

Chapter XVII.—Of Elevated Hands.

But we more commend our prayers to God when we pray with modesty and humility, with not even our hands too loftily elevated, but elevated temperately and becomingly; and not even our countenance over-boldly uplifted. For that publican who prayed with humility and dejection not merely in his supplication, but in his countenance too, went his way “more justified” than the shameless Pharisee.⁸⁸⁶⁰ The sounds of our voice, likewise, should be subdued; else, if we are to be heard for our noise, how large windpipes should we need! But God is the hearer not of the *voice*, but of the *heart*, just as He is its inspector. The demon of the Pythian oracle says:

“And I do understand the mute, and plainly hear the speechless one.”⁸⁸⁶¹

Do the ears of God wait for sound? How, then, could Jonah’s prayer find way out unto heaven from the depth of the whale’s belly, through the entrails of so huge a beast; from the very abysses, through so huge a mass of sea? What superior advantage will they who pray too loudly gain, except that they annoy their neighbours? Nay, by making their petitions audible, what less error do they commit than if they were to pray in public?⁸⁸⁶²

8860 [Luke xviii. 9–14.](#)

8861 [Herod. i. 47.](#)

8862 Which is forbidden, [Matt. vi. 5, 6.](#)

Chapter XVIII.—Of the Kiss of Peace.

Another custom has now become prevalent. Such as are fasting withhold the kiss of peace, which is the seal of prayer, after prayer made with brethren. But when is peace more to be concluded with brethren than when, at the time of some religious observance,⁸⁸⁶³ our prayer ascends with more acceptability; that they may themselves participate in our observance, and thereby be mollified for transacting with their brother touching their own peace? What prayer is complete if divorced from the “holy kiss?”⁸⁸⁶⁴ Whom does peace impede when rendering service to his Lord? What kind of sacrifice is that from which men depart without peace? Whatever our prayer be, it will not be better than the observance of the precept by which we are bidden to conceal our fasts;⁸⁸⁶⁵ for *now*, by abstinence from the kiss, we are known to be fasting. But even if there be some reason *for this practice*, still, lest you offend against this precept, you may perhaps defer your “peace” *at home*, where it is not possible for your fast to be entirely kept secret. But wherever else you can conceal your observance, you ought to remember the precept: thus you may satisfy the requirements of Discipline abroad and of custom at home. So, too, on the day of the passover,⁸⁸⁶⁶ when the religious observance of a fast is general, and as it were public, we justly forego the kiss, caring nothing to conceal anything which we do in common with all.



8863 Such as fasting.

8864 See Rom. xvi. 16; 1 Cor. xvi. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 Thess. v. 26; 1 Pet. v. 14. [The sexes apart.]

8865 Matt. vi. 16–18.

8866 i.e. “Good Friday,” as it is now generally called.

Chapter XIX.—Of Stations.

Similarly, too, touching the days of Stations,⁸⁸⁶⁷ most think that they must not be present at the sacrificial prayers, on the ground that the Station must be dissolved by reception of the Lord's Body. Does, then, the Eucharist cancel a service devoted to God, or bind it more to God? Will not your *Station* be more solemn if you have withal *stood* at God's *altar*?⁸⁸⁶⁸ When the Lord's Body has been received and reserved⁸⁸⁶⁹ each point is secured, both the participation of the sacrifice and the discharge of duty. If the "Station" has received its name from the example of military life—for we withal are God's military⁸⁸⁷⁰—of course no gladness or sadness chanting to the camp abolishes the "stations" of the soldiers: for gladness will carry out discipline more willingly, sadness more carefully.

8867 The word *Statio* seems to have been used in more than one sense in the ancient Church. A passage in the *Shepherd of Hermas*, referred to above (B. iii. Sim. 5), appears to make it = "fast."

8868 "Ara," not "altare."

8869 For receiving at home apparently, when your *station* is over.

8870 See 2 *Tim. ii. 1*, etc. [See *Hermas*, Vol. I., p. 33.]

Chapter XX.—Of Women's Dress.

