gives great momentum in the direction of knowledge. The exercise of faith directly becomes knowledge, building on a sure foundation. Knowledge, accordingly, is defined by the philosophers as a *habit*, which cannot be overthrown by reason.

From *The Stromata*, B. II., chap. ii.

Faith as an Infallible Criterion.

We *rest on the infallible criterion of faith, manifesting a self-determining spirit* in the activity of will, since we have *chosen* life and believe God through His voice. *And he who has believed the Word knows the matter to be true.*

With a new eye, a new ear, a new heart, whatever can be seen and heard is to be apprehended, by the faith and understanding of the disciples of the Lord, who speak, hear and act

Faith as an Infallible Criterion. 55

spiritually. For there is genuine coin, and other coin that is spurious. The spurious deceives the unprofessional, though it does not deceive the money changers who know through having learned how to separate and distinguish what has a false stamp from what is genuine. So the money-changer only says to the unprofessional man that the coin is counterfeit. But the reason why, only the banker's apprentice and he that is trained into this department, learns.

Now Aristotle says that the judgment which follows knowledge is in truth faith. Accordingly faith is something superior to knowledge, and is its criterion. Conjecture, which is only a feeble supposition, counterfeits faith; as the flatterer counterfeits a friend, and the wolf a dog. And as the workman sees that by learning certain things he becomes an artificer, and the helmsman by being instructed in the art will be able to steer, he does not regard the mere wishing to become excellent and good enough, but he must learn it by *the exercise of obedience*. But to obey the Word, whom we call Instructor, is to believe Him, going against Him in nothing. Knowledge

accordingly, is characterised by faith; and faith, *by a kind of divine mutual and reciprocal correspondence*, becomes characterised by knowledge.

From *The Stromata*, B. II., chap. iv.

Faith as a Pre-Conception of the Mind.

How can one, without a pre-conceived idea of what he is aiming after, learn about that which is the subject of his investigation? He, again, who has learned has already turned his pre-conception into comprehension. And if he who learns, learns not without a pre-conceived idea which takes in what is expressed, that man has ears to hear the truth. And happy is the man that speaks to the ears of those that hear; as happy certainly also is he who is a child of obedience. Now to hear is to understand. If, then, *faith is nothing else than a preconception of the mind* in regard to what is the subject of discourse, and obedience is so called, and understanding and persuasion; no one shall learn aught without faith, since no one learns aught without preconception. Consequently there is a more ample demonstration of the complete

Faith as Receptive Faculty. 57

truth of what was spoken by the prophet, "Unless ye believe, neither will ye understand."

From *The Stromata*, B. II., chap. iv.

Faith as Receptive Faculty.

As playing at ball not only depends upon one throwing the ball skilfully, but requires one to catch it dexterously, that the game may be gone through according to the rules for ball ; so also is it the case that teaching is reliable when faith on the part of those who hear contributes, as a sort of natural art, to the process of learning. So also the earth co-operates, through its productive power, being fit for the sowing of the seed. For the very best instruction is futile without the exercise of the receptive faculty on the part of the learner, and even prophecy is without avail when there is the absence of docility on the part of those who hear. For dry twigs, being ready to receive the power of fire, are kindled with great ease ; and the far-famed stone [the so-called load-stone], attracts steel through affinity, as the amber tear-drop draws to itself twigs, and the lump sets chaff in motion. And the substances attracted obey

them, influenced by a subtle spirit, not as a cause, but as a concurring cause.

From *The Stromata*, B. II., chap. vi.

Faith as Necessary as Respiration.

Faith may not be disparaged in an offhand way, as simple and vulgar, appertaining to anybody. For, if it were a mere human habit, as the Greeks supposed, it would have been extinguished. But if it grows, and there is no place where it is not, then I affirm, that faith, whether founded in love, or in fear, as its disparagers assert, is something divine; which is neither rent asunder by other mundane friendship, nor dissolved by the presence of fear. For love, on account of its friendly alliance with faith, which is the foundation of love, in its turn introduces the doing of good. Faith is tested and proved trustworthy by action. Such a change from unbelief to faith—and to trust in hope and fear, is Divine. And, in truth, faith is discovered by us, to be the first movement towards salvation; after which fear, and hope, and repentance, advancing in company with temperance and patience, lead us to love and

Faith.

