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VOLUME IV

ATHANASIUS: TO THE PEOPLE OF ANTIOCH AND TO THE BISHOPS OF AFRICA

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Introduction to Tomus Ad Antiochenos.

THE word 'tome' (τόμος) means either a section, or, in the case of such a document as that before us, a concise statement. It is commonly applied to synodical letters (cf. the 'Tome' of Leo, A.D. 450, to Flavian).

Upon the accession of Julian (November, 361) the Homœan ascendancy which had marked the last six years of Constantius collapsed. A few weeks after his accession (Feb. 362) an edict recalled all the exiled Bishops. On Feb. 21 Athanasius re-appeared in Alexandria. He was joined there by Lucifer of Cagliari and Eusebius of Vercellæ, who were in exile in Upper Egypt. Once more free, he took up the work of peace which had busied him in the last years of his exile (see Prolegg. ch. ii. §9). With a heathen once more on the throne of the Cæsars, there was everything to sober Christian party spirit, and to promise success to the council which met under Athanasius during the ensuing summer. Among the twenty-one bishops who formed the assembly the most notable are Eusebius of Vercellæ, Asterius of Petra, and Dracontius of Lesser Hermopolis and Adelphius of Onuphis, the friends and correspondents of Athanasius. The rest, with the exception of Anatolius of Eubœa, were all from Egypt and Marmarica, and (probably three only) from S.W. Asia. The council (Newman, *Arians*, v. i.; Gwatkin, *Stud.* p. 205, Krüger, *Lucif.* 45–53, was occupied with four problems: (1) The terms on which communion should be vouchsafed to those Arians who desired to re-unite (§§3, 8). They were to be asked for nothing beyond the Nicene test, and an express anathema against Arianism, including the

doctrine that the Holy Spirit is a Creature. The latter point had been rising into prominence of late, and had called forth from Athanasius his four Discourses to Serapion of Thmuis. The emphatic way in which the point is pressed in §3, implies that an attempt was being made in some quarter to subscribe the Nicene Creed, while maintaining the Arian position with regard to the Holy Spirit. The language of §3 cannot be reconciled with the hypothesis (Gwatkin, *Studies*, 233), that no formal requirement was made by this council on the subject. The person aimed at was possibly Acacius, who (*Serap.* iv. 7) had treated the subject with levity, and yet was now disposed to come to terms (as he did a year later, *Socr.* iii. 25). It is true that we find the names of Macedonius and his followers (N.B. not Eleusius) in the number of the 59 who betook themselves to Liberius (*Socr.* iv. 12), and neither in their letter nor in his reply is there any allusion to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit; and that Basil (*Ep.* 204), with the sanction of Athanasius (cf. below, *Letters* 62, 63), did not press the test upon those who were otherwise orthodox. But the council of 362 has Syrian circumstances specially in view; and however we may explain it, its language is too clear to be mistaken. (On the *general* subject, cf. *Letter* 55.) (2) The Arian Christology also occupied the council (§7). The integrity of Christ's human nature on the one hand, its perfect Union with the Word on the other, are clearly emphasised. This question had begun to come into prominent discussion in several parts of the Christian world (e.g. at Corinth, see *infr.* *Letter* 59), and was soon to give rise to the system of Apollinarius, who, however, it is interesting to note, was a party, by his legates, to the present decision. (3) The state of the Church at Antioch was the most practical problem before the council. Meletius was returning to the presidency of the main body of the Antiochene church, whose chief place of worship was the 'Palaea' (§3). Since the deposition of Eustathius (c. 330), the intransigent or 'protestant' body had been without a bishop, and were headed by the respected presbyter Paulinus. Small in numbers, and dependent for a church upon the good will of the Arians, they were yet strong in the unsullied orthodoxy of their antecedents, in the sympathy of the West and of Athanasius himself, who had given offence at Antioch in 346 by worshipping with them alone. Clearly the right course was that they should reunite with the main body under Meletius, and this was what the council recommended (§3), although, perhaps in deference to the more uncompromising spirits, the union is treated (*ib.* and 4) as a return of the larger body to the smaller, instead of *vice versa*. (For the sequel, see Prolegg. *ubi supra*.) (4) With the rivalry of parties at Antioch, a weighty question of theological terminology was indirectly involved. The word ὑπόστασις had been used in the Nicene anathema as a synonym of οὐσία (see *Excursus A*, pp. 77 *sqq.* above), and in this sense it was commonly used by Athanasius in agreement with the New Testament use of the word

(Westcott on [Heb. i. 3](#)), with Dionysius of Rome, and with the West, to whom ὑπόστασις was etymologically identified with 'Substantia' their (perhaps imperfect) equivalent for οὐσία. On the other hand, the general tendency of Eastern Theology had been to use ὑπόστασις in the sense of Subject or Person, for which purpose it expressed the idea of individual essence less ambiguously than πρόσωπον. This was the use of the word adopted by Origen, Dionysius Alex. (*supr. de Sent. Dionys.*), Alexander of Alexandria (in his letter *Thdt. H. E. i. 4. p. 16, l. 19*), and by Athanasius himself in an earlier work (p. 90, *supr.*) At Antioch the Eustathians appear to have followed the Nicene and Western usage, using the word to emphasise the Individual Unity of God as against Arian or Subordinationist views, while the Meletians protested against the Marcellian monarchianism by insisting on *three* Hypostases in the Godhead. The contradiction was mainly verbal, the two parties being substantially at one as to the doctrine, but varying in its expression. Hence the wise and charitable decision of the council, which came naturally from one who, like Athanasius, could use either expression, though he had come to prefer the Western to the Eastern use¹.

The Tome was carried to Antioch by the five bishops named at the beginning of §1, and there subscribed by Paulinus and Karterius of Antaradus. As to its effect among the friends of Meletius our information is only inferential (see Gwatkin, *Studies*, p. 208). On the supposed disciplinary legislation of this council in relation to the *Syntagma Doctrinæ*, see Prolegg. ch. ii. §§9.

N.B. The translation of the present tract as well as that of the *ad Afros* and of *Letters* 56, 59, 60, 61, was made independently of that by Dr. Bright in his *Later Treatises of S. Athanasius* (see Prolegg. ch. i. §2), but has been carefully collated with it, and in not a few cases improved by its aid. For a fuller commentary on these pieces than has been possible in this volume, the reader is referred to Dr. Bright's work.

¹It may be well to trace briefly the sense of these technical terms, the history and significance of which is a forcible reminder of the inability of Theology to bring the Infinite within the categories of the Finite, to do more than guard our Faith by pointing out the paths which experience has shewn to lead to some false limitation of the fulness of the Revelation of God in Christ.

The distinction (drawn out Prolegg. ch. ii. §3 (2) b) between the primary and secondary sense of οὐσία in Greek metaphysics does not easily fit the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. The οὐσία common to Father and Son is not the name of a *Species*, as 'Man' applies to Peter and Paul. But neither can the idea of πρώτη οὐσία be reconciled with inherence in three distinct personal existences. (Cf. *supr.* p. 409, note 7.)

But here the word ὑπόστασις comes in to help our imagination. The word (see *Socr. H. E. iii. 7. Westcott, ubi supr.* and Newman, *Arians, App. 4*), from various literal senses came to be transferred to the philosophical vocabulary, doing duty as verbal substantive not only for ὑφ'εστάναι but for ὑποκειῖσθαι. Like the concrete ὑποκείμενον it was applied (a) to matter as underlying form, (b) to substance as underlying attributes. In this latter use it served to distinguish πρώτη from δευτέρα οὐσία, expressing

Tome or Synodal Letter to the People of Antioch.

