This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

https://books.google.com



1076

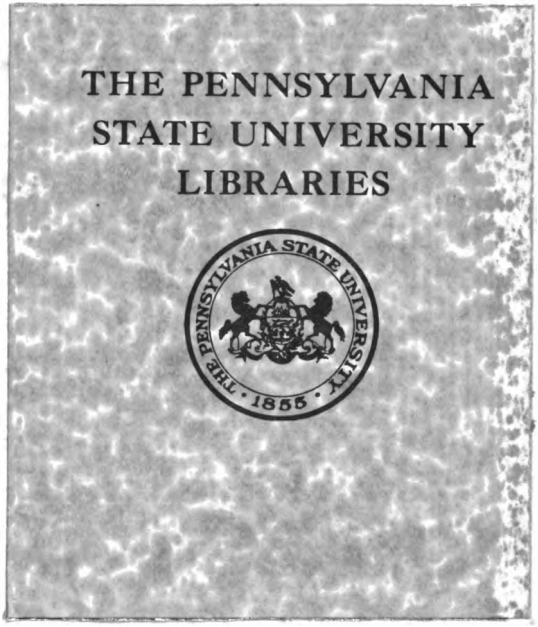
7172 No. 856



Alfred Seymour-Jones.

Digitized by Google

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE PARADISE
OF THE HOLY FATHERS
VOLUME I

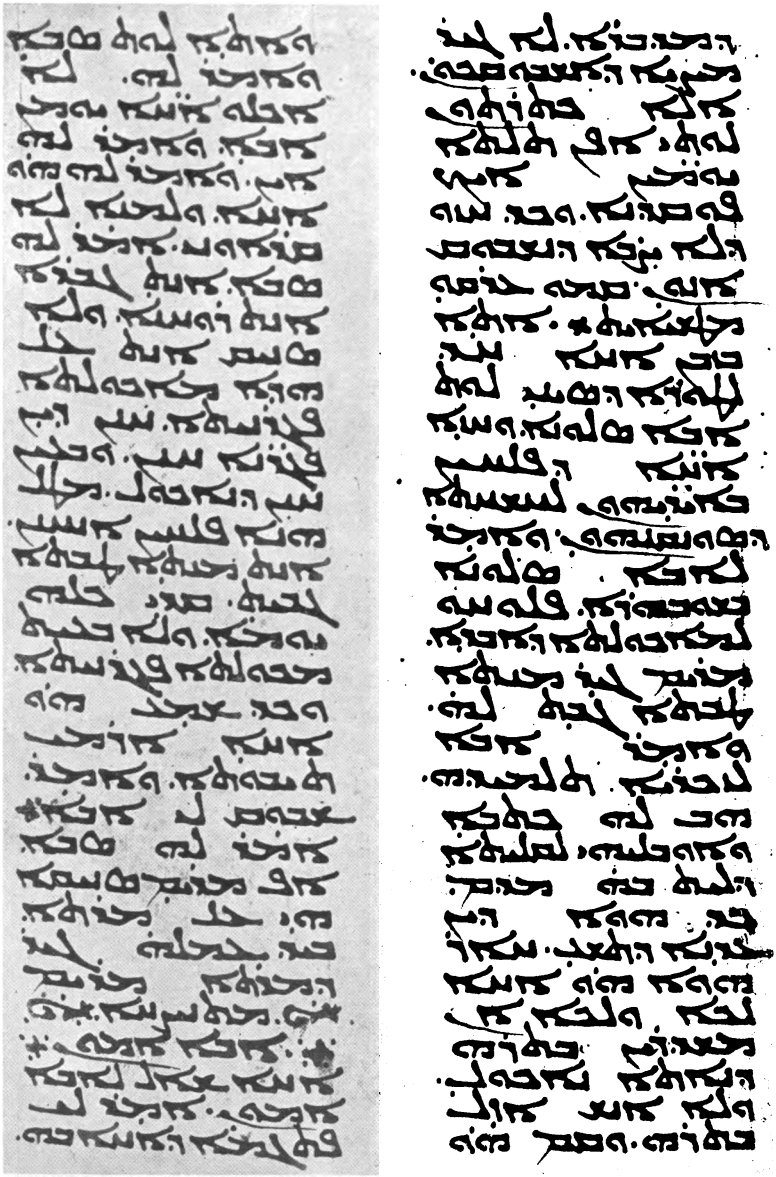
CONTAINING THE INTRODUCTION: THE LIFE OF ST ANTHONY, BY ATHANASIUS ARCHBP OF ALEXANDRIA: HISTORIES OF THE FATHERS BY PALLADIUS BP OF HELENOPOLIS: THE RULE OF PACHOMIUS: ST JEROME'S HISTORY OF THE FATHERS



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



FROM THE STORY OF THE MONK WHO VISITED SYLVANUS IN SINAI.
(Brit. Mus. MS. 14,648, fol. 10b.)

Digitized by Google

ʿAnān Īshō



THE PARADISE/ OR GARDEN OF THE HOLY FATHERS BEING HISTORIES OF THE ANCHORITES RECLUSES MONKS COENOBITES AND ASCETIC FATHERS OF THE DESERTS OF EGYPT BETWEEN A.D. CCL AND A.D. CCCC CIRCITER COMPILED BY *ATHANASIUS* ARCHBISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA: *PALLADIUS* BISHOP OF HELENOPOLIS: SAINT *JEROME* AND OTHERS ¶ NOW TRANSLATED OUT OF THE SYRIAC WITH NOTES & INTRODUCTION BY *ERNEST A. WALLIS BUDGE* M.A: L^ITT. D: D.L^IT: KEEPER OF THE ASSYRIAN & EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

PUBLISHED AT LONDON BY CHATTO & WINDUS MCM VII

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Preface

DURING the winter of 1888 the Vicar of the Chaldean Patriarch at Môsul (Nineveh) was so kind as to shew me some of the Syriac manuscripts in his possession, and among them was a thick oblong quarto volume containing the Lives of the Holy Men by Palladius and St. Jerome. I was familiar with the Syriac MSS. of the *Paradise* of Palladius in the British Museum, but I had never before seen so lengthy a copy of the work. The manuscript was old, that is to say, it was written probably in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, and as it was impossible to buy the volume, it being Church property, I asked permission to have a copy of it made. To this the Vicar assented, and a copy was made in due course and sent to England. On examination it was found to contain the *Life of St. Anthony*, by Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria, the Book of *Paradise*, by Palladius, the *Askêtikon*, or *History of the Monks of Tabenna*, the *Histories of the Solitaries of the Desert of Egypt*, attributed to St. Jerome, the *Sayings of the Fathers*, and the *Questions and Answers of the Holy Men*. In fact the manuscript contained a collection of works which were of the highest importance for the history of the rise and growth of Christian monasticism in Egypt.

In 1893 I published a full description of the contents of the manuscript (see Thomas of Margâ, *The Book of Governors*, Vol. II, pp. 192-206), and several extracts from it, and it was generally recognized that it contained a copy of the famous Redaction of the Book of *Paradise* which was made by Ânân-Îshô when he was a monk in the monastery of Bêth Âbhê, probably early in the seventh century. In 1898 my friend Dom Cuthbert Butler published the *Prolegomena* of his edition of the Greek text of the *Paradise* of Palladius, and in this work he discussed at length the critical value of my manuscript copy of the Syriac version. Soon after this I made translations of the five works contained in the manuscript, and these appeared, together with the Syriac texts, in two volumes in 1904. The work was not available for the public, being printed for private circulation only.

The number of those who are interested in the history of the Christian monastic movement in Egypt has increased consider-

Digitized by Google

ably in recent years, and in answer to many requests it was decided to publish a popular edition of the translation of Ânan-Îshô's great work in a handy form, and at a price which would place it within the reach of every reader. I therefore revised my translation, which had appeared in 1904, by the light of recently acquired manuscripts, and was able to fill up several gaps in the text: the present work is the result. An entirely new introduction has been prepared for this edition, and in it an attempt has been made to indicate the great value and importance of Ânân-Îshô's Syriac Recension for the study of Christian monasticism in Egypt. It is hoped that this edition may add to the deserved popularity of the Book of *Paradise* and increase the reputation of Palladius.

E. A. WALLIS BUDGE

British Museum, June 5, 1907.

Digitized by Google

Contents of the First Volume

Frontispiece
Preface v

Introduction: xv

1 Palladius, his Life and Travels xv
2 The Book *Paradise* xxv
3 Christian Monasticism in Egypt xxxix
4 The Supernatural Element in the Book *Paradise* xlix
5 The Lives of the Egyptian Monks and their Teaching liv
6 Palladius as a Historian lxij

j The Life of St. Anthony by Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria 3

ij The Paradise of Palladius

Book j

1 The Epistle of Palladius to Lausus 77
2 The Plan of the Book of Paradise 78
3 Counsels to Lausus 80

The Histories of the Holy Men:

1 The History of Abbâ Isidore 89
2 The History of Dorotheos of Thebes 91
3 The History of the Virgin Potamiaena 93
4 The History of Didymus 94
5 The History of the Maiden Alexandra 95
6 The History of Abbâ Macarius and a certain Virgin 96
7 Concerning the Monks who lived in Nitria 99
8 The History of Abbâ Ammôn 100
9 The History of the Blessed Man Hor 102
10 The History of the Blessed Man Pambo [*or* Panbo] 103
11 The History of the Blessed Man Ammonius 105
12 The History of the Blessed Man Benjamin 106
13 The History of Apollonius the Merchant 107
14 The Histories of Paesius and Isaiah 108
15 The History of Macarius, the Child of his Cross 109
16 The History of the Blessed Nathaniel 111
17 The Histories of Macarius the Egyptian, and of Macarius the Alexandrian 113
18 The History of the Blessed Man Macarius, the Alexandrian 117
19 The History of the Blessed Man Paul the Simple 125
20 The History of the Blessed Man Pachomius 129
21 The History of the Blessed Man Stephen 131
22 The History of the Blessed Man Valens, the Palestinian 132

Digitized by Google

23 The History of the Blessed Man Hero, the Alexandrian 134
24 The History of the Blessed Man Ptolemy, the Egyptian 135
25 The History of the Blessed Man Abraham, the Egyptian 136
26 The History of the Virgin in Jerusalem 136
27 The History of the Virgin in Caesarea 137
28 The History of the Virgin who fell and repented 137
29 The History of another Virgin who fell and repented 138
30 The History of the Blessed Thais [*or* Thaisis] 140
31 The History of the Blessed Man Abbâ Elijah 142
32 The History of the Blessed Man Dorotheos 144
33 The History of the Blessed Man Pachomius 144
34 An Apology, and Preface, and Admonition 149
35 The History of the Virgin who hid Athanasius 150
36 The History of Piamon the Virgin 152
37 The History of Mother Talîdâ 153
38 The History of the Virgin Taor 153
39 The History of the Virgin Colluthus 154
40 The History of the Virgin and the Magistrianus 154
41 The History of Melania the Great 156
42 The History of Melania the Younger 161
43 The History of Olympias 163
44 The History of Candida 165
45 The History of Gelasia 166
46 The History of Juliana 166
47 The History of Heronion and Bosphoria 166
48 The History of Magna 167
49 The History of the Monk Misericors 168
50 The History of John of Lycus 169
51 The History of Possidonius 173
52 The History of Chronius of Phœnix 175
53 The History of James the Lame and Paphnutius Kephala 175
54 The History of Solomon 180
55 The History of Dorotheos 180
56 The History of Diocles 181
57 The History of Kapiton 181
58 The History of the Monk who fell 181
59 The History of Ephraim, Deacon of Edessa 182
60 The History of Innocent the Priest 183
61 The History of Elpidius 185
62 The History of Eustathius 186
63 The History of Sisinnius 186
64 The History of Gaddai, the Palestinian 187
65 The History of Elijah 187

Digitized by Google

66 The History of Sabas of Jericho 187
67 The History of Serapion of the Girdle 188
68 The History of Eulogius 192

Book ij

1 The Triumph of Mark the Mourner 197
2 The History of Mâr Paulus (Paule) 197
3 The History of the Alexandrian 203
4 The History of an Old Man in Scete 209
5 The History of a Disciple 212
6 The History of a Disciple 212
7 The History of Peter 214
8 The History of a Disciple 214
9 The History of Aurelius (Adolius) 214
10 The History of Abbâ Moses, the Indian 215
11 The History of Abbâ Pîôr 218
12 The History of Abbâ Moses, the Libyan 219
13 The History of a Wandering Monk 219
14 The History of Evagrius 222
15 The History of Malchus 226
16 The History of the Two Naked Fathers 234
17 The History of an Old Man who went Naked 235
18 The History of another Holy Man 238
19 The History of a Grass-eating Monk 239
20 The History of a certain Virgin 240
21 The History of the Two Young Men with Macarius 240
22 The History of Bessarion 242
23 The History of the Acts of Bessarion 243
24 The History of the Man with Nine Virtues 245
25 The History of Maria 248
26 The History of a Sage 251
27 The History of the Two Brothers 253
28 The History of a Virgin 255
29 The History of Stephânâ 260
30 The History of Eucarpus 262
31 The History of the Deacon 264
32 The History of the Bishop 265
33 The History of Abbâ Poemen's Neighbour 265
34 The History of a Brother who denied Christ 266
35 The History of an Old Man in Scete 267
36 The History of Serapion and the Harlot 268
37 The History of a Harlot 269
38 The History of Apollo in Scete 270
39 The History of Cosmas of Sinai 270
40 The History of Abbâ Macarius 271
41 The History of the Melchisedekian 273

Digitized by Google

The Paradise of the Holy Fathers

42 The History of Macarius, the Egyptian 273
43 The History of Mark the Less 278
44 The History of Abbâ Paule, disciple of Anthony 278