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knowledge. Rightly therefore, the Apostle Barnabas says, "From the portion I have received I have done my diligence to send by little and little to you ; that along with your faith you may also have perfect knowledge." Fear and patience are then helpers of your faith ; and our allies are long-suffering and temperance. The fore-mentioned virtues being then the elements of knowledge, the result is that faith is more elementary, being as necessary to the complete Christian as respiration to him that lives in this world is to life. And as without the four elements it is not possible to live, so neither can knowledge be attained without faith. Faith is then the support of truth.

From *The Stromata*, B. II., ch . vi.

Faith.

Faith is power toward salvation and energy toward eternal life.

That deepest assent by which we live is faith.

From *The Stromata*, B. II., chap. xii.

Now faith is the ear of the soul.

Faith is *the visual faculty* of the soul.

Faith is *the foundation of the august knowledge of the truth.*

Faith must not be inert and alone, but accompanied with investigations.

From *The Stromata*, B. V., chap. i.

Faith, if it is the voluntary assent of the soul, is still the doer of good things, the foundation of right conduct.

From *The Stromata*, B. V., chap. xiii.

Love is Fellowship in Life.

Now love turns out to be consent in what pertains to reason, life and manners, or in brief, fellowship in life, or it is the intensity of friendship and of affection, with right reason, in the enjoyment of associates. And an associate is another self ; just as we call those brethren, who are regenerated by the same Word. And akin to love is hospitality, being a congenial art devoted to the treatment of strangers. And those are strangers, to whom the things of the world are strange.

From *The Stromata*, B. II., chap. ix.

The Imitation of God.

He is the complete Christian who copies the image and likeness of God, who *imitates God* as far as possible, deficient in none of the things

The Good Man.

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which contribute to the likeness, practising self-restraint and endurance, living righteously, reigning over the passions, bestowing of what he has as far as possible, and doing good both by word and deed.

From *The Stromata*, B. II., chap. xix.

The Good Man is God's Image.

The image of God is, really, the man who does good, and in doing good he receives good ; as the pilot at once saves and is saved. Wherefore when one obtains his request, he does not say to the giver, Thou hast given well, but, Thou hast received well.

From *The Stromata*, B. II., chap. xix.

The Good Man Turns His Passions to Service.

There is need of a man who shall use in a praiseworthy and discriminating manner the things from which passions take their rise, as riches and poverty, honour and dishonour, health and sickness, life and death, toil and pleasure. For in order that we may treat things that are different, indifferently, there is need of a great

difference in us, as having been previously afflicted with much feebleness, and in the distortion of a bad training and nurture having ignorantly indulged ourselves.

From *The Stromata*, B. II., chap. xx.

The Perfect Work of Love.

With good courage the martyr goes to his Lord, his Friend, for whom he voluntarily gave his body, and, as his judges hoped, his soul, hearing from our Saviour the words, "Dear brother," by reason of the similarity of his life. We call martyrdom perfection, not because the man comes to the end of his life as others, but because he has exhibited the perfect work of love. And the ancients laud the death of those among the Greeks who died in war, not that they advised people to die a violent death, but because he who ends his life in war is released without the dread of dying, severed from the body without experiencing previous suffering or being enfeebled in his soul, as the people that suffer in diseases.

From *The Stromata*, B. IV., chap. iv.

The Habit of Being Good.

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Living Means Living Well.

Those who falsely calumniate the body, should learn that the harmonious mechanism of the body contributes to the understanding which leads to goodness of nature. Wherefore in the third book of the Republic, Plato says, "that for the sake of harmony of soul, care must be taken for the body" by which, he who announces the proclamation of the truth, finds it possible to live and to live well. For it is by the path of life and health that we learn true Christianity. In living, then, living well is secured. And he who in the body has devoted himself to a good life, is being sent on to the state of immortality.