So far, however, as regards the dress of women, the variety of observance compels us—men of no consideration whatever—to treat, presumptuously indeed, after the most holy apostle,⁸⁸⁷¹ except in so far as it will not be presumptuously if we treat the subject in accordance with the apostle. Touching modesty of dress and ornamentation, indeed, the prescription of Peter⁸⁸⁷² likewise is plain, checking as he does with the same mouth, because with the same Spirit, as Paul, the glory of garments, and the pride of gold, and the meretricious elaboration of the hair.

8871 See 1 Cor. xi. 1–16; 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10.

8872 1 Pet. iii. 1–6.

Chapter XXI.—Of Virgins.

But that point which is promiscuously observed throughout the churches, whether virgins ought to be veiled or no, must be treated of. For they who allow to virgins immunity from head-covering, appear to rest on this; that the apostle has not defined “virgins” by name, but “women,”⁸⁸⁷³ as “to be veiled;” nor the sex generally, so as to say “females,” but a *class* of the sex, by saying “women:” for if he had named the sex by saying “females,” he would have made his limit absolute for *every* woman; but while he names one class of the sex, he separates another class by being silent. For, they say, he might either have named “virgins” specially; or generally, by a compendious term, “females.”

8873 1 Cor. xi. 5.

Chapter XXII.—Answer to the Foregoing Arguments.

They who make this concession⁸⁸⁷⁴ ought to reflect on the nature of the word itself—what is the meaning of “woman” from the very first records of the sacred writings. Here they find it to be the *name of the sex*, not a *class of the sex*: if, that is, God gave to Eve, when she had not yet known a man, the surname “woman” and “female”⁸⁸⁷⁵—(“female,” whereby the sex generally; “woman,” hereby a class of the sex, is marked).⁸⁸⁷⁶ So, since at that time the as yet unwedded Eve was called by the word “woman,” that word has been made common even to a virgin.⁸⁸⁷⁷ Nor is it wonderful that the apostle—guided, of course, by the same Spirit by whom, as all the divine Scripture, so that book Genesis, was drawn up—has used the selfsame word in writing “women,” which, by the example of Eve unwedded, is applicable too to a “virgin.” In fact, all the other passages are in consonance herewith. For even by this very fact, that he has not *named* “virgins” (as he does in another place⁸⁸⁷⁸ where he is teaching touching marrying), he sufficiently predicates that his remark is made touching *every* woman, and touching *the whole* sex; and that there is no distinction made between a “virgin” *and any other*, while he does not name her at all. For he who elsewhere—namely, where the difference requires—remembers to make the distinction, (moreover, he makes it by designating each species by their appropriate names,) wishes, where he makes *no* distinction (while he does not name each), *no* difference to be understood. What of the fact that in the Greek speech, in which the apostle wrote his letters, it is usual to say, “women” rather than “females;” that is, γυναῖκας (*gunaikas*) rather than θηλείας (*theleias*)? Therefore if that word,⁸⁸⁷⁹ which by interpretation represents what “female” (*femina*) represents,⁸⁸⁸⁰ is frequently used *instead* of the name of the sex,⁸⁸⁸¹ he has named the *sex* in saying γυναῖκα; but in the *sex* even the *virgin* is embraced. But, withal, the declar-



8874 As to the distinction between “women” and “virgins.”

8875 Gen. ii. 23. In the LXX. and in the Eng. ver. there is but the one word “woman.”

8876 These words are regarded by Dr. Routh as spurious, and not without reason. Mr. Dodgson likewise omits them, and refers to *de Virg. Vel.* cc. 4 and 5.

8877 In *de Virg. Vel.* 5, Tertullian speaks even more strongly: “And so you have the name, I say not now *common*, but *proper* to a virgin; a name which from the beginning a *virgin* received.”

8878 1 Cor. vii. 34 et seq.

8879 γυνή.

8880 Mr. Dodgson appears to think that there is some transposition here; and at first sight it may appear so. But when we look more closely, perhaps there is no need to make any difficulty: the stress is rather on the words “by *interpretation*,” which, of course, is a different thing from “*usage*;” and by *interpretation* γυνή appears to come *nearer* to “*femina*” than to “*mulier*.”

