

S:1.

This twelfth book gives a notable interpretation of the words of the Lord to Mary, "Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father."

But let us see what is the next addition that follows upon this profanity, an addition which is in fact the key of their defence of their doctrine. For those who would degrade the majesty of the glory of the Only-begotten to slavish and grovelling conceptions think that they find the strongest proof of their assertions in the words of the Lord to Mary, which He uttered after His resurrection, and before His ascension into heaven, saying, "Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God [1020] ." The orthodox interpretation of these words, the sense in which we have been accustomed to believe that they were spoken to Mary, is I think manifest to all who have received the faith in truth. Still the discussion of this point shall be given by us in its proper place; but meantime it is worth while to inquire from those who allege against us such phrases as "ascending," "being seen," "being recognized by touch," and moreover "being associated with men by brotherhood," whether they consider them to be proper to the Divine or to the Human Nature. For if they see in the Godhead the capacity of being seen and touched, of being supported by meat and drink, kinship and brotherhood with men, and all the attributes of corporeal nature, then let them predicate of the Only-begotten God both these and whatsoever else they will, as motive energy and local change, which are peculiar to things circumscribed by a body. But if He by Mary is discoursing with His brethren, and if the Only-begotten has no brethren, (for how, if He had brethren, could the property of being Only-begotten be preserved?) and if the same Person Who said, "God is a Spirit [1021] ," says to His disciples, "Handle Me [1022] ," that He may show that while the Human Nature is capable of being handled the Divinity is intangible, and if He Who says, "I go," indicates local change, while He who contains all things, "in Whom," as the Apostle says, "all things were created, and in Whom all things consist [1023] ," has nothing in existent things external to Himself to which removal could take place by any kind of motion, (for motion cannot otherwise be effected than by that which is removed leaving the place in which it is, and occupying another place instead, while that which extends through all, and is in all, and controls all, and is confined by no existent thing, has no place to which to pass, inasmuch as nothing is void of the Divine fulness,) how can these men abandon the belief that such expressions arise from that which is apparent, and apply them to that Nature which is Divine and which surpasseth all understanding, when the Apostle has in his speech to the Athenians plainly forbidden us to imagine any such thing of God, inasmuch as the Divine power is not discoverable by touch [1024] , but by intelligent contemplation and faith? Or, again, whom does He Who did eat before the eyes of His disciples, and promised to go before them into Galilee and there be seen of them,--whom does He reveal Him to be Who should so appear to them? God, Whom no man hath seen or can see [1025] ? or the bodily image, that is, the form of a

servant in which God was? If then what has been said plainly proves that the meaning of the phrases alleged refers to that which is visible, expressing shape, and capable of motion, akin to the nature of His disciples, and none of these properties is discernible in Him Who is invisible, incorporeal, intangible, and formless, how do they come to degrade the very Only-begotten God, Who was in the beginning, and is in the Father, to a level with Peter, Andrew, John, and the rest of the Apostles, by calling them the brethren and fellow-servants of the Only-begotten? And yet all their exertions are directed to this aim, to show that in majesty of nature there is as great a distance between the Father and the dignity, power, and essence of the Only-begotten, as there is between the Only-begotten and humanity. And they press this saying into the support of this meaning, treating the name of the God and Father as being of common significance in respect of the Lord and of His disciples, in the view that no difference in dignity of nature is conceived while He is recognized as God and Father both of Him and of them in a precisely similar manner.

And the mode in which they logically maintain their profanity is as follows;--that either by the relative term employed there is expressed community of essence also between the disciples and the Father, or else we must not by this phrase bring even the Lord into communion in the Father's Nature, and that, even as the fact [1026] that the God over all is named as their God implies that the disciples are His servants so by parity of reasoning, it is acknowledged, by the words in question, that the Son also is the servant of God. Now that the words addressed to Mary are not applicable to the Godhead of the Only-begotten, one may learn from the intention with which they were uttered. For He Who humbled Himself to a level with human littleness, He it is Who spake the words. And what is the meaning of what He then uttered, they may know in all its fulness who by the Spirit search out the depths of the sacred mystery. But as much as comes within our compass we will set down in few words, following the guidance of the Fathers. He Who is by nature Father of existent things, from Whom all things have their birth, has been proclaimed as one, by the sublime utterance of the Apostle. "For there is one God," he says, "and Father, of Whom are all things [1027] ." Accordingly human nature did not enter into the creation from any other source, nor grow spontaneously in the parents of the race, but it too had for the author of its own constitution none other than the Father of all. And the name of Godhead itself, whether it indicates the authority of oversight or of foresight [1028] , imports a certain relation to humanity. For He Who bestowed on all things that are, the power of being, is the God and overseer of what He has Himself produced. But since, by the wiles of him that sowed in us the tares of disobedience, our nature no longer preserved in itself the impress of the Father's image, but was transformed into the foul likeness of sin, for this cause it was engrafted by virtue of similarity of will into the evil family of the father of sin: so that the good and true God and Father was no longer the God and Father of him who had been thus outlawed by his own depravity, but instead of Him Who was by Nature God, those were honoured who, as the Apostle says, "by nature were no Gods [1029] ," and in the place of the Father, he was deemed father who is falsely so called, as the prophet Jeremiah says in his dark