From *The Stromata*, B, IV., chap. iv.

To Be Good Consists in the Habit of Being Good.

We do not desire knowledge about God for any practical [*i.e.*, utilitarian] purpose, but the knowledge itself suffices as the reason for contemplation. For I will dare aver that it is not because he wishes to be saved that he, who devotes himself to knowledge for the sake of the

divine science itself, chooses knowledge. For the exertion of the intellect by exercise is prolonged to a perpetual exertion. And the perpetual exertion of the intellect is the essence of an intelligent being, which results from an uninterrupted process, and remains eternal contemplation. Could we, then, suppose any one proposing to the complete Christian whether he would choose the knowledge of God *or* everlasting salvation ; and if these, which are entirely identical, were separable, he would without the least hesitation choose the knowledge of God, deeming that property of faith, which from love ascends to knowledge, desirable, for its own sake. *This, then, is the perfect man's first form of doing good, when it is done not for any advantage in what pertains to him, but because he judges it right to do good ;* and the energy being vigorously exerted in all things, in the very act becomes good ; not good in some things, and less good in others ; but *consisting in the habit of doing good, neither for glory, nor, as the philosophers say, for reputation, nor for reward either from men or God ; but so as to pass life after the image and likeness of the Lord.*

The Saint is Holy in His Dreams. 65

To him the flesh is dead ; but he himself lives alone, having consecrated the sepulchre into a holy temple to the Lord.

From The Stromata, B. IV., chap. xxii.

Goodness must be a Disposition.

Not even he himself who shows mercy ought to know that he does show mercy ; for in this way he will be sometimes merciful, sometimes not. But when he shall do good by habit, he will imitate the nature of good, and his disposition will be his nature and his practice.

From The Stromata, B. IV., chap. xxii.

The Saint is Holy in His Dreams.

As is right, then, knowledge itself loves and teaches the ignorant, and instructs the whole creation to honour God Almighty. And if such an one teaches to love God, he will not hold virtue as a thing to be lost in any case, either awake or in a dream, or in any vision ; since the habit never goes out of itself by falling from being a habit. Whether, then, knowledge be said to be habit or disposition, the guiding faculty, remaining unaltered, admits no alteration of

appearances by framing in dreams visionary conceptions out of its movements by day. Wherefore also the Lord enjoins "to watch," so that our soul may never be perturbed with passion, even in dreams ; but also to keep the life of the night pure and stainless, as if spent in the day. For assimilation to God, as far as we can be assimilated, preserves the mind in its relation to the same things. And this is the relation of mind as mind.

From *The Stromata*, B. IV., chap. xxii.

Being Good for the Sake of Goodness.

We desire to learn about the man who is always and in all things righteous ; who, neither dreading the penalty proceeding from the law nor fearing to entertain hatred of evil in the case of those who live with him and who prosecute the injured, nor dreading danger at the hands of those who do wrong, remains righteous. For he who, on account of these considerations, abstains from anything wrong, is not voluntarily good, but is good from fear. If, too, one shall abstain from doing wrong from hope of the recompense given by God on account of righteous deeds, he is not

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on this supposition spontaneously good. For as fear makes that man just, so reward makes this one ; or rather makes him appear to be just.

But he who obeys the mere call to goodness, neither for fear, nor for enjoyments, is on his way to knowledge. For he does not consider whether any intrinsic lucrative gain or enjoyment follows to him ; but drawn by the love of Him who is the true object of love, and led to what is requisite *practises* goodness. So that not even were we to suppose him to receive from God leave to do things forbidden with impunity ; not even if he were to get the promise that he would receive as a reward the good things of the blessed ; but besides, not even if he could persuade himself that God would be hoodwinked with reference to what he does (which is impossible), would he ever wish to do aught contrary to right reason, having once made choice of what is truly good and worthy of choice on its own account, and therefore to be loved.

From *The Stromata*, B. IV., chap. xxii.

Those who are in God's Work are Near God.

