

TREATISE ON SEPARATE SUBSTANCES

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CHAPTER I

THE OPINION OF THE EARLY PHILOSOPHERS AND OF PLATO

Since we cannot be present at the holy ceremonies in honor of the angels, we should not let this time of devotion go by fruitlessly; rather, such time as we do not spend in singing their praises, we should spend in writing about them. And because our aim is to present as best we can the excellence of the holy angels, we ought to begin with man's earliest conjectures about the angels. In this way, we shall be in a position to accept whatever we find that agrees with faith, and refute whatever is opposed to Catholic teaching.

2.—The first of those who philosophized on the natures of things believed that only bodies existed and held that the first principles of things were certain corporeal elements, either one or several. Ed

And if they held the first principle to be one, either they thought it was water, as Thales of Miletus did, or air as Diogenes, or fire as Heraclitus. Ed

If they thought the principles to be several, they thought them to be either finite in number, as did Empedocles, who posited four elements and along with them, two moving principles, namely, love and strife; Ed

or infinite in number, as in the case of Democritus and Anaxagoras, both of whom posited an infinite number of minimal parts as the principles of all things, except that Democritus held that these parts were similar in kind, differing only in figure, order, and position. Ed

Anaxagoras, on the other hand, thought that in the case of diverse things which have similar parts, the first principles are the infinite minimal parts.

Moreover, since all of these philosophers had the natural conviction that they should consider as god that which was the first principle of things, just as each of them had attributed to a certain corporeal element the rank of a first principle, so he likewise felt that the name and honor of divinity should be given to this element. These things were said for this reason, that for all of these men and their followers, it was the case that no incorporeal substances, which we call

“angels”, existed.

The Epicureans, however, who traced their origin to the teachings of Democritus, posited certain corporeal gods, resembling human beings in appearance, Ed

whom they held completely

free and without any cares, so that by enjoying ceaseless pleasures, they would be blessed. This teaching had such a far-reaching effect that it influenced even Jewish worshipers of God, a sect of whom, the Sadducees, held that neither angels nor spirits existed. Ed

3.—The early philosophers, however, opposed this opinion in three ways. For although, at first, Anaxagoras with the other Natural Philosophers posited certain material or corporeal principles, nevertheless, he was the first among the philosophers to assert a certain incorporeal principle, namely, an intellect. Ed

Since indeed, according to his view, all corporeal things were mixed in all things, it did not seem possible that corporeal bodies could have been distinguished from one another, unless there existed some principle of distinction which was itself completely unmixed and had nothing in common with corporeal nature.

But, although Anaxagoras’ opinion was much closer to the truth than that of the philosophers who posited only a corporeal nature, yet it falls short of the truth in two respects.

First, because it is apparent from his position that he posited only one separate intellect which had produced this world by distinguishing what was mixed. But since we attribute the establishment of the world to God, from this point of view, we can gather nothing from his opinion as to the incorporeal substances, which we call angels and which are below God and above corporeal natures.

Second, because concerning the intellect, which he said to be one and unmixed, he seems to have failed in this respect, since he did not sufficiently express its power and eminence. Instead of defining this intellect, which he considered to be separate, as the universal principle of being, he makes it to be only a distinguishing principle, for he did not hold that the bodies that were mixed with one another, received being (esse) from the separate intellect; they received from it only distinctions.

4.—Plato therefore proceeded by a more adequate way to refute the opinion of these early Naturalists. Ed

For since the early Naturalists had held that man could not know the definite truth of things, both because of the continuous passing of corporeal things and because of the deception of the senses by which bodies are known, Plato posited certain natures, separate from the matter of flowing things, in which truth remained abiding. Ed

By adhering to these natures, our soul knew the truth. Ed

Hence, as the intellect in knowing truth, apprehends certain things beyond the matter of sensible things, Plato thus believed that there existed certain realities separate from sensible things. Ed

Now our intellect uses a two-fold abstraction in arriving at the understanding of truth: One, according as it grasps mathematical numbers, magnitudes, and figures without the understanding of sensible matter; for, in understanding the number two or three, or a line, a surface, a triangle, or a square, there is not included together with it in our apprehension anything pertaining to what is hot or cold, or the like, which is perceptible by sense. The intellect, however, uses another abstraction when it understands something universal without the consideration of something particular, as when we understand man without including in our understanding anything about Socrates, Plato, or any other individual. The same appears in other cases. Ed

5.—Plato accordingly posited two classes of beings abstracted from sensible things, namely, mathematical, and universals to which he gave the name of Forms or Ideas. Ed

There appeared, however, to be this difference between them, namely, that in the case of mathematical, we can grasp several members of one species, for example, two equal lines or two identical equilateral triangles; whereas with Forms, this is absolutely impossible; man, for example, taken universally is only one in Form. Ed

And so, Plato posited mathematical between Forms or Ideas and sensible things; since mathematical agree with sensible things in that many are contained in the same species, and they agree with the Forms in that they are separate from sensible matter. Ed

Further, among Forms themselves, he posited a certain order, on the ground that according as something was simpler in the intellect, so far was it prior within the order of things. Now that which is first in the intellect is the one and the good;

for he understands nothing who does not understand something one, and the one and the good follow upon one another. Hence Plato held that the first Idea of the One, which he called the One-in-itself and the Good-in-itself, was the first principle of things and this Idea he said was the highest good. Ed

Under this One, he established among the substances separate from matter Ed

diverse orders of participating and participated beings, all of which orders he called secondary gods, Ed

as being certain unities below the first simple unity. Ed

6.—Again, inasmuch as all Forms participate in the One, the intellect likewise must participate in the Forms of things in order to have understanding. Ed

Therefore, just as under the highest God, who is the prime unity, simple and unparticipated, other Forms of things exist as secondary unities and gods; so, under the order of these Forms or unities, he posited an order of separate intellects, which participate in the above-mentioned Forms in order to have actual understanding. Ed

Among these intellects, an intellect is higher according as it is nearer to the first intellect which has full participation in the Forms; just as among the gods or unities, that one is higher which shares more perfectly in the first unity.

Although Plato distinguished between the gods and the intellects, he did not mean to imply that the gods could not have understanding. It was his desire, rather, that they should understand in a supra-intellectual manner; that is, instead of understanding by participating in certain Forms, they should have understanding through themselves, with the proviso that every one of them was good and one only through participating in the first One and Good. Again, because we see that certain souls possess understanding which, however, does not befit a soul by the fact that it is a soul, otherwise it would follow that every soul is an intellect and that it would be intelligent in its whole nature, he further posited that under the order of the separate intellects, there was an order of souls, the nobler of which participate in intellectual power, while the lowest of them are lacking in it. Ed

Again, because bodies do not seem to be capable of moving themselves unless they have a soul, Plato held that self-motion belongs to bodies insofar as they participate in soul, since those bodies lacking in this participation, are not moved, unless they are moved by another. Whence he considered it to be an essential

property of souls that they move themselves. Ed

7.—In this way, below the order of souls, Plato posited the order of bodies, but in such a manner that the highest of the bodies, namely, the first heavens, which is moved by its own motion, receives motion from the highest soul, and so on to the very lowest of the heavenly bodies. Below these, furthermore, the Platonists placed immortal bodies, namely, aëreal or ethereal bodies, which participate eternally in soul. Some of these they considered to be altogether independent of earthly bodies and these they said to be bodies of demons; others became entombed in earthly bodies, which is the case with human souls. Ed

For they did not believe that this earthly human body which we touch and see, participates immediately in the soul; rather, there is another nobler body belonging to the soul, incorruptible and everlasting, even as the soul itself is incorruptible Ed

in such wise that the soul with its everlasting and invisible body is in this grosser body not as a form in matter but as a sailor in a ship. Ed

And just as they said that some men were good and others wicked, so too, with the demons. But the heavenly souls, the separate intellects and all the gods, they said were all good. Ed

In this way, therefore, between us and the highest God, it is clear that they posited four orders, namely, that of the secondary gods, that of the separate intellects, that of the heavenly souls, and that of the good or wicked demons. If all these things were true, then all these intermediate orders would be called by us "angels", for Sacred Scripture refers to the demons themselves as angels. Ed

The souls themselves of the heavenly bodies, on the assumption that these are animated, should also be numbered among the angels, as Augustine determines in the *Enchiridion* . Ed

CHAPTER II

ARISTOTLE'S OPINION

8.—But the basis of this position is found to be without foundation, for it is not necessary that what the intellect understands separately should have a separate existence (*esse*) in reality. Hence, neither should we posit separate universals subsisting outside singulars nor likewise mathematical outside sensible things;

for universals are the essences of particular things themselves and mathematical are certain limits of sensible bodies. Eo

That is why Aristotle proceeded by a more manifest and surer way, namely, by way of motion, to investigate substances that are separate from matter. Eo

First, he established by both reason and examples, the fact that everything moved is moved by another; and that if something is said to be self-moved, this is not true of it according to the same part but according to diverse parts of itself, so that one part is moving and another is moved. Eo

Furthermore, since it is not possible to proceed to infinity among movers and things moved, because if the first mover is taken away, it would follow that the other movers as well, would not be moved, we must therefore arrive at some first unmoved mover and some first movable which is moved by itself, in the manner already indicated; for that which is through itself, is prior to and the cause of that which is through another. Eo

Furthermore, Aristotle aimed to establish the eternity of motion and that only an infinite power can move in an infinite time, and likewise that no power belonging to a magnitude is an infinite power. Eo

From these premises he concluded that the power of the first mover is not a power belonging to any body; therefore the first mover must be incorporeal and without magnitude. Eo

9.—Again, since in the class of movable beings, that which is desirable is present as an unmoved mover, whereas the one desiring is present as a moved mover, Aristotle further concluded that the first unmoved mover is as an appetible good and that the first self-moved mover, namely the first movable, is moved through a desire of that unmoved mover. Eo

However, we must furthermore keep in mind that in the order of appetites and of appetible objects, the first is that which is through itself an object of understanding, for intellective appetite seeks that which is good through itself; whereas sensitive appetite cannot rise to the appetite of that which is good in itself but only that which appears good. For that which is simply and absolutely good does not fall under the apprehension of sense but only of the intellect.

The first movable, therefore, seeks the first mover with an intellectual appetite and from this it can be inferred that the first movable is appetitive and intelligent. And since only a body is moved, we may infer that the first movable is a body

animated by an intellectual soul. But the prime movable, namely the first heavens, is not the only one moved with an eternal motion; but also all the lesser spheres of the heavenly bodies likewise are. Ed

Therefore each of the heavenly bodies is animated by its own soul and each has its own separate appetible object which is the proper end of its motion.

10. -There are, accordingly, many separate substances that are in no way united to any bodies; there are, likewise, many intellectual substances united to heavenly bodies. Aristotle attempts to find out the number of these on the basis of the number of motions of the heavenly bodies. Ed

But one of his followers, namely Avicenna Ed

assigns the number of these substances not according to the number of motions but rather according to the number of the planets and the other higher bodies, namely, the sphere of the fixed stars and the sphere without stars. For many motions seem to be ordered to the motion of one star, and just as all the other heavenly bodies are under one highest heaven by whose motion all the other bodies are revolving, so likewise, all the other separate substances are ordered under the first separate substance which is the one God. And in like manner, all the souls of the other heavenly bodies are ordered under the soul of the first heaven. Under the heavenly bodies according to Aristotle, the only animated bodies are those of animals and plants. Ed

For he did not hold that any simple and elementary body could be animated because a simple body cannot be a suitable organ of touch which of necessity belongs to every animal. Ed

Between us and the heavenly bodies, Aristotle did not locate any intervening animate body. Thus, according to the position of Aristotle, between us and the highest God, there exists only a two-fold order of intellectual substances, namely, the separate substances which are the ends of the heavenly motions; and the souls of the spheres, which move through appetite and desire.

11.—Now this position of Aristotle seems to be surer because it does not depart greatly from that which is evident according to sense; yet it seems to be less adequate than the position of Plato.

In the first place, there are many things which are evident according to senses, for which an explanation cannot be given on the basis of what Aristotle teaches. For we see in men who are possessed by devils and in the works of sorcerers,

certain phenomena which do not seem capable of taking place except through some intellectual substance. Certain followers of Aristotle, as is evident in Porphyry's letter to Anebon the Egyptian, Ed

tried to reduce the causes of these phenomena to the power of the heavenly bodies, as if the works of the sorcerers attained certain unusual and marvelous results under the influence of certain constellations. Furthermore, they say that it is through the influence of the stars that persons who are possessed sometimes foretell future events, for the realization of which there is a certain disposition in nature through the heavenly bodies. But in such cases, there are manifestly certain works which cannot in any way be reduced to a corporeal cause. For example, that people in a trance should speak in a cultivated way of sciences which they do not know, since they are unlettered folk; and that those who have scarcely left the village in which they were born, speak with fluency the vernacular of a foreign people. Likewise, in the works of magicians, certain images are said to be conjured up which answer questions and move about, all of which could not be accomplished by any corporeal cause. Therefore, as the Platonists see it, who could evidently assign a cause of these effects, except to say that these are brought about through demons.

12.—Second because it seems unbefitting that immaterial substances should be limited to the number of corporeal substances. For those beings that are higher do not exist for the sake of those that are lower. But on the contrary, that because of which something else exists, is the more noble. Now one cannot sufficiently ascertain the nature of an end from that which is for the end, but rather the other way about. Hence, one cannot adequately ascertain the magnitude and power of higher beings by a consideration of the lower ones. This truth is especially evident in the order of corporeal beings, for it is impossible to reckon the magnitude and number of heavenly bodies from the disposition of the elementary bodies, which are as nothing in comparison to them. But the immaterial substances surpass corporeal substances much more than the heavenly bodies surpass elementary ones. In view of this, the number, power, and disposition of immaterial substances cannot be adequately grasped from the number of heavenly movements.

13.—Let us assume the procedure and even the very words of Aristotle's proof in order that this truth may be more particularly made manifest. Now Aristotle assumes that there can be no motion in the heavens unless it is ordered to the accomplishment of something. Ed

This assumption is sufficiently probable. For all the substances of the spheres seem to exist for the sake of the stars which are nobler among the heavenly

bodies and have a more evident influence. Aristotle further assumes that all the higher substances, impassible and immaterial, are ends, being of themselves most excellent; and this assumption is reasonable. Ed

For the good has the nature of an end, and hence among beings, those that are by their very nature noblest, are ends for other beings.

But the conclusion of Aristotle that the number of immaterial substances is determined by the number of heavenly movements Ed

does not necessarily follow. For an end is both proximate and remote. And the proximate end of the highest heavens is not necessarily the highest immaterial substance which is the all-high God, but it is more probable that there are many orders of immaterial substances between the first immaterial substance and the heavenly body. The lower of these immaterial substances is ordered to the higher as to an end and a heavenly body is ordered to the lowest of these as to its proximate end. For each thing must in some way be proportioned to its proximate end. Accordingly, because of the greatest possible distance between the first immaterial substance and any corporeal substance, it is not probable Ed

that a corporeal substance should be ordered to the highest substance as to its proximate end.

14.—Hence even Avicenna Ed

posited that the immediate end of any of the heavenly movements was not the first cause but a certain first intelligence; and the same can likewise be said of the lower motions of the heavenly bodies. Hence that there should not be more immaterial substances than the number of heavenly motions is not a necessary fact. And Aristotle himself, suspecting this fact, did not advance this position as necessary but only as probable. For when he had enumerated the heavenly movements and before he offered the aforementioned explanation, he states, "Accordingly, it is reasonable to posit so many substances and immovable principles. But why it should be necessary, we shall leave to more capable individuals to pronounce." Ed

Aristotle therefore did not consider himself equal to the task of reaching a necessary conclusion in such matters.