The Rule of Pachomius at Tabenna, or the "Asketikon"

1 The Monks of Tabenna 283
2 The History of Sylvanus the Actor 284
3 The History of a Sinner who died 287
4 The History of the Funeral of a Holy Man 289
5 The History of the Things heard by Pachomius 290
6 The History of the Things which Pachomius did 292
7 The History of the Revelation of Pachomius 292
8 The History of the Revelation of Pachomius 293
9 The History of the Revelation of Pachomius 295
10 The History of the Words of Doctrine of Pachomius 296
11 The History of Pachomius and the Wheat 298
12 The History of Pachomius and the Wages of the Brethren 301
13 The History of the Apostate Monk 301
14 The History of Pachomius and the Phantom 304
15 The History of the Gift of Tongues 307
16 The History of Jonah the Gardener 308
17 The History of Pachomius and the Buildings 310
18 The History of Pachomius and the Heretics 311
19 The History of a Question and Answer 312
20 The History of a Vainglorious Monk 313
21 The History of the Monk in the Monastery 313
Further Remarks by Palladius 315

The History of the Monks, by Hieronymus

1 The Apology 317
2 The History of John of Lycus 320
3 The History of Abbâ Hôr 334
4 The History of Abbâ Ammon 336
5 The History of Abbâ Abban 337
6 The History of the Monks of Oxyrrhynchus 337
7 The History of Abbâ Theon 338
8 The History of Abbâ Elijah 339
9 The History of Abbâ Apollo 340
10 The History of Apellen 353
11 The History of Apollo, and of John the Desert Dweller 356
12 The History of Abbâ Paphnutius 358
13 The History of Eulogius 362
14 The History of Isidore 363
15 The History of Dioscurus 363

Digitized by Google

16 The History of Copres and Petarpemotis 364
17 The History of Hôr, Isaiah, Paul, and Nopi 372
18 The History of Evagrius 373
19 The History of Abbâ Pithyrion 374
20 The Triumphs of the Blessed Fathers 374
21 The Triumphs of the Monks who were in Nitria 376
22 The Triumph of Ammon the First 377
23 The Triumph of another Ammon 378
24 The Triumph of Didymus 378
25 The Triumph of Chronius 379
26 The Triumph of the Three Brethren 379
27 The Triumph of Philemon 379
28 The Triumph of John 379
29 The Triumph of Serapion 380
30 The Triumph of Apollo the Less 380

Digitized by Google

Contents of the Second Volume

Frontispiece

The Sayings of the Fathers

Book I

Cap. I Palladius on Flight from Men and Silent Contemplation. Sayings 1–62 3
II On Fasting and Abstinence. Sayings 63–104 16
III On Reading of the Scriptures, Night Vigils, the Service of the Psalms and Constant Prayer. Sayings 105-135 24
IV On Weeping and Mourning for Sins. Sayings 136–157 31
V On Voluntary Poverty. Sayings 158–182 35
VI On Patient Endurance. Sayings 183–237 40
VII On Obedience to God and Man. Sayings 238–247 52
VIII On Watchfulness of Thought, Word and Deed. Sayings 248-392 56
IX On Love, Charity, and Hospitality. Sayings 393–443 88
X On Humility. Sayings 444–558 103
XI On Fornication. Sayings 559–597 126
XII On the Acceptance of Repentance. Sayings 598-613 136
XIII On the Fathers who wrought Wonders. Sayings 614–630 141
XIV On the Greatness of the Ascetic Life. Sayings 631–635 146

Book II

I–XV Questions and Answers on the Rule of Life. Nos. 1–539 149
XVI, XVII Questions and Answers by the Fathers and Monks. Nos. 540–577 262
XVIII Questions and Answers on the Visions of the Mind. Nos. 578–603 271
Appendix. Nos. 604–706 283

Digitized by Google

Introduction

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Introduction

I. Palladius, his Life and Travels

THE principal facts of the life of Palladius we owe to the famous biographer of the monks himself, and nearly all of them are to be found in the History of the Acts of the Holy Fathers, which he dedicated to his patron Lausus, and entitled *Paradise*. He was born, probably in Galatia (see Vol. I, p. 170), about A.D. 364, but of his family, and of his boyhood and early manhood nothing is known. He appears to have embraced the ascetic life, to a greater or lesser degree, when he was about twenty years of age.

Soon after Palladius became a monk, he went and lived with the "blessed priest Innocent" on the Mount of Olives for a period of three years (386-388). Innocent had formerly been a court official "in the kingdom of the Emperor Constantine," and he had a son, but he "withdrew himself from marriage" (Vol. I, p. 184) and became a monk. Palladius describes Innocent as a man of most merciful disposition, and he tells us that he used to steal things from the brethren in order to give them to the poor and needy; all the same he considered him to be a man "lacking in sense." Innocent possessed a small martyrium in which he kept a blessed [relic] of St. John the Baptist, and by means of this he cast out from a young woman a devil which vexed her exceedingly, and caused such writhing and contortions of her body that "when she spat the spittle "fell on her side," instead of away from her.

When Palladius was about twenty-three or twenty-four years of age he visited Alexandria for the first time; this event took place, as he himself tells us (Vol. I, p. 89), in the second Consulate of the Emperor Theodosius the Great, i.e., in 388. Here he met Isidore, the secretary of the hospital which was supported by the Church of Alexandria, who had lived as a monk in Nitria, and was at that time about seventy years of age. Isidore was a wealthy man, and gave large alms to the poor and needy (Vol. I, p. 90), but he fared hardly. He never wore a linen shirt, or put a covering on his head; he never ate meat, never partook of a full meal, seated comfortably at a table, and never washed, yet his body was strong, sound and healthy. With him Palladius lived for a short time, but finding that he required "not the Word only but also the labour of the body, "and severe physical exercises, even like the young unbroken "animal," and that he had no great need of doctrine, but did need the power to subdue the passions of his early manhood, he besought Isidore to let him go and live by himself. Isidore granted his request, and then took him to a place about six

Digitized by Google

miles from Alexandria, and placed him in the hands of Dorotheos the Anchorite, who had lived in a cave for sixty years, and had been a friend and associate of St. Anthony in the desert in the days of the Emperor Maximinus [II] (305-314) (Vol. I, p. 93).

Of the manner of the life which this Dorotheos led we obtain a good idea from Palladius (Vol. I, p. 91). He lived on a daily allowance of six ounces of bread, a little bundle of green herbs, and a limited quantity of water. He spent his days in collecting stones in the desert near the sea, and in building cells for the monks who could not build cells for themselves. He did not sleep by day, and he occupied himself during the nights in weaving palm-leaf baskets, from the sale of which he bought his daily bread and herbs. He never laid himself down to sleep on a bed of palm leaves, but slept in snatches as he sat at work, or whilst he was eating his scanty food (Vol. I, p. 92).

When Isidore left Palladius with Dorotheos, he told him to stay with that stern old man for three years so that he might slay his passions, and then to come back to him to receive the completion of his spiritual education. Palladius, however, was unable to complete his period of three years, for the want of sleep and food, and exposure to cold brought on a severe illness, and he was obliged to return to his friend Isidore, who cared for every one but himself. About this time Palladius became acquainted with Didymus of Alexandria, who was at that time eighty years old, and had been blind since the fourth year of his age. In spite of his blindness he was well versed in the Scriptures, and was thoroughly acquainted with the "belief of "the truth," and he "comprehended so deeply all heresies "that his knowledge was more excellent than that of many who "were before him in the Church" (Vol. I, p. 94). He was a friend of St. Anthony, who visited him three times in his cell. Thus, before he was twenty-five years old Palladius had made the acquaintance of two great monks who had known St. Anthony.

During the three years which followed his return to Isidore, Palladius passed his time in going about from monastery to monastery in the neighbourhood of Alexandria, and he says (Vol. I, p. 99) that he met about "two thousand of the great "and strenuous men" who lived in them. After this he departed to Mount Nitria, that is to say, to the district commonly called "Wâdî an-Natrûn," the "Nitre Valley," or "Birkat an-Natrûn," the "Nitre Lake," which lies between 30° and 31° North Lat., about two days' journey from the Rosetta arm of the Nile. A tradition which seems to rest on fact asserts that the oldest home of Christian asceticism in Egypt was in this place. Between Nitria and Alexandria lies Lake Mareotis,

Digitized by Google

and having sailed across this in one-and-a-half days, Palladius came to the "Mountain of the Mazaki and Mauritanians." Here he found a society which consisted of some six hundred monks, who lived either in communities or as solitary dwellers in the mountain, and he stayed in this place for a year. We may note in passing that several of the monks whom he met possessed purely Egyptian names, e.g., Arsisius = Heru-sa Ast, Busiris = Pa-Asar, Petâ-Bast, Serapion = Asar Hapi, etc., and it is probable that they were pure Egyptians. Having learned from these many facts about Ammôn and "the first "spiritual fathers" who had lived there, he departed to "the "inner desert, wherein is Mount Nitria" (Vol. I, p. 99), probably in the year 391, when he was about twenty-five years of age, and he remained there for nine years.

In the inner desert of Nitria, Palladius heard of Hor, who never uttered a lie, or cursed, or swore an oath, and who never spoke except when it was absolutely necessary to do so, but did not see him. Pambo died on the day of the arrival of Palladius in Nitria (Vol. I, p. 103), but many of the sayings of this famous monk have come down to us. Whilst in Nitria Palladius became a a great friend of Macarius the Alexandrian, who was originally a merchant in dried fruits, and of Evagrius of Pontus. The former lived in that portion of the Nitrian Valley which was called "The Cells," and for three years Palladius enjoyed close intercourse with him, and learned much concerning the true spirit of Egyptian asceticism from him. Macarius lived "a sad, stern "life of self-denial," (Vol. I, p. 117), and could not endure the thought that any monk surpassed him in the exercise of ascetic rigours. On one occasion he heard that the monks in the Monastery of Tabenna did not eat any food which had been cooked by fire during the Forty Days' Fast of Lent, whereupon he determined that for seven years he would eat nothing which had been cooked by fire, and he carried out his intention to the letter. On hearing that a monk in a certain monastery only ate one pound of bread per day, he reduced his own allowance to four or five ounces of bread, and to water just sufficient to enable him to eat the bread. On another occasion he determined to vanquish sleep, and for twenty days and nights he never took shelter under a roof, but sat in the sun all day. Once he crushed a gnat in his hand and killed it because it had bitten him, therefore, because this act made him despise himself, he went to Scete and sat in the inner desert naked for six months, where the gnats were large and resembled wasps (Vol. I, p. 118). At the end of this time his skin was so bitten and swollen that it was like the hide of an elephant, and when he returned to his cell, the monks only recognized him by his voice.

Digitized by Google

Yet once again he heard of the great self-denial of the monks of Tabenna, who were under the direction of Pachomius, and having disguised himself as a farm-labourer, he walked in fifteen days to the monastery where, having proved that he could fast for a week at a time, he was admitted. Soon after the season of Lent drew nigh, and he fasted the whole of the forty days, weaving ropes of palm fibre as he did so; on Sundays he ate a few moist cabbage leaves, so that he might pretend that he was taking food. His success, however, betrayed him, for Pachomius knew that none but Macarius could have fasted with such strenuousness for so long a time (Vol. I, p. 121). Though such exercises must have interested Palladius very much, it is quite clear from some of his remarks that both physically and mentally he was unable to emulate them. In connexion with Macarius he tells us that the "chills of fever" came on him at times, and that at others, when weariness of the ascetic life laid hold upon him (Vol. I, p. 124), his thoughts would say to him, "Thou art doing nothing here, get thee "gone."

From the "inner desert" Palladius paid visits to several of the great ascetics, and the details which he gives of their lives are full of interest. On one occasion he went to Scete, a distance of forty miles, and saw and conversed with Pachomius who had lived there for forty years. On another he and Albinus travelled to Scete in company with Nero the Alexandrian, who only ate a meal once every three months (Vol. I, p. 134). Palladius also found his way to that portion of the Nitrian Valley, which was beyond Scete and was called "Klimax"; it was a wild and rugged place, and the nearest drinking water was twelve miles distant. Here dwelt Ptolemy, the Egyptian, who for fifteen years drank nothing but dew which he squeezed out of sponges (Vol. I, p. 136).

Having explored the Nitrian Valley Palladius turned his steps towards the south, and made himself acquainted with the lives of the ascetics who lived there. At Atrêpe, near Akhmîm, he visited the nunnery which had been built by Elijah, a wealthy landowner (Vol. I, p. 142). Elijah's successor was Dorotheos, who lived in an upper chamber which had no staircase; from this place he kept watch over the nuns, but no woman ever went up to his chamber, and he could not go down to any. At Tabenna Palladius visited the monastery of Pachomius, whose rule he describes at some length (Vol. I, p. 144). At Antinoë he found twelve nunneries, in one of which he found the aged nun Talîdâ and her sixty virgins (Vol. I, p. 153). At Lycus he visited John, who had received the gift of prophecy, which he demonstrated on several important

Digitized by Google

occasions. This famous recluse was an object of great interest to the followers of Origen, and especially to Evagrius, who was the most intimate friend of Palladius at this time. One day he heard Evagrius say that he desired greatly to find out what manner of man John was, but that it was impossible for him to go to visit him because he lived so far away. Palladius said nothing at the time, but after pondering the matter for two days, he committed himself to God, and set out for the Thebaïd. His journey occupied eighteen days, on some of which he walked, and on others he sailed in a boat. The season of the year was the beginning of the Egyptian summer, when the Nile was rising, and many folk were falling sick (Vol. I, p. 170), and Palladius himself suffered from illness. At length he arrived at Lycus, and at the proper time obtained speech with John, who convinced him that he could read his thoughts, and understand the things which were passing in his mind. John knew that Palladius was anxious to leave the desert, and also that he was afraid for various reasons to do so, and he told him to remain in the desert, and to quench his desire to return to his kinsfolk, for his father would live for another seven years (Vol. I, p. 171).