To our beloved and much-desired fellow-ministers Eusebius¹, Lucifer², Asterius³, Kymatius, and Anatolius, Athanasius and the bishops present in Alexandria from Italy and Arabia, Egypt and Libya; Eusebius, Asterius, Gaius, Agathus, Ammonius, Agathodæmon, Dracontius, Adelphius, Hermæon, Marcus, Theodorus, Andreas, Paphnutius, another Marcus, Zoilus, Menas, George, Lucius, Macarius and the rest, all greeting in Christ.

We are persuaded that being ministers of God and good stewards ye are sufficient to order the affairs of the Church in every respect. But since it has come to us, that many who were formerly separated from us by jealousy now wish for peace, while many also having severed their connection with the Arian madmen are desiring our communion, we think it well to write to your courtesy what ourselves and the beloved Eusebius and Asterius have drawn up: yourselves being our beloved and truly most-desired fellow-ministers. We rejoice at the said tidings, and pray that even if any be left still far from us, and if any appear to be in agreement with the Arians, he may promptly leave their madness, so that for the future all men everywhere may say, 'One Lord, one faith⁴.' For as the psalmist says, what is so good or pleasant as for brethren to dwell in unity⁵. But our dwelling is the Church, and our mind ought to be the same. For thus we believe that the Lord also will dwell with us, who says, 'I will dwell with them and walk in them⁶' and 'Here will I dwell for I have a delight therein⁷.' But by 'here' what is meant but there where one faith and religion is preached?

2. Mission of Eusebius and Asterius.

We then of Egypt truly wished to go to you along with our beloved Eusebius and Asterius, for many reasons, but chiefly that we might embrace your affection and together enjoy the said peace and concord. But since, as we declared in our other letters, and as ye may learn from our fellow-ministers, the needs of the church detain us, with much regret we begged the same fellow-ministers of ours, Eusebius and Asterius, to go to you in our stead. And we thank their piety in that although they might have gone at once to their dioceses, they preferred to go to you at all costs, on account of the pressing need of the Church. They therefore having consented, we consoled ourselves with the consideration that you and they being there, we all were present with you in mind.

3. The 'Meletians' to be acknowledged, and all who renounce heresy, especially as to the Holy Spirit.

As many then as desire peace with us, and specially those who assemble in the Old [Church]⁸ and those again who are seceding

¹Eusebius of Vercellæ, exiled (*Hist. Ar.* 33; *Ap. Fug.* 4) after Milan 355. See D.C.B. ii. 374 (93).

²Lucifer of Calaris: cf. *Letters* 50, 51, below, and *Hist. Ar.* 33; *Apol. Fug.* 4.

³The following are all the details that can be collected with regard to the bishops named in the text. Asterius (*Hist. Ar.* 18 note); Kymatius of Paltus in Syria Prima (*Apol. Fug.* 3; *Hist. Ar.* 5); Anatolius of Eubœa (not in D.C.B.); Gaius (*Apol. Fug.* 7; *Hist. Ar.* 72, D.C.B. i. 387, No. 19??); Agathus, *Hist. Ar.* 72 (not in D.C.B.); Ammonius (see *Hist. Ar.* 72 *sub.-fin.*; *Ap. Fug.* 7, *Letter* 49, 7, and *infr.* Appendix, note 1 as to names in D.C.B.); Agathodæmon (*Hist. Ar.* *ibid.*); Dracontius and Adelphius (*Letters* 49, 60); Hermæon (Hermion in §10) unknown, unless the 'Hermes' of *Hist. Ar.* 72; Marcus (2), (cf. D.C.B. iii. 825 (7) for works ascribed to one or the other); Paphnutius, (*Hist. Ar.* 72; D. C. B. iv. 184 (4)); Zoilus of Andropolis (Harduin, &c., *suo jure*, identify him with the bishop of the Syrian Larissa, who signs at Antioch in 363, *Conc.* i. 742; D.C.B. iv. 1220); Andreas, George, Lucius, Macarius, Menas, and Theodore, are unknown and not in D.C.B. The names all recur (excepting those of George, Lucius, Macarius), in §10, where the sees are specified.

⁴[Eph. iv. 5.](#)

⁵See [Ps. cxxxiii. 1.](#)

⁶[2 Cor. vi. 16,](#) and [Lev. xxvi. 12.](#)

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⁸ Ἐν τῇ παλαιᾷ, cf. Theodt. *H. E.* i. 3: possibly the old Town is meant, viz. the main part of Antioch on the left bank of the Orontes, so called in distinction from the 'New' town of Seleucu Callinicus which occupied the Island in the river. The 'Old' *Church*, or Church of the Apostles, was situated in the Old Town, and was at present occupied by the orthodox party of Meletius. The old orthodox party of Paulinus had only one small church in the New Town, granted for their use out of respect for Paulinus by the Arian Bishop Euzoios (*Socr. H. E.* iii. 9.).

from the Arians, do ye call to yourselves, and receive them as parents their sons, and welcome them as tutors and guardians; and unite them to our beloved Paulinus and his people, without requiring more from them than to anathematise the Arian heresy and confess the faith confessed by the holy fathers at Nicæa, and to anathematise also those who say that the Holy Spirit is a Creature and separate from the Essence of Christ. For this is in truth a complete renunciation of the abominable heresy of the Arians, to refuse to divide the Holy Trinity, or to say that any part of it is a creature. For those who, while pretending to cite the faith confessed at Nicæa, venture to blaspheme the Holy Spirit, do nothing more than in words deny the Arian heresy while they retain it in thought. But let the impiety of Sabellius and of Paul of Samosata also be anathematised by all, and the madness of Valentinian and Basilides, and the folly of the Manichæans. For if this be done, all evil suspicion will be removed on all hands, and the faith of the Catholic Church alone be exhibited in purity.

4. *The parties at Antioch to unite.*

But that we, and they who have ever remained in communion with us, hold this faith, we think no one of yourselves nor any one else is ignorant. But since we rejoice with all those who desire re-union, but especially with those that assemble in the Old [church], and as we glorify the Lord exceedingly, as for all things so especially for the good purpose of these men, we exhort you that concord be established with them on these terms, and, as we said above, without further conditions, without namely any further demand upon yourselves on the part of those who assemble in the Old [church], or Paulinus and his fellows propounding anything else, or aught beyond the Nicene definition.

5. *The creed of Sardica not an authorised formula. Question of 'hypostasis.'*

And prohibit even the reading or publication of the paper, much talked of by some, as having been drawn up concerning the Faith at the synod of Sardica. For the synod made no definition of the kind. For whereas some demanded, on the ground that the Nicene synod was defective, the drafting of a creed, and in their haste even attempted it¹, the holy synod assembled in Sardica was indignant, and decreed that no statement of faith should be drafted, but that they should be content with the Faith confessed by the fathers at Nicæa, inasmuch as it lacked nothing but was full of piety, and that it was undesirable for a second creed to be promulged, lest that drafted at Nicæa should be deemed imperfect, and a pretext be given to those who were often wishing to draft and define a creed. So that if a man propound the above or any other paper, stop them, and persuade them rather to keep the peace. For in such men we perceive no motive save only contentiousness. For as to those whom some were blaming for speaking of three Subsistences², on the ground that the phrase is unscriptural and therefore suspicious, we thought it right indeed to require nothing beyond the confession of Nicæa, but on account of the contention we made enquiry of them, whether they meant, like the Arian madmen, subsistences foreign and strange, and alien in essence from one another, and that each Subsistence was divided apart by itself, as is the case with creatures in general and in particular with those begotten of men, or like different substances, such as gold, silver, or brass;—or whether, like other heretics, they meant three Beginnings and three Gods, by speaking of three Subsistences.