Furthermore, it may seem to someone that Aristotle's aforesaid reasoning for positing immaterial substances is improper because it is based on the everlastingness of motion, which is contrary to the truth of faith. But if we follow

his reason carefully, we can see that his argumentation still holds, even if the eternity of motion is denied. For, just as the infinite power of a mover can be proved from the eternity of motion, so too, the same can be proved from the uniformity of motion. For a mover that cannot always be in motion, must necessarily move at one time faster and at another time more slowly according as his power gradually slows down in motion. But in the domain of heavenly movements there is a complete uniformity. We may therefore conclude that the mover of the first motion has the power to move everlastingly and we would thus arrive at the same conclusion. Ed

CHAPTER III

HOW ARISTOTLE AND PLATO AGREE

15.—After having examined these points, we can easily determine wherein Plato's and Aristotle's positions on the immaterial substances agree and wherein they differ.

In the first place, Plato and Aristotle agree on the manner of their existence. For Plato Ed

held that all lower immaterial substances are one and good by participation in the first, which is essentially one and good. Now whatever participates in something, receives that which it participates from the one from whom it participates; and to this extent that from which it participates is its cause, just as air has light which it participates from the sun which is the cause of its illumination. Therefore, according to Plato, the highest God is the reason why all immaterial substances are each one of them one and good. Ed

Aristotle, too, held this opinion because, as he himself says, "that which is most being and most truth is the cause of being and truth for all other things." Ed

16.—Secondly, Plato and Aristotle agree as to the condition of their nature, for both held that all such substances are completely free of matter, although not free from the composition of potency and act, for every participating being must be composed of potency and act. For that which is received as participated, must be the act of the participating substance itself. And thus, since Plato held that all substances below the highest, which is by itself one and good, are participants, they are, of necessity composed of potency and act. Ed

This must likewise be said according to Aristotle's position, for he maintained that

the nature of the true and the good is attributed to act. Ed

Hence, that which is the first truth and the first good must be pure act. And whatever beings fall short of it, must have a certain admixture of potency.

17.—Thirdly, Plato and Aristotle agree on the nature of providence. Plato held that the highest God, from the fact that He is the One itself and the Good itself, has as His property from the root nature of goodness, to have providence over all lower things; and every lower thing insofar as it participates in the goodness of the first good, likewise acts as a providence over the things which come after it, and not only of the same order but of diverse orders as well. Accordingly, the first separate intellect is a providence over the whole order of separate intellects, and each higher intellect over a lower intellect; and the whole order of separate intellects is a providence over the order of souls and the lower orders. Ed

Furthermore, Plato thought that this same fact could be observed among souls themselves, namely, that the highest souls of the heavens exercise a providence over all the lower souls and over the whole generation of lower bodies; and in the same way, that the higher souls exercise a providence over the lower ones Ed

i.e., the souls of the demons over the souls of men. For the Platonists held that demons acted as mediators between us and the higher substances. Ed

With this view of providence, Aristotle likewise does not disagree. For he posits one separate good, acting as a providence over all things in the manner of a single commander or master under whom are diverse orders of things in such wise that the higher orders of things achieve the order of perfect providence, Ed

and hence no defect is found in them. But lower beings which are able to receive the order of a less perfect providence are open to many defects, just as in a home, the children, who perfectly share in the rule of the father, fall short either in few things or in none; whereas the actions of slaves are found to lack order in many respects. Ed

Hence among inferior bodies, failings arise in the natural order [an order] which is never found to be lacking among higher bodies. In the same way, human souls themselves frequently fall short of the understanding of the truth and of the right appetite of the true good but this is not found among the higher souls or intellects. For this reason, Plato himself posited that certain demons were good and others were wicked, as were men; whereas the gods, the intellects, and the souls of the heavens were completely without wickedness. Ed

These are the three points on which the opinion of Plato concerning the separate substances is found to be in agreement with that of Aristotle.

CHAPTER IV

HOW THE ABOVE POSITIONS OF PLATO AND ARISTOTLE DIFFER

18.—There are other respects in which Plato and Aristotle differ: First, as has been said above, Ed

Plato posited above the souls of the heavens, a two-fold order of immaterial substances, namely, the intellects and the gods. He declared these gods were the separate intelligible Forms Ed

by participation in which the intellects have understanding. Ed

But Aristotle, since he did not posit any separate universals, posited only a single order of things above the souls of the heavens. He held, moreover, that the first among these was the highest God, just as Plato held that the highest God was first in the order of Forms, among which the highest God is the very Idea of the One and the Good. But Aristotle held that this order comprised both, namely, so that it was both understanding and understood, so that thus the highest God would understand not by participation in something higher that would be His perfection but through His own essence. Ed

And Aristotle likewise held the same opinion as to the other separate substances ordered below the highest God, Ed

except that as they fall short of the simplicity of the First and of His highest perfection, their understanding can be perfected by participation in the higher substances. Ed

Thus, according to Aristotle, such substances which are the ends of the heavenly motions are both understanding intellects and intelligible Forms. Ed

But this is not to be understood in the sense that they are the forms or natures of sensible substances, as the Platonists asserted, Ed

but altogether higher forms.

They differ, secondly, because Plato did not restrict the number of separate

intellects to the number of heavenly movements. It was not on this account that Plato was moved to posit separate intellects but rather by considering the very nature of things in themselves. Aristotle, on the other hand, not wishing to be diverted from sensible things, came to posit separate intellectual substances as a result of the sole consideration of motion, as we have said above, Ed

and for this reason, limited the number of the substance's to the number of heavenly motions. Ed

Third, they differ because Aristotle did not posit any souls intermediate between the souls of the heavens and the souls of men, as did Plato. Ed

Hence, we find that neither Aristotle nor any of his followers has made mention of demons. This then is what we have gathered from various writings concerning the opinions of Plato and Aristotle on the separate substances. Ed

CHAPTER V

THE OPINION OF AVICEBRON AND HIS ARGUMENTS FOR IT

19.—Among those who came after Plato and Aristotle, some departed from their positions and fell into error. First among these was Avicbron who, in the book *The Fount of Life* , held that separate substances were of a different state. Ed

For he held that all substances established below God are composed of matter and form Ed

an opinion that disagrees both with the view of Plato and the view of Aristotle. Ed

Avicbron seems to have been twice deceived: First, because he thought that according to the intelligible composition found in the genera of things, inasmuch, namely, as a species is composed of genus and difference, there would likewise be understood such a composition in things themselves, so that in the case of each and every thing existing in a genus, the genus is matter and the difference is form. Ed

Secondly, because he thought that "to be" in potency, "to be" a subject, and "to be" a recipient would in all cases be said according to one notion. Therefore, basing himself upon these two positions, he proceeded in a certain reductive way

in investigating the composition of all things up to intellectual substances.

20.—In the first place, he noticed in the case of artificial things that they are composed of an artificial form and of matter, which is a certain natural thing, for example, iron or wood, which is disposed to the artificial form as potency to act.

Ed

Furthermore, he observed that such particular natural bodies were composed of elements. Ed

Hence he asserted that the four elements are related to the particular natural forms, e.g., of stone or iron, as matter to form and potency to act. Moreover, he noted that the four elements agree in that each one of them is a body and they differ according to contrary qualities. Ed

Hence in the third place, he held that body itself is the matter of the elements, which matter he named universal natural matter, and that the forms of this matter are the qualities of the elements. But because he observed that a heavenly body agrees with the elements in corporeity but differs from them in not being receptive of contrary qualities Ed

he placed the matter of a heavenly body in a fourth order, which likewise is related to the form of heavenly body as potency is to act. Avicbron thus posited four orders of corporeal matter. Ed

21.—Again, because he saw that every body signifies a certain substance with length, width, and thickness, he thought that the body, insofar as it is such a body, has three dimensions which are as form; substance, which is the subject of quantity and the other genera of accidents, is matter of the body so far as it is a body. Ed

Thus, therefore, as he himself says, the substance which supports the nine predicaments is the prime spiritual matter. Ed

And just, as he posited in universal corporeal matter, which he called a body, something higher which was not receptive of contrary qualities, (namely, the matter of the body of the heavens), and something lower which is receptive of contrary qualities, which he believed to be the matter of the four elements, Ed

—so likewise, in substance itself, he posited something higher which is not receptive of quantity and which he considered to be a separate substance and something lower which is receptive of quantity, which he posited as the

incorporeal matter of bodies. Ed

22.—Furthermore, he asserted that the separate or spiritual substances themselves are composed of matter and form. This he proved by several arguments: Ed

First, because he held that there would be no diversity among spiritual substances unless they were composed of matter and form. Ed

For if they are not composed of matter and form, they are either matter alone or form alone. If they are matter alone, then spiritual substances cannot be many because matter of itself is one and is diversified through forms. In like manner, if a spiritual substance is form alone, no cause of the diversification of spiritual substances can be assigned. For if you say that they are diverse according to perfection and imperfection, it would then follow that spiritual substance is the subject of perfection and imperfection. But to be a subject belongs to the nature of matter and not to the nature of form. Therefore, it remains either that spiritual substances are not many or that they are composed of matter and form. Ed

His second reason is that the concept of spirituality is outside the concept of corporeity. And thus corporeal spiritual substances have something in which they differ and likewise in which they agree since each is a substance. Hence, just as in the case of corporeal substance, substance is as matter upholding corporeity, so in the case of spiritual substance, substance is as matter upholding spirituality. And according as matter participates more or less in the form of spirituality, spiritual substances are accordingly higher or lower, just as the finer the air is, the more it participates in clarity. Ed

23.—His third reason is that *esse* is found in common among spiritual substances as in higher beings, and in corporeal substances as in lower beings. Therefore, that which follows upon *esse* in corporeal substances will also follow upon *esse* in spiritual ones. But a three-fold order is found in corporeal substances, namely, a gross body which is the body of the elements, a refined body which is the heavenly body, and finally, the matter and form of body. Therefore, in a spiritual substance there is found a lower spiritual substance, for example, one which is joined to a body, and a more excellent one which is not joined to a body, and again, matter and form from which a spiritual substance is composed. Ed

His fourth reason is that every created substance must be distinguished from the Creator. But the Creator is one only. Therefore every created substance cannot be one only but must be composed of two constituents, of which one must

necessarily be form and the other matter, because it cannot be composed of two matters or of two forms. Ed

His fifth reason is that every created spiritual substance is finite. But a thing is finite only through its form because a thing which does not have a form through which to become one, is infinite. Therefore every created spiritual substance is composed of matter and form. Ed

CHAPTER VI

REFUTATION OF AVICEBRON'S POSITION

24.—These arguments which we have set forth Ed

are plainly improbable in many respects:

The first argument is unacceptable because Avicbron proceeds upward from the lower beings to the highest ones by resolving Ed

them into material principles, which is an argument absolutely contrary to reason. For matter is compared to form as potency to act. Now it is clear that potency is less a being than is act, for potency is said to be a being only according to its order to act. Wherefore, neither do we say without qualification that the things which are in potency exist; we say this only of things which are in act. Therefore, the lower one descends by resolving to material principles, the less does one find of the character of being. On the other hand, among beings the highest ones must be preeminently beings, for the highest in every genus which are the principles of all the rest, are eminently said to exist in the highest degree, just as fire is most hot. Ed

Accordingly, Plato, while investigating the highest beings, proceeded by resolving them into formal principles, as has been said above. Ed

Most unfittingly therefore, did Avicbron proceed in the opposite direction by resolving beings into material principles.

25.—Second, because at least so far as appears from his own words, Avicbron in a way returned to the opinion of the ancient Naturalists who held that all things were one being, by positing that the substance of all things was nothing other than matter. Ed

This matter they did not consider as something only in potency, as Plato and Aristotle did, but as some actual being. There was this difference, however, that the ancient Naturalists, believing that only bodies existed, said that this common matter and substance of all things was some body, as for example, fire or air or water or something in between; Ed

on the other hand, Avicenna, thinking that the nature of things was not contained in bodies alone, said that that one principle which he held to be the first matter and common substance of all things, was a non-corporeal substance. Ed

And that he posited this universal matter, which he says is the substance of all things, in the same way in which the Naturalists posited this of some one body, is clear from the fact that according to Avicenna, matter is the genus of those things which agree in genus, while the differences by which the species differ, are forms. Ed

26. -For he says that the common matter of all material things is body itself. Ed

And again, the common matter of all substances, both corporeal and spiritual, is substance itself. Ed

Therefore it is clear that there is the same relation of the genus to its differences as of a subject to its proper attributes. In other words, substance is divided into spiritual and corporeal, and body into heavenly and elemental, just as number is divided into odd and even, and animal into healthy and sick. Of these, number is the subject of the even and of the odd as of its proper attributes, and animal is the subject of the healthy and the sick, with the subject and the attributes being predicated of all the species. Thus, therefore, if the substance that is predicated of all things, should be compared to *spiritual* and *corporeal* as the matter which is their subject, it will follow that these two Ed

come to substance in the manner of accidental attributes. The same applies in all subsequent cases, as he himself expressly admits by positing that all forms considered in themselves are accidents. They are said to be, however, "substantial", in comparison with certain things in whose definitions they are included, as whiteness belongs to the definition of a white man.

27.—But this position destroys the true nature of prime matter. For if it is of the nature of matter that it be in potency, then prime matter must be completely in potency.

As a consequence, it is not predicated of any actually existing thing, just as a part is not predicated of the whole. This position likewise destroys the principles of logic by doing away with the true nature of genus, species, and substantial difference, inasmuch as it reduces them all to the mode of accidental predication.

Ed

Moreover, it destroys the foundations of natural philosophy by removing a true generation and corruption from things, as did the ancient Naturalists, in positing one material principle. For a thing is said without qualification to be generated only because it becomes without qualification a being. Ed

For nothing which previously existed comes to be. Therefore if it existed previously in act — which is for it without qualification to exist — it will follow that it will not unqualifiedly become a being but rather a being which previously was not. Therefore, it will be generated in a certain respect and not in an unqualified manner.

28.—Finally and to reach a last conclusion, the aforementioned position also destroys the principles of first philosophy by taking away unity from each thing and, as a consequence, the true being and the diversity of things. For if to some being existing in act, another act is added, the whole will not be one essentially but only accidentally because two acts or forms are essentially diverse and agree only in subject. Ed

But to be one through the unity of the subject is to be one accidentally, whether the two forms are not ordered to each other, as the white and the musical, (for we say that the white and the musical are one accidentally because they inhere in one subject), or whether the forms or the acts are ordered to one another as color and surface. For that which is colored and has a surface is not absolutely one, though in a way, the “colored” is essentially predicated of the surfaced thing, not indeed, because “surfaced” signifies the essence of the “colored”, as genus signifies the essence of a species, but because the subject is included in the definition of an accident; or otherwise the “colored” would not be predicated of the surfaced thing essentially but the “surfaced” of the “colored”. Ed

Now in this way alone is a species one without qualification, namely, insofar as that which is man is truly animal, not because animal is the subject of the form *man* but because the very form *animal* is the form *man*, differing only as the indeterminate from the determinate. For, if animal be one thing and biped something else, the biped animal that is man will not be essentially one and consequently will not be essentially a being. Ed

As a consequence, it follows that whatever things agree in the genus, will differ only by an accidental difference and all things will be one in substance which is the genus and the subject of all substances; just as the one part of a surface is white and the other part black, yet the whole is one surface. For this reason, the ancients themselves who posited one matter which was the substance of all things and predicated of all of them, asserted that all things were one. These difficulties likewise beset those who posit an order of diverse substantial forms in one and the same being.

29.—Third, following the method of the aforementioned position, Ed

it is necessary to proceed to infinity among material causes, with the result that a first matter is never reached. For in all things which agree in some point and differ in another, that in which they agree, they have as their matter; and that in which they differ, they have as their form, as is clear from what has been said.

Ed

If, therefore, there is one common matter for all things for it to receive diverse forms, it is then necessary that the more noble form should be received in a finer and more excellent matter; the less noble form should be received in an inferior and coarser matter; for example, the form of spirituality should be received in a more refined matter, whereas the form of corporeity should be received in an inferior matter, as he himself says. Ed

Prior to the form of spirituality and of corporeity, there is therefore required in matter a difference of fineness and coarseness. It is therefore again necessary that prior to the coarseness and fineness, there pre-exist in matter some other difference through which one matter is receptive of the one and the other receptive of the other. The same question will re-appear concerning those other pre-existent differences and so on to infinity. For as often as one arrived at one completely uniform matter, according to the principles of the aforementioned position it would be necessary that this matter should receive only one form and this equally throughout the whole. And again the matter underlying that form would, as a consequence, receive only one form and this uniformly throughout the whole; and thus by descending even to the lowest of beings, no diversity could be found in things.