I shall free myself from lust, O Lord, for the sake of alliance with Thee. For the economy of creation is good, and all things are well administered ; nothing happens without a cause. I must be in what is Thine, O Omnipotent One. And if I am there, I am near Thee. And I would be free of fear that I may be able to draw near to Thee, and to be satisfied with little. The soul of a man is stamped with the impression of the objects of his choice.

From *The Stromata*, B. IV., chap. xx.ii.

When we pull at God we pull ourselves toward Him.

As those who at sea are held by an anchor, pull at the anchor, but do not drag it to them, but drag themselves to the anchor ; so those, who according to the perfect Christian life, draw God towards them, imperceptibly bring themselves to God : for he who reverences God, reverences himself. In the contemplative life, then, one in worshipping God attends to himself,

The Body as the Soul's Inn. 69

and through his own spotless purification beholds the holy God holily; for self-control, being present, the person surveying and contemplating uninterruptedly, is as far as possible assimilated to God.

From *The Stromata*, B. IV., chap. xxiii.

The Body as the Soul's Inn.

Now the soul of the wise man and complete Christian, as sojourning in the body, conducts himself towards it gravely and respectfully, not with inordinate affections, as about to leave the tabernacle if the time of departure summon.

The wise Christian uses the body as one sent on a distant pilgrimage, uses inns and dwellings by the way, having care of the things of the world, of the places where he halts; but leaving his dwelling place and property without excessive emotion; readily following Him that leads him away from life; by no means and on no occasion turning back; giving thanks for his sojourn, and blessing God for his departure, embracing the mansion that is in heaven.

From *The Stromata*, B. IV., chap. xxvi.

God Works All Things up to Better.

The soul is not then sent down from heaven to what is worse. *For God works all things up to what is better.*

From *The Stromata*, B. IV., chap. xxvi.

The Body is Worthy of Honour.

Those who run down created existence and vilify the body are wrong, for the very frame of man was formed erect for contemplation. The body, too, is the abode of the soul. It is dignified by the Holy Spirit, and it has been perfected in the perfection of the Saviour.

From *The Stromata*, B. IV., chap. xxvi.

The Nature of God.

But the most of men, clothed with what is perishable, like cockles, and rolled all around in a ball in their excesses, like hedgehogs, entertain the same ideas of the blessed and incorruptible God as of themselves. But it has escaped their notice, though they be near us, that God has bestowed on us ten thousand things in which He does not share : birth, being Himself unborn ; food, He wanting nothing ; and growth, He being always equal ; and long life and immortality,

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He being immortal and incapable of growing old. Wherefore let no one imagine that hands, and feet, and mouth, and eyes, and going in and coming out, and resentments and threats, are attributes of God. By no means ; but these appellations are used more sacredly in an allegorical sense.

If then, abstracting all that belongs to bodies and things called incorporeal, we cast ourselves into the greatness of Christ, and then advance into immensity of holiness, we may reach somehow to the conception of the Almighty, knowing not what He is, but what He is not. And form and motion, or standing, or a throne, or place, or right hand or left are not at all to be conceived as belonging to the Father of the universe, although it is so written.

From *The Stromata*, B. V., chap. xi.

We Become Christians to be Good.

For it is not that we may *seem* good that we believe in Christ, as it is not alone for the purpose of being seen that we pass into the sunlight. But in the one case for the purpose of being warmed ; and in the other, we are compelled

to be Christians in order to be excellent and good.

From *The Stromata*. B. VI., chap. xvii.

The Gifts of God are Not Fragile.

The word of our Teacher remained not in Judea alone, as philosophy did in Greece ; but was diffused over the whole world, over every nation, and village, and town, bringing already over to the truth whole houses and individuals privately of those who heard, and not a few of the philosophers themselves.