8881 θηλεία.

ation is plain: “Every woman,” saith he, “praying and prophesying with head uncovered,⁸⁸⁸² dishonoureth her own head.”⁸⁸⁸³ What is “every woman,” but *woman* of every age, of every rank, of every condition? By saying “every” he excepts nought of womanhood, just as he excepts nought of manhood either from *not* being covered; for just so he says, “Every man.”⁸⁸⁸⁴ As, then, in the masculine sex, under the name of “man” even the “youth” is *forbidden* to be veiled; so, too, in the feminine, under the name of “woman,” even the “virgin” is *bidden* to be veiled. Equally in each sex let the younger age follow the discipline of the elder; or else let the male “virgins,”⁸⁸⁸⁵ too, be *veiled*, if the female virgins withal are *not* veiled, because *they* are not mentioned by *name*. Let “man” and “youth” be different, if “woman” and “virgin” are different. For indeed it is “on account of the angels”⁸⁸⁸⁶ that he saith women must be veiled, because on account of “the daughters of men” angels revolted from God.⁸⁸⁸⁷ Who then, would contend that “women” *alone*—that is,⁸⁸⁸⁸ such as were already wedded and had lost their virginity—were the objects of angelic concupiscence, unless “virgins” are incapable of excelling in beauty and finding lovers? Nay, let us see whether it were not *virgins alone* whom they lusted after; since Scriptures saith “the daughters of men;”⁸⁸⁸⁹ inasmuch as it might have named “wives of men,” or “females,” indifferently.⁸⁸⁹⁰ Likewise, in that it saith, “And they took them to themselves for wives,”⁸⁸⁹¹ it does so on this ground, that, of course, such are “received *for wives*” as are devoid of that title. But it would have expressed itself differently concerning such as were *not* thus devoid. And so (they who are named) are devoid as much of *widowhood* as of *virginity*. So completely has *Paul* by naming the sex generally, mingled “daughters” and species together in the genus. Again, while he says that “nature herself,”⁸⁸⁹² which has assigned hair as a tegument and ornament to women, “teaches that veiling is the duty of females,” has not the same tegument and the same honour of the head been assigned also to virgins? If “it is shameful” for a

8882 Or, “unveiled.”

8883 1 Cor. xi. 5.

8884 1 Cor. xi. 4.

8885 For a similar use of the word “virgin,” see Rev. xiv. 4.

8886 1 Cor. xi. 10.

8887 See Gen. vi. 2 in the LXX., with the *v. l.* ed. Tisch. 1860; and compare Tertullian, *de Idol.* c. 9, and the note there. Mr. Dodgson refers, too, to *de Virg. Vel.* c. 7, where this curious subject is more fully entered into.

8888 i.e. according to *their* definition, whom Tertullian is refuting.

8889 Gen. iv. 2.

8890 i.e. If *married women* had been meant, either word, “uxores” or “feminæ,” could have been used indifferently.

8891 Gen. vi. 2.

8892 1 Cor. xi. 14.

woman to be shorn it is similarly so to a virgin too. From them, then, to whom is assigned one and the same *law* of the head,⁸⁸⁹³ one and the same *discipline*⁸⁸⁹⁴ of the head is exacted,—(which extends) even unto those virgins whom their childhood defends,⁸⁸⁹⁵ for from the first⁸⁸⁹⁶ a virgin was named “female.” This custom,⁸⁸⁹⁷ in short, even Israel observes; but if *Israel* did *not* observe it, *our Law*,⁸⁸⁹⁸ amplified and supplemented, would vindicate the addition for itself; let it be excused for imposing the veil on virgins also. Under *our* dispensation, let that age which is ignorant of its sex⁸⁸⁹⁹ retain the privilege of simplicity. For both Eve and Adam, when it befell them to be “wise,”⁸⁹⁰⁰ forthwith veiled what they had learnt to know.⁸⁹⁰¹ At all events, with regard to those in whom girlhood has changed (into maturity), their age ought to remember its duties as to nature, so also, to discipline; for they are being transferred to the rank of “women” both in their persons and in their functions. No one is a “virgin” from the time when she is capable of marriage; seeing that, in her, age has by that time been wedded to its own husband, that is, to time.⁸⁹⁰² “But some particular *virgin* has devoted herself to God. From that very moment she both changes the fashion of her hair, and converts all her garb into that of a ‘woman.’” Let her, then, maintain the character wholly, and perform the whole function of a “virgin:” what she conceals⁸⁹⁰³ for the sake of God, let her cover quite over.⁸⁹⁰⁴ It is our business to entrust to the knowledge of God alone that which the grace of God effects in us, lest we receive from man the reward we hope for from God.⁸⁹⁰⁵ Why do you denude before God⁸⁹⁰⁶ what you cover before



8893 i.e. long hair.