30.—Fourth, given the position of the ancient Naturalists that there was a prime matter as the common substance of all things, it was possible to produce diverse things from it by attributing diverse forms to diverse parts of this common substance. Ed

For, since that common matter was corporeal, there could be understood in it a division according to quantity. But if we remove quantitative division, there remains only a division according to form or according to matter. If, therefore, we posit a universal matter which is common to every substance and which has no quantity in its nature, the division of this matter can be understood only according to form or only according to the matter itself.

When, however, it is said that common incorporeal matter in part receives this form and in part that form, a division of matter is presupposed to the diversity of the forms received in the matter. That division, therefore, cannot be understood according to some other forms. If, therefore, it should be understood according to some forms, it must be understood according to prior forms of which matter receives neither one through the whole of itself. Accordingly, it is necessary again that we presuppose in matter some sort of division or distinction. This distinction or division, too, will therefore be according to other forms to infinity, or we must come to this, that the first division is according to the matter itself.

31.—Now there cannot be a division according to matter except because the matter is distinguished through itself and not through a diverse disposition or form or quantity; for this would mean that the matter is distinguished according to the quantity or form or disposition. Therefore we must finally reach the conclusion that there is not one matter for all things but that matters are many and distinct in themselves. Now it is proper for matter to be in potency. This distinction of matter must therefore not be understood according as matter contains its diverse forms or dispositions, for this is outside the essence of matter, but according to the distinctions of potency with respect to the diversity of forms. For, since potency is called that which is said relatively to act, it is necessary that potency be distinguished with respect to that of which potency is primarily predicated. Ed

I say potency is primarily said in relation to something in the manner in which the potency to see is said in relation to color but not to white and black, since the same potency can receive both. In the same way, a surface can receive white and black according to one potency which is primarily predicated with respect to color. Avicenna therefore presupposed a clearly false principle when he said that potency and reception are found in all in the same way.

CHAPTER VII

THAT OF SPIRITUAL AND CORPOREAL SUBSTANCES THERE CANNOT BE ONE MATTER

32.—We may further conclude from this argument that there

cannot be one matter for both spiritual and corporeal substances. For if both have a single and common matter, there must be understood in it a distinction prior to the difference of forms, namely, a distinction of spirituality and corporeity. This disposition cannot be according to a division of quantity because the dimensions of quantity are not found in spiritual substances. Ed

Accordingly, it remains that this distinction is either according to forms or dispositions or according to matter itself; and since it cannot be according to forms and dispositions to infinity, we must finally come back to this, that the distinction is present in matter according to matter itself. Therefore the matter of spiritual substances will be absolutely other than the matter of corporeal substances.

33.—Again, since it is the property of matter as such to receive, if the matter of spiritual and corporeal substances is the same, then it is necessary that the mode of reception be the same in both. The matter of corporeal things, however, receives the form in a particular way, that is, not according to the common nature of form. Ed

Nor does corporeal matter act in this way insofar as it is subject to dimensions or to a corporeal form, since corporeal matter receives the corporeal form itself in an individual way. Accordingly, it becomes clear that this befits such a matter from the very nature of the matter which, since it is the lowest reality, receives form in the weakest manner; for reception takes place according to the mode of the receiver. Thereby matter, by receiving that form in a particular way, falls short in the greatest degree of that complete reception of form which is according to the totality of the form. Now it is clear that every intellectual substance receives the intellected form according to its totality, or otherwise it would not be able to know it in its totality. For it is thus that the intellect understands a thing insofar as the form of that thing exists in it. Ed

It remains therefore that if there be a matter in spiritual substances, it is not the same as the matter of corporeal things, but much nobler and finer, since it receives form according to its totality.

34.—Again, as we consider the matter further, it becomes clear that a given being has a higher place among beings according as it has a greater share in “to be”. It is clear, however, that since being is divided by potency and act, act is more perfect than potency and has a greater share in “to be”. Ed

For we do not say without qualification that what is in potency, is; we say this only of what is in act. It is therefore necessary that that which is higher among

beings approach more closely to act, and that what is lowest among beings, be nearer to potency. And since the matter of spiritual substances cannot be the same as the matter of corporeal substances but is much higher as has been shown, Ed

it must be separated from the matter of corporeal substances according to the difference of potency and act.

Now according to the opinion of Aristotle and Plato, the matter of corporeal things is pure potency. Ed

It remains therefore that the matter of spiritual substances is not pure potency but is something actual existing in potency. I am not saying "some thing actual existing in potency" as though I meant some thing composed of act and potency, because either we should have to proceed to infinity or we should have to arrive at something which was a being only in potency; and since this being is the lowest among beings and consequently can receive existence in a way which is weak and particularized, it cannot be the prime matter of a spiritual and intellectual substance. It remains therefore that the matter of a spiritual substance is in such wise a being in act that it be a subsisting act or form, just as the matter of corporeal things is said to be a being in potency for the reason that it is the very potency which is subject to forms.

35-Furthermore, whenever matter is posited as an actual being, it makes no difference whether we call it the matter or the substance of a thing, For thus the ancient Natural Philosophers, who held that the first matter of corporeal things was some actual being, said that matter was the substance of all things in the same way that the substance of artificial things is nothing other than their matter. Ed

Therefore, if the matter of spiritual substances cannot be only some potential being but is some actual being, then the matter itself of spiritual beings is their substance. And in this case, there is no difference whether we posit matter in spiritual substances or whether we hold that simple spiritual substances are not composed of matter and form.

Furthermore, act is by nature prior to potency and form prior to matter and since potency depends in its existence on act and matter depends on form, whereas form according to its proper nature does not depend on matter for its existence, neither does act, (for that which is by nature prior does not depend upon that which is by nature subsequent); — since this is the case, if there are some forms which cannot exist without matter, this befits them not because they are forms,

but because they are such forms ` namely, imperfect forms which cannot exist through themselves of their own accord but need the foundation of matter.

36.—Now in all classes of being, prior to every thing imperfect, there is found something Perfect. For example, if there is fire in a foreign matter upon which the fire according to its nature does not depend, then it follows that the fire is not supported in the foreign matter. Therefore above the forms received in matter, there are certain self-subsisting forms which are spiritual substances not composed of matter and form. This fact also appears among the lowest of the spiritual substances, namely souls, on the assumption that they are united to bodies as forms. For it is impossible that that which is composed of matter and form be the form of some body. For to be the form of some being is to be the act of that being. Hence no part of that which is the form of some being can be matter, which is pure potency.

CHAPTER VIII

ON THE REFUTATION OF AVICEBRON'S ARGUMENTS

37.—On this basis, it is easy to answer arguments advanced to the contrary. For the first argument seemed to infer that there could not be diversity among spiritual substances if they were not composed of matter and form. Ed

This argument was deficient in both parts of its reasoning. For it is not necessary that those things which are only matter be without diversity, just as it is likewise not necessary of those substances which are forms only. For we have said Ed

that since matter according to its nature is a being in potency, there must be diverse matters according to the diversity of potency. Nor do we mean anything else by the substance of matter than that very potency which is in the genus of substance. For the genus of substance, like other genera, is divided by potency and act and hence nothing prevents certain substances which are only potential to be diverse according as they are ordered to diverse genera of acts; in which sense the matter of the heavenly bodies is distinguished from the matter of the elements. For the matter of the heavenly bodies is in potency to perfect act, that is, to a form which completes the whole potentiality of matter, so that there no longer remains any potentiality to other forms. But the matter of the elements is in potency to incomplete forms, which cannot exhaust the whole potency of matter. But above these matters, there is spiritual matter, that is a spiritual substance, which receives a form according to its totality while the lower matters receive their form in a particular way.

38.—In the same way, the inference based on the forms is also deficient. Ed

For it is clear that if things composed of matter and form differ according to their forms, the forms themselves are diverse through themselves. But if it be said that the forms of diverse things are not diverse except because of the diversity of matter — just as diverse colors are caused by one illumination of the sun in the air according to the diversity of the difference of density and rarity in it —, it is necessary that prior to the diversity of the colors, there be understood in the air a diversity of clearness and density. So, likewise, it is necessary that in matter, prior to one form, another form be understood, just as in the case of bodies, prior to color, a surface is understood. Therefore among forms, there is found a diversity according to a certain order of perfection and imperfection. For that form which is nearer to matter is more imperfect and as in potency with reference to a later form. Thus, although they are only forms, nothing prevents us from positing a multiplicity among spiritual substances, on the basis that one is more imperfect than the other, provided we do so in such wise that the more imperfect is in potency in relation to the more perfect and so on upward to the first Form, which is act only, namely, God; so that, in this way, lower spiritual substances can be called *matters* according as they are in potency and *forms* according as they are in act.

39.—Therefore it is a clearly inconsequential objection that he brings forth against this view. He concludes that if a spiritual substance differs according to perfection and imperfection, it must be the subject of perfection and imperfection; and therefore since "subject" belongs to the nature of matter, a spiritual substance must possess matter. In this argument, he is deceived in two ways. He is deceived, first, because he thinks that perfection and imperfection are certain supervening forms or accidents that a subject needs — which is clearly false. For there is a certain perfection which a thing has according to its species and substance, which is not compared to that thing as an accident to a subject or a form to matter, but designates the proper species itself of the thing. For just as one number is greater than another according to its own species, which is why unequal numbers differ in species, so, among material forms and forms separated from matter, one is more perfect than another according to the character of its own nature, insofar, namely, as the proper character of its species consists in a given grade of perfection. Second, because to be a subject not only follows upon the matter which is a part of substance but in general belongs to all potency. For everything that is related to another as potency to act is naturally subject to it, and in this way, likewise, a spiritual substance, although it does not have matter as a part of itself, nevertheless, insofar as it is in some respect in potency, can be subject to intelligible forms.

40.—From this, the solution of the second argument Ed

is likewise clear. For when we say that a certain substance is corporeal or spiritual, we do not compare spirituality or corporeity to a substance as forms to matter or accidents to a subject, but as differences to a genus, in such wise, that a spiritual substance is spiritual not because of something added to substance, but according to its proper substance, just as a corporeal substance is corporeal not because of something added to substance but according to its own substance. For the form through which the species receives the predication of the difference is not a form other than the one through which it receives the predication of genus, as we have said before. Ed

Hence, it is not necessary that something should underlie the spirituality of substance as matter or subject.

41.—The third argument has no validity. Ed

For, since being is not predicated of all things univocally, the same mode of “to be” is not required in all things that are said to be; rather, some share in “to be” more perfectly, and some less perfectly. Ed

For accidents are called beings, not because they have “to be” in themselves but because their “to be” lies in the fact that they are in a substance. Ed

Again, there is not the same mode of “to be” in all substances. For those substances which share in “to be” most perfectly, do not have in themselves something which is a being only in potency. That is why they are called immaterial substances. Below these, are those substances which, although they contain within themselves a matter which according to its essence is a being in potency, yet they have a potentiality that is entirely completed through form so that there remains in them no potentiality to another form. They are therefore also incorruptible. Such is the case of the heavenly bodies which are necessarily composed of matter and form. In fact, they must exist in act, otherwise, they could not underlie any motion or be subject to sense nor could they be the principle of any action. No one of them is form only because if they were forms without matter, they would be substances that are actually intelligible and having understanding through themselves. This is impossible, since to understand cannot be an act of a body, as is proved in the *De Anima* . Ed

It remains, therefore, that they are composed of matter and form. But just as *that* particular body underlies this particular magnitude and determinate figure so that it is not in potency to another magnitude or figure; so,

the matter of the heavenly bodies is so subject to *this* form that it is not in potency to another form. Below these substances, there is a third grade of substances, namely, that of corruptible bodies which in themselves have a matter that is a being only in potency. Yet the whole potentiality of such a matter is not realized through the one form to which it is subject, so that there does not remain in it a potency to other forms. And according to this diversity of matter, this potentiality in bodies is found the more finely and the more grossly according as the heavenly bodies are finer and more formal than the bodies of the elements. And since form is proportioned to matter, it follows that the heavenly bodies likewise have a nobler and more perfect form, inasmuch as it realizes the full potentiality of matter. Therefore among the higher substances to which the potency of matter is completely foreign, there is found a difference of greater or lesser refinement according to the difference in the perfection of the form; but there is in them no composition of matter and form.

42.—The fourth argument has no validity. Ed

For given that spiritual substances have no matter, it does not follow that they are not distinguished from God. For if we take away the potentiality of matter, there remains in them a certain potentiality insofar as they are not "to be" itself but they share in "to be". Ed

For there can be only one being which is "to be" itself; just as some form, if it should be considered by itself, can be only one. That is why the things which are diverse in number are one in species because the nature of the species considered in itself is one. just as therefore it is one according to the consideration of it while it is being considered, so it would be one in being if it existed through itself. The same argument applies to the genus in relation to species, until we reach the "to be" itself which is most common. There is therefore only one "to be" subsisting through itself. Ed

Hence it is impossible that other than it, there should be something which is "to be" alone. Now everything that is, has a "to be". Therefore in every being other than the first, there is present both a "to be" itself as the act, and the substance having the "to be" as a potency receptive of the act of "to be". Ed

43.—It is possible for one to say that that which participates in something, of itself lacks that thing; just as a surface which has the nature to participate in color, considered in itself is not color and not colored. In the same way, accordingly, that which participates in "to be" must itself be a non-being. That which is a being in potency and participative of being but is not of itself being, is matter as was said above. Ed

Thus, therefore, since every being that is after the First Being, which is "to be" itself, is a being by participation, it has matter.

But it must be observed that the beings which share "to be" from the First Being, do not share in it according to a universal mode of being as it is found in the First Principle; they participate in it in a particular way, according to a certain determinate mode of being which belongs to this given genus or this given species. Now each thing is adapted to one determinate mode of being according to the mode of its substance. But the mode of every substance composed of matter and form is according to the form through which it belongs to a determinate species. Thus, a thing composed of matter and form is made through its form to receive a share in "to be" itself from God according to a mode proper to it.

44. -A two-fold order, therefore, is found in a substance composed of matter and form. One is the order of the matter to form, and the other is the order of the composite thing itself to the participated "to be". Ed

For the "to be" of a thing is neither its form nor its matter but something coming to the thing through the form. Ed

Consequently, in things composed of matter and form, the matter considered in itself, according to the mode of its essence, has "to be" in potency, and this it has as a result of a certain participation in the First Being; Ed

but, considered in itself, it lacks the form through which it participates actually in "to be" according to the mode proper to it. Ed

Now a composite being, considered in its essence, already has a form but it participates in its own "to be" through its own form. Therefore because matter receives an actual determinate "to be" through a form and not conversely, there is nothing to prevent the existence of a form which receives the "to be" in itself, not in some subject. For a cause does not depend on the effect, but rather conversely. In this way, therefore, a form subsisting through itself participates in "to be" in itself just as a material form participates in its subject. If, therefore, when I say "non-being", the effect is to remove only the "to be" in act, the form, considered in itself, is non-being but sharing in "to be". But if "non-being" removes not only the "to be" in act but also the act or the form through which something shares in "to be", then, in this sense, matter is non-being, whereas a subsistent form is not non-being but an act which is a form that can participate in the ultimate act which is the "to be".

It is clear therefore wherein the potency which is found in spiritual substances differs from the potency found in matter. For the potency of a spiritual substance is measured only according to its order to "to be", whereas the potency of matter is measured according to its order both to a form and to "to be". If someone were to say that both potencies are matter, it is clear that he is using the word "matter" equivocally.

45.—The solution of the fifth argument Ed

is already apparent from what we have said. Ed

For since a spiritual substance participates in "to be", not according to the infinity of its community, as is the case in the First Principle, but according to the mode proper to its essence, it is clear that its "to be" is not infinite but finite. Nevertheless, since the form itself is not participated in matter, in this respect, it is not limited by the mode by which forms found in matter are limited.