And if any one ruler whatever prohibit the Greek philosophy, it vanishes forthwith. But our doctrine on its very first proclamation was prohibited by kings and tyrants together, as well as particular rulers and governors, with all their mercenaries ; and in addition by innumerable men, warring against us, and endeavouring as far as they could to exterminate it. But it flourishes the more. For it dies not, as human doctrine dies, nor fades as a fragile gift. For no gift of God is fragile. But it remains unchecked, though prophesied as destined to be persecuted to the end. Thus Plato writes of poetry : " A poet is a light and a sacred thing, and cannot

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write poetry till he be inspired and lose his senses." And Democritus similarly : " Whatever things a poet writes with divine afflatus, and with sacred spirit, are very beautiful." And we know what sort of things poets say. And shall not the prophets of God Almighty become the organs of the Divine Voice.

From *The Stromata*, B. VI., chap. xviii.

The Only Lover of God.

Godliness is the habit which preserves what is becoming to God, and thus the Godly man is *the only lover of God*, and such will be he who knows what is becoming, both in respect of knowledge and of the life which must be lived by him, who is destined to be divine, and is already being assimilated to God. So then he is in the first place a lover of God. For as he who honours his father is a lover of his father, so he who honours God is a lover of God.

From *The Stromata*, B. VII., chap. i.

God Does Not Need to be Won Over by Gifts.

We rightly do not sacrifice to God, who, needing nothing, supplies all men with all things ;

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but we glorify Him who *gave Himself in sacrifice for us*, we also sacrificing ourselves. For in our salvation alone God delights. We do not therefore, and with reason too, offer sacrifice to Him who is not overcome by pleasures, inasmuch as the fumes of the smoke stop far beneath, and do not even reach the thickest clouds. The Deity neither is, then, in want of aught, nor loves pleasure, or gain, or money, being full, and supplying all things to everything that has received being and has wants. And neither by sacrifices nor offerings, nor on the other hand by glory and honour, is God won over ; nor is He influenced by any such things ; but He appears only to excellent and good men, who will never betray justice for threatened fear, nor by the promise of considerable gifts.

From *The Stromata*, B. VII., chap. iii.

The Good Man.

Pre-eminently a divine image, resembling God, is the soul of a completely good man ; in whom, through obedience to the divine commands, as in a consecrated spot, is enclosed and enshrined the Leader of mortals and of

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immortals, King and Father of what is good, who is truly law, and right, and eternal Word, being the one Saviour individually to each, and in common to all.

Ruling, then, over himself and what belongs to him, and possessing a sure grasp of divine science, the good man makes a genuine approach to the truth.

Further, he employs prudence and righteousness in the acquisition of wisdom, and fortitude, not only in the endurance of circumstances, but also in restraining pleasure and desire, grief and anger ; and, in general, to withstand everything which, either by any force or fraud, entices him.

Accordingly, pain is found beneficial in the healing art, and in moral discipline, and in punishment ; and by it men's manners are corrected to their advantage. Forms of fortitude are endurance, magnanimity, high spirit, liberality, and grandeur, and through his fortitude the good man can meet the opinion of the multitude.

From *The Stromata*, B. VII., chap. iii

The True Athelete in the Stadium of this Fair World.

In the endurance of toils and at the same time in the discharge of any duty, and in his manly superiority to all circumstances, the good man appears truly a *man*. And maintaining prudence he exercises moderation in the calmness of his soul; receptive of what is commanded, as of what belongs to him, entertaining aversion to what is base, as alien to him; decorous and living above the world, he does everything with decorum and in order, and transgresses in no respect, and in nothing. Rich he is in the highest degree as he desires nothing, and has few wants; and is in the midst of abundance of all good through the knowledge of the good. For it is the first effect of his righteousness to love to spend his time with those of his own race both in earth and heaven. So also he is liberal of what he possesses. And being a lover of men, he is a hater of the wicked, entertaining a perfect aversion to all villainy. He must consequently learn to be faithful both to himself and to his neighbours, and obedient to the divine commandments. For *he* is the true servant of God who spontane-

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ously subjects himself to His commands. And he who already, not through the commandments, but through knowledge itself, is pure in heart, is the friend of God. For neither are we born by nature possessing virtue, nor after we are born does it grow naturally, as certain parts of the body; since then it would neither be voluntary nor praiseworthy.