saying, "The partridge called, she gathered together what she hatched not [1030] ." Since, then, this was the sum of our calamity, that humanity was exiled from the good Father, and was banished from the Divine oversight and care, for this cause He Who is the Shepherd of the whole rational creation, left in the heights of heaven His unsinning and supramundane flock, and, moved by love, went after the sheep which had gone astray, even our human nature [1031] . For human nature, which alone, according to the similitude in the parable, through vice roamed away from the hundred of rational beings, is, if it be compared with the whole, but an insignificant and infinitesimal part. Since then it was impossible that our life, which had been estranged from God, should of itself return to the high and heavenly place, for this cause, as saith the Apostle, He Who knew no sin is made sin for us [1032] , and frees us from the curse by taking on Him our curse as His own [1033] , and having taken up, and, in the language of the Apostle, "slain" in Himself "the enmity [1034] " which by means of sin had come between us and God,--(in fact sin was "the enmity")--and having become what we were, He through Himself again united humanity to God. For having by purity brought into closest relationship with the Father of our nature that new man which is created after God [1035] , in Whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily [1036] , He drew with Him into the same grace all the nature that partakes of His body and is akin to Him. And these glad tidings He proclaims through the woman, not to those disciples only, but also to all who up to the present day become disciples of the Word,--the tidings, namely, that man is no longer outlawed, nor cast out of the kingdom of God, but is once more a son, once more in the station assigned to him by his God, inasmuch as along with the first-fruits of humanity the lump also is hallowed [1037] . "For behold," He says, "I and the children whom God hath given Me [1038] ." He Who for our sakes was partaker of flesh and blood has recovered you, and brought you back to the place whence ye strayed away, becoming mere flesh and blood by sin [1039] . And so He from Whom we were formerly alienated by our revolt has become our Father and our God. Accordingly in the passage cited above the Lord brings the glad tidings of this benefit. And the words are not a proof of the degradation of the Son, but the glad tidings of our reconciliation to God. For that which has taken place in Christ's Humanity is a common boon bestowed on mankind generally. For as when we see in Him the weight of the body, which naturally gravitates to earth, ascending through the air into the heavens, we believe according to the words of the Apostle, that we also "shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air [1040] ," even so, when we hear that the true God and Father has become the God and Father of our First-fruits, we no longer doubt that the same God has become our God and Father too, inasmuch as we have learnt that we shall come to the same place whither Christ has entered for us as our forerunner [1041] . And the fact too that this grace was revealed by means of a woman, itself agrees with the interpretation which we have given. For since, as the Apostle tells us, "the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression [1042] ," and was by her disobedience foremost in the revolt from God, for this cause she is the first witness of the resurrection, that she might retrieve by her faith in the resurrection the overthrow caused by her disobedience, and that as, by making herself at the

beginning a minister and advocate to her husband of the counsels of the serpent, she brought into human life the beginning of evil, and its train of consequences, so, by ministering [1043] to His disciples the words of Him Who slew the rebel dragon, she might become to men the guide to faith, whereby with good reason the first proclamation of death is annulled. It is likely, indeed, that by more diligent students a more profitable explanation of the text may be discovered. But even though none such should be found, I think that every devout reader will agree that the one advanced by our opponents is futile, after comparing it with that which we have brought forward. For the one has been fabricated to destroy the glory of the Only-begotten, and nothing more: but the other includes in its scope the aim of the dispensation concerning man. For it has been shown that it was not the intangible, immutable, and invisible God, but the moving, visible, and tangible nature which is proper to humanity, that gave command to Mary to minister the word to His disciples.