Thus therefore we see a certain gradation of infinity in things. For a material substance is finite in a two-fold manner, namely, on the part of the form which is received in matter and on the part of the "to be" itself, in which it shares according to its own mode, as being finite from below and from above. A spiritual substance, however, is finite from above, inasmuch as it receives "to be" from the First Principle according to its proper mode; it is infinite from below, insofar as it is not received in a subject. But the First Principle, God, is infinite in every way.

CHAPTER IX

CONCERNING THE ERROR OF THOSE WHO POSIT THE ANGELS AS NOT CREATED AND ITS REFUTATION

46.—Just as the aforementioned position Ed

on the condition of spiritual substances strayed from the opinion of Plato and Aristotle Ed

by taking away from those substances the simplicity of immateriality, so, concerning their mode of being, we find that certain people have strayed from the truth by taking away from spiritual substances an origin in a first and highest Author. On this point there was a three-fold error among different thinkers.

For, in the first place, some of them said that the aforementioned substances had absolutely no cause of their "to be". Ed

Others held that these substances had indeed a cause of being but they did not proceed immediately from the highest and first Principle but the lower ones among them derived their being from the higher ones according to a certain orderly succession. Ed

Still others admit that all these substances have the origin of their being immediately from the First Principle; but in the case of their other attributes, for example, in that they are living, intelligent, and the like, the higher substances are as causes for the lower ones. Ed

47.—In the first place, then, they hold that spiritual substances are completely uncreated. They derive this opinion from the things which are caused according to matter, and they base themselves on the common physical assumption of the philosophers as their principle, namely, that from nothing nothing comes. Ed

That thing seems to become which has a cause of its "to be". Whatever, therefore, has a cause for its "to be", this must come from another. Now that from which another becomes, is matter. If, therefore, spiritual substances have no matter, it seems to follow that they have absolutely no cause of their "to be". Ed

Again, "to become" is a certain kind of "to be moved" or "to be changed". Now there must be some subject for all change and motion, since motion is the act of something existing in potency. Ed

Therefore some subject must pre-exist for everything that becomes. Hence, if spiritual substances are immaterial, they cannot have been made. Ed

Again, in any given making, when we arrive at the final "having been made", there remains nothing to be made, just as after the last "having been moved", there remains no "to be moved". But in the case of those things that are generated, we see that each one of them is then said to have been made, as meaning that the making is finished, when it receives its form. For the form is the term of generation. Therefore when the form is acquired, nothing remains to be made. Therefore that which has a form does not become a being; it *is* a being according to its form. If then something is in itself a form, this does not become a being. Now spiritual substances are certain subsistent forms as is clear from what has already been said. Therefore spiritual substances do not have a cause of their "to be" in the sense of having been made by another.

One could likewise argue to the same effect from the opinion of Aristotle and Plato who hold that such substances are everlasting. Ed

But nothing everlasting seems to be something made, since a being comes to be from non-being, as white comes to be from non-white. It seems to follow, then, that what comes to be, previously did not exist. Consequently, if spiritual substances are everlasting, it follows that they are neither made nor do they have a principle and cause of their "to be". Ed

48. -But if one were to consider the matter correctly, he will find that this opinion and the previous opinion which attributes matter to spiritual substances, proceed from the same source. For the previous opinion proceeded from the fact that Avicenna, unable to transcend the imagination, considered that spiritual substances were of the same nature as the material substances which are perceived by sense. Ed

So, too, the present opinion seems to proceed from the fact that the intellect cannot be raised to see a mode of causing other than the one which is suited to material things. For human ability seems to have progressed slowly in investigating the origin of things. In the beginning, men thought that the origin of things consisted only in an external change, by which I mean an external origin that takes place according to accidental changes. Ed

For those who were first to philosophize about the natures of things held that to become is nothing other than to be altered, so that the substance of things which they called matter, is a completely uncaused first principle. Ed

For they were not able by their intellect to hurdle the distinction between substance and accident. Others, proceeding a little further, likewise investigated the origin of the substances themselves, asserting that certain substances had a cause of their "to be". But because they were not able by their minds to see anything beyond bodies, they did indeed reduce corporeal substances to certain principles but corporeal principles, and they posited that other substances come to be through the combining of certain bodies, as though the origin of things consisted solely in combining and separating. Ed

Later philosophers proceeded by reducing sensible substances into their essential parts, which are matter and form. Thus they made the "becoming" of physical things to consist in a certain change, according as matter is successively made subject to different forms. Ed

But beyond this mode of becoming, it is necessary according to the teaching of Plato and Aristotle, to posit a higher one. Ed

For, since it is necessary that the First Principle be most simple, this must of necessity be said to be not as participating in "to be" but as itself being "to be". But because subsistent "to be" can be only one, as was pointed out above, Ed

then necessarily all other things under it must be as participating in "to be". Therefore there must take place a certain common resolution in all such things according as each of them is reduced by the intellect into that which is and its "to be". Therefore, above the mode of coming to be, by which something becomes when form comes to matter, we must presuppose another origin for things according as "to be" is bestowed upon the whole universe of things by the First Being that is its own "to be".

49.—Again, in every order of causes, a universal cause must exist prior to the particular cause, since particular causes act only in the power of universal causes. Now it is clear that every cause that makes something through motion is a particular cause, since it has a particular effect. For every motion is *from* this determinate point *to* that determinate point, and every change is the terminus of some motion. Therefore, over and above the mode of becoming by which something comes to be through change or motion, there must be a mode of becoming or origin of things, without any mutation or motion through the influx of being.

Further, that which exists by accident must be reduced to that which exists through itself. Now in every thing that comes to be through change or motion, there comes to be that which is in itself this or that being. But "being" taken in its community, comes to be accidentally, for it does not arise from non-being but from non-being *this* , as if dog arises from horse. To use the example of Aristotle, if a dog were to come to be from a horse, that which is essentially a dog comes to be, but an animal does not come to be essentially but only accidentally, since animal existed previously. Ed

It is therefore necessary to consider in things a certain origin according to which "to be" taken in its community, is granted essentially to things-which transcends all change and motion.

And if one should consider the order of things, he will always find that that which is most such is always the cause of those things that come after it. For example, fire which is hottest, is the cause of heat in other elementary bodies. Ed

Now the First Principle which we call God is most a being. For in the order of things, we cannot proceed to infinity but we must come to something highest because it is better to be one than to be many. But that which is better in the universe, must necessarily be because the universe depends on the essence of God's goodness. Therefore the First Being must of necessity be the cause of being for all things.

50.—Having seen these points, 

we can easily solve the arguments brought forth. That the ancient Naturalists assumed as a first principle that nothing comes to be from nothing was due to the fact that they were able to reach only a particular mode of coming to be, namely, that which is through change and motion.

The second argument likewise was based on this mode of coming to be. For among things which come to be through change or motion, a subject is presupposed to the making, but in the highest mode of coming to be, which takes place through the influx of being, no subject is presupposed to the making; for according to this kind of making, for a subject to come to be is for the subject to participate in "to be" through the influence of a higher being.

So, too, the third argument is likewise based on the coming to be, which is through change or motion. For when the form is reached, there will be no further motion. Nevertheless, we must understand that through its form, a generated thing receives its "to be" from the universal cause of being. For the causes that are acting towards the production of determinate forms are causes of being only insofar as they act in the power of the first and universal principle of being.

51.—The fourth argument likewise applies in the same way to those things which come to be through change or motion, in which it is necessary that non-existence precede the existence of things that come to be, for their "to be" is the terminus of a change or motion. But in those things which come to be without change or motion through a simple emanation or influx, we are able to understand that something has been made without including that at some time, it did not exist. For when change or motion has been removed, there is not found in the action of the causal principle, the succession of "before" and "after". It is therefore necessary that the effect which is produced through the influence of a cause be so related to that influencing cause while it is acting, in the same way that things which come to be through motion are related to their acting cause at the terminus of the action that exists through motion; for at that time, the effect then exists. Therefore, in the case of those things that come to be without motion, it is necessary that the produced effect be simultaneous with the influx of the acting

cause. If, however, the action of the acting cause be without motion, no disposition will come to the agent so that he might be able to act afterwards when previously he could not do so, because this disposition would already be a certain change. Hence he could always act by an influx. Therefore the effect produced can be understood to have always existed. And this appears somewhat among corporeal things themselves. For in the presence of an illuminating body, light is produced in the air without any preceding change of the air. Accordingly, if the illuminating body had always been present to the air, the air would always have light from it.

52.—But this appears more clearly in the case of intellectual beings which are more removed from motion. For the truth of the principles is the cause of the truth in conclusions that are always true. For there are certain necessary things which have a cause of their necessity, as Aristotle himself says in the fifth book of the *Metaphysics* : Ed

and in the eighth book of the *Physics* . Ed

Therefore, although Plato and Aristotle did posit that immaterial substances or even heavenly bodies always existed, we must not suppose on that account that they denied to them a cause of their being. Ed

For they did not depart from the position of the Catholic faith by holding such substances to be uncreated, but because they held them to have always existed — of which the Catholic faith holds the contrary.

For although the origin of certain things be from an unmoved principle without motion, it is not necessary that their “to be” be everlasting. For an effect proceeds from any given agent according to the mode of the “to be” of the agent. Now the “to be” of the First Principle is His “to understand” and “to will”. Therefore the universe of things proceeds from the First Principle as from a being that understands and wills. But it belongs to one understanding and willing to produce something not of necessity as it itself is, but as it wills and understands. Now in the intellect of the first understanding being, there is included every mode of being and every measure of quantity and duration. Therefore, just as the First Principle did not give to things the same mode of being by which He exists and enclosed the quantity of bodies under a determinate measure — since all measures are contained in His power as well as in His intellect — so He gave to things such a measure of duration as He willed, not as He has. Accordingly, just as the quantity of bodies is enclosed under a given measure, not because the action of the First Principle is determined to this measure of quantity but because a measure of quantity actually follows as the intellect of the cause has

prescribed; so, too, from the action of the First Cause, there follows a determinate measure of duration because the divine Intellect so prescribed; not, indeed, in the sense that God is subject to successive duration, so that He now wills or does something which He previously did not will, but because the whole duration of things is included under His Intellect, so that He determines from eternity the measure of duration that He Wills for things.

CHAPTER X

THE OPINION OF AVICENNA ON THE COMING OF THINGS FROM THE FIRST PRINCIPLE AND ITS REFUTATION

53.—Therefore, other thinkers, considering these and similar points, assert that all things do indeed derive the origin of their being from the first and highest Principle of things Whom we call God, yet they do not do so immediately but in a certain order. Since the First Principle of things is absolutely one and simple, they thought that only that which is one proceeded from Him. And although this effect be more simple and more one than all the other lesser things, it falls short of the simplicity of the First Principle, insofar as it is not its own "to be" but is a substance having "to be". This substance they call the First Intelligence, from which they say that it is possible for a plurality of beings to proceed. For according as the First Intelligence is turned to the understanding of its simple and first Principle, they say that the second intelligence proceeds from it. Then, according as it understands itself in terms of the intellectuality in it, it produces the soul of the first sphere; but according as it understands itself in terms of that which is potential within it, the first body proceeds from it. Ed

And thus, according to a certain order down to the lowest bodies, they determine the procession of things from the First Principle. This is the position of Avicenna

Ed

which seems to be presupposed in the *Book of Causes* . Ed

54.—But it is immediately evident that this position is open to criticism. For the good of the universe is stronger than the good of any particular nature. Since the nature of the good and of the end is the same, if anyone withdraws the perfection of the effect from the intention of the agent, he destroys the nature of the good in the particular effects of nature or art. For this reason, Aristotle criticized the opinion of the ancient Naturalists, who posited that the forms of the things that are generated by nature and other natural goods are not intended by nature but come about from the necessity of matter. All the more unbefitting is it therefore that the good of the universe proceed not from the intention of the

universal agent but by a certain necessity in the order of things. Moreover, if the good of the universe which consists in the distinction and order of its parts, does come from the intention of the first and universal agent, then it is necessary that the very distinction and order of the parts of the universe preexist in the intellect of the First Principle. And because things proceed from Him as from a principle with an intellect, which acts in accordance with conceived forms, we may not posit that from the First Principle — granting that It is simple in Its essence — there proceeds only one effect; and that it is from another being, according to the mode of its composition and power, there proceeds a multitude, and so on. This would mean that such a distinction and order in things proceeded from a certain necessity in things and not from the intention of the first Agent.

55.—Now it can be replied that the distinction and order of things does indeed proceed from the intention of the First Principle, which intends to produce not only the first effect but also the whole universe; yet this happens according to a certain order so that the First Principle produces the first effect immediately and through the mediation of the first effect, He brings things into being in a certain order. But since there is a twofold mode of producing things, namely, one according to change and motion, and the other, without change and motion — as we have already said above Ed

— in the mode of production which takes place through motion, we clearly see that some things come to be from the First Principle through the mediation of second causes. For thus we see plants and animals brought into being through motion according to the powers of higher causes, in an orderly way extending to the First Principle. But in the mode of production that takes place without motion through a simple influx of “to be” itself, this cannot take place. But in the mode of production according to which a thing is brought into being, not only does it itself come to be this thing, but it itself comes to be a being absolutely, as we have said. Ed

56.—But there must be a proportion between effect and causes so that, namely, a particular effect corresponds to a particular cause and a universal effect to a universal cause. just as therefore, when through motion some thing itself comes to be this being, an effect of this sort is reduced to a particular cause that moves towards a determinate form, so too, when some thing comes to be absolutely and not by accident a being, this effect must be reduced to the universal cause of being. This, however, is the First Principle, namely God. By way of change and motion, certain effects can be brought into being by the First Principle through the mediation of second causes; but according to that mode of production which takes place without motion, called creation, an effect Ed

is reduced to God alone as its Author. In this way, alone, can immaterial substances be brought into being, as well as the matter of such bodies as could not exist prior to form, as we have said concerning the matter of the heavenly bodies which is not in potency to other forms. Ed

It remains, therefore, that all immaterial substances and the heavenly bodies, which cannot be brought into being through motion, have God alone as the Author of their being. And therefore, that which is prior among them is not the cause of being for those that come later.

57.—Moreover, the higher a cause, by so much the higher and more universal is it and by so much does its power extend to more things. But that which is found to be prime in each and every being is especially common to all beings, for whatever is added, contracts that which is given as prior, for that which is understood in a thing as subsequent in reality is related to the prior as act is to potency. But potency is determined through act. Thus, therefore, that which is first in each and every thing must be the effect of the highest power. But the later the effect is, the more it is reduced to the power of a lower cause. Therefore that which is found to be in each and every being — as matter in bodies and what is proportional to immaterial substances — is the proper effect of the prime power of the universal agent. Consequently, it is impossible that certain things should be brought into being by second causes, without presupposing the effect of a higher agent; and thus, no agent after the first, brings a thing as a whole into being, in the sense of producing a being absolutely in itself and not accidentally — which is to create, as we have said. Ed

58.—Again, a given nature or form has a two-fold cause: one, which is essentially and absolutely the cause of such a nature or form; the other, which is the cause that such a nature or form is in such a being. The necessity of this distinction is apparent to any one considering the causes of the things which are generated. For when a horse is generated, the generating horse is indeed the reason why the nature of horse begins to exist in this being, but it is not the essential cause of equinity. For that which is essentially the cause of a certain specific nature, must be the cause of that nature of all the beings that have that species. Since, then, the generating horse has the same nature, it would have to be its own cause, which is impossible. It remains, therefore, that above all those participating in equinity, there must be some universal cause of the whole species. This cause the Platonists posited as a Form separate from matter in the manner in which the principle of all artifacts is the artistic form that does not exist in matter. Ed

According to Aristotle's opinion, however, this universal cause must be located in

some one of the heavenly bodies and therefore he himself, distinguishing between these two causes, said that man and the sun generate man. Ed

But when something is caused through motion, the common nature comes to some preexisting being through the coming of a form to matter or to a substance. For in this way, something that has that nature in a particular way, can be through motion the cause of some being, as man is the cause of man or a horse the cause of horse. When a thing is not caused through motion, then such a making refers to the nature itself according to itself. Therefore it must be reduced to that which is essentially the cause of that nature, but not to something which participates in that nature in a particular way. For such a making is compared to the procession or causality which is found in intelligibles, in which the nature of a thing according to itself depends only on a First Principle, just as the nature and essence of six do not depend on three or two but on unity itself. For according to the very nature of its species, six is not twice three but once six; otherwise, there would have to be many substances of one thing. Consequently, when the being of some thing is caused without motion, the causality involved cannot be attributed to any one of the particular beings that participate in being; it must be reduced to the universal and first cause of being, namely God, Who is being itself.