In reply to John's question, "Wishest thou to become a "bishop?" Palladius replied that he had already been made the "bishop of the public eating houses, and of the taverns, and "of tables, and of wine pots. My visiting," he continued, "is my "episcopate, and it is the love of the belly and gluttony which "hath made me the visitor of these." To these jesting words John made answer, "Quit jesting, for a bishop thou needs "must be, and thou wilt have to labour, and to be troubled "greatly; now if thou wishest to flee from tribulations and "trials go not forth from the desert, for in the desert no man "will make thee a bishop." This prophecy was uttered about 397. Of the period between this year and that wherein he left Nitria to go southwards he spent four years in Antinoë (Vol. I, p. 180), where he found a society of about twelve hundred monks. Here also he met the famous cave-dwellers, Solomon, Dorotheos the priest, Diocles the grammarian and philosopher, and Kapitôn.

How far to the south Palladius travelled is not quite certain, but it is clear that he visited all the chief settlements of the monks in Upper Egypt. Three years after his visit to John of Lycus, which probably took place in 394 (Butler, *Lausiac History*, p. 182), he was overtaken by a severe illness caused by his kidneys and stomach, and the brethren, fearing that he was becoming dropsical, sent him to Alexandria. Shortly before his return to this city he seems to have been present at the

Digitized by Google

death of Evagrius of Pontus, who died in the year 400, aged fifty-four years (Vol. I, p. 222; Butler, *Lausiac History*, p. 181). The account of this monk's career is one of the most interesting in the Book of *Paradise*, and it is easy to see that Palladius regarded him with great admiration and affection. The two men had passed several years together in the "inner desert," at the place called "The Cells," and Palladius tells us that his friend lived upon a daily allowance of one pound of bread, that a "box of oil" lasted him three months, that he lived by the labour of his hands, that he prayed one hundred prayers each day, and that he spent the rest of his time in writing books (Vol. I, p. 225).

When Palladius arrived in Alexandria the physicians advised him to leave the city and to go to Palestine, where the air was lighter and purer; and, in obedience to their counsel, he departed thither.

It seems that Palladius next made his way to Bethlehem, and lived there for a year with Possidonius the Theban, at a place beyond the Monastery of the Shepherds, which was near the town. Possidonius was a man of amiable disposition, and Palladius declares (Vol. I, p. 173) that he did not recollect ever meeting any other man in whom the qualities of patience, endurance and goodness were so highly developed. Possidonius, apparently, loved living alone, and on one occasion he said that he had not seen a man nor heard human speech for a whole year; his food was of the simplest, for he lived on the insides of palm leaves soaked in water, and wild honey whenever he could get it. For forty years he never ate bread, and he never allowed the sun to set upon his wrath. Whilst Palladius lived near Bethlehem he became acquainted with St. Jerome, whom he describes as a learned and eloquent man and one skilled in the Latin tongue; but he declares that his great abilities were obscured by the vices of "envy and evil-eyedness," which he possessed to an extraordinary degree (Vol. I, p. 174). Because of his envy, none of the holy men would live in those districts.

From Bethlehem Palladius went to Jerusalem, where, no doubt, he found one of the numerous companies of ascetics from the monasteries, who were entertained by that famous woman Melania the Great, and by the Italian nobleman, Rufinus of Aquileia, her friend. The praise which Palladius bestows upon Melania and Rufinus is very great, and it is evident that he knew both of them well, and there is little doubt that the kindness and graciousness of these distinguished Christians and their kinsfolk had a considerable effect upon his character and disposition. We know from his own testimony that he travelled from Ælia to Egypt by way of Pelusium in company

Digitized by Google

with Melania and "the gentle virgin Sylvania, the sister of Rufinus" (Vol. I, p. 159); and this being so, it follows, almost of necessity, that he was no ferocious, fanatical monk, to whom the companionship of women was an abominable thing. As Palladius had lived for a whole year with the gentle Possidonius, and he speaks of him with the warmth of a true friend, it seems justifiable to assume that he was himself a man of amiable and sympathetic nature, and one to whom the pathos of the ascetic life appealed more than its grim majesty.

A little later [400?] he passed over into Bithynia, where, as he says (Vol. I, p. 172), "for what reason I know not, whether "by the care and solicitude of men, or whether by the Will of "God, Who is exalted above all things, I was held to be "worthy of the laying on of hands for the episcopacy, which "was far above my deserts." Thus we see that the prophecy of John of Lycus was fulfilled. Palladius tells us that when he returned to the desert from Lycus he related to the fathers what John had said, and that then he forgot all about it. Curiously enough, Palladius does not say who ordained him, neither does he give us the name of his see, but there is little doubt that it was St. John Chrysostom who ordained him, and that his see was Helenopolis, which was formerly called Drepanum.

In May of the year 400 Palladius was present at the Synod held at Constantinople, and very soon afterwards "he be-"came an associate in the trial which rose up against the "blessed John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople" (Vol. I, p. 172). In July, 403, Chrysostom appeared in the church of a suburb of Chalcedon to answer before a council of thirty-six bishops a series of charges which had been formulated against him by John the Archdeacon and Isaac the monk. The chief offence with which he was charged was that he had spoken words against the Empress Eudoxia, whom he was declared to have likened to Jezebel. After much unseemly wrangling Chrysostom was condemned by his enemies unanimously, and he was deposed, the Emperor confirming the decree of the council, and ordering him to be banished. Three days later Chrysostom surrendered to the Emperor's soldiers, and he was carried to a vessel and sent to Hieron at the mouth of the Euxine. Within a few days, however, he was brought back in triumph to Constantinople, in response to letters from the Emperor Arcadius and the Empress Eudoxia, who had been frightened out of their wits by a severe shock of earthquake which was felt in the city on the night following his departure to Hieron. In September, 403, Chrysostom fell again under the displeasure of Eudoxia, and in June of the year following Arcadius decreed his banishment to Cucusus, a mountain on

Digitized by Google

the border of Cilicia. It was most likely about this time that Palladius was "secluded for a period of about eleven months "in a dark cell" (Vol. I, p. 172), wherein he probably hid himself to escape the fury of the triumphant enemies of his friend John Chrysostom.

Some authorities think that at this time he betook himself to a river valley near Jericho, where a large number of ascetics lived in the rock-hewn caves, the making of which tradition assigned to those who fled from before Joshua, the son of Nun. In one of these dwelt Elpidius the Cappadocian, who practised the habits of a strict asceticism, and was eventually ordained priest. This man only ate food on Saturdays and Sundays, and he was wont to rise up many times during the night to pray. With him, for a time, lived Palladius (see Vol. I, p. 185), and from the description which he gives of this wonderful man it is clear that he regarded him with affection and admiration. Palladius tells us that Elpidius possessed power over noxious reptiles, and that on one occasion, whilst he was reading the service for the night, a scorpion stung him; without shewing the least sign of pain, and without leaving his place, or making any break in his reading, Elpidius put forth his hand and crushed the scorpion. Such an incident could not fail to impress the imagination of Palladius, and he must have felt that the holy man possessed the power which would enable him to "put his hand on the cockatrice's den," and to draw it away unharmed.

In 405 we find that Palladius had succeeded in escaping with other fugitives to Rome at the time when Innocent, Bishop of Rome, was enquiring into the appeal which had been made to him by many friends on behalf of Chrysostom. As the result of this enquiry Innocent annulled the deposition of Chrysostom, and declared that the council of hostile bishops who had condemned him was irregular. Whilst in Rome Palladius and his companions were entertained by Pinianus, who received them "with the greatest good will, and supplied them "with provisions for the way in great abundance, and they "sent them on their way in joy and gladness" (Vol. I, p. 163). From Rome Palladius journeyed to Constantinople in company with the members of the mission sent by Honorius to Arcadius, asking that a general council should be convened to investigate the charges brought against Chrysostom. When Palladius arrived in Constantinople he and his companions were treated with great harshness; each of them was condemned to solitary confinement, and every effort was made to induce them to break their adherence to the views of Chrysostom. The friends of Chrysostom, however, stood firm, and finally, as the result of an

Digitized by Google

imperial decree, all were banished. The place of banishment chosen for Palladius was Syene, and on his way thither his journey was made as unpleasant as possible by the petty spite and malice of the imperial servants; he was not allowed to have a servant, and his notes and writing tablets were taken away from him by force. How long he remained at Syene, or in its neighbourhood, cannot be said, but it is tolerably certain that between 406 and 412 he spent four years at Antinoë, and also some time in the monastery at Akhmîm and neighbouring towns. Some authorities think that he may have been allowed to end his exile in Egypt on the death of Theophilus, the bitter foe of Chrysostom, which took place in 412, and it is probable that he travelled about Galatia and visited Ancyra between 412 and 420, the year in which he wrote the Book *Paradise*. According to Socrates he was translated to the see of Aspuna, in Galatia Prima; this event happened probably in 417. How long he remained there cannot be stated, but he certainly died before 431, for the bishop of Aspuna in that year was called Eusebius.

As to the period of his life in which Palladius wrote the book *Paradise* there is, fortunately, no difficulty, for in his Counsels to Lausus (Vol. I, p. 82) he says that at the time of wr t-ing he had lived a life of rule and had been in a monastery of solitary brethren until the thirty-third year of his age, and that after that he served the office of Bishop for twenty years. He was therefore fifty-three years of age when he wrote the book *Paradise*, and as he was ordained Bishop in 400, he produced his work in 420.

Nowhere in *Paradise* does he tell us anything about his parents or family, though in his "further remarks" (Vol. I, p. 315), he speaks of "my beloved brother, who hath lived "with me from my youth up until this day." It is, however, a little uncertain whether he refers to an actual or to a monastic brother. In praising his manner of life he remarks that, "he "never arrayed himself in fine and costly apparel," and this seems to suggest that the brother was a man of some fortune. Moreover, as this brother, "in his coming in and going out, "walked through one hundred and six cities (*or* provinces) "several times, and in the greater number of them tarried for "some time," we must assume that he possessed means sufficient to allow him to travel wheresoever he pleased. On the whole, we may conclude that the parents of Palladius were people of some standing, and that they could afford to give him money enough to travel from place to place in comfort. That he was never a very robust man is proved by the fact that he was unable to serve his term of three years with Dorotheos of

Digitized by Google

Thebes, and by the allusions to the sickness and fever which attacked him when travelling, and to the troubles caused by his kidneys and stomach, which eventually compelled him to forsake the desert and to go to Palestine. On the other hand, it must be confessed that few young men of gentle bringing up could emulate successfully Dorotheos, who lived on dry bread and wandered about in the sun all day on the seashore collecting stones for building, or could endure the hardship of walking for days at a time, to say nothing of the heat by day, the chills by night, rough lodgings, and rough food which could only be obtained at irregular intervals.

Digitized by Google

ij. The Book "Paradise"

THE book *Paradise* was composed by Palladius in the year 420 at the request of Lausus, a man who held high rank at Constantinople, and who is generally thought to have been a chamberlain of the Emperor Theodosius II, who ascended the throne in 408; for this reason the work was called the *Lausiac History* of Palladius. According to some authorities, Lausus, the friend of Palladius, is to be identified with "Lausus præ-"positus," who received the lady Melania when she visited Constantinople about 435. Be this as it may, the friend of Palladius was, as we know from his testimony (Vol. I, p. 79), a man whose mind was "full of doctrine, whose habits were "those of a lover of peace, who feared God in his heart and "loved Christ in his mind," and elsewhere (Vol. I, p. 80) he describes him as the "ornament of this believing and God-"fearing kingdom," and the "true friend and servant of "God." Nowhere does Palladius tell us what the bond was which united him in friendship with Lausus, or why the great court official entreated him to write down the histories of the lives of the Fathers of the Egyptian desert, and of other holy men. To guess at the origin of their friendship is useless, and whatever his motive may have been in urging Palladius to compile his histories, the thanks of every student of religion is due to Lausus as being the immediate cause of the production of a work which gives a true account of the origin and development of one of the most remarkable phases of Christianity which the world has ever seen.

In the brief account of the book *Paradise* which will be given in the following paragraphs, no attempt will be made to consider the difficulties which exist in connexion with the investigation of the original Greek text of the work, or to outline the chronological sequence of the versions which are based upon it. A general discussion of these matters will be found in Dom Cuthbert Butler's *Lausiac History* (Cambridge, 1898), and in the learned notes which he has appended to his critical edition of the Greek text published at Cambridge in 1904. These works contain an honest description of the difficulties which have beset the paths of earlier editors and translators of *Paradise*, together with solutions of many of them. As the result of the scholarship, clear thought and well-balanced judgement which Dom Cuthbert Butler has bestowed upon *Paradise*, Palladius stands forth with an enhanced reputation, and the reader may once and for all rest assured that he is perusing the work of a man who described truthfully the things which he had seen and the men whom he had known.