[1020] S. John xx. 17

[1021] S. John iv. 24

[1022] S. Luke xxiv. 39.

[1023] Col. i. 16, 17.

[1024] Cf. Acts xvii. The precise reference is perhaps to verse 27.

[1025] The reference is perhaps to 1 Tim. vi. 16; but the quotation is not verbal. See also S. John i. 18.

[1026] The grammar of the passage is simplified if we read to theon auton onomasthenai, but the sense, retaining Oehler's reading ton theon, is probably the same.

[1027] Cf. 1 Cor. viii. 6.

[1028] There seems here to be an allusion to the supposed derivation of theos from theaomai, which is also the basis of an argument in the treatise "On Not three Gods," addressed to Ablabius.

[1029] Gal. iv. 8.

[1030] Jer. xvii. 11 (LXX.).

[1031] Cf. Book IV. S:3 (p. 158 sup.). With the general statement may be compared the parallel passage in Book II. S:8.

[1032] Cf. 2 Cor. v. 21

[1033] Cf. Gal. iii. 13

[1034] Cf. Eph. ii. 16

[1035] Cf. Eph. iv. 24

[1036] Cf. Col. ii. 9

[1037] Cf. Rom. xi. 16

[1038] Cf. Heb. ii. 13, quoting Is. viii. 18

[1039] Cf. Heb. ii. 14

[1040] 1 Thess. iv. 16.

[1041] Cf. Heb. vi. 20

[1042] 1 Tim. ii. 14.

[1043] Reading diakonesasa for the diakomisasa of the Paris ed. and diakomesasa of Oehler's text, the latter of which is obviously a misprint, but leaves us uncertain as to the reading which Oehler intended to adopt. The reading diakonesasa answers to the diakonos genomene above, and is to some extent confirmed by diakonesai occurring again a few lines further on. S. Gregory, when he has once used an unusual word or expression, very frequently repeats it in the next few sentences.

S:2.

Then referring to the blasphemy of Eunomius, which had been refuted by the great Basil, where he banished the Only-begotten God to the realm of darkness, and the apology or explanation which Eunomius puts forth for his blasphemy, he shows that his present blasphemy is rendered by his apology worse than his previous one; and herein he very ably discourses of the "true" and the "unapproachable" Light.

Let us also investigate this point as well,--what defence he has to offer on those matters on which he was convicted of error by the great Basil, when he banishes the

Only-begotten God to the realm of darkness, saying, "As great as is the difference between the generate and the ungenerate, so great is the divergence between Light and Light." For as he has already shown that the difference between the generate and the ungenerate is not merely one of greater or less intensity, but that they are diametrically opposed as regards their meaning; and since he has inferred by logical consequence from his premises that, as the difference between the light of the Father and that of the Son corresponds to ungeneracy and generation, we must necessarily suppose in the Son not a diminution of light, but a complete alienation from light. For as we cannot say that generation is a modified ungeneracy, but the signification of the terms genesis and agnesia are absolutely contradictory and mutually exclusive, so, if the same distinction is to be preserved between the Light of the Father and that conceived as existing in the Son, it will be logically concluded that the Son is not henceforth to be conceived as Light, as he is excluded alike from ungeneracy itself, and from the light which accompanies that condition,--and He Who is something different from light will evidently, by consequence, have affinity with its contrary,--since this absurdity, I say, results from his principles, Eunomius endeavours to explain it away by dialectic artifices, delivering himself as follows: "For we know, we know the true Light, we know Him who created the light after the heavens and the earth, we have heard the Life and Truth Himself, even Christ, saying to His disciples, Ye are the light of the world [1044] ,' we have learned from the blessed Paul, when he gives the title of Light unapproachable [1045] ' to the God over all, and by the addition defines and teaches us the transcendent superiority of His Light; and now that we have learnt that there is so great a difference between the one Light and the other, we shall not patiently endure so much as the mere mention of the notion that the conception of light in either case is one and the same." Can he be serious when he advances such arguments in his attempts against the truth, or is he experimenting upon the dulness of those who follow his error to see whether they can detect so childish and transparent a fallacy, or have no sense to discern such a barefaced imposition? For I suppose that no one is so senseless as not to perceive the juggling with equivocal terms by which Eunomius deludes both himself and his admirers. The disciples, he says, were termed light, and that which was produced in the course of creation is also called light. But who does not know that in these only the name is common, and the thing meant in each case is quite different? For the light of the sun gives discernment to the sight, but the word of the disciples implants in men's souls the illumination of the truth. If, then, he is aware of this difference even in the case of that light, so that he thinks the light of the body is one thing, and the light of the soul another, we need no longer discuss the point with him, since his defence itself condemns him if we hold our peace. But if in that light he cannot discover such a difference as regards the mode of operation, (for it is not, he may say, the light of the eyes that illumines the flesh, and the spiritual light which illumines the soul, but the operation and the potency of the one light and of the other is the same, operating in the same sphere and on the same objects,) then how is it that from the difference between the light of the beams of the sun and that of the words of the Apostles, he infers a like difference between the Only-begotten Light and the Light of