59.—Further, the more distant a potency is from act, the greater the power it needs to be reduced to act. For a fire of a greater strength is needed to melt stone than to melt wax. But as between no potency and some potency howsoever undisposed Ed

and removed, Ed

there is no proportion; for between non-being and a being there is no proportion, for the power which produces an effect from no preceding potency infinitely exceeds the power which produces an effect from some potency, however remote it might be. Now an infinite power can belong to other things in a qualified sense, but an infinite power with respect to all of being can belong only to the first agent, which is its own being, and is thereby in all ways infinite, as we said above. Ed

Therefore only the power of the first agent can produce an effect without the presupposition of any potency. Ed

Such, however, must be the production of all ingenerable and incorruptible things, which are produced without motion. Such things, therefore, must be produced by God alone. Hence, it is impossible that immaterial substances should

come into being from God according to the order which the aforementioned position laid down.

CHAPTER XI

CONCERNING PLATO'S OPINION ON THE IDEAS AND ITS REFUTATION

60.—Influenced by these reasons, the Platonists held that in the case of all immaterial substances and, in general, all existing things, God is immediately the cause of being according to the aforementioned mode of production which is without change or motion. Fo

But they posited a certain order of causality in the aforementioned substances according to other participations in the divine goodness. For, as we said above Fo

the Platonists posited abstract principles according to the order of our intelligible conceptions. This would mean that just as unity and being are most common and are the first to fall in the intellect, after which comes life, then intellect and so forth, so likewise, the first and highest among these separate principles is that which is being itself, and this is the First Principle, God, of Whom we have said that He is His own being. Fo

Under this principle, they posited another separate principle, life, and again, another, intellect. If, therefore, there be some immaterial substance which is intelligent, living, and being, it will be a being through participation in the First Principle which is being itself; it will be living through participation in the second separate principle which is life; and it will be intelligent through a participation in another separate principle which is the intellect itself. Fo

This would be the same as if it were posited that man is an animal through participation in the separate principle which is animal; and a biped through participation in a second principle which is biped. Fo

61.—Now this position can be true in a certain way but, absolutely speaking, it cannot be true. For among those qualities which come accidentally to some being, nothing prevents that which is prior from coming from a more universal cause and that, which is subsequent, from coming from some subsequent principle. For example, animals and plants participate in heat and cold from the elements but they obtain the determinate mode of complexion which pertains to their own species from the seminal power through which they are generated. Nor is it awkward that a thing have quantity or be white or hot from different

principles. But this is absolutely impossible in the case of substantial attributes. For all attributes which are predicated of some thing substantially, are essentially and absolutely one. Now a single effect is not reduced to several first principles according to the same notion of principle because an effect cannot be simpler than its cause. Whence, Aristotle himself uses this argument against the Platonists, namely, that if animal were one thing and biped another thing in separate principles, then there would not be "one two-footed animal" without qualification. Fo

If, therefore, among immaterial substances, that which is the "to be" were different from the "to live" and from the "to be intelligent" in such a way that "living" would come to an existing being or "being intelligent" would come to a living being as an accident to a subject or form to matter, then what is said would be correct. For we see that something is the cause of the accident which is not the cause of the subject, and something is the cause of the substantial form that is not the cause of matter. But in immaterial substances, their "to be" itself is their "to live", and their "to live" is not other than their "to be intelligent". Therefore they are living and understanding from the same principle that they are beings. Therefore if all immaterial substances have their being immediately from God, then they have immediately from Him their life and intelligence. And if anything comes to them over and above their essence, for example, intelligible species or the like, in this respect, the position of the Platonists can hold, namely, that such qualities among lower immaterial substances may have been derived according to a certain order from higher ones.

CHAPTER XII

ON THE ERROR OF THOSE WHO HOLD THAT ALL SPIRITUAL SUBSTANCES ARE CREATED EQUAL AND ITS REFUTATION

62.—Just as the aforementioned positions, Fo

considering the order of immaterial substances, taught that they proceeded from the First Principle not immediately but according to a certain order, so, some thinkers, contrariwise, wishing to save their immediate procession from the First Principle, completely took away an order of nature among them. The author of this position is recognized to have been Origen. Fo

For it was his opinion that diverse and unequal things could not proceed from an author who is one and just unless some diversity were presupposed. But no diversity could precede the first production of things by God, which presupposes

nothing at all. Whence he posits that all the things which were first produced by God were equal. Hence, because bodies cannot be made equal to non-bodily substances, he posited that there were no bodies in the first production of things. Afterwards, when the things had been produced by God, a diversity entered creation as a result of the diversity in the motions of the will of the non-bodily substances which, of their nature, have freedom of choice.

According to this view, some of them, turning to their principle Ed

by an orderly motion of their will, advanced in goodness, and this diversely, according to the diversity of their voluntary motion. Whence, some among them were made superior to others. Some others, however, were turned away from their principle by a disorderly motion of the will and these deteriorated in goodness, some more and some less; so that this was the occasion for the production of bodies, namely, that non-bodily substances having turned away from the order of the good, might be bound to them as having fallen down to the level of a lower nature. Whence Origen was wont to say that the whole diversity of bodies was based on the diversity in the disorderliness of the voluntary motion of non-bodily substance, so that those that had turned in a lesser way from God, were bound to nobler bodies, and those that were turned away more, were bound to less noble bodies.

63-The principle of this position is groundless and the position itself is impossible. The ground of this impossibility can be gathered from what we have already said. For we said above that spiritual substances are immaterial. Ed

If, therefore, there is any diversity in them, this must be according to a formal difference. Now among those beings which differ by a formal difference, no equality can be found, for every formal difference must be reduced to the first opposition which is the opposition of privation to form. Ed

Therefore, among all beings that differ formally, the nature of one that is imperfect with respect to another is related to that other in the disposition of privation to form. And this is apparent to us in the diversity of the species known to us. Thus among animals and plants and metals and elements, we find that a difference of species proceeds according to the order of nature so that step by step, nature rises from the lower to the most perfect. This is likewise apparent in the species of colors and flavors and other sensible qualities. But in things which differ materially, nothing prevents things that have the same form from being equal. For diverse subjects can participate in the same form either equally or by excess and defect. Consequently, it would be possible for all spiritual substances to be equal, if, having specifically the same form, they differed only in matter.

And perhaps this is what Origen thought them to be by not distinguishing noticeably between spiritual and corporeal natures. But because spiritual substances are immaterial, there must be an order of nature among them.

64.—Further, according to this position, it is necessary that spiritual substances be either imperfect or superfluous. For we do not find a multitude of beings on the same grade of nature except through some imperfection of any one of them or because of the necessity of continuing in existence, so that those things that cannot endure in numerical sameness, might endure through multiplication; just as among corruptible things, we find many individuals equal according to the nature of the species; or through the necessity of some operation for which the power of one is not sufficient but the power of many must be joined together as constituting one complete power, as is evident in a number of warriors and in a multitude of persons pulling a boat. But those things whose power is complete and which are enduring in the order of their nature are not multiplied numerically in the equality of the same species. For there is only one sun which suffices for permanent endurance and to produce all the effects which belong to it according to the grade of its nature; the same is clear in the case of the other heavenly bodies. But spiritual substances are much more perfect than even the heavenly bodies. Therefore, there is not among them a multitude in the same grade of nature, for, since one of them is sufficient, others would be superfluous.

65.—Again, the aforementioned position takes away the perfection of goodness from the universe of things produced by God. For the perfection of each and every effect consists in this, that it is likened to its cause, Ed

for that which according to its nature is something generated is then perfect, when it reaches the likeness of its generator. Artifacts are likewise made perfect when they achieve the form of the art. But in the case of the First Principle, we recognize not only that He is good, and being, and one, but also that He possesses this perfection above and beyond all other things and that He leads other things to a participation in His own goodness. Therefore, the perfect assimilation of the universe produced by God requires not only that each thing be good and be a being, but also that one thing should excel another and that one thing should move the other to its end. Hence the good of the universe, like the good of an army, is the good of an order. Ed

Accordingly, the aforementioned position, by establishing a complete equality in the production of things, takes away the good of order from the universe of things. Ed

Moreover, it is unbefitting to attribute that which is best in the universe to

chance. For that which is best has most especially the nature of the intended end. Now the good of order is that which is best in the universe of things, for this is the "common good; while other goods are singular goods. This order, which is now found in things, the aforementioned position attributes to chance according, namely, as it happens that one spiritual substance is moved in a certain way according to its will, and another spiritual substance in another way. Therefore the above opinion must be completely rejected.

66.—Furthermore, the basis of this position is clearly absurd. For the same notion of justice is not involved in the constitution of some whole out of several and diverse parts and in the distribution of some thing common among singulars. For he who intends to make a given whole, aims that the whole be perfect and accordingly, brings together diverse and unequal parts to its constitution. For if all the parts were equal, then the whole would not be perfect, which is evident both in a physical whole and in a civil whole. Ed

For the body of man would not be perfect, unless it had members that are diverse and of unequal importance, nor would the body politic be perfect unless there were found in it unequal conditions and diverse offices. But in the distribution of something common, the concern is with the good of each singular; and therefore diverse things are assigned to diverse beings according to a preexisting diversity in them, in accordance with which, diverse things befit them. Therefore in the first production of things, God brought forth diverse and unequal things in being, looking to that which the perfection of the universe requires and not to any preexisting diversity in things. But He will look to this point in the rewarding of final judgment by giving to each according to his merit.

CHAPTER XIII

ON THE ERROR OF THOSE WHO SAY THAT GOD AND THE ANGELS DO NOT HAVE A KNOWLEDGE OF SINGULARS

67.—But not only did some thinkers err concerning the substance and the order of spiritual substances, judging of them after the manner of lower beings, but some of them also fell into error concerning the knowledge and the providence of these substances. For in wanting to judge of the intelligence and the operation of spiritual substances after the manner of human intelligence and operation, they held that God and the other immaterial substances did not have a knowledge of singulars, nor did they exercise a providence over any lower beings and especially human acts. Ed

For, since in our own case, it is the sense that deals with singulars whereas the intellect, because of its immateriality, deals not with singulars but with universals, as a consequence, they thought that the intellects of spiritual substances which are much more simple than our intellect, could not grasp singulars. Now since they are completely incorporeal, there is in spiritual substances no sense, whose operation cannot take place without a body. Accordingly, they thought that it was impossible for spiritual "substances to have any knowledge of singulars. Ed

68.—Further, proceeding to a greater folly, they thought that God knew only Himself by His intellect. For thus in our own case, we see that to understand is the perfection and the act of the one understanding, for it is thus that the intellect becomes actively understanding. Now nothing other than God is nobler than He so that it can be His perfection. Therefore, they hold that it necessarily follows that God understands only His own essence. Ed

Further, that which proceeds from the providence of any one cannot be by chance. If, therefore, all things that happen in this world proceed from the divine providence, there is no fortune or chance in things. Ed

They likewise use an argument of Aristotle in the sixth book of the *Metaphysics*, Ed

where he proves that if we posit that every effect has an essential cause and that, given any cause whatsoever, its effect must necessarily be posited, it will follow that all futures will happen of necessity, since any future effect will be reduced to some preceding cause, and that to another and so on, until we come to the cause which already is or already was. But this cause is now posited because it is in the present or it was in the past. If, therefore, to posit the cause means necessarily for the effect to be posited, then all future effects will follow of necessity. But if all things that are in the world, are subject to the divine providence, the cause of all things is not only present or past but has preceded them from eternity. But it is not possible that when this cause is posited, its effect will not follow. For the divine providence on which no defect falls, is not thwarted either through ignorance or through the impotence of the one providing. Therefore it follows that all things come about of necessity. Ed

69.—Further, if God is the good itself, the order of His providence must necessarily proceed according to the nature of the good. Therefore either divine providence is inefficacious or it completely excludes evil from things. We see, however, many evils occurring among singular, generable, and corruptible things, and especially among men in whom, in addition to physical evils which are natural defects and corruptions common to them and to other corruptible things,

there are added also the evils of vices and of disorderly happenings, as when numerous evils befall the just, and good things happen to the unjust. On this account, therefore, some people have thought that divine providence extends only to immaterial substances and the incorruptible and heavenly bodies, in which they saw no evil. But the lower beings, according to them, were subject to the providence of 'God in genus but not individually nor to other spiritual substances.

70.—And because the things which have been said above are opposed to the common opinion of mankind and this, not only of men in general but also of the wise, we must show by certain arguments that the above positions have no truth and that the above arguments do not establish the conclusion they intend. This applies first to the knowledge of God and secondly, to His providence.

Now we must, of necessity, hold firmly this point, namely, that God has a most certain knowledge of all things that are knowable at any time or by any knower whatsoever. For as we have maintained above, Ed

the substance of God is His very act of being. Furthermore, His being and His understanding are one and the same; otherwise, He would not be a perfectly simple being nor the absolutely prime being. Therefore, just as His substance is His act of being, so is His substance His understanding or His intelligence as likewise the Philosopher concludes in *Metaphysics* XII.
Ed

Just as therefore His substance is His separate act of being, so likewise, is His substance His separate understanding. But if there should be some separate form, nothing that could belong to the nature of that form would be lacking to it, just as if there were a separate whiteness, nothing understood under the nature of whiteness would be lacking to it. Now the knowledge of any knowable is included under the universal nature of knowing. Therefore God cannot be lacking in the knowledge of any knowable.

But the knowledge of any knower is according to the mode of his substance, just as any operation is according to the mode of the one operating. All the more so, divine knowledge which is God's substance, is according to the mode of His being. Now His being is one, simple, abiding, and eternal. It follows therefore that by one simple glance, God has an eternal and fixed knowledge of all things.

71.—Further, that which is abstract Ed

can be only one in each nature. For if whiteness could exist as abstracted, the only whiteness would be the one that is separate and all the others would be

white by participation. Now just as the sole substance of God is His separate existence, so His substance is His absolutely separate understanding. All other things consequently understand or know by participation, just as they are by participation. But that which befits a being by participation is found more perfectly in that in which it is essentially and from which it is derived to others.

¶

Therefore God must have a knowledge of all things which are known by any being whatsoever. And therefore the Philosopher considers it unfitting that something which is known by us should be unknown to God, as is clear in *On the Soul*

I ¶

and in *Metaphysics*

III. ¶

72. -Likewise, if God knows Himself, He must know Himself perfectly because if His understanding is His substance, then whatever is in His substance must be included in His knowledge. But when the substance of anything is known perfectly, its power must likewise be known perfectly. God therefore knows His power perfectly and consequently He must know all the things to which His power extends. But His power extends to everything that in any way is in reality or can be, — whether it be proper or common, immediately produced by Him or through the mediation of second causes — since the power of the First Cause acts on the effect more than does the power of a second cause. ¶

Therefore God must have a knowledge of all things that in any way are found in things.

Furthermore, just as the cause is in a manner present in its effect through a participated likeness of itself, so, every effect is in its cause in a more excellent way according to the power of the cause. Therefore all things must exist more eminently in their First Cause, which is God, than in themselves. But whatever is in a thing, must be in it according to the substance of that thing. But the substance of God is His understanding. Therefore, however things may be in reality, they must exist in God in an intelligible way according to the eminence of His substance. Therefore God must know all things most perfectly.