8894 i.e. veiling.

8895 i.e. “exempts.”

8896 i.e. from her creation.

8897 Of the “universal veiling of women.”

8898 i.e. as above, the Sermon on the Mount.

8899 i.e. mere infancy.

8900 [Gen. iii. 6.](#)

8901 [Gen. ii. 27 \(or in the LXX. iii. 1\), and iii. 7, 10, 11.](#)

8902 Routh refers us to *de Virg. Vel.* c. 11.

8903 i.e. the redundancy of her hair.

8904 i.e. by a veil.

8905 i.e. says Oehler, “lest we postpone the eternal favour of God, which we hope for, to the temporal veneration of men; a risk which those virgins seemed likely to run who, when devoted to God, used to go veiled in public, but bareheaded in the church.”

8906 i.e. in church.

men?⁸⁹⁰⁷ Will you be more modest in public than in the church? If *your self-devotion* is a grace of God, and you have received it, “why do you boast,” saith he, “as if you have not received it?”⁸⁹⁰⁸ Why, by your ostentation of yourself, do you judge others? Is it that, by your boasting, you invite others unto good? Nay, but even you yourself run the risk of losing, if you boast; and you drive others unto the same perils! What is assumed from love of boasting is easily destroyed. Be veiled, virgin, if virgin you are; for you ought to blush. If you are a virgin, shrink from (the gaze of) many eyes. Let no one wonder at your face; let no one perceive your falsehood.⁸⁹⁰⁹ You do well in falsely assuming the married character, if you veil your head; nay, you do not seem to assume it *falsely*, for you *are* wedded to Christ: to Him you have surrendered your body; act as becomes your Husband’s discipline. If He bids the brides of others to be veiled, His own, of course, much more. “But each individual man⁸⁹¹⁰ is not to think that the institution of his predecessor is to be overturned.” Many yield up their own judgment, and its consistency, to the custom of others. Granted that *virgins* be not *compelled* to be veiled, at all events such as *voluntarily are* so should not be prohibited; who, likewise, cannot deny themselves to be virgins,⁸⁹¹¹ content, in the security of a good conscience before God, to damage their own fame.⁸⁹¹² Touching such, however, as are betrothed, I can with constancy “above my small measure”⁸⁹¹³ pronounce and attest that they are to be veiled from that day forth on which they shuddered at the first bodily touch of a man by kiss and hand. For in them everything has been forewedded: their age, through maturity; their flesh, through age; their spirit, through consciousness; their modesty, through the experience of the kiss their hope, through expectation; their mind through volition. And Rebecca is example enough for us, who, when her betrothed had been pointed out, veiled herself for marriage merely on recognition of him.⁸⁹¹⁴

8907 i.e. in public; see note 27, *supra*.

8908 1 Cor. iv. 7.

8909 i.e. as Muratori, quoted by Oehler, says, your “pious” (?) fraud in pretending to be married when you are a virgin; because “devoted” virgins used to dress and wear veils like married women, as being regarded as “wedded to Christ.”

8910 i.e. each president of a church, or bishop.

8911 i.e. “are known to be such through the chastity of their manner and life” (Oehler).

8912 “By appearing in public as married women, while in heart they are virgins” (Oehler).

8913 Does Tertullian refer to 2 Cor. x. 13? or does “modulus” mean, as Oehler thinks, “my rule?” [It seems to me a very plain reference to the text before mentioned, and to the Apostolic Canon of not exceeding one’s Mission.]

8914 Gen. xxiv. 64, 65.

Chapter XXIII.—Of Kneeling.