the Father? "But the Son," he says, "is called the true' Light, the Father Light unapproachable." Well, these additional distinctions import a difference in degree only, and not in kind, between the light of the Son and the light of the Father. He thinks that the "true" is one thing, and the "unapproachable" another. I suppose there is no one so idiotic as not to see the real identity of meaning in the two terms. For the "true" and the "unapproachable" are each of them removed in an equally absolute degree from their contraries. For as the "true" does not admit any intermixture of the false, even so the "unapproachable" does not admit the access of its contrary. For the "unapproachable" is surely unapproachable by evil. But the light of the Son is not evil; for how can any one see in evil that which is true? Since, then, the truth is not evil, no one can say that the light which is in the Father is unapproachable by the truth. For if it were to reject the truth it would of course be associated with falsehood. For the nature of contradictories is such that the absence of the better involves the presence of its opposite. If, then, any one were to say that the Light of the Father was contemplated as remote from the presentation of its opposite, he would interpret the term "unapproachable" in a manner agreeable to the intention of the Apostle. But if he were to say that "unapproachable" signified alienation from good, he would suppose nothing else than that God was alien from, and at enmity with, Himself, being at the same time good and opposed to good. But this is impossible: for the good is akin to good. Accordingly the one Light is not divergent from the other. For the Son is the true Light, and the Father is Light unapproachable. In fact I would make bold to say that the man who should interchange the two attributes would not be wrong. For the true is unapproachable by the false, and on the other side, the unapproachable is found to be in unsullied truth. Accordingly the unapproachable is identical with the true, because that which is signified by each expression is equally inaccessible to evil. What is the difference then, that is imagined to exist in these by him who imposes on himself and his followers by the equivocal use of the term "Light"? But let us not pass over this point either without notice, that it is only after garbling the Apostle's words to suit his own fancy that he cites the phrase as if it came from him. For Paul says, "dwelling in light unapproachable [1046] ." But there is a great difference between being oneself something and being in something. For he who said, "dwelling in light unapproachable," did not, by the word "dwelling," indicate God Himself, but that which surrounds Him, which in our view is equivalent to the Gospel phrase which tells us that the Father is in the Son. For the Son is true Light, and the truth is unapproachable by falsehood; so then the Son is Light unapproachable in which the Father dwells, or in Whom the Father is.

[1044] S. Matt. v. 14

[1045] Cf. 1 Tim. vi. 16. The quotation, as S. Gregory points out, is inexact.

[1046] 1 Tim. vi. 16.

S:3.

He further proceeds notably to interpret the language of the Gospel, "In the beginning was the Word," and "Life" and "Light," and "The Word was made flesh," which had been misinterpreted by Eunomius; and overthrows his blasphemy, and shows that the dispensation of the Lord took place by loving-kindness, not by lack of power, and with the co-operation of the Father.