Digitized by Google

The translations of *Paradise* and of the *Sayings of the Fathers* collected by Palladius, which are printed in the following pages, are made from the fullest Syriac versions of these works known to us, namely, those which we owe to Rabban Ânân-Îshô, a monk who flourished in Northern Mesopotamia in the latter half of the sixth and the first half of the seventh century. Of this man we possess a tolerably full account, written by Thomas, Bishop of Margâ, about A.D. 840 (see *The Book of Governors*, ed. Budge. 2 vols. London, 1893). Writing in this work (Book II, chap. xi), Thomas says:

"It is not right that the glorious memory of the holy Abbâ "Ânân-Îshô should drop from our mind, or that we should sup- "press the mention of his indefatigable zeal; on the contrary, "let us place his noble acts among [those of] his companions, "for happiness at the right hand of our Lord Christ is laid up "for him with them. Now this blessed man, and his brother "Îshô-Yahbh, came from the country of Adiabene. They were "both trained in doctrine in the city of Nisibis, being children "of the school and household of the blessed Mâr Îshô-Yahbh. "They became disciples in the Great Monastery [of Mount "Îzlâ, about ten miles from Nisibis], as the books which be- "longed to them [and are now] in the library of this monas- "tery (i.e., Bêth Âbhê) testify, for they show that they were "written by their hands there. Now Ânân-Îshô, having lived "the life of an ascetic with all excellence, and having had his "mind constantly fixed upon the works of the ascetic fathers, "determined to go and worship in Jerusalem. And from there "he went to the desert of Scete, where he learned concerning "all the manner of the lives of the ascetic fathers, whose his- "tories and questions are written in books, and concerning "their dwellings and the places in which they lived. And "when he turned to come back he made his journey by way of "[the place of] holy Mâr John, the Bishop of the Scattered, "of whom I have made mention a little way back, that he "might be blessed by his holiness and enjoy his conversation. "And after he had come to his own monastery (i.e., Mount "Îzlâ) he took his brother, and they came to this monastery "(i.e., Bêth Âbhê) by reason of the annoyance and contention "which had taken place there, for certain slanderous men who "had set themselves against holy men, had risen up there, "and they drove out the holy Rabban Narsai, the disciple of "Mâr Bâbhai, who finally became head of the monastery and "was renowned for a life of excellence.

"Now when they came to this monastery, and were living in "silence, according to the rule of ascetics, Rabban Ânân-Îshô, "the wise of understanding, laboured so hard in the study of

Digitized by Google

"books that he surpassed all who were before and after him "in his knowledge. And when Mâr Îshô-yahbh was Metropoli- "tan of Arbel and wished to draw up in order a book of the "Canons that he might send copies of it to all the countries of "his patriarchate, he made the wise Ânân-Îshô, the love of "whom is very dear and sweet to me, to sit with him during "the drawing up of the Canons, because he had composed "Institutes and Rules, and because he found that he alone "possessed, in a sufficient measure, a clear mind and a natu- "ral talent for the art of music and a knowledge of how to "arrange words.

"And the noble Ânân-Îshô composed Definitions and Divi- "sions of various things, which were written upon the walls "of his cell. And when his brother Mâr Îshô-yahbh came to "pray in this monastery (i.e., Bêth Âbhê), and saw the divi- "sions of the science of philosophy of his brother, Ânân-Îshô, "he begged him to write a commentary on them for him, and "to send it to him, which Ânân-Îshô actually did. And he "wrote to him a clear exposition in many lines, from which "will be apparent, to every one who readeth therein, the great- "ness of his wisdom; now the title of the work is, 'A Letter "which a Brother wrote to his Brother. . . .' He also wrote a "work on the correct pronunciation of the words, and of the "difficult words which are used with different significations in "the writings of the Fathers; a copy of this work exists "among the books in the library of this monastery, and it sur- "passes all other collations in its accuracy."

The above extract is of great interest, for it proves that Ânân-Îshô, who edited the Syriac version of *Paradise* which is translated in these volumes, prepared himself for his great work by visiting the Scete desert, in order that he might see for himself the conditions under which the monks lived, and the dwellings and places wherein they abode. Knowledge, at first hand, and experience went side by side with great learning and literary skill, and the more his translation is studied, the greater its accuracy is found to be.

A little further on in his *Book of Governors* (Bk. II, chap. xv) Thomas, Bishop of Margâ, gives us some details of the "Compilation of the Book which was called *Paradise*." From these we learn that Ânân-Îshô undertook this work as a result of an order which he received from the Patriarch Mâr George. Having asked for the "Prayers of Mâr Catholicus and "of the holy old men of his congregation, he began and finished "the command wherewith he had been commanded. And with "an enlightened mind and a wise understanding—especially "as the Spirit had manifested in him the efficacy of His gifts—

Digitized by Google

"he arranged and grouped together in smooth order (i.e., con-
"secutively), 615 'Heads' (*or* Chapters), in Canons and
"Sections, [with] each 'Head' a 'Question' giving informa-
"tion concerning the subject matter of the 'Head' which
"preceded it. So that if a brother was labouring in any
"[spiritual] warfare whatsoever, and he wished to pluck con-
"solation or to take counsel on the matter which was
"troubling him, he might find it close at hand. And the
"Counsels were arranged and classified according to the
"subject matter, so that he might very quickly be consoled in
"his tribulation, and find relief, and might also lay a soothing
"plaster on the wound which was causing him pain."

"And besides these [615 'Heads'] there were 430 others,
"which would give a man information in general upon all
"kinds of spiritual excellence, and there were many others
"which he did not arrange in numerical order, and which he
"did not group or classify. And he took from the 'Commen-
"'tary' on the blessed Matthew, the Evangelist, the Discourse
"which was composed by Mâr John [Chrysostom] on the
"praises of the monks who were in Egypt, and the Questions
"of the blessed Mâr Abraham of Nephthar, and demonstrations
"and other histories which he himself had collected from the
"writings of the Fathers."

"And he arranged the whole book [*Paradise*] in two Parts.
"In the First Part were the Histories of the Holy Fathers,
"which were composed by Palladius and Hieronymus (Jerome),
"and in the Second Part were the Questions and Narratives
"(*or* Matters) of the Fathers, which he had arranged and classi-
"fied. And he called this Book *Paradise* and under this name
"hath it been handed down and accepted in all the monas-
"teries of the East, and the Fathers in every place have
"praised his ability and applauded his work."

It may be mentioned in passing that the word "Paradise" means "garden," and there is no doubt that Palladius intended to suggest to his readers that his compilation resembled a spiritual garden, the flowers of which were the Histories of the famous monks which he had collected therein, just as the monks themselves were the flowers of the Garden of God.

Prefixed to the translations of *Paradise* and the *Sayings of the Fathers* printed in these volumes will be found a rendering of the Syriac version of a Life of St. Anthony, which is attributed to Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria. This work is of very great interest, and it is of considerable importance for the study of Christian monasticism in Egypt. The original was written in Greek, but the Greek text now extant is different from that used by the translator into Syriac (Butler,

Digitized by Google

Lausiac History, p. 227; Schulthess, *Probe einer syrischen Version der Vita S. Antonii*, Leipzig, 1894). Many authorities have denied the authenticity of this *Life of St. Anthony*, but there is really no good reason why Athanasius should not have taken part in the preparation of some portions of the work, or in its revision, and until proof is brought forward that such a thing is impossible, we shall be justified in believing that the framework of the narrative is historical. The character of St. Anthony, as drawn by the author of the Life in the form wherein we now have it, is wholly lovable, and it is easy to understand how the words and deeds of the great monk drew all men to him. His manner of life was as simple and as strenuously ascetic as it could well be, and yet his manners towards all men were kind and gentle. He ate bread and salt, and drank water only, and on certain occasions passed three or four days, and sometimes whole weeks, without eating (Vol. I, p. 12). He passed most nights in vigil, and when he slept his bed was a palm-leaf mat. He never used oil and he never washed. He wore an untanned leather garment with the hair next his skin (Vol. I, pp 40, 73), and he slept, when an old man, with a skin covering over him. Before his death he gave his leather tunic to Athanasius, and his leather coat to Bishop Serapion. He remained healthy to the last, and his eyesight failed not, and not a tooth dropped from his head; he died aged 105 years. Before his death he ordered the brethren to bury him in a grave, and not to embalm him, for, said he, ["there shall I be] "until the Resurrection of the Dead, when I shall receive this "body without corruption" (Vol. I, p. 73). He spoke Egyptian, and knew neither Greek nor Latin, but his speech was dignified, austere, pungent and "seasoned with salt"; his mind was alert, and his shrewdness and sagacity won the admiration of the crowds of ascetics of all kinds who visited him. Though kind to all, and gracious even to those with whose opinions he disagreed, his quick intelligence enabled him to defeat the worldly-wise in argument, and to shew the superiority of his religion over that of the pagan philosophers who propounded problems to him. His disposition was happy, and his faith in God as firm as a rock; no devil, fiend, or phantom could undermine his trust in the goodness of God, and no wickedness of man made him to doubt it. We hear nothing of his torturing his body, as was the custom of later monks; nevertheless he was willing to suffer hardship, imprisonment, and even martyrdom, if by so doing he might help his fellow man. During the persecution of Maximinus he left the desert and went into Alexandria, and visited the prisons and ministered to the wants of the blessed confessors who were shut up there. He

Digitized by Google

comforted those who were condemned to hard labour in the mines in the Sûdân, and those who were to be banished to the islands, and those on whom the sentence of death had been passed, and he went in and out among the prisoners fearlessly. At length the governor heard of him and his ministrations, and ordered that he should in future be kept out of the city. In spite of this prohibition he made his way into the judgement hall of the governor, intending, no doubt, to make a vigorous protest against his treatment of the confessors. His friends, however, saw him there, "and prevented him that day "from appearing before the judge," and thus he escaped certain condemnation.

We may now proceed to the consideration of the contents of the First Part of Ânân-Îshô's Syriac recension of the book *Paradise*. After the Epistle to Lausus, the high official at whose request the original work was compiled, we have a description of the plan of *Paradise* and a series of "Counsels" to Lausus, and then comes the first history, namely, that of:

Book j

1. Isidore, who had been a monk in Nitria, and died fifteen years after Palladius met him, aged 85 years. With his sisters lived a company of about seventy nuns. His history is followed by those of:

2. Dorotheos, who lived in a cave for sixty years.

3. Potamiaena, the virgin, who was boiled to death at Alexandria in a cauldron of bitumen by the order of the prefect Basilides.

4. Didymus. He was a friend of St. Anthony, who had visited him in his cell thrice, and he received through the Spirit the news of the death of Julian the Apostate on the very day on which he died. He was 80 years of age when Palladius met him.

5. Alexandra of Alexandria, who shut herself up in a tomb and saw neither man nor woman for twelve years. Her history was told to Palladius by Melania.

6. The Avaricious Virgin, who gave Macarius 500 dînârs to buy emeralds and jewels; he spent the money on the sick poor.

7. The Monks of Nitria. Palladius mentions the monks Petâ-Bast, Arsisius, Chronius, and Serapion, and describes the life led by the monks there.

8. Ammôn, one of the early monks of Nitria, who died aged 62 years.

9. Hor, a monk of Nitria, who died before Palladius came there.

10. Pambo, who died on the day of the arrival of Palladius

Digitized by Google

in Nitria, aged 70 years. Palladius received his history from Melania, Ammonius, and Origen, the priest and steward.

11. AMMONIUS, the Tall Brother, the disciple of Pambo. He cut off his left ear to prevent the brethren from making him a bishop; and he never ate any food which had been cooked by fire.

12. BENJAMIN, of Nitria, the physician, who died of dropsy; he was 80 years old when Palladius visited him.

13. APOLLONIUS the merchant, who lived in Nitria for twenty years, and purchased with the money he earned necessaries for the 5,000 brethren who dwelt in the mountain.

14. PAESIUS and ISAIAH, the sons of a merchant, who spent all their money in charity.

15. MACARIUS [the Younger], the "Child of his Cross," who lived for three years in the open desert, and for twenty-five in a cell.

16. NATHANIEL, who died fifteen years before Palladius visited Nitria. He lived for thirty-seven years in his cell, and never passed outside its door.

17. MACARIUS the Egyptian, who lived in the desert for sixty years, and died aged 90; he is said to have raised a man from the dead.

18. MACARIUS the Alexandrian, who was famous for his fasting and vigils, and self-abnegation; some of his cells had no windows, and at one time he walked about in the desert carrying a basket with two or three bushels of sand in it on his shoulders. He performed many cures, and worked miracles.

19. PAUL THE SIMPLE, who became a disciple of St. Anthony when he was 80 years of age (Butler's Greek text, chap. 22).

20. PACHOMIUS of Scete; he was 70 years of age when visited by Palladius (Greek text, chap. 23).

21. STEPHEN the Libyan, who dwelt in the desert for sixty years (Greek text, chap. 24).

22. VALENS the Palestinian, who went mad, and was put in fetters for a year by the fathers (Greek text, chap. 25).

23. HERO the Alexandrian, who became a drunkard and whoremonger, but returned to the desert, repented, and died (Greek text, chap. 26).

24. PTOLEMY the Egyptian, who dwelt in the portion of the Scete desert called "Klimax" for fifteen years, and went mad (Greek text, chap. 27).