They assured us in reply that they neither meant this nor had ever held it. But upon our asking them 'what then do you mean by it, or why do you use such expressions?' they replied, Because they believed in a Holy Trinity, not a trinity in name only, but existing and subsisting in truth, 'both a Father truly existing and subsisting, and a Son truly substantial and subsisting, and a Holy Spirit subsisting and really existing do we acknowledge,' and that neither had they said there were three Gods or three beginnings, nor would they at all tolerate such as said or held so, but that they acknowledged a Holy Trinity but One Godhead, and one Beginning, and that the Son is coessential with the Father, as the fathers said; while the Holy Spirit is not a creature, nor external, but proper to and inseparable from the Essence of the Father and the Son.

6. *The question of one Subsistence (Hypostasis) or three, not to be pressed.*

Having accepted then these men's interpretation and defence of their language, we made enquiry of those blamed by them for speaking of One Subsistence, whether they use the expression in the sense of Sabellius, to the nega

¹The draft is given by Theodt. *H. E.* ii. 8; it insists vehemently on the 'One Hypostasis.'

²ὑποστάσεις

tion of the Son and the Holy Spirit, or as though the Son were non-substantial, or the Holy Spirit impersonal¹. But they in their turn assured us that they neither meant this nor had ever held it, but 'we use the word Subsistence thinking it the same thing to say Subsistence or Essence;' 'But we hold that there is One, because the Son is of the Essence of the Father, and because of the identity of nature. For we believe that there is one Godhead, and that it has one nature, and not that there is one nature of the Father, from which that of the Son and of the Holy Spirit are distinct.' Well, thereupon they who had been blamed for saying there were three Subsistences agreed with the others, while those who had spoken of One Essence, also confessed the doctrine of the former as interpreted by them. And by both sides Arius was anathematised as an adversary of Christ, and Sabellius, and Paul of Samosata, as impious men, and Valentinus and Basilides as aliens from the truth, and Manichæus as an inventor of mischief. And all, by God's grace, and after the above explanations, agree together that the faith confessed by the fathers at Nicæa is better than the said phrases, and that for the future they would prefer to be content to use its language.

7. *The human Nature of Christ complete, not Body only.*

But since also certain seemed to be contending together concerning the fleshly Economy of the Saviour, we enquired of both parties. And what the one confessed, the others also agreed to, that the Word did not, as it came to the prophets, so dwell in a holy man at the consummation of the ages, but that the Word Himself was made flesh, and being in the Form of God, took the form of a servant², and from Mary after the flesh became man for us, and that thus in Him the human race is perfectly and wholly delivered from sin and quickened from the dead, and given access to the kingdom of the heavens. For they confessed also that the Saviour had not a body without a soul, nor without sense or intelligence; for it was not possible, when the Lord had become man for us, that His body should be without intelligence: nor was the salvation effected in the Word Himself a salvation of body only, but of soul also. And being Son of God in truth, He became also Son of Man, and being God's Only-begotten Son, He became also at the same time 'firstborn among many brethren³.' Wherefore neither was there one Son of God before Abraham, another after Abraham⁴: nor was there one that raised up Lazarus, another that asked concerning him; but the same it was that said as man, 'Where does Lazarus lie⁵;' and as God raised him up: the same that as man and in the body spat, but divinely as Son of God opened the eyes of the man blind from his birth⁶; and while, as Peter says⁷, in the flesh He suffered, as God opened the tomb and raised the dead. For which reasons, thus understanding all that is said in the Gospel, they assured us that they held the same truth about the Word's Incarnation and becoming Man.

8. *Questions of words must not be suffered to divide those who think alike.*

These things then being thus confessed, we exhort you not hastily to condemn those who so confess, and so explain the phrases they use, nor to reject them, but rather to accept them as they desire peace and defend themselves, while you check and rebuke, as of suspicious views, those who refuse so to confess and to explain their language. But while you refuse toleration to the latter, counsel the others also who explain and hold aright, not to enquire further into each other's opinions, nor to fight about words to no useful purpose, nor to go on contending with the above phrases, but to agree in the mind of piety. For they who are not thus minded, but only stir up strife with such petty phrases, and seek something beyond what was drawn up at Nicæa, do nothing except 'give their neighbour turbid confusion to drink⁸,' like men who grudge peace and love dissensions. But do ye, as good men and faithful servants and stewards of the Lord, stop and check what gives offence and is strange, and value above all things peace of that kind, faith being sound. Perhaps God will have pity on us, and unite what is divided, and, there being once more one flock⁹, we shall all have one leader, even our Lord Jesus Christ.

9. *The above terms unanimously agreed upon.*

These things, albeit there was no need to require anything beyond the synod of Nicæa, nor to tolerate the language of contention, yet for the sake of peace, and to prevent the rejection of men who wish to believe aright, we enquired into. And what they confessed, we put briefly into writing, we namely who are left in Alexandria, in common

¹ἀνουσίου, ἀνυποστάτου, the words are rendered 'unessential' and 'not subsisting' in another connection, *supr.* p. 434, &c.

²Phil. ii. 7, &c.

³Rom. viii. 29.

⁴John viii. 58.

⁵John 11.34.

⁶Mark viii. 22, &c.

⁷1 Pet. iv. 1.

⁸Hab. ii. 15.

with our fellow-ministers, Asterius and Eusebius. For most of us had gone away to our dioceses. But do you on your part read this in public where you are wont to assemble, and be pleased to invite all to you thither. For it is right that the letter should be there first read, and that there those who desire and strive for peace should be re-united. And then, when they are re-united, in the spot where all the laity think best, in the presence of your courtesy, the public assemblies should be held, and the Lord be glorified by all together. The brethren who are with me greet you. I pray that you may be well, and remember us to the Lord; both I, Athanasius, and likewise the other bishops assembled, sign, and those sent by Lucifer, bishop of the island of Sardinia, two deacons, Herennius and Agapetus; and from Paulinus, Maximus and Calemerus, deacons also. And there were present certain monks of Apolinarius¹ the bishop, sent from him for the purpose.

10. *Signatures.*

The names of the several bishops to whom the letter is addressed are: Eusebius of the city of Virgilli in Gaul², Lucifer of the island of Sardinia, Asterius of Petra, Arabia, Kymatius of Paltus, Cœle-Syria, Anatolius of Eubœa.

Senders: the Pope Athanasius, and those present with him in Alexandria, viz.: Eusebius, Asterius, and the others above-mentioned, Gaius of Paratonium³ in Hither Libya, Agathus of Phragonis and part of Elearchia in Egypt, Ammonius of Pachnemunis⁴ and the rest of Elearchia, Agathodæmon of Schedia⁵ and Menelaitas, Dracontius of Lesser Hermupolis, Adelphius of Onuphis⁶ in Lychni, Hermion of Tanes⁷, Marcus of Zygra⁸, Hither Libya, Theodorus of Athribis⁹, Andreas of Arsenoe, Paphnutius of Sais, Marcus of Philæ, Zoilus of Andrôs¹⁰, Menas of Antiphra¹¹.

Eusebius also signs the following in Latin, of which the translation is:

I Eusebius, according to your exact confession made on either side by agreement concerning the Subsistences, also add my agreement; further concerning the Incarnation of our Saviour, namely that the Son of God has become Man, taking everything upon Himself without sin, like the composition of our old man, I ratify the text of the letter. And whereas the Sardican paper is ruled out, to avoid the appearance of issuing anything beyond the creed of Nicæa, I also add my consent, in order that the creed of Nicæa may not seem by it to be excluded, and [I agree] that it should not be published. I pray for your health in the Lord.

I Asterius agree to what is above written, and pray for your health in the Lord.