This man then, is the true athlete—he who in the great stadium of the fair world, is crowned for the true victory over all the passions. For He who prescribes the contest is the Almighty God, and He who awards the prize is the only-begotten Son of God.

From The Stromata, B. VII., chap. iii.

We are all Open and Naked to His Glance.

Just as the sun not only illumines the heavens and the whole world, shining over land and sea, but also through windows and small chinks sends his beams into the innermost recesses of houses, so the Divine Word, diffused everywhere, casts his Light on the minutest circumstances of the actions of life.

From The Stromata, B. VII., chap. iii.

The Assemblage of the Saints is the Church.

If the word "sacred" has a two-fold application, designating both God Himself and the structure raised to His honour, how shall we not with propriety call the Church "holy," since it is made for the honour of God, sacred to God, of great value, and not constructed by mechanical art, nor embellished by the hand of an impostor, but by the will of God fashioned into a temple? For it is not now the *place*, but the assemblage of the elect, that I call the Church. This temple is better for the reception of the greatness of the dignity of God. For the living creature which is of high value, is made sacred by that which is worth all, or rather which has no equivalent in virtue of the exceeding sanctity of the latter. Now this is the complete Christian who is of great value, who is honoured by God, in whom God is enshrined. Here, too, we shall find the divine likeness and the holy image in the righteous soul, when it is blessed in being purified and in performing blessed deeds.

From *The Stromata*, B, VII., chap. v.

The Congregation is the True Altar.

The best and holiest sacrifice, with righteousness, we bring, presenting it as an offering to the most righteous Word, from whom we receive knowledge, giving glory to Him, for what we have learned.

The altar, then, that is with us here, the terrestrial one, is *the congregation of those who devote themselves to prayer*, having as it were one common voice and one mind.

“Breathing together,” is properly said of the Church. For the sacrifice of the Church is the word breathing as incense from holy souls, the sacrifice and the whole mind being at the same time unveiled to God.

We ought to offer God sacrifices not costly, but such as He loves. And that compound incense which is mentioned in the Law, is that which consists of many tongues and voices in prayer, or rather of different nations and natures, prepared by the gift vouchsafed in the dispensation for “the unity of the faith,” and brought together in praises, with a pure mind, and just and right conduct, with holy works and righteous prayer.

From *The Stromata*, B. VII., chap. vi.

God is Altogether and Everywhere Present.

Now we are commanded to reverence and to honour the Word, being persuaded that He is Saviour and Leader, and to worship the Father, not on special days, as some others, but doing this continually in our whole life, and in every way. Certainly the elect race justified by the precept says, "Seven times a day have I praised Thee." Whence not in a specified place, or selected temple, or at certain festivals, and on appointed days, but during his whole life, the complete Christian in every place, even if he be alone by himself, and wherever he has any of those who have exercised the like faith, honours God, that is, acknowledges his gratitude for the knowledge of the way to live.

And if the presence of a good man, through the respect and reverence which he inspires, always improves him with whom he associates, with much more reason does not he who always holds uninterrupted converse with God by knowledge, life and thanksgiving, grow at every step superior to himself in all respects—in conduct, in words, in disposition? Such an one is persuaded that

Pray Not to Get Things.

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God is ever beside him, and does not suppose that He is confined in certain limited places ; so that under the idea that at times he is without Him, he may indulge in excesses night and day.

Holding festival, then, in our whole life, persuaded that *God is altogether on every side present*, we cultivate our fields, praising ; we sail the sea, hymning ; in all the rest of our conversation we conduct ourselves according to rule. The complete Christian, then, is very closely allied to God, being at once grave and cheerful in all things—grave on account of the bent of his soul towards the Divinity, and cheerful on account of his consideration of the blessings of humanity which God hath given us.

From *The Stromata*, B. VII., chap. vii.

We Pray Not to Get Things but to be Good.

The complete Christian who is such by *possession*, makes his prayer and request for the truly good things which appertain to the soul, and prays, he himself also contributing his efforts, to attain to the habit of goodness, so as

no longer to have the things that are good belonging to him, *but to be good.*

From The Stromata, B. VII., chap. vii.