25. ABRAHAM the Egyptian (Greek text, chap. 53).

26. A VIRGIN in Jerusalem, who fell (Greek text, chap. 28).

27. A VIRGIN in Caesarea, who fell. A fuller form of this history is given in chapter 29.

28. A certain VIRGIN, who fell (Greek text, chap. 69).

29. A VIRGIN in Caesarea, who fell (Greek text, chap. 70).

Digitized by Google

30. THAIS, or THAISIS, the harlot. According to the Syriac version of this chapter Thais, the harlot, was converted by Abbâ Bessarion. She burnt all her possessions, and was introduced by Bessarion into "a religious house of sisters" (Vol. I, p. 141), where she lived on one pound of dry bread daily and water for a period of three years. At the end of this time Bessarion went and asked St. Anthony whether God had forgiven her her sins or not, and Anthony told his monks to shut themselves up in their cells all night in order that the matter might be revealed concerning which Bessarion had applied to him. After a long time Paul, the disciple of Anthony, saw a vision in the heavens of a splendid couch with a crown of glory laid thereon, and three angels with three lamps standing by its side. Paul thought that the couch was prepared for Anthony, but a voice came to him from heaven, saying, "This couch is "not for Anthony, thy father, but for Thais, the harlot." When Bessarion heard the news of the vision from Paul, he returned to Thais and told her that God had forgiven her her sins. Fifteen days afterwards she died. In Book II, chap. 36 of the Syriac version (see Vol. I, p. 268) will be found the story of the conversion of a harlot by Abbâ Serapion, but it differs in many respects from the story of Bessarion and the harlot. Now according to the Greek versions of this history the monk who converted Thais was called Paphnutius, or Serapion (see F. Nau, *Histoire de Thaïs,* in *Annales du Musée Guimet*, Tome trentième, pt. iii, Paris, 1903), and some authorities identify this Serapion with "Serapion of the Girdle." In 1899-1900 M. Gayet carried out a series of excavations on the site of Antinoë, and in the course of his work discovered the tomb of a woman which contained baskets made of plaited reeds, a chaplet made of wood and ivory, an object in the form of the ancient Egyptian symbol for "life" (*ānkh,* the *crux ansata*), palm branches, and a rose of Jericho. In the tomb, roughly traced in red ink, was the inscription:

ΕΚΟΙΜΗΘΕΜΑ
ΚΑΡΙΑΘΑΙΑΣ
. . . . ΘΕΣΣΑΛ . . . .

which proved that it was the resting place of the "Blessed "Thais." In a neighbouring tomb was found a fragment of pottery, on which were inscribed the words:

ΣΑΡΑΠΙΩΝ
ΚΟΡΝΩΣΘΑΛΟΥ

which prove that the occupant was called "Serapion." We knew that Thais, the harlot, was buried in Egypt, and there

Digitized by Google

are fairly good reasons for believing that Serapion of the Girdle was buried there also. This being so, some have not hesitated to think that the Thais and Serapion whose tombs were excavated by M. Gayet, are to be identified with Thais, the harlot, and Serapion, who converted her. On the other hand, M. Gayet's words (*L'Exploration des Nécropoles Gréco-Byzantines d'Antinoë,* in *Annales du Musée Guimet,* tome xxx, Part. II, Paris, 1902), are to be well considered: "La question a été "controversée; je me bornerai à redire ce que je n'ai cessé "de répéter à ceux qui m'ont questionné à ce sujet: 'Je n'ai "'aucun document me permettant d'identifier Thaïs d'Antinoë "'à la Thaïs historique; je n'en ai aucun, non plus, m'autori-"'sant à nier la possibilité de cette identification.'" It seems, then, that the identification is not at present certain, but it is difficult not to wish that the bodies of the man and woman who now lie side by side in the Musée Guimet, may eventually prove to be those of the famous monk and the woman whom he converted.

31. ELIJAH of Atrêpe (Athribis) near Akhmîm, the builder of a nunnery (Greek text, chap. 29).

32. DOROTHEOS, who lived in an upper chamber.

33. PACHOMIUS the Great, of Tabenna, the Abbot of 1,300 monks, and the nuns (Greek text, chaps. 32-34).

34. The VIRGIN who hid Athanasius (Greek text, chap. 63).

35. PIAMON the Virgin (Greek text, chap. 31).

36. EMMÂ TALÎDÂ, the old woman of Antinoë (Greek text, chap. 59).

37. TAOR the Virgin (Greek text, chap. 59).

38. COLLUTHUS the Virgin (Greek text, chap. 60).

39. The VIRGIN and the MAGISTRIANUS, who was thrown to the beasts in her stead (Greek text, chap. 65).

40. MELANIA THE ELDER. She lived in exile for thirty-seven years (Greek text, chaps. 46 and 54).

41. MELANIA THE YOUNGER (Greek text, chap. 61).
PAMMACHIUS (Greek text, chap. 62).

42. OLYMPIAS, daughter of Seleucus (Greek text, chap. 56).

43. CANDIDA, who lived on dry bread dipped in vinegar (Greek text, chap. 57).

44. GELASIA (Greek text, chap. 57).

45. JULIANA, who received Origen (Greek text, chap. 64).

46. HERONION and his wife BOSPHORIA (Greek text, chap. 66).

47. MAGNA (Greek text, chap. 67).

48. MISERICORS the monk (Greek text, chap. 68).

49. JOHN OF LYCUS, who foretold that Palladius would be made a bishop (Greek text, chap. 35).

Digitized by Google

50. Possidonius the Theban, who possessed the gift of prophecy (Greek text, chap. 36).
51. Chronius of Tomârtâ, the priest, who lived in the desert for sixty years (Greek text, chap. 47).
52. James the Lame and Paphnutius Kephala (Greek text, chap. 47).
53. Solomon of Antinoë (Greek text, chap. 58).
54. Dorotheos of Antinoë (Greek text, chap. 58).
55. Diocles of Antinoë (Greek text, chap. 58).
56. Kapiton of Antinoë (Greek text, chap. 58).
57. The Monk who fell.
58. Ephraim of Edessa, who made an open-air hospital (Greek text, chap. 40).
59. Innocent of the Mount of Olives (Greek text, chap. 44).
60. Elpidius of Jericho (Greek text, chap. 48).
Ænesius (Greek text, chap. 48).
61. Eustathius (Greek text, chap. 48).
62. Sisinnius (Greek text, chap. 49).
63. Gaddai (Gaddanus) (Greek text, chap. 50).
64. Elijah (Greek text, chap. 51).
65. Sabas of Jericho (Greek text, chap. 52).
66. Serapion of the Girdle (Greek text, chap. 37).
67. Eulogius and the Crippled Arian (Greek text, chap. 21).

Book ij

1. Mark the mourner.
2. Paul, the prince of monks, who died at the age of 113 years, when St. Anthony was 90 years old.
3. History of a young Alexandrian.
4. History of an old man in Scete.
5. History of a solitary dweller.
6. History of the disciple of a certain old man.
7. History of Peter, a disciple.
8. History of a disciple.
9. Adolius of Tarsus (Greek text, chap. 43).
10. Moses the Indian (Greek text, chap. 19).
11. Pîôr (Greek text, chap. 39).
12. Moses the Libyan.
13. A wandering monk.
14. Evagrius (Greek text, chap. 31).
15. Malchus of Mârônîa.
16. Two fathers who went naked.
16a. An old man who went naked.
17. An old man who fed with the beasts.
18. An old man who lived forty-nine years in the desert.
19. A monk who fed on grass by the Jordan.

Digitized by Google

Contents of the Book Paradise

20. A HOLY VIRGIN.
21. The YOUNG MEN who were with Macarius.
22. BESSARION, who went naked during the frost.
23. BESSARION'S acts.
24. The HOLY MAN with nine virtues.
25. MARIA, who assumed a monk's attire.
26. A CERTAIN SAGE.
27. TWO BRETHREN in a Persian Monastery.
28. A VIRGIN.
29. STEPHÂNÂ of Scete.
30. EUCARPUS, who went mad and reviled Evagrius.
31. A FAMOUS DEACON.
32. A BISHOP who fell into fornication and repented.
33. The neighbour of POEMEN.
34. The APOSTATE BROTHER.
35. An OLD MAN in Scete.
36. SERAPION and the Harlot (*see* Vol. I, p. 140).
37. The HARLOT whom a subdeacon drove out of the Church.
38. APOLLO of Scete.
39. COSMAS of Mount Sinai.
40. MACARIUS, who was accused of committing fornication.
41. The OLD MAN who thought that Melchisedek was the Son of God.
42. MACARIUS, the disciple of Mâr Anthony.
43. MARK the Less.
44. PAULE the Simple, the disciple of St. Anthony.

The Asketikon of Pachomius

1. ON PRIDE AND WICKEDNESS.
2. SYLVANUS the Actor.
3. The SINNER who died.
4. The RIGHTEOUS MAN who died.
5. What the DEVILS SAID TO PACHOMIUS.
6. The ACTS OF PACHOMIUS in his Monastery.
7. A REVELATION concerning heretics.
8. A REVELATION concerning the Settlement of the Brethren.
9. ANOTHER REVELATION.
10. WORDS OF DOCTRINE.
11. THE FAMINE.
12. PACHOMIUS and the Steward.
13. The MONK WHO DENIED CHRIST.
14. PACHOMIUS and the PHANTOM.
15. PACHOMIUS and his GIFT OF TONGUES.
16. JONAH the Gardener.
17. PACHOMIUS and HIS ORATORY.
18. PACHOMIUS and THE HERETICS.

Digitized by Google

19. PACHOMIUS and THE MONK.
20. PACHOMIUS and the MONK WHO MADE MATS.
21. PACHOMIUS and the MONK WITH CUT HANDS.
FURTHER REMARKS BY PALLADIUS.

Following the above we have in the Syriac version of Ânân-Îshô a HISTORY OF THE MONKS WHO LIVED IN THE DESERT OF EGYPT, which is said to have been compiled by Saint Jerome. This work is generally known as the *Historia Monachorum*, and was written in Greek; the Latin version is now acknowledged to have been made by Rufinus. It has been shown (Butler, *Lausiac History*, p. 276, Cambridge, 1898) that it was compiled by a Monk of Jerusalem, who belonged to the monastery on Mount Olivet founded by Rufinus, and who went to Egypt in 394, with six companions, to visit the monks. On his return to his monastery he wrote the book at the request of the brotherhood. According to Sozomen the writer was Timotheus, Bishop of Alexandria, but Dom Butler has proved this to be impossible, and he suggests (op. cit., p. 277) that the writer was not the Bishop of Alexandria, but the Archdeacon of Alexandria, who was also called Timotheus, and was put forward by his party, on the death of Bishop Theophilus in 412, as a candidate for the see against St. Cyril. The contents of his work are:

1. The Author's APOLOGY.
2. JOHN OF LYCUS.
3. ABBÂ HOR.
4. ABBÂ AMMON.
5. ABBÂ ABBAN (BENUS).
6. THE BRETHREN OF OXYRRHYNCHUS.
7. ABBÂ THEON.
8. ABBÂ ELIJAH.
9. ABBÂ APOLLO and ABBÂ AMMON.
10. ABBÂ APELLEN.
11. ABBÂ APOLLO and ABBÂ JOHN.
12. ABBÂ PAPHNUTIUS.
13. EULOGIUS.
14. ISIDORE of Thebes.
15. DIOSCURUS of Thebes.
16. ABBÂ COPRES and PETARPEMOTIS.
17. HÔR, ISAIAH, PAUL, and NOPI, the Confessors.
18. EVAGRIUS.
19. PITHYRION.
20. TRIUMPHS OF THE FATHERS.
21 THE MONKS OF NITRIA.
22. AMMON THE FIRST.

Digitized by Google

23. Another AMMON.
24. DIDYMUS.
25. CHRONIUS.
26. The THREE BRETHREN who cut off their ears.
27. PHILEMON.
28. JOHN, Abbâ of Dîkâpôlîs.
29. SERAPION, the head of ten thousand men.
30. APOLLO the Less.

The Second Part of Ânân-Îshô's version of the book *Paradise* contains several series of miscellaneous collections of "Sayings" and "Stories" of the Fathers, some 635 in number, and also a series of "Questions and Answers," about 706 in number, which deal with the rule of life of the holy men. Though Ânân-Îshô attributes all of them to Palladius, it is very doubtful if more than a few of them were collected by him. Large numbers of them are found in Greek manuscripts of the sixth century, and it is almost certain that the "Sayings" were first collected and done into writing in the fifth century, probably about the time when the book *Paradise* and *History of the Monks* were compiled. It is only natural that the men who wrote these works should think that the terse, pithy "Sayings" of the ascetics whom they had visited were just as well worth preserving as the histories of their lives, and that they should take pains to put on record the words and opinions on difficult points of the ascetic life for the benefit and guidance of future generations of monks. It is, in my opinion, quite impossible for all the "Sayings" and "Stories" collected by Ânân-Îshô to belong to this early period or to be of Egyptian origin, but it is certain that a very large proportion of them is of Egyptian origin, and that the teaching and spirit in all of them are the products of the Christian monasticism of Egypt. On the other hand, the authorship of many of them is doubtful, and this we must probably attribute to the mistakes of copyists. When the "Sayings" were first collected, they were grouped either according to the names of their authors or their subject matters; but these arrangements were soon broken up, and after a generation or two anything like systematic order disappeared from the collections. The "Sayings" and the "Stories" of the monks translated in the second volume of this work are of great value for the study of Egyptian monastic Christianity, for they reveal the very thoughts of the ascetics and illustrate the views of the monks on almost every conceivable point in connexion with the theory and practice of the Christian Life as they understood it. In them we have depicted the strength and weakness of the holy men, and though

Digitized by Google

our modern ideas may suggest that selfishness was at the bottom of their stern asceticism, that their labours did nothing to help the world along, and that their hardships and the torturings of their bodies were both useless and unnecessary, no one can deny that the fixedness and intensity of their faith, and their high aims and practical morality made them bright lights and guides to all, and proved them to be most earnest seekers after God.