But he puts his strength into his idle contention and says, "From the facts themselves, and from the oracles that are believed, I present the proof of my statement." Such is his promise, but whether the arguments he advances bear out his professions, the discerning reader will of course consider. "The blessed John," he says, "after saying that the Word was in the beginning, and after calling Him Life, and subsequently giving the Life the further title of Light,' says, a little later, And the Word was made flesh [1047] .' If then the Light is Life, and the Word is Life, and the Word was made flesh, it thence becomes plain that the Light was incarnate." What then? because the Light and the Life, and God and the Word, was manifested in flesh, does it follow that the true Light is divergent in any degree from the Light which is in the Father? Nay, it is attested by the Gospel that, even when it had place in darkness, the light remained unapproachable by the contrary element: for "the Light," he says, "shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not [1048] ." If then the light when it found place in darkness had been changed to its contrary, and overpowered by gloom, this would have been a strong argument in support of the view of those who wish to show how far inferior is this Light in comparison with that contemplated in the Father. But if the Word, even though it be in the flesh, remains the Word, and if the Light, even though it shines in darkness, is no less Light, without admitting the fellowship of its contrary, and if the Life, even though it be in death, remains secure in Itself, and if God, even though He submit to take upon Him the form of a servant, does not Himself become a servant, but takes away the slavish subordination and absorbs it into lordship and royalty, making that which was human and lowly to become both Lord and Christ,--if all this be so, how does he show by this argument variation of the Light to inferiority, when each Light has in equal measure the property of being inconvertible to evil, and unalterable? And how is it that he also fails to observe this, that he who looked on the incarnate Word, Who was both Light and Life and God, recognized, through the glory which he saw, the Father of glory, and says, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father [1049] "?

But he has reached the irrefutable argument which we long ago detected lurking in the sequel of his statements [1050] , but which is here proclaimed aloud without disguise. For he wishes to show that the essence of the Son is subject to passion, and to decay, and in no wise differs from material nature, which is in a state of flux, that

by this means he may demonstrate His difference from the Father. For he says, "If he can show that the God Who is over all, Who is the Light unapproachable, was incarnate or could be incarnate, came under authority, obeyed commands, came under the laws of men, bore the Cross, let him say that the Light is equal to the Light." If these words had been brought forward by us as following by necessary consequence from premises laid down by Eunomius, who would not have charged us with unfairness, in employing an over-subtle dialectic to reduce our adversaries' statement to such an absurdity? But as things stand, the fact that they themselves make no attempt to suppress the absurdity that naturally follows from their assumption, helps to support our contention that it was not without due reflection that, with the help of truth, we censured the argument of heresy. For behold, how undisguised and outspoken is their striving against the Only-begotten God! Nay, by His enemies His work of mercy is reckoned a means of disparaging and maligning the Nature of the Son of God, as though not of deliberate purpose, but by a compulsion of His Nature he had slipped down to life in the flesh, and to the suffering of the Cross! And as it is the nature of a stone to fall downward, and of fire to rise upward, and as these material objects do not exchange their natures one with another, so that the stone should have an upward tendency, and fire be depressed by its weight and sink downwards, even so they make out that passion was part of the very Nature of the Son, and that for this cause He came to that which was akin and familiar to Him, but that the Nature of the Father, being free from such passions, remained unapproachable by the contact of evil. For he says, that the God Who is over all, Who is Light unapproachable, neither was incarnate nor could be incarnate. The first of the two statements was quite enough, that the Father did not become incarnate. But now by his addition a double absurdity arises; for he either charges the Son with evil, or the Father with powerlessness. For if to partake of our flesh is evil, then he predicates evil of the Only-begotten God; but if the lovingkindness to man was good, then he makes out the Father to be powerless for good, by saying that it would not have been in His power to have effectually bestowed such grace by taking flesh. And yet who in the world does not know that life-giving power proceeds to actual operation both in the Father and in the Son? "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them," He says, "even so the Son quickeneth whom He will [1051] ,"-- meaning obviously by "dead" us who had fallen from the true life. If then it is even so as the Father quickeneth, and not otherwise, that the Son brings to operation the same grace, how comes it that the adversary of God moves his profane tongue against both, insulting the Father by attributing to Him powerlessness for good, and the Son by attributing to Him association with evil. But "Light," he says, "is not equal to Light," because the one he calls "true," and the other "unapproachable." Is then the true considered to be a diminution of the unapproachable? Why so? and yet their argument is that the Godhead of the Father must be conceived to be greater and more exalted than that of the Son, because the one is called in the Gospel "true God [1052] ," the other "God [1053] " without the addition of "true." How then does the same term, as applied to the Godhead, indicate an enhancement of the conception, and, as applied to Light, a diminution? For if they say that the Father is greater than the Son