11. *The 'Tome' signed at Antioch.*

And after this Tome was sent off from Alexandria, thus signed by the aforesaid, [the recipients] in their turn signed it:

I Paulinus hold thus, as I received from the fathers, that the Father perfectly exists and subsists, and that the Son perfectly subsists, and that the Holy Spirit perfectly subsists. Wherefore also I accept the above explanation concerning the Three Subsistences, and the one Subsistence, or rather Essence, and those who hold thus. For it is pious to hold and confess the Holy Trinity in one Godhead. And concerning the Word of the Father becoming Man for us, I hold as it is written, that, as John says, the Word was made Flesh, not in the sense of those most impious persons who say that He has undergone a change, but that He has become Man for us, being born of the holy Virgin Mary and of the Holy Spirit. For the Saviour had a body neither without soul, nor without sense, nor without intelligence. For it were impossible, the Lord being made Man for us, that His body should be without intelligence. Wherefore I anathematise those who set aside the Faith confessed at Nicæa, and who do not say that the Son is of the Father's Essence, and coessential with the Father. Moreover I anathematise those who say that the Holy Spirit is a Creature made through the Son. Once more I anathematise the heresy of Sabellius and of Photinus¹², and every heresy, walking in the Faith of Nicæa, and in all that is above written. I Karterius¹³ pray for your health.

¹Of Laodicea, the later heresiarch.

²i.e. Vercellæ, in 'Cisalpine' Gaul, or Lombardy.

³In Marmarica or 'Libya Siccior' near the *Ras el Harzeit*.

⁴Capital of the Sebennyitic nome, near *Handahur*.

⁵A town and custom-house near Andropolis, between Alxa. and the Canopic arm of the Nile.

⁶Chief town of a nome in the Delta.

⁷'Zoan.'

⁸West of Alxa. toward the Libyan dessert, and not far from Zygra in Marmarica.

⁹A very important town near the head of the Tanite arm. See Amm. Marc. xxii. 16. 6, who calls it one of the four largest cities in Egypt proper.

¹⁰i.e. Andropolis (above, note 11).

¹¹West of Alxa. toward the Libyan dessert, and not far from Zygra in Marmarica.

¹²See Prolegg. ch. ii. §3 (2) *ad fin.* This is remarkable as the first Eastern condemnation of Photinus by name from the Nicene side. He had been condemned at Sirmium in 347, and under pressure from the East apparently at Milan in 345 and 347, as well as in the Councils of Antioch in 344, and Sirmium in 351 (*supr.* pp. 463, 464). On the document of Paulinus, see Epiph. *Hær.* lxxvii. 20, 21, also Dr. Bright's note.

¹³Bishop of Antaradus on the Syrian coast (D.C.B. i. 410 (3)); see *de Fuga*, 3, and *Hist. Ar.* 5. note 6a.

Appendix.

EXILE OF ATHANASIUS UNDER JULIAN, 362–363.

THE fragment which follows, containing an interesting report of a story told by Athanasius to Ammonius, Bishop of Pachnemunis, is inserted here as furnishing undesignedly important details as to the movements of Athanasius in 363. See Prolegg. ch. v. §3 h, also ch. ii. §9. It is excerpted by Montfaucon from an account of the Abbat Theodore, written for Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria (385–412) by a certain Ammon (*Acta SS. Maii*, Tom. iii. Append., pp. 63–71). The writer was at that time a bishop (see unknown): he was born about 335, as he was seventeen years old when he embraced the monastic life a year 'and more' after the proclamation of Gallus as Cæsar ([Mar. 15. 351](#)). About the time of the expulsion of Athanasius by Syrianus he retired to Nitria, where he remained many years, and finally returned to Alexandria, where he appears (*infra*) as one of the clergy; the date of his elevation to the Episcopate cannot be fixed, but it obviously cannot be as early as 356–7 (so D.C.B. i. 102 (2), and probably is much later even than 362, in which year he would still be hardly twenty-eight. (He mentions the objections to the election of Athanasius, who was probably 30 in 328, on the ground of his youth.) Accordingly (apart from the different form of his name) he cannot¹ be identified with either of the Ammonii referred to in *Tom. ad. Ant.* 1, note 3; *Hist. Ar.* 72, &c. The elder of the two does not concern us here: the younger (*supr.* pp. 483, 486), is the Ammonius to whom Athanasius told the story in the hearing of Ammon, and was now dead. Of Hermon, Bishop of Bubastis, mentioned as present along with Ammonius, Theophilus, and Ammon when the story was told, nothing is known (except that the date D.C.B. iii. 4 (2) is over 25 years too early). As he is not 'of blessed memory,' he was possibly still living during the Episcopate of Theophilus and Ammon. (There is nothing to identify him with the bishop of *Tanes* in *Tom. Ant.* 1, 10.)

The story itself is given at second-hand, from Ammon's recollection of a statement by Athanasius some 12 to 15 years (at least) before he wrote. The prophetic details about Jovian may therefore be put down to natural accretion (*Letter* 56, note 2). But (apart from the fact that Julian's death must have been rumoured long before the tardy official announcement of it, Tillem. *Emp.* iv. 449 *sqq.*, Prolegg. *ubi supr.*) that Athanasius told of the φήμη of Julian's death among the monks of the Thebaid need not be doubted. The story is one of a very large class, many of which are fairly authenticated. To say nothing of the φήμη at the battle of Mycale; we have in recent times the authority of Mr. R. Stuart Poole, of the British Museum, for the fact that on the night of the death of the Duke of Cambridge (July 9, 1850), Mr. Pooles's brother 'suddenly took out his watch and said, "Note the time, the Duke of Cambridge is dead," and that the time proved to be correct;' also the case of Mr. Edmonds who saw at Leicester, early in the morning of Nov. 4, 1837, an irruption of water into the works of the Thames tunnel, by which a workman was drowned; (other curious cases in 'Phantasms of the Living' vol. 2, pp. 367 *sqq.*). The letter or memoir from which this 'Narratio' is taken, was published by the Bollandists from a Medicean MS., and it bears every internal mark of genuineness. In what way it is integrally connected with the *Vita Antonii* (Gwatkin, *Studies*, p. 101), except by the fact that it happens to mention Antony, I fail to see. On the subject of Theodore of Tabenne, the main subject of the memoir, see Amélineau's *S. Pakhôme* (*ut supra*, p. 188), also *infr.* *Letter* 58, note 3.

"As I think your holiness was present and heard, when his blessedness Pope Athanasius, in the presence of other clergy of Alexandria and of my insignificance, formerly related in the Great Church something about Theodorus², to the Ammonius of blessed memory, bishop of Elearchia³, and to Hermon, bishop of the city of Bumastica⁴; I write only what is necessary to put your reverence in mind of what he said. When the famous bishops were wondering at the Blessed Antony, Pope Athanasius—for Antony was often with him—said to them:—

I saw also at that season great men of God, who are lately dead, Theodorus chief of the Tabennesian monks, and the father of the monks around⁵ Antinoopolis, called Abbas Pammon. For when I was pursued by Julian, and was expecting to be slain by him—for this news was shewn me by good friends—these two came to me on the same day at Antinoopolis. And having planned to hide with Theodorus, I embarked on his vessel, which was completely covered in, while Abbas Pammon accompanied us. And when the wind was unfavourable, I was very anxious and prayed; and the monks with Theodore got out and towed the boat. And as Abbas Pammon was encouraging me in my anxiety, I said 'Believe me when I say that my heart is never so trustful in time of peace as in time of persecution. For I have good confidence that suffering for Christ, and strengthened by His mercy, even though I am slain, I shall find mercy with Him.' And while I was still saying this, Theodorus fixed his eyes on Abbas Pammon and smiled, while the other nearly laughed. So I said to them, 'Why have you laughed at my words, do you convict me of cowardice?' and Theodorus said to Abbas Pammon, 'Tell him why we smiled.' At which the latter said, 'You ought to tell him.' So Theodorus said, 'in this very hour Julian has been slain in Persia' for so God had declared beforehand concerning him: 'the haughty man, the despiser and the boaster, shall finish nothing⁶. But a Christian Emperor shall arise who shall be illustrious, but shall live only a short time⁷. Wherefore you ought not to harass yourselves by departing into the Thebaid, but secretly to go to the Court, for you will meet him by the way, and having been kindly received by him, will return to your Church. And he soon shall be taken by God.' And so it happened. From which cause I believe, that many who are well pleasing to God live unnoticed, especially among the monks. For those men unnoticed also, such as the blessed Amun and the holy Theodorus⁸ in the mountain of Nitria, and the servant of God, the happy old man Pammon."