Prayer is Inward Converse with God.

Prayer is, to speak boldly, converse with God. Though whispering, consequently, and not opening the lips, we speak in silence, yet we cry inwardly. For God hears continually all inward converse.

The complete Christian prays throughout his whole life, endeavouring by prayer to have fellowship with God. And briefly, having reached to this, he leaves behind him all that is of no service, as having now received the perfection of the man that acts by love.

From The Stromata, B. VII., chap. vii.

He Who Prays Contributes to the Answer.

But if, as is true, any occasion of converse with God becomes prayer, no opportunity of access to God ought to be omitted.

Each place, then, and time in which we entertain the idea of God, is in reality sacred.

When then, the man who chooses what is

Things which Concern the Soul. 83

right, and is at the same time of thankful heart, makes his request in prayer, *he contributes to the obtaining of it*, gladly taking hold in prayer of the thing desired. For when the Giver of good things perceives the susceptibility on our part, all good things follow at once the conception of them. Certainly in prayer the character is sifted, how it stands with respect to duty.

But if voice and expression are given to us, for the sake of understanding, how can God not hear the soul itself, and the mind, since assuredly soul hears soul, and mind, mind? Whence God does not wait for loquacious tongues as interpreters among men but knows absolutely the thoughts of all. Prayer, then, may be uttered without the voice, by *concentrating the whole spiritual nature within on expression by the mind*, in undistracted turning towards God.

From *The Stromata*, B. VII., chap. vii.

Pray for the Things which Concern the Soul.

The complete Christian will ask the permanence of the things he possesses, adaptation for what is to take place, and the eternity of those things which he shall receive. And the things which

are really good, the things which concern the soul, he prays that they may belong to him, and remain with him. And so he desires not anything that is absent, being content with what is present. For he is not deficient in the good things which are proper to him; being already sufficient for himself, through divine grace and knowledge. But having become sufficient in himself, he stands in no want of other things. But knowing the sovereign will, and possessing as soon as he prays, being brought into close contact with the almighty power, and earnestly desiring to be spiritual, through boundless love, he is united to the Spirit.

From *The Stromata*, B. VII., chap. vii.

The Endless Progress of the Soul.

The good man walks unswervingly, being very well persuaded that all things are managed consummately well, and that *progress to what is better goes on in the case of souls that have chosen virtue*, till they come to the Good itself, to the Father's vestibule, so to speak, close to the great High Priest. Such is our Christian, faithful, persuaded that the affairs of the universe are managed in the best way. Particularly, he

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is well pleased with all that happens. In accordance with reason, then, he asks for none of those things in life required for necessary use ; being persuaded that God, who knows all things, supplies the good with whatever is for their benefit, even though they do not ask.

From *The Stromata*, B, VII., chap. vii.

Nearer Than Breathing.

The Christian does not use wordy prayer by his mouth ; having learned to ask of the Lord what is requisite. In every place, therefore not ostensibly and visibly to the multitude, he will pray. But while engaged in walking, in conversation, while in silence, while engaged in reading and in works according to reason, he in every mood prays. If he but form the thought in the secret chamber of his soul and call on the Father "with unspoken groanings," He is near, and is at his side, while yet speaking.

From *The Stromata*, B, VII., chap. vii.

The Life is an Affirmation.

The man of proved character is far from being apt to lie and to swear. An oath is a decisive affirmation, with the taking of the divine name.

Now, how can he, who is once faithful, show himself unfaithful, so as to require an oath ; and *so that his life may not be a sure and decisive oath* ? He lives, and walks, and shows the trustworthiness of his affirmation in an unwavering and sure life and speech.

It suffices then, with him, to add to an affirmation or denial the expression " I say truly " for confirmation to those who do not perceive the certainty of his answer. For he ought, I think, to maintain a life calculated to inspire confidence towards those without, so that an oath may not even be asked ; and towards himself and those with whom he associates, good feeling, which is voluntary righteousness.

From *The Stromata*, B. VII., chap. viii.

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