because He is true God, by the same showing the Son would be acknowledged to be greater than the Father, because the former is called "true Light [1054] ," and the latter not so. "But this Light," says Eunomius, "carried into effect the plan of mercy, while the other remained inoperative with respect to that gracious action." A new and strange mode of determining priority in dignity! They judge that which is ineffective for a benevolent purpose to be superior to that which is operative. But such a notion as this neither exists nor ever will be found amongst Christians,--a notion by which it is made out that every good that is in existent things has not its origin from the Father. But of goods that pertain to us men, the crowning blessing is held by all right-minded men to be the return to life; and it is secured by the dispensation carried out by the Lord in His human nature; not that the Father remained aloof, as heresy will have it, ineffective and inoperative during the time of this dispensation. For it is not this that He indicates Who said, "He that sent Me is with Me [1055] ," and "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works [1056] ." With what right then does heresy attribute to the Son alone the gracious intervention on our behalf, and thereby exclude the Father from having any part or lot in our gratitude for its successful issue? For naturally the requital of thanks is due to our benefactors alone, and He Who is incapable of benefiting us is outside the pale of our gratitude. See you how the course of their profane attack upon the Only-begotten Son has missed its mark, and is working round in natural consequence so as to be directed against the majesty of the Father? And this seems to me to be a necessary result of their method of proceeding. For if he that honoureth the Son honoureth the Father [1057] , according to the Divine declaration, it is plain on the other side that an assault upon the Son strikes at the Father. But I say that to those who with simplicity of heart receive the preaching of the Cross and the resurrection, the same grace should be a cause of equal thankfulness to the Son and to the Father, and now that the Son has accomplished the Father's will (and this, in the language of the Apostle, is "that all men should be saved [1058] "), they ought for this boon to honour the Father and the Son alike, inasmuch as our salvation would not have been wrought, had not the good will of the Father proceeded to actual operation for us through His own power. And we have learnt from the Scripture that the Son is the power of the Father [1059] .

[1047] Cf. S. John i. 4 and 14.

[1048] S. John i. 5 (A.V., following the Vulgate). The word *katelabe* is perhaps better rendered by "overtook." "As applied to light this sense includes the further notion of overwhelming, eclipsing. The relation of darkness to light is one of essential antagonism. If the darkness is represented as pursuing the light, it can only be to overshadow and not to appropriate it." (Westcott on S. John ad loc.)

[1049] S. John i. 14

[1050] The passage has already been cited by S. Gregory, Book V S:3 (p. 176 sup.).

[1051] S. John v. 21

[1052] S. John xvii. 3

[1053] S. John i. 1

[1054] S. John i. 9

[1055] Cf. S. John v. 37, and xvi. 32.

[1056] S. John xiv. 10

[1057] Cf. S. John v. 23

[1058] 1 Tim. ii. 4.

[1059] 1 Cor. i. 24.

S:4.

He then again charges Eunomius with having learnt his term agennesia from the hieroglyphic writings, and from the Egyptian mythology and idolatry, and with bringing in Anubis, Osiris, and Isis to the creed of Christians, and shows that, considered as admitting His sufferings of necessity and not voluntarily, the Only-begotten is entitled to no gratitude from men: and that fire has none for its warmth, nor water for its fluidity, as they do not refer their results to self-determining power, but to necessity of nature [1060].

Let us once more notice the passage cited. "If he can show," he says, "that the God Who is over all, Who is the Light unapproachable, was incarnate, or could be incarnate,....then let him say that the Light is equal to the Light." The purport of his words is plain from the very form of the sentence, namely, that he does not think that it was by His almighty Godhead that the Son proved strong for such a form of loving-kindness, but that it was by being of a nature subject to passion that He stooped to the suffering of the Cross. Well, as I pondered and inquired how Eunomius came to stumble into such notions about the Deity, as to think that on the one side the ungenerate Light was unapproachable by its contrary, and entirely unimpaired and free from every passion and affection, but that on the other the generate was intermediate in its nature, so as not to preserve the Divine unsullied and pure in impassibility, but to have an essence mixed and compounded of contraries, which at