¹The Articles in D.C.B. i. 102 (2) and (3), combine variously data belonging to three distinct persons. (1) The old bishop ordained by Alexander (see unknown, see *Hist. Ar.* 72 init.). Signs the synodal letter of the Sardican Council; is one of the infirm prelates cruelly expelled by George, along with coffins to bury them in case of the journey being fatal (see also *Apol. Fug.* 7). (2) Another Ammonius, probably not a signatory of Sardica (cf. *Apol. Ar.* 50, with *Ep. Fest.* for 347), but a contemporary of Serapion, sent by Athanasius with Serap. to Constantius in 353. He had been a monk, but was then (*Dracont.* 7) bishop of Pachnemunis and part of Elearchia (*Tom.* 10), in which capacity, along with other exiles of 356–7 (*Hist. Ar.* 72; *Ap. Fug.* 7), he attends the Council of 362. He is the 'Ammonius of blessed memory' in the text. (3) Ammon, born 335, baptized 352, monk at Tabenne and Nitria 352–367 (?), then at Alexandria, and finally (about 390) bishop of an unknown see in Egypt: wrote a short account of S. Theodore for Pope Theophilus.

²Cf. *Vit. Ant.* 60, and see below, letters 57, 58, and *Acta SS. Maii*, vol. iii. pp. 334–357, and *Appx.*; also D.C.B. iv. 954 (53).

³*Tom. Ant.* 4.

⁴i.e. Bubastis.

⁵Opposite Hermupolis Magna in Upper Egypt.

⁶*Habak. ii. 5.*

⁷Cf. *Letter* 56, note 2.

⁸On *this* Theodore, see D.C.B. s.v. no. (67).

Introduction to Ad Afros Epistola Synodica.

(WRITTEN ABOUT 369.)

THE synodical letter which follows was written after the accession of Damasus to the Roman see (366). Whether it was written before any Western synod had formally condemned Auxentius of Milan (see *Letter* 59. 1) may be doubted: the complaint (§10) is rather that he still retains possession of his see, which in fact he did until 374, the year after the death of Athanasius. At any rate, Damasus had had time to hold a large synod, the letter of which had reached Athanasius. The history of the synods held by Damasus seems hopelessly obscure, and the date of our encyclical is correspondingly doubtful. Damasus certainly held at one time a synod of some 90 bishops from Italy and the Gauls, the letter of which was sent to Illyricum and to the East (*Thdt. H. E.* ii. 22; *Soz.* vi. 23; *Hard. Conc.* i. 771: the Latin of the copy sent to Illyricum is dated 'Siricio et Ardabure vv. cl. coss.,' an additional element of confusion). The name of Sabinus at the end of the Latin copy sent to the East seems to fix the date of this synod (D.C.B. i. 294) to 372. Thus the synod referred to §1 below must have been an earlier one, the acts of which are lost. It cannot have been held before the end of 367 or beginning of 368 (*Montf. Vit. Ath.*), as the earlier period of the episcopate of Damasus was fully occupied by different matters. Accordingly our encyclical falls between 368 and 372, probably as soon as Damasus had

been able to assemble so large a synod, and Athanasius to write in reply (§10). It may be added that the letter of the Damascine synod of 372 refers in ambiguous terms to the condemnation of Auxentius as having already taken place, ('damnatum esse liquet:' was this because they felt unable to dislodge him? see Tillem. viii. 400).

The occasion of the letter is two-fold: principally to counteract the efforts that were being made in the West, and especially in Africa (still later in the time of S. Augustine, see *Collat. cum Maximin.* 4; and for earlier Arian troubles in Africa, *Nicene Lib.* vol. i. p. 287), to represent the council of Ariminum as a final settlement of the Faith, and so to set aside the authority of the Nicene definition. The second object is involved in the first. The head and centre of the dying efforts of Arianism in the Roman West was apparently Auxentius, 'one of the last survivors of the victory of Ariminum.' That he should be still undisturbed in his see, while working far and wide to the damage of the Catholic cause, was to Athanasius a distressing surprise, and he was urging the Western bishops to put an end to such an anomaly.

In the encyclical before us he begins (1–3) by contrasting the synod of Nicæa with that of Ariminum, and pointing out the real history of the latter, going over again to some extent the ground of the earlier sections of the *de Synodis*. He touches (3. end) on the disastrous termination of the Council. He then proceeds to vindicate the Nicene creed (4–8) as essentially Scriptural, i.e. as the only possible bar to the unscriptural formulæ of the Arians. This he illustrates (5, 6) by an account, substantially identical with that in the *de Decretis*, of the evasions of every other test by the Asian bishops at Nicæa. He repeatedly urges that the formula was no invention of the Nicene Fathers (6, 9), appealing to the admission of Eusebius to this effect. He attacks the Homœan position, shewing that its characteristic watchword merely dissembles the alternative between Anomœanism and the true co-essentiality of the Son (7). The most novel argument in the Letter is that of §4, where he refutes the repudiation of οὐσία and ὑπόστασις in the creed of Niké by an argument from Scripture, starting from [Ex. iii. 14](#) (as *de Decr.* 22 and *de Syn.* 29), and turning upon the equivalence of the two terms in question. This would appeal to Westerns, and expresses the usual view of Ath. himself (*Tom. ad Ant. Introd.*) but would not have much force with those who were accustomed to the Eastern terminology.

The insistence (in §11) that the Nicene formula involves the Godhead of the Spirit should be noted. It seems to imply that, as a rule, such an explicit assurance as is insisted upon in *Tom ad Ant.* 3, would be superfluous.

The completeness of the work of Athanasius, now very near his end, in winning over all Egypt to unanimity in faith and in personal attachment to himself, is quaintly reflected in the naive assurance (§10) that the bishops of Egypt and the Libyas 'are all of one mind, and we always sign for one another if any chance not to be present.'

The translation has been carefully compared with that of Dr. Bright (*supr.* p. 482).

To the Bishops of Africa.

LETTER OF NINETY BISHOPS OF EGYPT AND LIBYA, INCLUDING ATHANASIUS.

1. *Pre-Eminence of the Council of Nicæa. Efforts to exalt that of Ariminum at its expense.*

The letters are sufficient which were written by our beloved fellow-minister Damasus, bishop of the Great Rome, and the large number of bishops who assembled along with him; and equally so are those of the other synods which were held, both in Gaul and in Italy, concerning the sound Faith which Christ gave us, the Apostles preached, and the Fathers, who met at Nicæa from all this world of ours, have handed down. For so great a stir was made at that time about the Arian heresy, in order that they who had fallen into it might be reclaimed, while its inventors might be made manifest. To that council, accordingly, the whole world has long ago agreed, and now, many synods having been held, all men have been put in mind, both in Dalmatia and Dardania, Macedonia, Epirus and Greece, Crete, and the other islands, Sicily, Cyprus, Pamphylia, Lycia, and Isauria, all Egypt and the Libyas, and most of the Arabians have come to know it, and marvelled at those who signed it, inasmuch as even if there were left among them any bitterness springing up from the root of the Arians; we mean Auxentius, Ursacius, Valens and their fellows, by these letters they have been cut off and isolated. The confession arrived at at Nicæa was, we say once more, sufficient and enough by itself, for the subversion of all irreligious heresy, and for the security and furtherance of the doctrine of the Church. But since we have heard that certain wishing to oppose it are attempting to cite a synod supposed to have been held at Ariminum, and are eagerly striving that it should prevail rather than the other, we think it right to write and put you in mind, not to endure anything of the sort: for this is nothing else but a second growth of the Arian heresy. For what else do they wish for who reject the synod held against it, namely the Nicene, if not that the cause of Arius should prevail? What then do such men deserve, but to be called Arians, and to share

the punishment of the Arians? For they were not afraid of God, who says, 'Remove not the eternal boundaries which thy fathers placed¹,' and 'He that speaketh against father or mother, let him die the death²:' they were not in awe of their fathers, who enjoined that they who hold the opposite of their confession should be anathema.