In the matter of *kneeling* also prayer is subject to diversity of observance, through the act of some few who abstain from kneeling on the Sabbath; and since this dissension is particularly on its trial before the churches, the Lord will give His grace that the dissentients may either yield, or else indulge their opinion without offence to others. We, however (just as we have received), only on the day of the Lord's Resurrection ought to guard not only against kneeling, but every posture and office of solicitude; deferring even our businesses lest we give any place to the devil.⁸⁹¹⁵ Similarly, too, in the period of Pentecost; which period we distinguish by the same solemnity of exultation.⁸⁹¹⁶ But who would hesitate *every* day to prostrate himself before God, at least in the first prayer with which we enter on the daylight? At fasts, moreover, and Stations, no prayer should be made without kneeling, and the remaining customary marks of humility; for (then)⁸⁹¹⁷ we are not only *praying*, but *deprecating*, and making satisfaction to God our Lord.⁸⁹¹⁸ Touching *times* of prayer nothing at all has been prescribed, except clearly “to pray at every time and every place.”⁸⁹¹⁹

8915 Eph. iv. 27.

8916 i.e. abstaining from kneeling: *kneeling* being more “a posture of solicitude” and of humility; *standing*, of “exultation.”

8917 i.e. at fasts and Stations. [Sabbath = Saturday, *supra*.]

8918 For the meaning of “satisfaction” as used by the Fathers, see Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* vi. 5.

8919 Eph. vi. 18; 1 Thess. v. 17; 1 Tim. ii. 8.

Chapter XXIV.—Of Place for Prayer.

But how “in every place,” since we are prohibited⁸⁹²⁰ (from praying) in public? In every place, he means, which opportunity or even necessity, may have rendered suitable: for that which was done by the apostles⁸⁹²¹ (who, in gaol, in the audience of the prisoners, “began praying and singing to God”) is not considered to have been done contrary to the precept; nor yet that which was done by Paul,⁸⁹²² who in the ship, in presence of all, “made thanksgiving to God.”⁸⁹²³

8920 [Matt. vi. 5, 6](#), which forbids praying in public.

8921 Paul and Silas ([Acts xvi. 25](#)).

8922 I have followed Muratori’s reading here.

8923 Mr. Dodgson renders “celebrated the Eucharist;” but that rendering appears very doubtful. See [Acts xxvii. 35](#).

Chapter XXV.—Of Time for Prayer.

Touching the *time*, however, the extrinsic⁸⁹²⁴ observance of certain hours will not be unprofitable—those common hours, I mean, which mark the intervals of the day—the third, the sixth, the ninth—which we may find in the Scriptures to have been more solemn than the rest. The first infusion of the Holy Spirit into the congregated disciples took place at “the third hour.”⁸⁹²⁵ Peter, on the day on which he experienced the vision of Universal Community,⁸⁹²⁶ (exhibited) in that small vessel,⁸⁹²⁷ had ascended into the more lofty parts *of the house*, for prayer’s sake “at the sixth hour.”⁸⁹²⁸ The same (apostle) was going into the temple, with John, “at the ninth hour,”⁸⁹²⁹ when he restored the paralytic to his health. Albeit these *practices* stand simply without any *precept* for their observance, still it may be granted a good thing to establish some definite presumption, which may both add stringency to the admonition to pray, and may, as it were by a law, tear us out from our businesses unto such a duty; so that—what we read to have been observed by Daniel also,⁸⁹³⁰ in accordance (of course) with Israel’s discipline—we pray at least not less than thrice in the day, debtors as we are to Three—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: of course, in addition to our regular prayers which are due, without any admonition, on the entrance of light and of night. But, withal, it becomes believers not to take food, and not to go to the bath, before interposing a prayer; for the refreshments and nourishments of the spirit are to be held prior to those of the flesh, and things heavenly prior to things earthly.



8924 Mr. Dodgson supposes this word to mean “outward, as contrasted with the inward, ‘praying always.’” Oehler interprets, “ex vita communi.” But perhaps what Tertullian says lower down in the chapter, “albeit they stand *simply without any precept enjoining their observance*,” may give us the true clue to his meaning; so that “extrinsecus” would = “extrinsic to any direct injunction of our Lord or His apostles.”