once stretched out to partake of good, and at the same time melted away into a condition subject to passion, since it was impossible to obtain from Scripture premises to support so absurd a theory, the thought struck me, whether it could be that he was an admirer of the speculations of the Egyptians on the subject of the Divine, and had mixed up their fancies with his views concerning the Only-begotten. For it is reported that they say that their fantastic mode of compounding their idols, when they adapt the forms of certain irrational animals to human limbs, is an enigmatic symbol of that mixed nature which they call "daemon," and that this is more subtle than that of men, and far surpasses our nature in power, but has the Divine element in it not unmingled or uncompounded, but is combined with the nature of the soul and the perceptions of the body, and is receptive of pleasure and pain, neither of which finds place with the "ungenerate God." For they too use this name, ascribing to the supreme God, as they imagine Him, the attribute of ungeneracy. Thus our sage theologian seems to us to be importing into the Christian creed an Anubis, Isis, or Osiris from the Egyptian shrines, all but the acknowledgment of their names: but there is no difference in profanity between him who openly makes profession of the names of idols, and him who, while holding the belief about them in his heart, is yet chary of their names. If, then, it is impossible to get out of Holy Scripture any support for this impiety, while their theory draws all its strength from the riddles of the hieroglyphics, assuredly there can be no doubt what right-minded persons ought to think of this. But that this accusation which we bring is no insulting slander, Eunomius shall testify for us by his own words, saying as he does that the ungenerate Light is unapproachable, and has not the power of stooping to experience affections, but affirming that such a condition is germane and akin to the generate: so that man need feel no gratitude to the Only-begotten God for what He suffered, if, as they say, it was by the spontaneous action of His nature that He slipped down to the experience of affections, His essence, which was capable of being thus affected, being naturally dragged down thereto, which demands no thanks. For who would welcome as a boon that which takes place by necessity, even if it be gainful and profitable? For we neither thank fire for its warmth nor water for its fluidity, as we refer these qualities to the necessity of their several natures, because fire cannot be deserted by its power of warming, nor can water remain stationary upon an incline, inasmuch as the slope spontaneously draws its motion onwards. If, then, they say that the benefit wrought by the Son through His incarnation was by a necessity of His nature, they certainly render Him no thanks, inasmuch as they refer what He did, not to an authoritative power, but to a natural compulsion. But if, while they experience the benefit of the gift, they disparage the lovingkindness that brought it, I fear lest their impiety should work round to the opposite error, and lest they should deem the condition of the Son, that could be thus affected, worthy of more honour than the freedom from such affections possessed by the Father, making their own advantage the criterion of good. For if the case had been that the Son was incapable of being thus affected, as they affirm of the Father, our nature would still have remained in its miserable plight, inasmuch as there would have been none to lift up man's nature to incorruption by what He Himself experienced;--and so it escapes

notice that the cunning of these quibblers, by the very means which it employs in its attempt to destroy the majesty of the Only-begotten God, does but raise men's conceptions of Him to a grander and loftier height, seeing it is the case that He Who has the power to act, is more to be honoured than one who is powerless for good.

[1060] The grammar of this section of the analysis is very much confused.

S:5.

Then, again discussing the true Light and unapproachable Light of the Father and of the Son, special attributes, community and essence, and showing the relation of "generate" and "ungenerate," as involving no opposition in sense [1061], but presenting an opposition and contradiction admitting of no middle term, he ends the book.

But I feel that my argument is running away with me, for it does not remain in the regular course, but, like some hot-blooded and spirited colt, is carried away by the blasphemies of our opponents to range over the absurdities of their system. Accordingly we must restrain it when it would run wild beyond the bounds of moderation in demonstration of absurd consequences. But the kindly reader will doubtless pardon what we have said, not imputing the absurdity that emerges from our investigation to us, but to those who laid down such mischievous premises. We must, however, now transfer our attention to another of his statements. For he says that our God also is composite, in that while we suppose the Light to be common, we yet separate the one Light from the other by certain special attributes and various differences. For that is none the less composite which, while united by one common nature, is yet separated by certain differences and conjunctions of peculiarities [1062]. To this our answer is short and easily dismissed. For what he brings as matter of accusation against our doctrines we acknowledge against ourselves, if he is not found to establish the same position by his own words. Let us just consider what he has written. He calls the Lord "true" Light, and the Father Light "unapproachable." Accordingly, by thus naming each, he also acknowledges their community in respect to light. But as titles are applied to things because they fit them, as he has often insisted, we do not conceive that the name of "light" is used of the Divine Nature barely, apart from some meaning, but rather that it is predicated by virtue of some underlying reality. Accordingly, by the use of a common name, they recognize the identity of the objects signified, since they have already declared that the natures of those things which have the same name cannot be different. Since, then, the meaning of "Light" is one and the same, the addition of "unapproachable" and "true," according to the language of heresy, separates the common nature by specific differences, so that the Light of the Father is conceived as one thing, and the