2. *The Synod of Nicæa contrasted with the local Synods held since.*

For this was why an ecumenical synod has been held at Nicæa, 318 bishops assembling to discuss the faith on account of the Arian heresy, namely, in order that local synods should no more be held on the subject of the Faith, but that, even if held, they should not hold good. For what does that Council lack, that any one should seek to innovate? It is full of piety, beloved; and has filled the whole world with it. Indians have acknowledged it, and all Christians of other barbarous nations. Vain then is the labour of those who have often made attempts against it. For already the men we refer to have held ten or more synods, changing their ground at each, and while taking away some things from earlier decisions, in later ones make changes and additions. And so far they have gained nothing by writing, erasing, and using force, not knowing that 'every plant that the Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be plucked up³.' But the word of the Lord which came through the ecumenical Synod at Nicæa, abides for ever⁴. For if one compare number with number, these who met at Nicæa are more than those at local synods, inasmuch as the whole is greater than the part. But if a man wishes to discern the reason of the Synod at Nicæa, and that of the large number subsequently held by

¹Prov. xxii. 28.

²Ex. xxi. 17.

³Matt. xv. 13.

⁴1 Pet. i. 25.

these men, he will find that while there was a reasonable cause for the former, the others were got together by force, by reason of hatred and contention. For the former council was summoned because of the Arian heresy, and because of Easter, in that they of Syria, Cilicia and Mesopotamia differed from us, and kept the feast at the same season as the Jews. But thanks to the Lord, harmony has resulted not only as to the Faith, but also as to the Sacred Feast. And that was the reason of the synod at Nicæa. But the subsequent ones were without number, all however planned in opposition to the ecumenical.

3. *The true nature of the proceedings at Ariminum.*

This being pointed out, who will accept those who cite the synod of Ariminum, or any other, against the Nicene? or who could help hating men who set at nought their fathers' decisions, and put above them the newer ones, drawn up at Ariminum with contention and violence? or who would wish to agree with these men, who do not accept even their own? For in their own ten or more synods, as I said above, they wrote now one thing, now another, and so came out clearly as themselves the accusers of each one. Their case is not unlike that of the Jewish traitors in old times. For just as they left the one well of the living water, and hewed for themselves broken cisterns, which cannot hold water, as the prophet Jeremiah has it¹, so these men, fighting against the one ecumenical synod, 'hewed for themselves' many synods, and all appeared empty, like 'a sheaf without strength².' Let us not then tolerate those who cite the Ariminian or any other synod against that of Nicæa. For even they who cite that of Ariminum appear not to know what was done there, for else they would have said nothing about it. For ye know, beloved, from those who went from you to Ariminum, how Ursacius and Valens, Eudoxius³ and Auxentius⁴ (and there Demophilus⁵ also was with them), were deposed, after wishing to write something to supersede the Nicene decisions. For on being requested to anathematise the Arian heresy, they refused, and preferred to be its ringleaders. So the bishops, like genuine servants of the Lord and orthodox believers (and there were nearly 200⁶), wrote that they were satisfied with the Nicene alone, and desired and held nothing more or less than that. This they also reported to Constantius, who had ordered the assembling of the synod. But the men who had been deposed at Ariminum went off to Constantius, and caused those who had reported against them to be insulted, and threatened with not being allowed to return to their dioceses, and to be treated with violence in Thrace that very winter, to compel them to tolerate their innovations.

4. *The Nicene formula in accordance with Scripture.*

If then any cite the synod of Ariminum, firstly let them point out the deposition of the above persons, and what the bishops wrote, namely that none should seek anything beyond what had been agreed upon by the fathers at Nicæa, nor cite any synod save that one. But this they suppress, but make much of what was done by violence in Thrace⁷; thus shewing that they are dissemblers of the Arian heresy, and aliens from the sound Faith. And again, if a man were to examine and compare the great synod itself, and those held by these people, he would discover the piety of the one and the folly of the others. They who assembled at Nicæa did so not after being deposed: and secondly, they confessed that the Son was of the Essence of the Father. But the others, after being deposed again and again, and once more at Ariminum itself, ventured to write that it ought not to be said

that the Son had Essence or Subsistence. This enables us to see, brethren, that they of Nicæa breathe the spirit of Scripture, in that God says in Exodus⁸, 'I am that I am,' and through Jeremiah, 'Who is in His substance⁹ and hath seen His word;' and just below, 'if they had stood in My subsistence¹⁰ and heard My words:' now subsistence is essence, and means nothing else but very being, which Jeremiah calls existence, in the words, 'and they heard not the voice of existence¹¹.' For subsistence, and essence, is existence: for it is, or in other words exists. This Paul also perceiving wrote to the Hebrews, 'who being the brightness of his glory, and the express Image of his subsistence¹².' But the others, who think they know the Scriptures and call themselves wise, and do not choose to speak of subsistence in God (for thus they wrote at Ariminum and at other synods of theirs), were surely with justice deposed, saying as they did,

¹ii. 13.

²Hos. viii. 7, LXX.

³Eudoxius was at Seleucia, not at Ariminum.

⁴See note on §10 *infr.*

⁵Bishop of Berœa in Macedonia Tertia, and from 370–380 successor of Eudoxius as Arian bishop of CP.

⁶There were some 400 in all, so that the orthodox majority must have been far more than 200 (see *de Syn.* 8, 33). But Gwatkin (*Stud.* 170, note 3), inclines to accept the statement in the text.

⁷i.e. at Niké, 359.

⁸Ex. iii. 14.

⁹ὕποστήματι, *Jer.* xxiii. 18, LXX.

¹⁰ὕποστάσει, *v. Jer.* 23.22.

¹¹ὕπαρξις, *Jer.* ix. 10, LXX.

¹²Heb. i. 3.

like the fool did in his heart¹, 'God is not.' And again the fathers taught at Nicæa that the Son and Word is not a creature, nor made, having read 'all things were made through Him²,' and 'in Him were all things created, and consist³;' while these men, Arians rather than Christians, in their other synods have ventured to call Him a creature, and one of the things that are made, things of which He Himself is the Artificer and Maker. For if 'through Him all things were made' and He too is a creature, He would be the creator of Himself. And how can what is being created create? or He that is creating be created?