8925 Acts ii. 1–4, 14, 15.

8926 Communitatis omnis (Oehler). Mr. Dodgson renders, “of every sort of common thing.” Perhaps, as Routh suggests, we should read “omnium.”

8927 Vasculo. But in Acts it is, σκευός τι ὡς ὀθόνην μεγάλην [*Small* is here comparatively used, with reference to *Universality* of which it was the symbol.]

8928 Acts x. 9.

8929 Acts iii. 1: but the man is not said to have been “paralytic,” but “lame from his mother’s womb.”

8930 Dan. vi. 10; comp. Ps. lv. 17 (in the LXX. it is liv. 18).

Chapter XXVI.—Of the Parting of Brethren.

You will not dismiss a brother who has entered your house without prayer.—“Have you seen,” says *Scripture*, “a brother? you have seen your Lord;”⁸⁹³¹—especially “a stranger,” lest perhaps he be “an angel.” But again, when received yourself by brethren, you will not make⁸⁹³² earthly refreshments prior to heavenly, for your faith will forthwith be judged. Or else how will you—according to the precept⁸⁹³³—say, “Peace to this *house*,” unless you exchange mutual peace with them who are *in* the house?

8931 I have ventured to turn the first part of the sentence into a question. What “scripture” this may be, no one knows. [It seems to me a clear reference to [Matt. xxv. 38](#), amplified by the [45th verse](#), in a way not unusual with our author.] Perhaps, in addition to the passages in [Gen. xviii.](#) and [Heb. xiii. 2](#), to which the editors naturally refer, Tertullian may allude to such passages as [Mark. ix. 37](#); [Matt. xxv. 40, 45](#). [Christo in pauperibus.]

8932 I have followed Routh’s conjecture, “feceris” for “fecerit,” which Oehler does not even notice.

8933 [Luke x. 5](#).

Chapter XXVII.—Of Subjoining a Psalm.

The more diligent in prayer are wont to subjoin in their prayers the “Hallelujah,”⁸⁹³⁴ and such kind of psalms, in the closes of which the company respond. And, of course, every institution is excellent which, for the extolling and honouring of God, aims unitedly to bring Him enriched prayer as a choice victim.⁸⁹³⁵

8934 Perhaps “the great Hallelujah,” i.e. the last five psalms.

8935 [The author seems to have in mind ([Hos. xiv. 2](#)) “the calves of our lips.”]

Chapter XXVIII.—Of the Spiritual Victim, Which Prayer is.

For this is the spiritual victim⁸⁹³⁶ which has abolished the pristine sacrifices. “To what purpose,” saith He, “(bring ye) me the multitude of your sacrifices? I am full of holocausts of rams, and I desire not the fat of rams, and the blood of bulls and of goats. For who hath required these from your hands?”⁸⁹³⁷ What, then, God *has* required the Gospel teaches. “An hour will come,” saith He, “when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and truth. For God is a Spirit, and accordingly requires His adorers to be such.”⁸⁹³⁸ We are the true adorers and the true priests,⁸⁹³⁹ who, praying in spirit,⁸⁹⁴⁰ sacrifice, in spirit, prayer,—a victim proper and acceptable to God, which assuredly He has required, which He has looked forward to⁸⁹⁴¹ for Himself! This *victim*, devoted from the whole heart, fed on faith, tended by truth, entire in innocence, pure in chastity, garlanded with love,⁸⁹⁴² we ought to escort with the pomp⁸⁹⁴³ of good works, amid psalms and hymns, unto God’s altar,⁸⁹⁴⁴ to obtain for us all things from God.

8936 1 Pet. ii. 5.

8937 Isa. i. 11. See the LXX.

8938 John iv. 23, 24.

8939 Sacerdotes; comp. *de Ex. Cast.* c. 7.

8940 1 Cor. xiv. 15; Eph. vi. 18.

8941 Or, “provided.”

8942 “Agape,” perhaps “the love-feast.”

8943 Or, “procession.”

8944 Altare.

Chapter XXIX.—Of the Power of Prayer.