Digitized by Google

iij. Christian Monasticism in Egypt

IN approaching the consideration of Christian monasticism in Egypt, it will be well to remember that the more the ancient religions of the world are studied, the plainer it is that in all ages, both in Asia and Africa, certain kinds of men have, for various reasons, devoted themselves to a life of asceticism which was more or less severe. It is foreign to our purpose to adduce detailed proofs of this statement here, and it is unnecessary, for anyone who will take the trouble to read the history of the leaders of the great religious movements which have taken place in China, and India, and Western Asia, and also the literature of ancient Egypt, cannot fail to be convinced of this fact. Men who were tired of the world, or who had experienced great disappointments, or who wished to impress their views and ideas concerning spiritual matters on their fellow men, forsook the habitations of men and retired into mountains and deserts, where they fasted, prayed, kept vigils, and meditated, and sometimes devoted their lives to ministering to the wants, both material and spiritual, of the poor and needy. They preserved their bodies chaste, and despised the possessions of this world. At the same time it must be borne in mind that the asceticism practised by the monks of Egypt differed in many particulars from that of men of other countries, and also that its essential characteristics were founded on views which were quite distinct from those which made the devout priests of the pre-Christian religions of Egypt pass their time in solitude, silence, reflection and study, and caused them to adopt lives of poverty and austere self-abnegation.

The Christian monks of Egypt, like investigators of our own time, often discussed the question, "Who were the first "monks?" Some held the view that the first who led lives of virginity and holiness in the desert were the Prophet Elijah and John the Baptist, and seemed to have assumed that the lives of the monks of Egypt were the counterparts of these great desert teachers. Some were firmly convinced that Christian monasticism began with St. Anthony, who was born about 250, and died about 355, whilst others again asserted boldly that the first Christian monk who dwelt in the desert was Paul the Anchorite, "who ended [his career] in the days of "Decius and Valerianus" (A.D. 249–253, 253–270) (Vol. I, p. 197). Now we find from the life of Paul, attributed to Palladius in the Syriac version, that this man was the son of wealthy parents who died when he was sixteen years of age; he was educated in the learning of both the Greeks and the Egyptians, and he

Digitized by Google

loved God with his whole heart. His sister's husband was always lying in wait to deliver him over to those who were persecuting the Christians, and at length he found it necessary to flee to the mountains, where he found a rock-cave wherein he lived for many years. When he was 113 years old, he was visited by St. Anthony, who travelled across the desert, and held converse first with a hippo-centaur, and next with a satyr. Now, according to the story, Anthony was at this time 90 years old, but this is impossible, for it is said in the same story that Paul "ended" in the days of Decius and Valerianus, in other words, that Anthony was a youth when Paul was a very old man. Assuming, however, that Anthony was 90 years old when he visited Paul, and that Paul was 113 years old at the time, it is tolerably certain that Paul had lived the life of an anchorite some twenty-three years longer than Anthony. If, on the other hand, we accept the statement that Paul died between 249 and 270 aged 113 years, it would follow that he was born about 150, and that he lived the life of a Christian monk before the close of the second century. It is impossible to think from any point of view that Paul was the only Christian who retired to the desert, whether he was born in the second or in the third century, but the history of his life is valuable as showing that a tradition, which was extant when the writer compiled his life, asserted that he was the first of the Christian monks who lived in the desert. What we are probably intended to understand by the writer of the life of Paul is that Paul was an anchorite in the desert to the east of the Nile, between the river and the Red Sea, before St. Anthony, and that when he first settled there Christian monks in general had not chosen that desert as a place of abode.

When we consider the trials and tribulations in the midst of which the Christians of Egypt lived during the second century, it is difficult not to think that large numbers of them forsook the towns and villages and fled to the mountains and deserts, the men to avoid military service, and the women to escape dishonour and persecution. A tradition states that during the reign of Antoninus Pius (138-161) an abbot called Frontonius, hating the world and longing for solitude, collected seventy brethren and led them into the Nitrian Desert, where they cultivated the ground, and lived exceedingly austere lives (*Acta Sanctorum*, April 14). For one systematically arranged "flight from the world" such as this, there must have been hundreds of which no record now exists. Taking all the probabilities of the case into consideration, we are justified in stating that by the year 300 there were in all the mountains and deserts of Egypt a large number of Christian monks and soli-

Digitized by Google

tary ascetics. It is doubtful if brotherhoods existed at this time; indeed, the histories of the ascetics which come first in the book *Paradise* indicate that they did not, for from these we learn that each recluse did what seemed right in his own eyes. Each man was entirely devoted to the saving of his own soul, and apparently cared for nothing and no one else. Each tried to lead a more austere life than that of his neighbour, believing that through the multitude of his fastings, vigils, and prayers he could make himself acceptable to God. Some, no doubt, repented of their evil deeds and thoughts with absolute sincerity, and their repentance lasted for years at a time, but repentance had never been a characteristic of the Egyptian, as we may see from the older literature of Egypt.

Up to about B.C. 2400 the Egyptian based all his hopes of reaching heaven upon the performance of ceremonies and the recital of formulæ, which would enable him to learn the great and secret name of the God of the other world. His moral code was of the highest character, and he often boasts in his inscriptions that he was good and dutiful to his father and mother, and affectionate to his brothers and sisters, and that he never did harm to any man because he feared an unfavourable judgement in the Hall of Osiris. In no inscription, however, known to me is there any mention of sorrow or regret for the commission of any sin or offence.

In the religious texts written about B.C. 1500, when, probably under Asiatic influence, a more spiritual conception of religion existed among the priests, we find clear indications that the doctrine of retribution was accepted by them. Good deeds and pious acts performed on earth secured for the doer when in the other world a regular and unfailing supply of offerings, and a favourable hearing when his soul was weighed in the Balance in the Hall of Osiris, and, in the Fields of the Blessed, a grant of land, the extent of which was in proportion to his good deeds upon earth. The funerary inscriptions which describe the lives of those whom they commemorate are full of protestations put into the mouths of deceased persons as to the righteousness and integrity of their lives, and in the Books of the Dead they deny the commission of forty-two sins and offences. Nowhere, however, do we find that the deceased persons express regret or contrition for such offences against the law as they must certainly have committed. Indeed, it seems as if the Egyptian regarded sin merely as a breach of an obligation to the moral law from which he could free himself by his own subsequent good works, or by the payment of offerings. There is no word in the hieroglyphic texts for "repentance," and in making the Coptic version of the New Testa-

Digitized by Google

ment the translators were obliged to borrow the Greek word μετάνοια when they needed to express the idea of repentance. The fundamental ideas which underlie the words "repentance," "conscience," and "faith," as understood by modern Christian peoples, seem to have been unknown to the ancient Egyptian, and it seems to me that they were only partially understood by the earliest of the Christian monks. The Christian and Egyptian monks trusted very largely to the efficacy of their own works for salvation. Hence their prolonged fasts, their multitudinous prayers, their constant vigils, their excessive manual labour, and their ceaseless battle against the cravings and desires of the body. The greatest monk was he who could fast the longest, rest and sleep the least, pray the greatest number of prayers, keep vigil the longest, work the hardest, endure best the blazing heat of the day and the bitter cold of the night, and who could reduce his body to the most complete state of impassibility. When hunger, thirst, cold, silence, watching and praying had reduced the body, the spiritual nature and faculties sprang into active operation, and the monks saw visions and received revelations of a supernatural character.

Whether we regard Abbâ Paul or St. Anthony as the first monk who dwelt in the desert, it is quite certain that the systematic establishment of monasticism in Egypt is due to the latter. During the first half of his life St. Anthony was surrounded by a large number of monks who emulated his mode of life, and who were more or less under his spiritual direction and guidance. Very early in the fourth century, perhaps, before 310, he gathered together a considerable number of monks, and they came and lived with him in a monastery not far from the Red Sea. Up to that time he had lived in Pispir, the "outer mountain," which appears to have been situated about sixty-five miles to the south of Cairo, eight miles to the north of the modern town of Beni Suwêf, and several miles inland from the west bank of the Nile. The monastery to which he betook himself with his community of monks was about twenty-five miles from the Red Sea, and the most direct route to it from the Nile is by the old desert road which runs almost due east from the village of Bayâd, about eighty miles to the south of Cairo. It stood on the "inner mountain," as the place is called in the history of St. Anthony. The Monastery of Paul (not Paul the Simple) lay some twenty miles to the south-east of that of St. Anthony.

The next great event in the history of Christian monasticism in Egypt was the founding, about 320, of the famous Monastery of Tabenna, near the modern town of Denderah, in Upper

Digitized by Google

Egypt, by Pachomius, who was born a few years before the close of the third century. When he had finished his discipleship, an Angel appeared to him and told him to go and collect the wandering monks, to live with them, and to lay down such laws as he should tell him for their guidance. The Angel then gave him a book (*or* tablet), wherein were written six laws. According to these a monk might eat and drink, or fast, as he pleased; no pressure was to be put upon him to do either. The strong were to labour hard, and the weak according to their strength, and each was to be encouraged to do his utmost. Monks were to live three by three in cells, and were to eat together in one house. They were not to sleep lying down, but seats were to be provided, so that when sitting down they might "support their heads." They were to sleep in sleeveless garments, wear skull caps with crosses worked in purple upon the fronts of them, and partake of the Eucharist on Saturdays and Sundays. The monks were to be divided into twenty-four grades, each of which was to bear the name of a letter of the alphabet.

In addition to these rules the Angel ordered that no man should be received into that monastery until he had toiled three years; the same period, we may note in passing, which Isidore ordered Palladius to serve. Though the monks ate together, they were to cover their faces with their cowls, and were not to converse with each other or look about. The rule of Pachomius seems to have been attractive to many, for the company of monks in the house in which he lived numbered 1,300, and there were several other houses near, each containing from one to three hundred monks. Each monk worked at a trade, and we learn (Vol. I, p. 146) that there were in the community gardeners, blacksmiths, bakers, carpenters, fullers, makers of baskets, mats, nets, and sandals, and one scribe. As each man worked he repeated the Psalms and selected passages from the Scriptures. Of the articles made by the monks a certain number were sold to the people of the neighbouring villages, but from the story told in Vol. I, p. 300, we see clearly that Pachomius did not allow an excessive profit to be made by the dealer who disposed of the surplus goods. From the *Askêtikon* (Vol. I, pp. 283ff) we may conclude that Pachomius was an able and just administrator, and one who detested excess of any kind among his followers. He urged every man to do his best, but he was most severe in his dealings with the vainglorious, and with those who undertook tasks beyond their power to fulfil. In illustration may be quoted the story (Vol. I, p. 291) of the cook who neglected his duly appointed work of cooking vegetables for the brethren for two months, and devoted his

Digitized by Google

time to the plaiting of mats. He excused himself by saying that the brethren used not to eat all that he cooked, and that much food was therefore wasted, to say nothing of the forty flasks of oil which were mixed daily with the peas and vegetables, but Pachomius refused to accept his excuse, and having ordered the five hundred mats which the cook had made to be brought to him, he threw them into the fire.

Another monk sighed for martyrdom, and begged Pachomius to pray that he might become a martyr, but there was little chance of this happening, for there was peace in the world, and Constantine was reigning. Pachomius told him to lead the life of a monk blamelessly, and to make his life pleasing to Christ, and then he should enjoy the companionship of the martyrs in heaven. This, however, did not satisfy the monk, and in spite of the warnings of his abbot, he continued to crave for martyrdom. Two years later Pachomius despatched a number of monks to an island in the river to the south to cut reeds for the mat-makers, and he sent the monk who wished to become a martyr to them with some money for their expenses, which he took an ass to carry. When he came to the place on the river bank opposite to the island, a company of the Blemmyes came down to draw water, and finding the monk there, they made him dismount, and having seized the ass and his money, they carried him off to the mountains. Then they made a feast and poured out libations to their gods, and urged the monk to join them in their worship. He refused at first to do so, but when they came against him with drawn swords in their hands and threatened to kill him, he took wine and poured out a libation to their gods, and denied God. When he returned to his monastery and confessed what he had done, Pachomius condemned him to solitary confinement, to one meal a day of bread and salt, to perpetual vigil and tears, and to plait two palm-leaf mats each day. After ten years of this penance he died (Vol. I, p. 304).

On the other side of the river near the monastery of Pachomius there were several nunneries, some of which were maintained by the work of the monks. Of the nuns who dwelt in these Palladius tells two stories (Vol. I, p. 147). A sister was seen by another talking to a man who asked her for work, and some time later, during a dispute between these two nuns, she who had seen the other talking with the man accused her of committing an act of infamy. This accusation distressed the innocent sister greatly, and at length she went and drowned herself secretly; her accuser, terrified at the result of her calumny, also drowned herself secretly. The second story s that of a sister who had been possessed of a devil, and who

Digitized by Google

permitted her companions to treat her with contempt; she waited upon them in the refectory, and performed so many menial duties that Palladius says she became the "broom of the whole nunnery." It was, however, revealed to Abbâ Piterius, who lived in the Porphyrites, that a nun of Tabenna was more excellent than he, and he asked his superior to give him permission to go and see her. When he arrived there, all the nuns came in to be blessed by him except the sister who made herself the servant of them all, and when he asked for her, she had to be dragged into his presence. As soon as she appeared, Piterius bowed down before her, and in answer to the remonstrances of the other sisters, declared that she was their "mother and his," and that he entreated God to grant him a portion with her in the Day of Judgement. On this the sisters who had been in the habit of buffeting her, and throwing the "rinsings of vessels" over her, and insulting her, expressed contrition and asked her pardon. These stories are told in such detail that Palladius must have heard them himself at Tabenna, where he cannot have failed to stay during his travels in Egypt.