73-But because they ¶

have found an occasion to err in the demonstration of Aristotle in *Metaphysics*

XII, ¶

we must show that they do not attain to the Philosopher's intention. Therefore it

must be known that according to the Platonists, an order of intelligibles existed prior to the order of intellect, so that an intellect became actually understanding by participating in an intelligible, as we have already said. Ed

And in the same way Aristotle showed earlier in the same book that above the intellect and the intellectual appetite by which the heavens are moved, there is a certain intelligible, participated by the intellect moving the heavens. His words are: "The receiver of the intelligible substance and of the intellect acts as possessing them," Ed

as if to say it actually understands as it already possesses its participated intelligible from above. And from this, he further concludes that that intelligible is more divine. And after he has interposed certain matters, he raises the question concerning the intellect of this most divine being by participation in which the mover of the heavens is actually understanding. Ed

For if that most divine being does not understand, he will not be something outstanding but will act as one who is asleep. But if he understands, the first query will then be how he understands. For if he understands by participating in something else above him — just as a lower intellect understands by participating in him — it will follow that there will be something else which will be a principle with respect to it, because by the fact that he understands by participating in another, he is not understanding through his own essence; so that his substance is not his understanding, but rather, his substance will be in potency in relation to understanding. Ed

For this is the condition of the substance of any participating being in relation to what it obtains by participation. And thus, it further follows that that divine being will not be the most excellent substance — which is contrary to the position.

74.—As a result, he advances another query concerning that which is understood about the noblest substance. Whether it be granted that the first substance is its very understanding or whether its substance is an intellect that is compared as potency to understanding, there will be a question as to what it is that the first substance understands. Ed

For it understands either itself or something other than itself. If it be granted that it understands something other than itself, there will arise the further query whether it always understands the same thing, or at one time one thing and at another time another. And because some one could say that it makes no difference what it understands, Aristotle raises on this point the query whether it makes some difference or none in any being to understand something good or to

understand something contingent. Ed

And he answers in reply to this query that to know certain things is trivial. The meaning of this statement can be two-fold: either that it is trivial to know concerning certain things, whether to understand them is as good as to understand certain other things, whether much lesser or much greater. The other meaning is that in our own case it seems trivial for us to have an actual understanding of certain things. Whence another reading has it, "Or meditating about certain things something is inappropriate."

Having determined that it is better to understand something good than to understand something less good, he concludes that what the first substance understands is the best; and that in understanding, it is not changed so that it understands now one thing and now another. He proves this in a two-fold way: First, since it understands that which is noblest, it would follow, as has been said, Ed

that if it were changed to some intelligible object, then there would be change to something less noble. Secondly, because such a change of intelligibles is already a certain motion. Ed

The first being, however, must be in every way immobile.

75.—He then returns to the resolution of the first question, namely, whether God's substance is His understanding. This, he proves in a two-fold way as follows: First, because if His substance is not His understanding but is as potency to it, it is probable that to understand without stop would be laborious to Him. Ed

He says that it is "probable" because that is how it happens in our own case. But since this can happen in our case not because of the nature of the intellect but because of the lower powers that we use in understanding, he therefore did not say that this is necessary in all cases. If, however, this probability is accepted as true, it will follow that it might be laborious for the First Substance to understand without stop and therefore it will not be able to understand everlastingly, which is contrary to what has been accepted.

Secondly, he proves it by the fact that if His substance were not His understanding, it would follow that something else would be nobler than His intellect, namely, the known thing, through participation in which, it becomes understanding. Ed

For whenever a substance is not its own understanding, the substance of the

intellect must be ennobled and perfected by the fact that it understands some intelligible actually, even if this object be a most humble one. For every thing by which some thing becomes actual, is more noble than it. Hence it would follow that some most humble intelligible is nobler than the intellect which is not understanding through its essence. Hence this must be denied, namely, that something else understood by Him is the perfection of the divine intellect because the nobility of the thing itself understood belongs to the perfection of His act of understanding. This point is manifest from the fact that in our case, among whom the substance of the knower differs from actual knowledge, it is more worthy for certain things not to be seen than to be seen. And so if it be thus in the case of God, that His intellect is not His understanding and that He understands something else, then, His understanding will not be the best because it will not have the best intelligible object. Ed

It remains, therefore, since He is the noblest of things, that He understands Himself.

76.—It is therefore apparent to anyone who considers carefully the above words of the Philosopher, that it is not his intention to exclude absolutely from God a knowledge of other things, but rather, that God does not understand other things through themselves as participating in them in order that He then may become understanding through them; as happens in the case of any intellect whose substance is not its understanding. He rather understands all things other than Himself by understanding Himself, inasmuch as His being is the universal and fontal source of all being and His understanding is the universal root of understanding encompassing all understanding. Ed

The lower separate intellects, however, that we call angels, understand themselves in each case through their essence, but according to the Platonists' position, they understand other things by participating in the separate intelligible forms that they call gods, as we have said. Ed

According to Aristotle's principles, they understand other things partly through their essence and partly through a participation in the First Intelligible, Who is God, from Whom they participate in both being and understanding.

CHAPTER XIV

IN WHICH IT IS SHOWN THAT GOD'S PROVIDENCE EXTENDS TO ALL THINGS

77.—Furthermore just as divine knowledge, according to what has been set down, Ed

must extend to the least of things, so it is necessary that the care of divine providence should enfold all things. For in all things the good is to be found in a certain order, according as things help one another and are ordered to an end.

Ed

Just as every being is derived from the First Being Who is His own act of being, so it is necessary that every good be derived from the First 'Good Who is goodness itself. Therefore the order of individuals is derived from the first and pure Truth, from which, however, something is derived according to its manner, namely, in an intelligible way. And in this the nature of providence consists, that an order be established by an understanding being in the things that are subject to its providence. Therefore all things must be subject to the divine providence.

Further, the First Unmoved Mover, Who is God, is the source of all motions, just as the First Being is the source of all beings. In essentially ordered causes, something is by so much more a cause, according as it is prior in the order of causes, since it confers on others that they be causes. Therefore according to this, God is more strongly the cause of all motions than are the individual moving causes themselves. Now God is the cause of something only as understanding, since His substance is His understanding, as is clear from the words of Aristotle mentioned above. Ed

Each thing, however, acts according to the mode of its substance. Therefore God moves all things to their proper ends through His intellect and this is providence. Therefore all things are subject to divine providence.

78.—Moreover, things are arranged in the universe in the best way because all of them depend on the highest goodness. But it is better for certain things to be ordered essentially rather than accidentally. Therefore the order of the whole universe is not accidental but essential. But that certain things be ordered essentially, it is required that the intention of the First Cause be directed even to the last. For if the First Cause intends to move the second, and Its intention goes no further, if the second then moves the third, this will be outside the intention of the First Mover; therefore such an order will be accidental. Consequently the intention of the First Mover and Orderer, namely God, must extend not only to certain beings but even to the very last ones. Therefore all things are subject to His providence.

Likewise, that which befits a cause and an effect is found more eminently in the

cause than in the effect for it flows into the effect from the cause. Accordingly anything that is found in lower causes and is attributed to the First Cause of all, belongs to it in a most excellent way. But some providence must be attributed to God, or otherwise the universe would be moved by chance. Therefore divine providence must be most perfect.

79.—Two things, however, must be considered in providence: These are disposition and the execution of what has been disposed in which, in a way, a different kind of perfection is found. For in disposition, providence is the more perfect as the one providing is more able with his mind to consider and order individual things. Accordingly, all operative arts are considered the more perfect as each one of them is more able to join together singulars. With respect to execution, however, providence seems to be the more perfect according as the one providing moves as a more universal agent through more intermediaries and instruments. Therefore, divine providence has an intelligible disposition of each and every thing but it executes what it disposes through many and varied causes. Among these, the spiritual substances whom we call angels, because they are closer to the First Cause, carry out the divine providence in a more universal way. Accordingly, the angels are the universal executors of the divine providence; whence they are pointedly called “angels”, that is, “messengers”, for it belongs to messengers to carry out what God has disposed.

CHAPTER XV

RESOLUTION OF THE AFOREMENTIONED POSITIONS

80.—With these points in mind, we may easily reply to the objections set down above. For it is not necessary, as the first argument Ed

alleged, that the intellect of God and the angels cannot know singulars if the human intellect cannot know them. And that the nature of this difference might appear more clearly, we must consider that the order of knowledge is according to the proportion of the order found in things according to their being. For the perfection and truth of knowledge consists in this, that it has the likeness of the things known. In things, however, the order that obtains is that the higher among beings have being and goodness more universally; not indeed, that they should come to have being and goodness only according to their common nature — insofar as the universal is said to be that which is predicated of many — but because whatever is found in lower beings is found more eminently in the higher; and this is seen from the operative power that is found in things.

For lower beings have powers which are restricted to determinate effects, whereas higher beings have powers that extend universally to many effects; and yet, a higher power among particular effects, is more effectual than a lower power; and this is especially evident among bodies. For in lower bodies, fire heats through its own heat and the seed of this animal or plant so determinately produces an individual of this species, that it does not produce an individual of another species. Ed

It is clear from this that among higher beings, a power is called universal not because it does not extend to particular effects but because it extends to more effects than does a lower power and acts more strongly on singulars among them.

81.—In this way, therefore, the higher the knowing power, the more universal it is; not indeed, in such a way that it knows only a universal nature, for thus the higher it would be, the more imperfect it would be. For to know something universally is to know it imperfectly and, in a manner, midway between potency and act. But a higher knowledge is called more universal on this account, that it extends to more individuals and knows singulars better. In the order of knowing powers, however, the sensitive power is lower and thus it can know singulars only through the proper species of singulars.

And because matter is the principle of individuation among material things, hence it is that the sensitive power knows singulars through individual species received in corporeal organs. Among intellectual cognitions, however, that of the human intellect is the lowest. Therefore intelligible species are received in the human intellect according to the weakest mode of intellectual knowledge, so that through them, the human intellect can know things only according to the universal nature of genus or species; to the representation of which, in its sole universality, the species are determined and in a manner limited by the fact that they are abstracted from the phantasms of singulars. And thus man knows singulars, through the sense but universals through the intellect. But the higher intellects are of a more universal power in knowing, so that, namely, they are able to know both the universal and the singular through an intelligible species.

82.—The second argument has no force. Ed

For when it is said that the thing understood is a perfection of the one understanding, this indeed is true according to the intelligible species which is the form of the intellect so far as it is actually understanding. For it is not the nature of the stone in matter that is the perfection of the human intellect, but the intelligible species abstracted from the phantasms through which species the intellect understands the nature of the stone. Accordingly, since every form that

is by derivation in some being must proceed from an agent, and since an agent is more noble than the patient or recipient, it is necessary that the agent from which the intellect has an intelligible species is more perfect than the intellect; just as in the case of the human intellect, we see that the agent intellect is nobler than the possible intellect, which receives species made actually intelligible by the agent intellect. But the physical things themselves that are known are not nobler than the possible intellect. The higher intellects of the angels, however, receive intelligible species either from the Ideas — according to the Platonists Ed

— or from the first substance, which is God — according to that which follows from Aristotle's position Ed

and what is in reality true.

The intelligible species of the divine intellect, however, through which it knows all things, is nothing other than his substance, which is likewise his understanding as was proved above through the words of the Philosopher. Ed

Hence it remains that in the case of the divine intellect there is nothing nobler through which it is perfected; but from the divine intellect itself as from a higher source, intelligible species come to the intellects of the angels; whereas to the human intellect, intelligible species come from sensible things through the action of the agent intellect.

83. -It is easy to solve the third argument. Ed

For nothing prevents something from being fortuitous and by chance, when it is referred to the intention of a lower agent which, yet, is ordered according to the intention of a higher agent. This is evident if some person treacherously sends someone else to a certain place where he knows that there are robbers or enemies. For the one who is sent, the meeting with these persons is fortuitous, being beyond his intention. But it is not by chance to the sender who knew this in advance. Consequently, nothing prevents certain things from taking place fortuitously or by chance so far as pertains to human knowledge, which yet are ordered according to divine providence.

84.—We can derive the answer to the fourth argument Ed

from the fact that the necessary order of consecution of an effect to cause must be understood according to the nature of the cause. For not every cause produces an effect in the same way. A natural cause does it through a natural form, through which it is in act. Therefore a natural agent must produce an effect

like unto itself. A rational cause, however, produces an effect according to the nature of an understood form which it intends to bring into being; and thus an intellectual agent produces such an effect as it understands should be produced, unless the producing power fail.

Furthermore, whatsoever power is concerned with the production of any genus, must be concerned with the production of the proper differences of that genus. For example, if it pertains to some one to make a triangle, it likewise pertains to him to make an equilateral or isosceles triangle. For the necessary and the possible are proper differences of being. Therefore it pertains to God, to Whom the power to produce being properly belongs, to give to things produced by Him according to His foreknowledge, either the necessity or possibility of being. Therefore it must be conceded that divine providence, preexisting from eternity is the cause of all the effects which are made in accordance with it and which proceed from it by an immutable disposition. Nevertheless all do not so proceed as to be necessary. But just as the providence of God disposes that such effects be, so it likewise disposes that certain of these effects be necessary for which it has ordained necessarily acting proper causes, while certain others should be contingent for which it has ordained proper contingent causes.

85.—The answer to the fifth argument Ed

is evident from these points. For just as from God Whose being is essentially and supremely necessary, there proceed contingent effects because of the condition of their proper causes, so likewise, from Him Who is the highest good there proceed certain effects which, to be sure, are good in that they exist and are from God; and yet they are affected by certain defects of secondary causes because of which they are called evil. But this, too, is a good, namely, that such effects are allowed by God to take place in reality, both because it befits the order of things, in which the good of the universe consists, that effects follow according to the condition of their causes, and also because from the evil of one, the good of another arises; just as in natural things the corruption of one thing is the generation of another; and in the case of moral realities, from the persecution of the tyrant there follows the patience of the just person. Accordingly, it was not fitting that evils should be completely prevented through divine providence.

CHAPTER XVI

THE ERROR OF THE MANICHEANS CONCERNING THE AFOREMENTIONED POINTS AND ITS REFUTATION

86.—All the preceding errors were surpassed by the error of the Manicheans, Ec who erred gravely in all the aforementioned points of doctrine.

First of all, they reduced the origin of things not to one but to two, principles of creation. Ec

They said that one of these was the author of good, while the other was the author of evils.

Secondly, they erred concerning the condition of the nature of these principles. Ec

For they posited both principles to be corporeal, saying that the author of good things was a certain infinite corporeal light with a power of understanding. But they said that certain infinite corporeal darknesses were the author of evils.

Thirdly, they erred as a consequence, in the government of things, in a manner establishing all things not under one dominion but under contraries. Ec

These notions which we have just set down, contain a manifest falsity as can be seen if we take them up one by one.

87.—In the first place, it is completely irrational that something should be posited as the first principle of evils as contrary to the highest good. For nothing can be active except insofar as it is a being in act because each being produces something else like itself; and furthermore, a thing is produced in order to be actually.

Now we call each thing "good" because it achieves act and its proper perfection; and it is evil because it is deprived of its due act and perfection. For example, life is a good of the body, for the body lives according to the soul, which is its perfection and its act. Hence, death, through which the body is deprived of the soul, is called an evil of the body. Nothing therefore acts or is done except insofar as it is good.

However, insofar as anything is evil, to that extent it falls short of being done perfectly or of acting perfectly. For example, we say that a house is badly built if it is not brought through to its due perfection, and we call a builder "bad" if he falls short in the art of building. Therefore evil as such neither has an active principle nor can it be an active principle, but follows from a defect of some agent.

88.—In the second place, it is impossible for any body to be intellective or to have an intellective power. For the intellect is neither a body nor is it the act of a body; otherwise, it would not know all things, as the Philosopher proves in the third book of *On The Soul* . Fo

Therefore if they admit that the First Principle has intellective power — which is held by all who speak of God it is impossible for the First Principle to be something corporeal.

89. -Thirdly, it is clear that the good has the nature of an end, for we call that thing good, towards which the appetite tends. All government however is according to an order to some end, and according to the nature of this order, the things that are directed to the end are ordered to it. Now all government is according to the nature of good. Therefore evil as evil cannot have a government or a dominion or rulership. In vain, therefore do they posit two kingdoms or governments, one of the good and the other of the evil.