For what has God, who exacts it *ever* denied⁸⁹⁴⁵ to prayer coming from “spirit and truth?” How mighty specimens of its efficacy do we read, and hear, and believe! *Old-world* prayer, indeed, used to free from fires,⁸⁹⁴⁶ and from beasts,⁸⁹⁴⁷ and from famine;⁸⁹⁴⁸ and yet it had not (then) received its form from Christ. But how far more amply operative is *Christian* prayer! It does not station the angel of dew in mid-fires,⁸⁹⁴⁹ nor muzzle lions, nor transfer to the hungry the rustics’ bread;⁸⁹⁵⁰ it has no delegated grace to avert any sense of suffering;⁸⁹⁵¹ but it supplies the suffering, and the feeling, and the grieving, with endurance: it amplifies grace by virtue, that faith may know what she obtains from the Lord, understanding what—for God’s name’s sake—she suffers. But in days gone by, withal prayer used to call down⁸⁹⁵² plagues, scatter the armies of foes, withhold the wholesome influences of the showers. Now, however, the prayer of righteousness averts all God’s anger, keeps bivouac on behalf of personal enemies, makes supplication on behalf of persecutors. Is it wonder if *it* knows how to extort the rains of heaven⁸⁹⁵³—(prayer) which was *once* able to procure its fires?⁸⁹⁵⁴ Prayer is alone that which vanquishes⁸⁹⁵⁵ God. But Christ has willed that it be operative for no evil: He had conferred on it all its virtue in the cause of good. And so it knows nothing save how to recall the souls of the departed from the very path of death, to transform the weak, to restore the sick, to purge the possessed, to open prison-bars, to loose the bonds of the innocent. Likewise it washes away faults, repels temptations, extinguishes persecutions, consoles the faint-spirited, cheers the high-spirited, escorts travellers, appeases waves, makes robbers stand aghast, nourishes the poor, governs the rich, upraises the fallen, arrests the falling, confirms the standing. Prayer is the wall of faith: her arms and missiles⁸⁹⁵⁶ against the foe who keeps watch over us on all sides. And, so never walk we unarmed. By



8945 Routh would read, “What *will* God *deny*?”

8946 [Dan. iii.](#)

8947 [Dan. vi.](#)

8948 [1 Kings xviii.](#); [James v. 17, 18.](#)

8949 i.e. “the angel who preserved in the furnace the three youths besprinkled, as it were, with dewy shower” (Muratori quoted by Oehler). [*Apocrypha, The Song, etc., verses 26, 27.*]

8950 [2 Kings iv. 42–44.](#)

8951 i.e. in brief, its *miraculous* operations, as they are called, are suspended in these ways.

8952 Or, “inflict.”

8953 See *Apolog.* c. 5 (Oehler).

8954 See [2 Kings i.](#)

8955 [A reference to Jacob’s wrestling. Also, probably, to [Matt. xi. 12.](#)]

8956 Or, “her armour defensive and offensive.”

day, be we mindful of Station; by night, of vigil. Under the arms of prayer guard we the standard of our General; await we in prayer the angel's trump.⁸⁹⁵⁷ The angels, likewise, all pray; every creature prays; cattle and wild beasts pray and bend their knees; and when they issue from their layers and lairs,⁸⁹⁵⁸ they look up heavenward with no idle mouth, making their breath vibrate⁸⁹⁵⁹ after their own manner. Nay, the birds too, rising out of the nest, upraise themselves heavenward, and, instead of hands, expand the cross of their wings, and say somewhat to seem like prayer.⁸⁹⁶⁰ What more then, touching the office of prayer? Even the Lord Himself prayed; to whom be honour and virtue unto the ages of the ages!

8957 1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thess. iv. 16.

8958 Or, "pens and dens."

8959 As if in prayer.

8960 This beautiful passage should be supplemented by a similar one from St. Bernard: "Nonne et aviculas levat, non onerat pennarum numerositas ipsa? Tolle eas, et reliquum corpus pondere suo fertur ad ima. Sic disciplinam Christi, sic suave jugum, sic onus leve, quo deponimus, eo deprimimur ipsi: quia portat potius quam portatur." Epistola, cclxxxv. Bernardi Opp. Tom. i. p. 691. Ed. (Mabillon.) Gaume, Paris, 1839. Bearing the cross uplifts the Christian.]