Now whilst Anthony was directing a community of monks on the "Inner Mountain," and Pachomius was Abbot of Tabenna, numbers of other monks were leading lives of austerity in the Desert of Nitria, or the Natron Valley (Wâdî-an-Natrûn), as it is generally called, and in the Desert of Scete. To reach Nitria Palladius was obliged to cross Lake Mareotis, which occupied him a day and a half. The main portion of the valley lies a little to the north-west of Cairo, and can be reached in two days by camel. When he arrived there he found a company of about 5,000 monks, who lived in twos and threes, or in groups; besides these there were 600 anchorites who lived, each by himself, in the neighbouring desert. The making of bread for these occupied seven bakers. Each monk lived as he pleased, either by himself or with others. Here in a courtyard stood a large church, which was served by eight priests, and the monks attended divine service on Saturday and Sunday. In the courtyard were three palm trees, with a whip hanging on each; one whip was used for beating the monks who committed acts of folly, another was used for chastising thieves, and the third for beating strangers who misbehaved. Close to the church was a guest-house, in which the visitor might stay as long as he pleased, provided he was willing to work in the bakery or refectory. At Nitria there were physicians and confectioners and wine merchants, but no man was needy, for every one had to work at the weaving of flax. At night-fall the monks began to sing psalms and to pray, and

Digitized by Google

the visitor who heard the singing of the monks rising up round about him, might, "his mind being exalted," imagine that he was in the "Paradise of Eden," i.e., heaven.

In Nitria Palladius heard of Ammon, Nathaniel, Paul the Simple, Hor, and Pambo, and he saw Ammonius, Benjamin the Physician, Macarius, and many others, and from the facts which he relates it is clear that Nitria had been inhabited by monks for more than one hundred years before he arrived there. One portion of the Nitrian Valley, because of the steep, precipitous rocks in it, was called "Klimax," i.e., "the Ladder," and as no water was to be had nearer than twelve miles, it was usually considered to be uninhabitable. Here, notwithstanding, for fifteen years lived Ptolemy the Egyptian (Vol. I, p. 136), who collected in sponges the dew which fell in the months of December and January, and having squeezed these out into jars he obtained a supply of water for the whole year. It is sad to learn that he went mad, and scoffed at the Eucharist, and that he finally departed to Egypt, where he gave himself over to prodigal and riotous living.

Another interesting portion of the Nitrian Valley was called "The Cells," because here were situated the abodes of the monks who were hermits in the strictest sense of the word. Each man lived by himself in a cell at some distance from any neighbour, and only mixed with his fellows when he went to the Church of Nitria, which was some miles distant, on Saturday and Sunday.

Now we know from other sources that during the second half of the fourth century a large and important societyof monks lived near the modern town of Sûhâk, about 320 miles south of Cairo. Their rallying point was the famous "White Monastery," which stood on the skirt of the desert on the west bank of the Nile, and was dedicated to the great ascetic Abbâ Shenuti by the Empress Helena. Shenuti was born about 333, and died at midday on July 2, 451, aged 118 years! He became a monk when a boy, and for years was under the direction of his uncle Bgûl, and for nearly 100 years he possessed very great influence. It is difficult to understand why Palladius makes no mention of him, and why he does not describe the rule of his monks, which was a very severe one. Shenuti was a man of violent temper and a strenuous opponent of Nestorius and his followers, and we can only surmise that Palladius omitted all reference to him because he disapproved of his personal characteristics. It would be wrong to think that he had no knowledge of the great communities of monks which flourished in the neighbourhood of Sûhâk and Akhmîm (Panopolis).

Digitized by Google

Another great host of monks lived at Oxyrrhynchus, about 125 miles south of Cairo, where, we learn from *The History of the Monks*, there were thirteen churches (Vol. I, p. 337). "The "city was so full of the habitations of the brethren that the "walls thereof are wellnigh thrust out with them, so many "were the brethren." Five thousand monks lived inside the city, and five thousand outside, and the praises of God rose up to heaven every hour of the day and night. Besides these the Bishop had under his charge twenty thousand nuns. Strangers were cordially welcomed at Oxyrrhynchus; and the writer of *The History of the Monks* says that his cloak and other garments were wellnigh torn off his back by the eager hands of those who contended with each other for the pleasure of receiving him into their houses.

At Lycus, near the modern city of Asyût, was another famous community of monks, the most famous of these being John the Carpenter. He was born about 304, became a monk about 330, and five years later he took up his abode on the top of the mountain of Lycus, where he lived until his death, which took place about 394. He possessed the gift of prophecy and worked miracles, and his counsel was sought by all, from Theodosius the Emperor to the humblest monk. During the earlier years of his life as a monk he ate nothing cooked by fire, not even bread, and towards the close of his life his food consisted of dried herbs only. He founded no community of monks, but large numbers of ascetics must have regarded him as their spiritual father (See Vol. I, pp. 169ff. and 320ff.)

During the period of his banishment to Egypt, Palladius wandered about the country and paid visits to many monasteries and solitaries. He found Antinoë so interesting that he spent four years there. The town lay on the east bank of the river, and its site is marked to-day by the village of Shêkh Abâdah. At Antinoë there were twelve nunneries, and Palladius met there Emmâ Talîdâ, the head of sixty virgins, and the virgin Taor. Close to the town lived some twelve hundred men "who worked with their hands and lived the life of "spiritual excellence" (Vol. I, p. 180). In the desert of Antinoë lived Elijah the hermit, who was 110 years old when the writer of *The History of the Monks* became acquainted with him, and who had lived there for seventy years. His daily food consisted of three ounces of bread and three olives, which he ate in the evening; in his earlier years he partook of food only once a week (Vol. I, p. 340).

From what has been said above it is clear that during the fourth century Egypt was filled with monks of all kinds, and that the monastic life was general there. During the two pre-

Digitized by Google

ceding centuries the followers of the ascetic life were content to lead solitary lives in isolated places on the borders of the towns and villages, and in the mountains and deserts, but after the persecutions of Decius and Diocletian, they found that their personal safety depended upon their living together in organized communities. The formation of societies, or brotherhoods, was quickly followed by the building of substantial monasteries, which were provided with courts enclosed by strong outer walls and gates, and the resistance which could be offered to intruders by some hundred of monks armed with the stout stick or cudgel of the Egyptian peasant was not small. Palladius, unfortunately, gives no description of the monasteries which he saw, but it is tolerably certain that their main features resembled those of the great buildings, half monastery half fortress, of which a fine example remains in the ruined monastery of St. Simeon near Aswân. If the numbers of the monks in Nitria, Antinoë, Oxyrrhynchus, Panopolis, and other places, given by Palladius and the author of the *History of the Monks*, be correct, it is clear that the whole body of the ascetics of Egypt must have formed a veritable army which was sufficiently strong to resist any unpopular measure of the Government. This fact, no doubt, explains why the heads of great religious houses were often consulted by the authorities on matters of State, and why their advice was so often followed by the leaders of military expeditions against the barbarians to the south of Egypt.

Digitized by Google

iv. The Supernatural Element in the Book "Paradise"

IN perusing the lives of the holy men given in the Book *Paradise* and in *The History of the Monks* the reader will find described a series of incidents and events in which the supernatural element plays a prominent part, and some critics have asserted that they constitute a proof that these works are not genuine. Palladius was, no doubt, credulous in respect of miracles and supernatural occurrences in general, but, in my opinion, the evidence that he was so is a proof that he lived at a time when the Christian world believed in the things which he describes, and the details given by him convince me that his knowledge of the particular events which he records was acquired at first hand. Those who are familiar with the magic of the Dynastic Egyptians find few miraculous occurrences in the histories of the monks of which parallels do not exist in the pagan literature of Egypt. The monks certainly rejected the old gods of the country, but the folk-lore survived, and with it the beliefs and superstitions which belonged to the mythology of a remote past and which were never wholly eradicated. To the Cross were transferred the powers and attributes of the old Egyptian amulet *ānkh,* and the histories of the monks supply many instances of its use as an amulet. Thus when Anthony made over himself the Sign of the Cross the devil "was straightway terrified" (Vol. I, p. 10); and on another occasion the devil, seeing the Sign, "passed "away quickly in the form of a flame of fire" (p. 16). Anthony protected himself against a being half-man half-ass by the Sign of the Cross (p. 44). One day the devil appeared to Macarius the Egyptian and explained his system of wiles and fraud; the "chosen athlete" made the Sign over himself and the devil disappeared (p. 278). John of Lycus made the Sign over some oil which he sent to a woman who had cataract in her eyes; she smeared her eyes therewith three times, and after three days she saw (p. 322). Poemen made the Sign over a youth whose face "had been turned backwards by the Evil One," and the youth was healed (Vol. II, p. 144). A certain father was about to drink from a vessel, and when a holy woman made the Sign over it, the devil fell from the vessel in the form of a flash of fire (Vol. II, p. 269). The brethren said, "The "demons fear and tremble, not only by reason of the Crucifixion of Christ, but even at the Sign of the Cross, whether it "be depicted upon a garment or made in the air" (Vol. II, p. 299). The "name of the Cross" even was a "word of power,"

Digitized by Google

wherewith Anthony put to flight the fiery phantoms which attacked him by night (Vol. I, p. 43).

The monks, like the Apostles (St. Matthew vii, 22) used the Name of Christ as a word of power. A haughty and insolent devil "once appeared to Anthony, and said, 'I am the power "'of God,'" whereupon the old man blew a puff of wind at him, and rebuked him in the Name of Christ, and the devil and all his host disappeared (Vol. I, p. 33). On another occasion Anthony held converse with Satan, but when Satan heard him mention the "Name of Christ his form vanished "and his words came to an end" (Vol. I, p. 35). One night when Satan had brought a troop of devils in the form of beasts against Anthony, at the mention of the Name of Christ Satan was driven away "like a sparrow before a hawk" (Vol. I, p. 44). By the Name of Christ Anthony drove out a devil from a maiden (Vol. I, p. 59), and it was well known that he performed all his healings by means of prayer and the mention of the Name of Christ (Vol. I, p. 68). Now Anthony was an Egyptian, and he did in such matters as a pagan Egyptian priest would have done, only his prayer took the place of the old magical formula, and the Name of Christ was used instead of the name of an old Egyptian god. Abbâ Benus adjured a hippopotamus which devoured the crops in a certain village in the Name of Jesus Christ, and the beast departed forthwith, and did no further harm (Vol. I, p. 337); and the fathers went so far as to say that laymen might drive away devils by the Name of Christ and the Sign of the Cross (Vol. II, p. 300).

When we remember that Anthony was, notwithstanding his natural shrewdness and virtues, an uneducated Egyptian, we need feel no surprise at the stories of his conflicts with devils and phantoms. His wandering among the tombs must have made him familiar with the painted reliefs in them and with the figures of gods and mythological beings in whom his ancestors believed, and the vivid imagination which he inherited from his ancestors endued them with life and movement. He was unacquainted with the literature of ancient Egypt, for he could neither read nor write, and therefore he could not know that the paintings only represented the attempts made by funerary artists to give form to the weird conceptions of the supposed denizens of the other world, both good and evil, which his forefathers had evolved out of their own minds.

It is noteworthy that many of the stories which relate the appearances of the Devil are told in connexion with men of Egyptian origin. Thus Palladius tells us (Vol. I, p. 115) that a certain Egyptian who wished to gain the love of another man's wife hired a magician to employ his sorceries in order to make

Digitized by Google

the woman love him or to make her husband hate her and cast her out; the magician failed to make the woman unfaithful, but he succeeded in transforming her into a mare. After three days the husband of the woman took the mare to Macarius the Egyptian, to whom God had revealed the matter, and when the brethren announced her arrival to the holy man, Macarius told them that the appearance of the woman to them in the form of a mare was due to an "error of sight" (hypnotic suggestion?) on the part of those who saw her. He then threw water which he had blessed over her, and she straightway appeared in the form of a woman to every man there; after eating some sacramental bread she was healed. To Macarius also they brought a man possessed of a fiery devil (Vol. I, p. 117), who, when he had eaten three baskets of bread and drunk three bottles of water, vomited them in the form of "smoky "vapour." Under the treatment of Macarius the man became content with three pounds of food per day, and was healed. Nathaniel, another Egyptian recluse, was sorely tempted to leave his cell to help a young man whose laden ass was said to have fallen in the bed of the river. He refrained, however, and the young man, who was the Devil, and his ass disappeared in a whirlwind (Vol. I, p. 113). When Macarius the Alexandrian went to the garden of Jannes and Jambres "seventy devils" came forth against him in the form of ravens; these devils were, no doubt, mere birds, but the imagination of the saint turned them into devils (Vol. I, p. 119). On one occasion, when Macarius was one hundred years old, Palladius heard him "striv-"ing with his soul and with Satan," and saying to the Evil One, "Thou canst do nothing unto me, get thee gone" (Vol. I, p. 124). One day a man possessed of a devil was brought to Paul the Simple and Anthony, and when the ordinary means failed to drive him out, Paul appealed to Christ, and swore that he would neither eat nor drink until the devil had come out of the man. Thereupon the devil cried out that he was being ill-treated, and when he asked Paul where he should go, the holy man said, "To the uttermost depths of the abyss." On this the devil came out, and transformed himself into "a mighty "dragon seventy cubits long," which wriggled its way down to the Red Sea (Vol. I, p. 128). The serpent is a well-known representative of the Evil One in Egyptian mythology, and the length of the monster here given suggests that the holy man regarded the creature before him as akin to Āpep, the arch-enemy of Horus and Rā. Pachomius, the Abbot of Tabenna, was also vexed by devils, and we are told (Vol. I, p. 290) that one day, whilst he was journeying in the desert of Ammon, "certain legions of devils rose up against him and

Digitized by Google

"thronged him, both on his right hand and on his left," and they clung to him until he reached the monastery. On another occasion, when he and Theodore were walking through the monastery by night, a woman appeared to them whose beauty was so great as to be indescribable, and even Theodore, who looked at the phantom, was exceedingly perturbed, and his face changed colour (Vol. I, p. 304). In answer to his questions she told Pachomius that she was the daughter of the Calumniator, and that she had received power to fight against him.