This error like those mentioned above Fo

seems to have come about because the Manicheans tried to transfer to the universal cause of things, what we find among particular causes. They saw particular contrary effects proceed from particular contrary causes, for example that fire heats and water causes cold. Hence, they believed that this process from contrary effects to contrary causes holds right up to the first principles of things. And because all contraries are seen to be contained under good and evil, insofar as one of two contraries is always deficient, for example, the black and the bitter, and the other is realized, as the sweet and the white, for this reason they thought that good and evil are the first active principles of all things.

90.—But they manifestly failed in considering the nature of contraries. For contraries are not altogether diverse, but they agree in one respect and differ in another. For they agree in genus and they differ according to specific differences. Therefore, just as there are contrary proximate causes of contraries, so far as they differ by their specific differences, so they have one common cause of the whole genus in which they agree. A common cause, however, is prior to and higher than the proper causes. For the higher a cause is, by so much is its power greater and reaching out to more effects. It remains, therefore, that contraries are not the first active principles of things but that there is one active cause of all things.

CHAPTER XVII

WHAT MUST BE HELD ACCORDING TO THE CATHOLIC FAITH WITH RESPECT TO THE ORIGIN OF THE ANGELS

91.—Since therefore it has been shown what the foremost philosophers, Plato Ed and Aristotle Ed

believed about the spiritual substances as to their origin, the condition of their nature, their distinction and order of government, and in what respect others Ed

disagreed with them, through error, it remains to show what the teaching of the Christian religion holds about each individual point. For this purpose, we shall use especially the writings of Dionysius who excelled all others in teaching what pertains to spiritual substances.

First, as to the origin of the spiritual substances, Christian tradition Ed

teaches most firmly that all spiritual substances — like all other creatures — were made by God, and this is proved by the authority of the canonical scriptures. For it is said in the Psalms, Ed

“Praise ye Him, all His angels; praise ye Him all His hosts”. And after all the other creatures have been enumerated, it is added, “For He spoke and they were created: He commanded and they were created.” And Dionysius explains this origin finely in the fourth chapter of the *Celestial Hierarchy* Ed

when he says, “In the first place, it is true to say that the super-essential dignity, by its universal goodness, in establishing the essences of all the things that are, brought them to being.” And after a few words he adds Ed

that “The celestial substances are first and in many ways made in the participation of God.” And in the fourth chapter of *On The Divine Names* Ed,

he says that “Because of the rays of divine goodness, all intelligible and intellectual substances and powers and operations were established. Because of these rays, they are and live and have an inexhaustible life.”

92. -Furthermore, that all spiritual substances and not only the highest were immediately produced he expressly states in the fifth chapter of *On*

the Divine Names

: Ed

"The existing powers of the most holy and exalted and, as if, on the threshold of the super-substantial Trinity, have been established by It and in It they have both being and being in a God-like way. And after those they are subjected," that is the lower to the higher. "Subjected," that is they have being from God in a lower way; "and the lowest", that is at the bottom; "extremely", that is in the lowest manner with respect to the angels but the highest, however, with respect to us. Through this statement, he gives us to understand that all the orders of spiritual substances are established by divine disposition and not from the fact that one of them is caused by another. And this is said more expressly in the fourth chapter of the *Celestial Hierarchy*, Ed

"It is fitting", he says, "for the cause of all things and of the goodness which is above all, to call to its communion all those things which are, so that each being which is should be determined by a proper analogy." For He established each thing in the order which befits its nature.

93.—Likewise, it is repugnant to Christian teaching that spiritual substances should have goodness, being, and life, and other such attributes that pertain to their perfection, from different principles. For in the canonical scriptures, it is attributed to the one and the same God that He is the very essence of goodness. Accordingly it is said in Matthew 19:17, "One is good, God": and that He is being itself — therefore in Exodus 3:14, God answers Moses who asks what is God's name, "I am Who am"; and that He Himself is the life of living beings — accordingly it is said in Deuteronomy 3:20, "He is the life of the living."

And this truth, Dionysius most expressly teaches in the fifth chapter of *On the Divine Names*, Ed

when he says that Sacred Scripture "... does not say that to be good is one thing and to be a being is another and that life or wisdom is something else, nor that there are many causes and lesser productive deities of whom some extended to some things and others to others." In this statement he removes the opinion of the Platonists who posited that the very essence of goodness was the highest God, Ed

under Whom there was another god who is being itself Ed

and so forth, with the rest as has been said above. Ed

And he adds, "But the opinion saysthat all the good processions belong to one, i.

e., one deity," namely because both being and life and all other such characteristics proceed to things from the highest deity.

This point he explains at greater length in the eleventh chapter of *On the Divine Names* Ed

saying, "For we do not say that a certain divine or angelic substance is through itself the esse which is the cause that all things are; for only the super-substantial being itself (namely of the highest God) is the principle and substance and cause that all things are by nature" — a principle which is indeed productive, a substance in the manner of an exemplary form and a cause which is final. And he adds: "Nor do we say that there is any other deity that generates life besides the super-divine life which is the cause of all things whatsoever that live, and of life itself in its essence, that life, namely which formally inheres in living things; nor, to say in conclusion, do we call causes the principles of existing things and the creative substances and persons, whom they have called both the gods of existing things and the self-acting creators. Ed

To exclude this position, moreover, "under the essential goodness", which the Platonists said was the highest god, Dionysius pointedly says "Spiritual substances have being, and life, and intelligence and all other such attributes pertaining to their perfection". He likewise repeats the same point in the individual chapters showing that they owe to the divine being that they are, and to the divine life that they are living and so forth.

94. -Furthermore, it is contrary to Christian teaching that spiritual substances should be said to derive their origin from the highest deity in such a way that they should have been from eternity-as the Platonists and the Peripatetics, held.' But, on the contrary, the declaration of the Catholic faith has it that they began to be after they had previously not existed. Accordingly, it is said in Isaiah 40:26: "Lift up your eyes on high and see who created these things," — namely, all the higher beings. And lest it be understood about the bodies alone, he adds, "Who brings out their host by number." Now Sacred Scripture is in the habit of calling the heavenly host of spiritual substances, "the heavenly army" because of their order and power in carrying out the divine will. Therefore it is said in Luke 2:13: "There was with the angel a multitude of heavenly army." It is therefore given to be understood that not only bodies but also spiritual substances were brought into being from non-being by creation. Accordingly, it is said in Romans 4:17: "He calls those things that are not as those that are." Therefore Dionysius says in the tenth chapter of *On the Divine Names* , Ed

"Sacred Scripture does not exclusively apply the name 'eternal' to that which is absolutely ungenerated and truly eternal, but the incorruptible and immortal and invariable and unchanging, it calls 'eternal', as when it says, 'Lift up, O eternal gates' and the like, which seems especially to be said concerning spiritual substances". And afterwards he adds, "Therefore the eternal beings cannot be thought to be absolutely coeternal with God, Who is before eternity".

95.—But because in the succession of the creation of things, Sacred Scripture in Genesis I makes no explicit mention of the production of spiritual substances — lest an occasion of idolatry be given to an unlettered people to whom the law was proposed, if the divine work should bring in many spiritual substances above all corporeal creatures — it cannot be expressly ascertained from the canonical Scriptures when the angels were created. That they indeed should not have been created after the corporeal beings, reason itself makes clear, for it was not fitting that the more perfect should be created later. This point is also expressly gathered from the authority of Sacred Scripture, for it is said in Job 38:7: "When the morning stars praised me together, and all the sons of God made a joyful melody through which are understood the spiritual substances.

Furthermore, Augustine argues in Book XI of On the City of God: Fo

"Therefore the angels already existed when the skies were made. The latter, however, were created on the fourth day. Do we therefore say that the angels were created on the third day? No. For it is well known what was made on that day: the earth was separated from the waters. Perhaps on the second day? Indeed not, for the firmament was made then." And afterwards he adds, "No wonder, therefore, if the very angels pertain to these works of God, just as that light which receives the name of day."

Therefore according to Augustine's Fo

opinion, the spiritual creature, which is signified by the name "heaven", was created along with the corporeal beings, when it is said in the beginning of Genesis (1:1): "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." But the formation and perfection of this spiritual creature is signified in the production of light, as is described many times at length in the second book of *A Literal Commentary on Genesis* . Fo

96. -But as Damascene says in the second book, Fo

certain thinkers say that the angels were begotten before all creation, namely, of

corporeal creatures — as Gregory the Theologian says, “First, indeed, He thought out the angelic and celestial powers and His thinking was the deed.” And Damascene himself agreed with this opinion. And Jerome, a pupil of the aforementioned Gregory Nazianzen, follows the same opinion, for he says in commenting on the Epistle to Titus, Ed

“Six thousand years of our time are not yet completed and how many eternities, how many times, how many origins of ages are we to think first existed in which the Angels, Thrones, and Dominations and the other orders served God without the succession and measurement of time and did God’s bidding.”

But I do not consider either one of these positions to be contrary to sound teaching because it seems too presumptuous to assert that such great doctors of the Church had strayed from the sound teaching of faith. Nevertheless, Augustine’s opinion seems to agree more with his position according to which he posits that in the production of things, there was no order of time according to the six days which Scripture recounts; but on the contrary, he refers those six days to the understanding of the angels brought face to face with the six kinds of things. The opinion of Gregory Nazianzen, of Jerome, and of Damascene, however, is more fitting according to the position of those who posit in the production of things, a succession of time according to the aforesaid six days. For if all the creatures were not made at the same time, it is quite probable that spiritual creatures preceded all bodies.

97.—If, however, it should be asked where the angels were created, it is clear that such a question has no place if they were created before all corporeal creatures, since place is something corporeal, unless perhaps, we should take for place, a spiritual clarity by which the angels are illumined by God. Accordingly, Basil says in II *Hexaemeron* , Ed

“We believe that if anything did exist before the establishment of this sensible and corruptible world, it was effected in light. For neither the dignity of the angels nor the armies of all the heavenly beings, whether named or unnamed, whether some rational power or ministration of the spirit, could have endured in darkness but it was fittingly clothed in light and joy. No one, I think, will contradict this point.” If, however, the angels had been created at the same time as the corporeal creature, the question can have a place only in that way in which it befits the angels to be in a place — about which we shall speak below. Ed

And according to this position, certain individuals said that the angels were created in a certain highest, brilliant heaven which they call the empyrean heavens, that is, the fiery heavens-not from the heat but from the brilliance. And

it is of this heaven that Strabo and Bede interpret the words, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth," though this interpretation is not touched upon by Augustine and the other more ancient doctors of the Church.

CHAPTER XVIII

WHAT MUST BE HELD CONCERNING THE CONDITION OF THE ANGELS' NATURE

98.—Next, we must consider what must be held concerning the condition of spiritual substances according to the opinion of Catholic teaching.

There were certain thinkers who thought that the angels were corporeal or composed of matter and form. Origen seems to have held this opinion in the *Peri Archon* Ed

where he says, "It is proper to the nature of God alone, that is, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, that it be understood to exist without material substance and without any association of a corporeal adjunct." The words of Sacred Scripture, which seems to attribute certain corporeal characteristics to angels and which pronounces the angels as being with corporeal things in a corporeal place, could have moved these thinkers to posit the angels as being corporeal: — According to the words of Matthew 18:10: "Their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father Who is in heaven." And Scripture asserts them to be moved, according to the words of Isaiah (6:6,2), "And one of the seraphim flew to me." And what is more, that it should describe them as having a corporeal form, just as is said in the same place of the seraphim, "The one had six wings and the other had six wings". And it is said about Gabriel in Daniel 10:5-6: "Behold a man clothed in linen, and his loins were girded with the finest gold... And his body was like the chrysolite," — and other points which are pertinent to these are described in the same place.

99.—Furthermore, we have already stated above, Ed

on the basis of arguments they may wish to hold, that there is in the angels a composition of form and matter, even though they are not corporeal. But that the angels are incorporeal, is proved from the authority of Sacred Scripture, which calls them "spirits". For it is said in the Psalm (103:4): "You make your angels spirit." And the Apostle in speaking of the angels, says to the Hebrews (1:14): "All are ministering spirits, but to minister for them, who shall receive the inheritance of salvation." Scripture, however, was accustomed to designate

something corporeal by the name of "spirit" according to the words of John 4:24: "God is a spirit and they who adore Him, must adore Him in spirit and in truth"; and according to the words of Isaiah 31:3: "Egypt is man and not God: and their horses, flesh and not spirit."

Therefore it is unfitting according to the view of Sacred Scripture, that angels should be corporeal. If, however, one should wish to examine diligently the words of Sacred Scripture, he will be able to gather from them that the angels are immaterial, for Sacred Scripture calls them certain powers. For it is said in the Psalm (102:20,21): "Bless the Lord, all ye His angels", and later it is added, "Bless the Lord all His powers." And it is said in Luke 21:26: "For the powers of the heavens shall be moved," which all the doctors apply to the holy angels. Furthermore, that which is material is not a power but it has power, just as it is not an essence but it has essence, for power follows upon essence. For neither is man his humanity nor is he his power; and the same is the case with every other composite of matter and form. It remains, therefore, that according to the intention of the Scriptures, angels are immaterial.

100.—Furthermore, both of these points are expressly ascribed to the words of Dionysius who, speaking of the angels, says in the fourth chapter of *On the Divine Names* Fo

that "the intellectual substances exist free from all corruption and death and matter and generation and are understood to be incorporeal and immaterial." He likewise says in the first chapter of the *Celestial Hierarchy* Fo

that the divine government made certain material figures to stand for the various immaterial hierarchies of angels. And in the second chapter of the same book Fo

he asks why the Sacred Doctors, coming to the corporeal representation of incorporeal beings, i.e., the angels, did not picture them with the most resplendent figures but gave earthly figures to immaterial and Godlike simple beings.

It is clear from all these words that Dionysius' opinion was that the angels are immaterial and simple substances. This is likewise clear from the fact that he frequently calls them celestial intellects or divine minds. The intellect or the mind, however, is something incorporeal and immaterial, as the Philosopher proves in Book III of *On the Soul* . Fo

Augustine likewise says in the second book of the *Literal*

Commentary on Genesis

¶

that on the first day when the light was made, the condition of the spiritual and intellectual creature is announced by the name of "light", in which nature are understood all the holy angels and powers. Damascene ¶

likewise says that the angel is "an intellectual and incorporeal substance." But what he later adds creates a doubt, "It is called an incorporeal and immaterial nature with reference to us, for everything compared to God is found to be coarse and material." This point is introduced so that the angel, because of his incorporeity and immateriality would not be considered to be equal to the simplicity of the divine substance.

101.—The corporeal shapes or forms, however, which are sometimes attributed to the angels in Sacred Scripture must be understood in the manner of a likeness because, as Dionysius says in the first chapter of the *Celestial Hierarchy*, ¶

"It is not possible for our mind to be raised up to the immaterial imitation and contemplation of the celestial hierarchies, unless in accord with its nature, it makes use of some material guidance"; — just as many corporeal things are said about God in the Scriptures through a certain likeness. Accordingly, Dionysius expounds in the fifteenth chapter of the *Celestial Hierarchy* ¶

what spiritual thing might be signified in the angels through all such corporeal figures. He asserts that not only corporeal forms of such a kind are predicated of the angels by likeness, but also, these things which pertain to the affection of the sensitive appetite, so that thereby, we might be given to understand not only that angels are not bodies, but likewise, that they are not spirits united to bodies that they perfect with sense life so that, thus, there maybe found in them operations of the sensitive soul.

For he says in the second chapter of the *Celestial Hierarchy* ¶

"Rage is begotten in irrational beings from a passible movement, but in angels, the irascible must be understood in a different way, namely as showing — as I believe — their strength and reason." Another translation has it thus, "But in angels, rage shows their strength of reason." And in like manner, he says that concupiscence in the angels signifies a divine love. Agreeing with this, Augustine says in the ninth book of the *City of God* ¶

: "The holy angels punish without anger those whom they receive for punishment by the eternal law of God; they help the suffering without the compassion of pity; and when those whom they love fall in danger, they minister without fear; and yet, the names of these passions are applied to them from a habit of human speech because of a kind of likeness in works and not because of a weakness in affections."