5. How the test 'Coessential' came to be adopted at Nicæa.

But not even thus are they ashamed, although they say such things as cause them to be hated by all; citing the Synod of Ariminum, only to shew that there also they were deposed. And as to the actual definition of Nicæa, that the Son is coessential with the Father, on account of which they ostensibly oppose the synod, and buzz around everywhere like gnats about the phrase, either they stumble at it from ignorance, like those who stumble at the stone of stumbling that was laid in Sion⁴; or else they know, but for that very reason are constantly opposing and murmuring, because it is an accurate declaration and full in the face of their heresy. For it is not the phrases that vex them, but the condemnation of themselves which the definition contains. And of this, once again, they are themselves the cause, even if they wish to conceal the fact of which they are perfectly aware,—But we must now mention it, in order that hence also the accuracy of the great synod may be shewn. For⁵ the assembled bishops wished to put away the impious phrases devised by the Arians, namely 'made of nothing,' and that the Son was 'a thing made,' and a 'creature,' and that 'there was a time when He was not,' and that 'He is of mutable nature.' And they wished to set down in writing the acknowledged language of Scripture, namely that the Word is of God by nature Only-begotten, Power, Wisdom of the Father, Very God, as John says, and as Paul wrote, brightness of the Father's glory and express image of His person⁶. But Eusebius and his fellows, drawn on by their own error, kept conferring together as follows: 'Let us assent. For we also are of God: for "there is one God of whom are all things⁷," and "old things are passed away, behold all things are made new, but all things are of God⁸.'" And they considered what is written in the Shepherd⁹, 'Before all things believe that God is one, who created and set all things in order, and made them to exist out of nothing.' But the Bishops, beholding their craftiness, and the cunning of their impiety, expressed more plainly the sense of the words 'of God,' by writing that the Son is of the Essence of God, so that whereas the Creatures, since they do not exist of themselves without a cause, but have a beginning of their existence, are said to be 'of God,' the Son alone might be deemed proper to the Essence of the Father. For this is peculiar to one who is Only-begotten and true Word in relation to a Father, and this was the reason why the words 'of the essence' were adopted. Again¹⁰, upon the bishops asking the dissembling minority if they agreed that the Son was not a Creature, but the Power and only Wisdom of the Father, and

the Eternal Image, in all respects exact, of the Father, and true God, Eusebius and his fellows were observed exchanging nods with one another, as much as to say 'this applies to us men also, for we too are called "the image and glory of God"¹¹,' and of us it is said, "For we which live are always"¹²,' and there are many Powers, and "all the power"¹³ of the Lord went out of the land of Egypt," while the caterpillar and the locust are called His "great power"¹⁴.' And "the Lord of powers"¹⁵ is with us, the God of Jacob is our help." For we hold that we are proper¹⁶ to God, and not merely so, but insomuch that He has even called us brethren. Nor does it vex us, even if they call the Son Very God. For when made He exists in verity.'

6. *The Nicene test not unscriptural in sense, nor a novelty.*

Such was the corrupt mind of the Arians. But here too the Bishops, beholding their craftiness, collected from the Scriptures the figures of brightness, of the river and the well, and of the relation of the express Image to the Subsistence, and the texts, 'in thy light shall we see light'¹⁷,' and 'I and the Father are one'¹⁸.' And lastly they wrote more plainly, and concisely, that the Son was coessential with the Father; for all the above passages signify this. And their murmuring, that the phrases are unscriptural, is exposed as vain by themselves, for they have uttered their impieties in unscriptural terms: (for such are 'of

¹Ps. xiv. 1.

²John i. 3.

³Col. i. 16.

⁴Rom. ix. 33.

⁵This passage repeats in substance the account in *de Decr.* 19.

⁶ὑπόστασις

⁷1 Cor. viii. 6.

⁸2 Cor. v. 17, 18.

⁹Herm. Mand. 1.

¹⁰Cf. *de Decr.* §20, *ubi supr.*

¹¹1 Cor. xi. 7.

¹²Ps. cxv. 18 (v. 26, LXX.); cf. 2 Cor. iv. 11.

¹³δύναμις, Ex. xii. 41

¹⁴Joel ii. 25.

¹⁵δυνάμεων, Ps. xlvii. 7.

¹⁶ιδίους.

¹⁷Ps. xxxvi. 9.

¹⁸John x. 30.

nothing' and 'there was a time when He was not'), while yet they find fault because they were condemned by unscriptural terms pious in meaning. While they, like men sprung from a dunghill, verily 'spoke of the earth'¹, the Bishops, not having invented their phrases for themselves, but having testimony from their Fathers, wrote as they did. For ancient bishops, of the Great Rome and of our city, some 130 years ago, wrote² and censured those who said that the Son was a creature and not coessential with the Father. And Eusebius knew this, who was bishop of Cæsarea, and at first an accomplice³ of the Arian heresy; but afterwards, having signed at the Council of Nicæa, wrote to his own people affirming as follows: 'we know that certain eloquent and distinguished bishops and writers even of ancient date used the word "coessential" with reference to the Godhead of the Father and the Son.'

7. *The position that the Son is a Creature inconsistent and untenable.*

Why then do they go on citing the Synod of Ariminum, at which they were deposed? Why do they reject that of Nicæa, at which their Fathers signed the confession that the Son is of the Father's Essence and coessential with Him? Why do they run about? For now they are at war not only with the bishops who met at Nicæa, but with their own great bishops and their own friends. Whose heirs or successors then are they? How can they call men fathers, whose confession, well and apostolically drawn up, they will not accept? For if they think they can object to it, let them speak, or rather answer, that they may be convicted of falling foul of themselves, whether they believe the Son when He says, 'I and my Father are one,' and 'he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father'⁴.' 'Yes,' they must answer, 'since it is written we believe it.' But if they are asked how they are one, and how he

that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father, of course, we suppose they will say, 'by reason of resemblance,' unless they have quite come to agree with those who hold the brother-opinion to theirs, and are called⁵ Anomœans. But if once more they are asked, 'how is He like?' they brasen it out and say, 'by perfect virtue and harmony, by having the same will with the Father, by not willing what the Father wills not.' But let them understand that one assimilated to God by virtue and will is liable also to the purpose of changing; but the Word is not thus, unless He is 'like' in part, and as we are, because He is not like [God] in essence also. But these characteristics belong to us, who are originate, and of a created nature. For we too, albeit we cannot become like God in essence, yet by progress in virtue imitate God, the Lord granting us this grace, in the words, 'Be ye merciful as your Father is merciful:' 'be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect⁶.' But that originate things are changeable, no one can deny, seeing that angels transgressed, Adam disobeyed, and all stand in need of the grace of the Word. But a mutable thing cannot be like God who is truly unchangeable, any more than what is created can be like its creator. This is why, with regard to us, the holy man said, 'Lord, who shall be likened unto thee⁷,' and 'who among the gods is like unto thee, Lord⁸;' meaning by gods those who, while created, had yet become partakers of the Word, as He Himself said, 'If he called them gods to whom the word of God came⁹.' But things which partake cannot be identical with or similar to that whereof they partake. For example, He said of Himself, 'I and the Father are one¹⁰,' implying that things originate are not so. For we would ask those who allege the Ariminian Synod, whether a created essence can say, 'what things I see my Father make, those I make also¹¹.' For things originate are made and do not make; or else they made even themselves. Why, if, as they say, the Son is a Creature and the Father is His Maker, surely the Son would be His own maker, as He is able to make what the Father makes, as He said. But such a supposition is absurd and utterly untenable, for none can make himself.

8. *The Son's relation to the Father essential, not merely ethical.*

Once more, let them say whether things originate could say¹², 'all things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine.' Now, He has the prerogative of creating and making, of Eternity, of omnipotence, of immutability. But things originate cannot have the power of making, for they are creatures; nor eternity, for their existence has a beginning; nor of omnipotence and immutability, for they are under sway, and of changeable nature, as the Scriptures say. Well then, if these prerogatives belong to the Son, they clearly do so, not on account of His virtue, as said above, but essentially, even as

¹[John iii. 31.](#)

²See *de Syn.* §43, and *de Sent. Dionys.* 18, 19, also *supr.* p. 76.

³But see Socrates, ii. 21, and D.C.B. ii. p. 347.

⁴[John x. 30](#), and xiv. 9 .