Light of the Son as another, separated one from the other by special properties. Let him, then, either overthrow his own positions to avoid making out by his statements that the Deity is composite, or let him abstain from charging against us what he may see contained in his own language. For our statement does not hereby violate the simplicity of the Godhead, since community and specific difference are not essence, so that the conjunction of these should render the subject composite [1063] . But on the one side the essence by itself remains whatever it is in nature, being what it is, while, on the other, every one possessed of reason would say that these--community and specific difference--were among the accompanying conceptions and attributes: since even in us men there may be discerned some community with the Divine Nature, but Divinity is not the more on that account humanity, or humanity Divinity. For while we believe that God is good, we also find this character predicated of men in Scripture. But the special signification in each case establishes a distinction in the community arising from the use of the homonymous term. For He Who is the fountain of goodness is named from it; but he who has some share of goodness also partakes in the name, and God is not for this reason composite, that He shares with men the title of "good." From these considerations it must obviously be allowed that the idea of community is one thing, and that of essence another, and we are not on that account any the more to maintain composition or multiplicity of parts in that simple Nature which has nothing to do with quantity, because some of the attributes we contemplate in It are either regarded as special, or have a sort of common significance.

But let us pass on, if it seems good, to another of his statements, and dismiss the nonsense that comes between. He who laboriously reiterates against our argument the Aristotelian division of existent things, has elaborated "genera," and "species," and "differentiae," and "individuals," and advanced all the technical language of the categories for the injury of our doctrines. Let us pass by all this, and turn our discourse to deal with his heavy and irresistible argument. For having braced his argument with Demosthenic fervour, he has started up to our view as a second Paeonian of Oltiseris [1064] , imitating that orator's severity in his struggle with us. I will transcribe the language of our author word for word. "Yes," he says, "but if, as the generate is contrary to the ungenerate, the Generate Light be equally inferior to the Ungenerate Light, the one will be found to be [1065] light, the other darkness." Let him who has the leisure learn from his words how pungent is his mode of dealing with this opposition, and how exactly it hits the mark. But I would beg this imitator of our words either to say what we have said, or to make his imitation of it as close as may be, or else, if he deals with our argument according to his own education and ability, to speak in his own person and not in ours. For I hope that no one will so miss our meaning as to suppose that, while "generate" is contradictory in sense to "ungenerate," one is a diminution of the other. For the difference between contradictories is not one of greater or less intensity, but rests its opposition upon their being mutually exclusive in their signification: as, for example, we say that a man is asleep or not asleep, sitting or not sitting, that he was or was not, and all the

rest after the same model, where the denial of one is the assertion of its contradictory. As, then, to live is not a diminution of not living, but its complete opposite, even so we conceived having been generated not as a diminution of not having been generated, but as an opposite and contradictory not admitting of any middle term, so that which is expressed by the one has nothing whatever to do with that which is expressed by the other in the way of less or more. Let him therefore who says that one of two contradictories is defective as compared with the other, speak in his own person, not in ours. For our homely language says that things which correspond to contradictories differ from one another even as their originals do. So that, even if Eunomius discerns in the Light the same divergence as in the generate compared with the Ungenerate, I will re-assert my statement, that as in the one case the one member of the contradiction has nothing in common with its opposite, so if "light" be placed on the same side as one of the two contradictories, the remaining place in the figure must of course be assigned to "darkness," the necessity of the antithesis arranging the term of light over against its opposite, in accordance with the analogy of the previous contradictory terms "generate" and "ungenerate." Such is the clumsy answer which we, who as our disparaging author says, have attempted to write without logical training, deliver in our rustic dialect to our new Paeonian. But to see how he contended with this contradiction, advancing against us those hot and fire-breathing words of his with Demosthenic intensity, let those who like to have a laugh study the treatise of our orator itself. For our pen is not very hard to rouse to confute the notions of impiety, but is quite unsuited to the task of ridiculing the ignorance of untutored minds.

[1061] The composer of the analysis seems to have been slightly confused by the discussion on the nature of contradictory opposition.

[1062] It is not clear how far the preceding sentences are an exact reproduction of Eunomius: they are probably a summary of his argument.

[1063] Oehler's punctuation seems rather to obscure the sense.

[1064] That is, a new Demosthenes, with a difference. Demosthenes' native place was the Attic deme of Paeania. Eunomius, according to S. Gregory, was born at Oltiseris (see p. 38, note 6, sup.).

[1065] Reading genesetai