102.—Furthermore, that angels are said to be in the heavens or in some other corporeal place must not be understood that they might be in them in a corporeal manner, namely, through a contact of measurable quantity but in a spiritual manner through a certain contact of power. Now the proper place of the angels is spiritual according to what Dionysius says in the fifth chapter of *On the Divine Names* , Ed

"The highest spiritual substances are stationed on the threshold of the Trinity." And Basil says in II *Hexaemeron* Ed

that "they are in spiritual light and joy." And Gregory of Nyssa says in the book, *On Man* : Ed

"The existing intelligibles are in intelligible places for either they are in themselves or in superior intelligibles. Since, therefore, something intellectual is said to be locally in a body, it is said to be in a body not as in a place but in disposition and in the sense of being present, as we say that God is in us". And after a few words he adds, "Since, therefore, there was something understandable in the disposition either of place or of some thing as existing in a place, we say by improper use, taking the place for the condition, that that is there because of the act of that which is there; since, 'indeed, we should have said, 'It acts there,' we say 'It is there'." And following this, Damascene Ed

says that "where the angel acts, there he is." Augustine likewise says in Book VIII of the *Literal Commentary on Genesis* Ed

that "the Creator spirit moves the created spirit through time and without place; He moves the body, however, through time and place."

103.—From all these arguments, we may understand that angels are in a place not in a corporeal but in a kind of spiritual manner. And because it befits a thing to be moved and to be in place in the same way, as a consequence, neither are angels moved in place in a corporeal manner; but rather, their movement, which

is described in the Scriptures — if it is referred to a corporeal place — must be understood as a succession of contacts of power at diverse places; or it must be understood according to a mystical meaning, just as in the fourth chapter of *On the Divine Names* , Ed

Dionysius says: "The divine minds are said to be moved in a circular manner when they are united to the illuminations of the beautiful and the good; they are moved in a straight line, however, when they proceed to the providence of what is subject to them; then, they are moved obliquely, however, when in their providence over lesser beings, they remain fixed before God." Ed

Therefore it is clear from these statements what the Sacred Doctors taught concerning the condition of the spiritual substances, that is, of the angels, when they asserted that the angels are incorporeal and immaterial.

CHAPTER XIX

ON THE DISTINCTION OF SPIRITUAL SUBSTANCES ACCORDING TO SACRED TEACHING

104.— Furthermore, we consequently consider next what we must hold according to Sacred Teaching concerning the distinction of spirits. Our first consideration is the difference between good and evil. For it has been accepted among many thinkers that certain spirits are good and certain others, evil. This is likewise proved by the authority of Sacred Scripture. For it is said about the good spirits in Hebrews 1:14: "They are all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them who receive the inheritance of salvation." About the evil spirits, however, it is said in Matthew 12:43,45: "And when an unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walks through dry places, seeking rest and finds none." And afterwards it is added, "Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself." And although, as Augustine narrates in the ninth book of *On the City of God* , Ed

certain thinkers posited both good and evil spirits to be gods, and likewise good and evil spirits to be called demons, nevertheless, others more correctly assert only the good spirits to be gods. These we call "angels", whereas according to the received manner of speaking, "demons" are accepted only as evil. This distinction, as he says, is reasonable. Ed

For the demons are named from the word "science" in Greek, which, without charity, according to the opinion of the Apostle,⁵ puffs up through pride.

105.—But the cause of the wickedness of the demons is not assigned by all thinkers in the same way. For some of them assert that demons are naturally evil, as having been produced by an evil principle and thus their nature must be evil — which is part and parcel of the error of the Manicheans, as is clear from what has been said. Ed

But Dionysius refutes this error most effectively in the fourth chapter of *On the Divine Names* Ed

when he says, “But neither are the demons evil by nature.” He proves this first, because if they were naturally evil, it would be necessary to say at one and the same time that neither had they been produced by a good principle nor should they be numbered among existing beings, since evil is not something existing, nor if there existed an evil nature, was it caused by a good principle.

In the second place, because if they are evil by nature, they are evil to themselves or to others: if to themselves, they would destroy themselves (which is impossible), since evil has the nature of something corruptive; but if they are evil to others, then they would have to destroy those things to which they are evil. However, what is such by nature, must be completely such with respect to all. It would follow therefore that they would destroy all things and this completely. This is impossible, both because certain beings are incorruptible and cannot be destroyed and also because those which are destroyed, are not destroyed completely. Therefore the nature itself of the demons is not evil.

In the third place, if they were naturally evil, they would not have been made by God because good produces good effects and makes them subsist. This is impossible according to that which has been proved above Ed

namely, that God must be the source of all things.

In the fourth place, because if the demons are always disposed in the same way, they are not evil, for that which is always the same, belongs to the good. If, however, they are not always evil, they are not evil by nature.

In the fifth place, they are not completely devoid of good, for according as they are and live and have understanding, they desire some good.

106.— Now there were others who held that the demons were naturally evil, not because their nature is evil, but because they have a certain natural inclination to evil, as Augustine advances in the tenth book of *On the*

City of God

[Ed]

through Porphyry, who says in the *Epistle to Anebon*tes : "Some men thought that there is a certain class of spirits which it is proper to obey and which is deceitful by nature in all forms and in many ways, imitating the gods and demons and the very souls of the dead." This opinion cannot have any truth if it be posited that demons are incorporeal and certain separate intellects. For, since every nature is good, it is impossible that some nature should have an inclination to evil, except under the character of some particular good. For nothing prevents some thing which is good in a particular manner, to be called "bad" with respect to a certain nature, insofar as it is opposed to the perfection of a higher nature; just as to be raging is a certain good with respect to a dog - nevertheless, it is an evil with respect to man who has reason. Yet it is possible that there should be in man, according to his sensible and corporeal nature which he shares with brutes, a certain inclination to raging which is evil for man. But this cannot be said of an intellectual nature because the intellect has an order to the good in general. Accordingly, it is impossible for a natural inclination to evil to be found in demons, if they are [Ed]

purely intellectual and have no admixture of a corporeal nature.

107.— It must be known, therefore, that the Platonists posited, as has likewise been said above, [Ed]

that the demons are certain corporeal animals which have an intellect. And inasmuch as they have a corporeal and sensible nature, they are subject to various passions of the soul, just as men are subject to passions, which incline them towards evil. Accordingly, when Apuleius was defining the demons in the book, *On the God of Socrates*

[Ed]

he said that they are "animals in genus, passible in soul, rational in mind, airy in body, eternal in time." And just as he himself says: "The mind of the demons is subject to the passions of lusts, fears, and angers and all other such things. Therefore the demons are likewise locally separated from the gods — whom we call angels — attributing the airy places to the demons but the ethereal ones to the angels or gods."

Certain of the Doctors of the Church follow this position in some respect. For in the third book of the *Literal Commentary On Genesis* , [Ed]

Augustine seems to say or to leave unsettled that the demons are airy animals because they have the nature of airy bodies; and, for that reason, they are not destroyed by death, because there prevails in them an element, namely air, which is quite suitable both for acting as well as being acted upon — and he says the same thing in several other places. And Dionysius seems to posit in demons those attributes which belong to a sensible soul; for he says in the fourth chapter of *On the Divine Names* Ed

that there is in demons an evil — “an irrational rage, a mad concupiscence, and wanton fancy.” And it is clear that fancy and concupiscence and anger or rage pertain not to the intellect but to a part of the sensitive soul. And with respect to place, certain doctors agreed with these thinkers because they did not consider the demons to be either celestial or super-celestial angels, as Augustine relates in the third book of the *Literal Commentary on Genesis* Ed

And Damascene says in the Second Book Ed

that the demons were among the angelic powers which were in command of the earthly order. And the Apostle in Ephesians (2:2) calls the devil a “prince of the power of this air.”

108.—But something presents itself here which is worthy of consideration. For, since matter is attributed to each species according to the suitability of its form, it does not seem possible that there should be in a whole of a given species a natural inclination to that which is evil for that species according to the nature of its proper form; just as there is not present in all men, a natural inclination to the immoderation of concupiscence or anger. Therefore, it is not possible that all demons should have a natural inclination to deception and to other evils, even if they were all of one species. Much less ` therefore, if there should be individuals in individual species; although if they are corporeal, nothing seems to prevent many of them from being contained under one species; for a diversity of individuals of one species could be caused according to a diversity of matter. Therefore we shall have to say that the demons were not always evil but some of them began to be evil, when by their own choice, they followed the inclination of the passions. And accordingly, Dionysius says in the fourth chapter of *On the Divine Names* Ed

that “aversion”, namely from God, “is an evil for the demons themselves, and it is a forsaking of those things which are fitting to them because they were carried away by pride beyond themselves.” And later on, he adds certain remarks pertaining to punishment as “not reaching the ultimate end” and imperfection

through a lack of a due perfection, and "impotence" of pursuing that which they desire by nature and an "infirmity" of the power conserving in them, a natural order, calling them back from evil.

109.—Augustine likewise says in the third book of the *Literal Commentary On Genesis*

Ed

that the transgressing angels were before their transgression, along with their leader, now a devil and formerly an archangel, in the higher part of the air near the heaven. He gives us clearly to understand that through their transgression, some of the angels were made evil. And Damascene says in the second book, Ed

"The devil was not created evil in nature but, existing as good and begotten in the good, he used the election of his own choice." In addition, both Origen in *Peri Archon* Ed

and Augustine in Book XI of *On the City of God* Ed

confirm this with texts of the Sacred Scriptures, when they introduce what is contained in Isaiah 14:12 about the devil under the likeness of the king of Babylon, "How have you fallen, O Lucifer, who rose in the morning?" And in Ezechiel 28:12,13,15 it is said to him in the person of the king of Tyre, "Seal of resemblance, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty, you were in the pleasures of the paradise of God." And afterwards, it is added, "You were perfect in your ways from the day of your creation, until iniquity was found in you." In the same place, Augustine Ed

resolves what is said in John 8:44: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and he stood not in the truth"; and what is said in the canonical Epistle of St. John (1 Jn 3:8) that "the devil sinned from the beginning," referring this to the "beginning" when he began to sin, or to the "beginning" of the human state when he killed man spiritually after having deceived him.

110.— Furthermore, the opinion of the Platonists, who say that certain demons are good and others are evil — as if having been made good or evil by their own free choice — seems to agree with this opinion. Ed

Accordingly, Plotinus, proceeding further, says that the souls of men become demons and the Lares are made of men if the latter are of good merit; the Lemures or Larvae, however, if they are of evil merit, and they are called Manes, if it is uncertain whether they are of good or evil merit, as Augustine sets forth in

IX of *On the City of God*. Fo

This opinion, agrees with the aforementioned position Fo

of the saints in this that the latter assert some demons to be good and others evil because of good or evil merits, although it is not customary for us to call the good spirits “demons” but rather “angels.”

As to what he says, namely that the souls of the dead become demons, his position is in error. Accordingly, Chrysostom, Fo

expounding on what is contained in Matthew 8:28 that two men possessed with devils came out of the sepulchres says, “Through this fact, namely that they were going out of the sepulchres, they wanted to impose a pernicious doctrine, that the souls of the dying become demons. Accordingly, many soothsayers killed children so that they might have their cooperating soul. And because of this, many demoniacs shout that ‘I am that one’s soul.’ However, it is not the dead person’s soul which shouts, but the demon pretends so that he might deceive the hearers. For if it were possible for the soul of one dead to enter the body of another, it would be much more possible for it to enter its own body. Nor is it reasonable for a soul suffering iniquities to cooperate with the one that brings iniquities on it. Nor likewise is it reasonable that a soul separated from the body should still be wandering here. ‘The souls of the just are in the hand of God’ (Wis 3:1). But those which are of sinners are led away from here at once, as is evident from Lazarus and Dives.” Nevertheless, we must not think that in this respect, Plotinus deviated from the opinion of the Platonists who posited the demons to be airy bodies — namely, because Plotinus thought that the souls of men become demons after death — for according to the Platonists’ opinion, even the souls of men have, over and above these corruptible bodies, certain ethereal bodies to which they are always joined as to something incorruptible, even after the dissolution of these sensible bodies. Accordingly, Proclus says in the *Book of the Divine Elementations* Fo

that “every soul capable of participating, uses the first and perpetual body and one having an ungenerated and incorruptible hypostasis.” And thus, according to them, the souls separated from the bodies, do not cease to be airy animals.

111.— But according to the opinion of other Saints, the demons, whom we call evil angels, not only came from a lower order of angels but also from the higher orders, whom we have shown to be incorporeal and immaterial, Fo

so that among them, there was one who was the highest of all. Accordingly,

Gregory Ed

explaining in a certain homily the words of Ezechiel 28:13 "Every precious stone has covering," says that the leader of the evil angels was, in comparison with the other angels, more brilliant than the rest. And in this respect, he seems to agree with those who asserted some demons to be good and others to be evil, according to which demons are called angels. And therefore it is said in Job 4:18: "Behold they who serve him are not steadfast, and in his angels he found wickedness." But this presents many difficulties. For in an incorporeal and intellectual substance, there seems to be no appetite except the intellectual, which is of that which is absolutely good, as appears through the Philosopher in XII *Metaphysics* Ed

Now no one is made evil from the fact that his intellect tends toward that which is good absolutely, but from the fact that it tends toward a qualifiedly good thing, as though it were absolutely good. Therefore it does not seem possible that an incorporeal and intellectual substance should be made evil by its own appetite.

112.—Again, appetite can be only of the good or of the seeming good, for the good is that which all beings seek and one is not rendered evil because he seeks the true good. Therefore, every individual who is made evil through his own appetite, must seek a seeming good as though it were truly good. This, however, cannot be unless he is deceived in his judgment, which does not seem capable of happening in an incorporeal and intellectual substance which, as it seems, cannot have a false apprehension. For even in our case, insofar as we understand something, there can be no falsity. Accordingly, Augustine says in the *Book of Eighty-Three Questions* Ed

"Everyone who is deceived, that, indeed, in which he is deceived, he does not understand." And accordingly, concerning those things which we grasp properly by our intellect as well as concerning the first principles, no one can be deceived. Therefore it seems impossible that some incorporeal and intellectual substance should become evil through its own appetite.

113.— Furthermore, a substance which is of an intellectual nature and separate from a body must be absolutely free of time. For the nature of a thing is grasped from its operation while the character of an operation is known from its object. The intelligible, however, as such, is neither here nor now; but it is rather something abstracted both from the dimensions of place as well as from the succession of time. Therefore, the intellectual operation itself, if it be considered by itself, must likewise rise above all temporal succession just as it is abstracted

from all corporeal dimension. And if a magnitude or time be joined to any intellectual operation, this happens only accidentally, just as it happens in our case, in so far as our intellect abstracts intelligible species from phantasms which it likewise considers in them—which can have no place in an incorporeal and intellectual substance. It remains therefore that the operation of such a substance and consequently the substance itself should be altogether outside all temporal succession. And accordingly, Proclus Ec

says, “Every intellect has in eternity, substance, and power, and operation.” And in the Book *On Causes* Ec

it is said that understanding “is on a par with eternity.” Therefore, whatever befits those incorporeal and intellectual substances, befits them always and without succession. Therefore either they were always evil — which is against what has been set down — or they could in no way have been made evil.

114.— Moreover, since God is the very essence of goodness, as Dionysius says in the first chapter of *On the Divine Names* , Ec

it is necessary that the closer they are to God, the more firmly are certain beings strengthened in the participation of goodness. But it is evident that intellectual, incorporeal substances are above all bodies. If, therefore, the highest bodies, namely, the heavenly bodies are not receptive of any disorder or evil, much less could those super-celestial substances be capable of disorder and evil.

Accordingly, Dionysius says in the fourth chapter of the *Celestial Hierarchy* , Ec

“The holy ornaments of the celestial substances participated in the divine teaching in greater measure than those beings that only exist, those that live with an irrational life and those that we call rational; and they have more abundant communications with God, with their minds fixed and, as is befitting, stretched towards what is above them in the power of a love that is divine and unswerving.” The order of things then seems to have this, that just as the lower bodies can be subject to disorder and evil but not the heavenly bodies, so likewise, the intellects joined to the lower bodies can be subject to evil, but not those super-celestial substances. And this view those thinkers seemed to follow who posited that the demons, who for us are the bad angels, are from a lower order and corporeal.