⁵Cf. *de Syn.* §31 (a chapter added after the death of Constantius). The Anomœan sect, headed by Eunomius, and deriving its intellectual impetus from Aetias, belongs to the second generation of the Arian movement (their watchword is characterised as recent in the creed of Niké, 359 A.D.), and was comparatively unfamiliar to Athanasius. Cf. Prolegg. ch. ii. §8.

⁶[Luke vi. 36](#); [Matt. v. 48](#) .

⁷[Ps. lxxxiii. 1](#) , LXX.

⁸[Ps. lxxxvi. 8](#).

⁹[John x. 35](#).

¹⁰[John 10.30](#).

¹¹[John 5.19](#): the word *ποιέω* is taken in the sense of *making*.

¹²[John xvi. 15](#).

the synod said, 'He is of no other essence' but of the Father's, to whom these prerogatives are proper. But what can that be which is proper to the Father's essence, and an offspring from it, or what name can we give it, save 'coessential?' For that which a man sees in the Father, that sees he also in the Son; and that not by participation, but essentially. And this is [the meaning of] 'I and the Father are one,' and 'he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.' Here especially once more it is easy to shew their folly. If it is from virtue, the antecedent of willing and not willing, and of moral progress, that you hold the Son to be like the Father; while these things fall under the category of quality; clearly you call God compound of quality and essence. But who will tolerate you when you say this? For God, who compounded all things to give them being, is not compound, nor of similar nature to the things made by Him through the Word. Far be the thought. For He is simple essence, in which quality is not, nor, as James says, 'any variableness or shadow of turning¹.' Accordingly, if it is shewn that it is not from virtue (for in God there is no quality, neither is there in the Son), then He must be proper to God's essence. And this you will certainly admit if mental apprehension is not utterly destroyed in you. But what is that which is proper to and identical with the essence of God, and an Offspring from it by nature, if not by this very fact coessential with Him that begat it? For this is the distinctive relation of a Son to a Father, and he who denies

this, does not hold that the Word is Son in nature and in truth.

9. *The honest repudiation of Arianism involves the acceptance of the Nicene test.*

This then the Fathers perceived when they wrote that the Son was coessential with the Father, and anathematised those who say that the Son is of a different Subsistence²: not inventing phrases for themselves, but learning in their turn, as we said, from the Fathers who had been before them. But after the above proof, their Ariminian Synod is superfluous, as well as any³ other synod cited by them as touching the Faith. For that of Nicæa is sufficient, agreeing as it does with the ancient bishops also, in which too their fathers signed, whom they ought to respect, on pain of being thought anything but Christians. But if even after such proofs, and after the testimony of the ancient bishops, and the signature of their own Fathers, they pretend as if in ignorance to be alarmed at the phrase 'coessential,' then let them say and hold, in simpler terms and truly, that the Son is Son by nature, and anathematise as the synod enjoined those who say that the Son of God is a Creature or a thing made, or of nothing, or that there was once a time when He was not, and that He is mutable and liable to change, and of another Subsistence. And so let them escape the Arian heresy. And we are confident that in sincerely anathematising these views, they *ipso facto* confess that the Son is of the Father's Essence, and coessential with Him. For this is why the Fathers, having said that the Son was coessential, straightway added, 'but those who say that He is a creature, or made, or of nothing, or that there was once a time when He was not,' the Catholic Church anathematises: namely in order that by this means they might make it known that these things are meant by the word 'coessential.' And the meaning 'Coessential' is known from the Son not being a Creature or thing made: and because he that says 'coessential' does not hold that the Word is a Creature: and he that anathematises the above views, at the same time holds that the Son is coessential with the Father; and he that calls Him 'coessential,' calls the Son of God genuinely and truly so; and he that calls Him genuinely Son understands the texts, 'I and the Father are one,' and 'he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father⁴.'

10. *Purpose of this Letter; warning against Auxentius of Milan.*

Now it would be proper to write this at greater length. But since we write to you who know, we have dictated it concisely, praying that among all the bond of peace might be preserved, and that all in the Catholic Church should say and hold the same thing. And we are not meaning to teach, but to put you in mind. Nor is it only ourselves that write, but all the bishops of Egypt and the Libyas, some ninety in number. For we all are of one mind in this, and we always sign for one another if any chance not to be present. Such being our state of mind, since we happened to be assembled, we wrote, both to our beloved Damasus, bishop of the Great Rome, giving an account of Auxentius⁵ who has in

¹James i. 17.

²ὑπόστασις

³Omit ἡ with most mss.

⁴John x. 30, and xiv. 9.

⁵Auxentius (not in D.C.B.) was a native of Cappadocia (*Hist. Ar.* 75), and had been ordained presbyter at Alexandria by Gregory (next note). Upon the expulsion of the somewhat weak-kneed Dionysius after the council at Milan (355) he was appointed to that see by Constantius, although according to Athanasius (*ubi supr.*) he knew no Latin, nor any thing else except irreligion ('a busybody rather than a Christian'). He took a leading part along with Valens and others at the Council of Ariminum (*de Syn.* 8, 10) and was included in the deposition of Arian leaders by that synod. Under the orthodox Valentinian he maintained his see in spite of the efforts of Philaster, Evagrius, and Eusebius of Vercellæ, and in spite of the condemnations passed upon him by various Western synods (362–371, see *ad Epict.* 1). In 364, Hilary travelled to Milan on purpose to expose him before Valentinian. In a discussion ordered by the latter, Hilary extorted from Auxentius a confession which satisfied the Emperor, but not Hilary himself, whose persistent denunciation of its insincerity caused his dismissal from the town. Auxentius seems after this to have intrigued to obtain Illyrian signatures to the creed of (Niké or) Ariminum (*Hard. Conc.* 1. pp. 771, 773). Upon his death (374) Ambrose was elected bishop of Milan, but was confronted by the Arian party with a rival bishop in the person of a second Auxentius, said to have been a pupil of Ulfilas.

truded upon the church at Milan; namely that he not only shares the Arian heresy, but is also accused of many offences, which he committed with Gregory¹, the sharer of his impiety; and while expressing our surprise that so far he has not been deposed and expelled from the Church, we thanked [Damasus] for his piety and that of those who assembled at the Great Rome, in that by expelling Ursacius and Valens, and those who hold with them, they preserved the harmony of the Catholic Church. Which we pray may be preserved also among you, and therefore entreat you not to tolerate, as we said above, those who put forward a host of synods held concerning the Faith, at Ariminum, at Sirmium, in Isauria, in Thrace, those in Constantinople, and the many irregular ones in Antioch. But let the Faith confessed by the Fathers at Nicæa alone hold good among you, at which all the fathers, including

those of the men who now are fighting against it, were present, as we said above, and signed: in order that of us too the Apostle may say, 'Now I praise you that ye remember me in all things, and as I handed the traditions to you, so ye hold them fast².'

11. *Godhead of the Spirit also involved in the Nicene Creed.*

For this Synod of Nicæa is in truth a proscription of every heresy. It also upsets those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit, and call Him a Creature. For the Fathers, after speaking of the faith in the Son, straightway added, 'And we believe in the Holy Ghost,' in order that by confessing perfectly and fully the faith in the Holy Trinity they might make known the exact form of the Faith of Christ, and the teaching of the Catholic Church. For it is made clear both among you and among all, and no Christian can have a doubtful mind on the point, that our faith is not in the Creature, but in one God, Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible: and in one Lord Jesus Christ His Only-begotten Son, and in one Holy Ghost; one God, known in the holy and perfect Trinity, baptized into which, and in it united to the Deity, we believe that we have also inherited the kingdom of the heavens, in Christ Jesus our Lord, through whom to the Father be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

¹The intrusive bishop of Alexandria, 339–346. He had ordained his fellow-countryman Auxentius (Hilar. *in Aux.* 8).

²[1 Cor. xi. 2.](#)