Another survival of the old Egyptian belief in the power of men, under certain circumstances, to cast spells is recorded in the history of Apollo (Vol. I, p. 351). The ten villages which were round about his place of abode, near Hermopolis, i.e., the city of the god Thoth, were filled with men who worshipped a wooden idol, and they carried him in procession from village to village, whilst the priests and people danced before him. One day Apollo saw them carrying on their "devilish sports," and he knelt down and prayed, and immediately all the people became spell-bound where they stood, and being unable to move they were obliged to remain there the whole day long in the fierce heat of the sun, and each was parched with thirst. Then certain of the inhabitants sent oxen to drag away the idol, but they also became spell-bound, and could move neither the idol nor themselves. At length it was recognized that the sports had been stopped by Apollo, and the people sent and begged for his help. He went quickly and prayed over the men who were spell-bound, and removed the spell, and they at once believed in Christ, and burned their idol, and were baptized.

The supernatural powers of Apollo were exercised in many other ways. During a dispute in a village about certain boundaries, the leader of the barbarians declared that there could never "be peace until death." To this Apollo replied, "It shall "be as thou sayest, but none except thyself shall die; and the "earth shall not be thy grave, but the bellies of wild beasts." That night the man died, and on the following morning his remains were found horribly mangled by vultures and hyenas. The faith that was in the holy man enabled him to kill snakes, asps, vipers, and all kinds of reptiles, and in a time of famine he fed the hungry folk from baskets of bread which always remained full through his miraculous powers.

In connexion with Apollo mention is made of another Egyptian called Ammon, who slew a mighty serpent (Vol. I, p. 352). The monster was wont to slay sheep and cattle, and when the people begged the saint to free them from him, he went and knelt down at the place where the serpent usually

Digitized by Google

passed, and prayed. Whilst he was praying, the serpent came and tried to strike him, but as soon as Ammon had called upon Christ to destroy him, the reptile burst asunder.

The instances quoted above are sufficient to illustrate the miraculous powers attributed to the ascetics of Egypt, and it is clear that the monks believed that they were able to cast out devils from the human body, and to destroy their evil works. The author of *The History of the Monks* boldly states that, at the time when he was writing, they raised the dead, and like Peter, walked on the water, and performed everything which the Redeemer and His Apostles performed.

Digitized by Google

v. The Lives of the Egyptian Monks and their Teaching

FROM the Histories related by Palladius and by the author of *The History of the Monks* we can gain a very clear idea of the manner of the lives of the solitary dwellers in the desert and of those who dwelt in monasteries. The first thing to be done by the man who determined to become an ascetic was to flee from the world, that is to say, to forsake the habitation of men, and to avoid all intercourse with men, and especially with women. At first the strong-willed man left his town or village, and seeking out a lonely spot in the desert or mountains took up his abode there. Later, when men like Anthony, and Paul, and Ammon lived in the desert, the man who would be a monk joined their followers, and learned from them the fundamental principles of the ascetic life. Those who, for various reasons, felt themselves unequal to the labours of the solitary life, remained in the company of their fellow-monks, and usually lived blameless lives until they died. The solitary dweller, having chosen his place of abode, at once began to eat sparingly with the view of reducing the strength of the passions of his body, and he drank nothing but water. Those who lived in the mountains and near the river had little difficulty in obtaining water, but many of them lived at considerable distances from a stream or well, and deliberately made the task of obtaining a supply of water as difficult as possible. The chief article of food of the solitaries was bread made in the form of thin cakes; many of them ate these dry, but some soaked them, or dipped them in water first. When one father asked another if he would not dip his bread-cake in water, his companion replied, "When a possession increaseth set not "thy heart upon it" (Vol. II, p. 18). Abbâ Isaac, the priest of the Cells, ate the ashes of the censer which was before the altar with his bread (Vol. II, p. 18), and another father used to make the Sign of the Cross over his food instead of mixing oil with it (Vol. II, p. 23). A monk usually ate bread and salt once a day, in the evening, but some only ate every second day, others every third or fourth day, and men of might often fasted for a week at a time. Moderate men thought it best for a man to eat a very little bread each day. A limited number of monks never ate bread at all, for they agreed with Theodotus, who said, "Abstinence from bread quieteth the body of a monk" (Vol. II, p. 21). And Poemen said, "The soul can be humbled "by nothing except thou make it feeble by eating bread" (Vol. II, p. 22). Some monks never ate bread at all, others ate nothing else, and the former lived upon vegetables and fruit,

Digitized by Google

and, when they could find it, wild honey. The greater number of the monks "cooked with fire," that is, boiled their vegetables, and the rest ate them dried. One stern monk advised a brother who consulted him about monastic comforts, to "Eat grass, wear grass, and sleep on grass," adding, "then "thy heart will become like iron" (Vol. II, p. 17). A counsel of this kind could be followed but by few, but there are recorded some cases in which monks actually lived on grass. Thus a certain monk went a journey of three days into the desert, and looking down from a rock he saw an old man "grazing like the "beasts"; he went down and gave chase to him, and when he came up with him he asked him to "speak a word." The old man replied, "Flee from the children of men, keep silence, and "thou shalt live" (Vol. I, p. 236). Elsewhere we read of another monk who fed on grass by the Jordan (Vol. I, p. 239).

The rule of Pachomius permitted monks to eat when they pleased, and to a limited degree what they pleased, but the solitaries were very strict in the matter of food. Isidore never took a full meal seated comfortably at a table, and flesh he never ate; Dorotheos lived on dry bread; Macarius the Alexandrian for seven years ate no boiled food, and lived on herbs and vegetables which had been soaked in water, and for a long period his daily allowance of bread was four or five ounces, and of water he only drank enough to enable him to eat his bread. During the Lenten fast his only food was a few cabbage leaves which he ate each Sunday. For fifteen years Ptolemy of the "Klimax" in Nitria drank nothing but the dew which he collected in sponges during the months of December and January each year. The solitaries who passed their nights in prayer and contemplation, and their days in plaiting palm-leaf mats, needed less food than the monks who lived in monasteries and performed hard manual labour. Sometimes they were so much occupied in repeating the Psalms that they forgot their food altogether; at other times they fought against their inclination to eat, and their hunger left them (Vol. II, p. 17).

As to the use of wine various views were held. Macarius the Egyptian liked wine, but if he drank one cup he would not drink water for a whole day afterwards. Paphnutius drank a cup of wine to escape death at the hand of a robber chief. Sisoes would drink two cups, but always refused the third, saying, "The third cupful is of Satan." One old man handed back his cup of wine to the brethren, saying, "Take away this "death from me"; and Poemen said, "The nature of wine is "not such as to make it useful to the dwellers in monasteries." Abbâ Abraham only thought three cups of wine too much to drink because Satan existed. Solitaries and coenobites alike

Digitized by Google

agreed that, "As the body groweth the soul becometh weak; "the more the body becometh emaciated, the more the soul "groweth" (Vol. II, p. 22).

Of the clothing worn by the solitaries little is said in the Book *Paradise*, but we are justified in assuming that it was small in quantity. Some, like Anthony, wore leather tunics, and others rough, untanned skins of goats, with the hair next their skin. Large numbers of them possessed no clothing except loin-clothes, and many went naked. Macarius says (Vol. I, p. 234) that he saw two naked monks, one an Egyptian and the other a Libyan, who had lived with the beasts for forty years; they told him that they were not burnt up in the summer and that in the winter they did not freeze. Another naked old man was seen grazing like the beasts, and he had lived so long in the desert that he could not endure the smell of man (Vol. I, p. 235). Another old man had lived naked near the Red Sea for thirty years, and his hair had grown so long during this period that it covered him (Vol. I, p. 237). The dwellers in monasteries were better clad, and from the Rule of Pachomius we know that they wore skull-caps, and slept in a kind of shirt which was without sleeves. The solitaries and some other kinds of monks wore cloths over their heads, which served the double purpose of preventing them from seeing the faces of their fellows, and of keeping off the keen winds from their faces. In places where the monks worked at the weaving of flax, they, no doubt, wore garments made of linen. The coverings of their beds were pieces of coarse linen, or, as in the case of Anthony, the skin of a sheep or goat. Some monks possessed cloaks.

The beds of the monks who lay down to sleep were mats made of plaited palm leaves.

It is laid down over and over again in *The Sayings of the Fathers* that a man is kept from sin by three things: flight from men, silence, and contemplation. Arsenius said that the sound of the twittering of a sparrow would prevent a monk from acquiring repose of heart, and the rustling of the wind in the reeds made it absolutely impossible (Vol. II, p. 4). Poemen told a brother that he did not learn to shut a door of wood, but the door of the tongue (Vol. I, p. 7), and when a brother asked Macarius how it was possible for them to flee further than the desert they were in, he laid his hand upon his mouth, and said, "Flee in this manner" (Vol. II, p. 11). "Lay hold "on silence," "Keep silence," were sayings that were always in the mouths of the old men; and Poemen said, "A monk's "victory is only assured when he holdeth his peace" (Vol. II, p. 13). Agathon only learned to keep silent by holding a stone in his mouth for three years (Vol. II, p. 16).

Digitized by Google

Almost as important for the monk as keeping silent was dwelling in the cell. "Eat, drink, sleep, and toil not, but on "no account go out of thy cell," was the advice of Arsenius to a brother (Vol. II, p. 5); and Sarmâtâ said to a brother, "Sit thou in thy cell, and whatsoever thou canst do, that do, "and trouble not thyself." Anthony said, "As a fish dieth "when it is taken out from the water, so doth the monk who "tarrieth outside his cell" (Vol. II, p. 8). He also said, "The "cell of a monk is the furnace of Babylon wherein the Three "Children found the Son of God, and it is also the pillar of "cloud wherefrom God spake with Moses" (Vol. II, p. 14).

The monk who sat in his cell and kept silent was enabled to pass his waking hours in the contemplation of spiritual matters, and this occupation was held to be of the highest importance. By meditating upon the dealings of God with man as exhibited in the histories of the saints given in the Old and New Testaments, the monk was enabled to apply their spiritual lessons to his own needs and circumstances, and to correct his thoughts and to make his deeds harmonize with those of the prophets. The time not spent in contemplation was devoted to the reading and learning of the Scriptures, and to prayer. If the monk ceased his contemplation the devils at once entered his cell, and one old man actually saw a devil standing outside the door of a brother's cell, and waiting until he ceased his contemplation; when he did so the devil was able to enter (Vol. II, p. 24). When a monk read the Divine Books the devils were afraid (Vol. II, p. 24). The principal work of the prudent monk was "constant prayer"; he was taught to pray "in his heart, or in a carefully prepared service, or in that "service which he performed with his will and understanding" (Vol. II, p. 27). He was to speak to God in a quiet voice and say, "Lord, Thou knowest full well that I am a beast, and "that I know nothing. O Lord, by Thy Will vivify Thou me" (Vol. II, p. 27). A certain monk prayed always, and each evening he found bread in his cell for his evening meal; when he joined in manual labour with another monk no bread appeared in his cell. To him a voice said, "Whilst thou occupiedst "thyself in converse with Me, I fed thee; but now thou hast "begun to work thou must demand thy food from the labour "of thy hands" (Vol. II, p. 30). The prayers of the brethren formed a "glorious pillar of brilliant light which reached from "the place where the brethren were congregated to the hea-"vens" (Vol. II, p. 30).

The strenuous monk slept little, and Arsenius used to say that one hour's sleep was sufficient for him. Arsenius prayed from sunset on Saturday to sunrise on Sunday, and Pachomius

Digitized by Google

tried to do without sleep altogether. For fifteen years he and Abbâ John snatched a little sleep after their all-night vigils, as they sat in the middle of their cell, without leaning against a wall (Vol. II, p. 25). Abbâ Sisoes, to drive away sleep, used to stand all night on the precipitous peak of a mountain, to fall from which in a moment of unconsciousness meant certain death. The angel of the Lord, however, removed him from the peak, and forbade him to stand there again (Vol. II, p. 26).

The accompaniments of true prayer were mourning and weeping, mourning for the crucifixion of our Lord, and weeping for sins committed and general unworthiness. Muthues said, "Weep and mourn, for the time hath come," and Ammon said, "Laugh not, O brother, for if thou dost, thou wilt drive "the fear of God from thy soul." Paul sank in the mire up to his neck, and he wept before God, and said, "Have mercy on "me." Isidore sat in his cell and wept always, and Poemen said, "He who weepeth not for himself in this world must "weep for ever in the next," and "There is no other path ex- "cept that of tears." And Macarius thought that the words "Flee from men" meant, "Sit in thy cell and weep for thy "sins" (Vol. II, pp. 31-34).

The poverty of the monk was absolute. Serapion saw a hollow in a wall in a monk's cell filled with books, and he said, "That which belongeth to the orphans and widows thou hast "laid up in a hole in the wall." Theodore of Parmê had three books, and he sold them and gave the proceeds to the poor. An old man took off his garment, and standing up, said, "A "monk must be as destitute of this world's goods as I am of "clothing." When Arsenius lived in Scete his apparel was inferior to that of every one else, and a monk's apparel ought to be so worthless that if it were cast outside his cell for three days no man would consider it worth taking away. A monk once came to the church of the Cells wearing a head-cloth, and Abbâ Isaac said, "Monks dwell here, but thou art a man in "the world, and canst not live here." Nastîr was ready to give away all his apparel, for he was certain that God would give him something wherewith to cover his body (Vol. II, pp. 35-40).

The virtue most cultivated, and, perhaps, the most admired by the monks themselves, was patient endurance. Agathon bore quietly every accusation except that of being a heretic. When thieves came to plunder the cell of Macarius he helped them in their work, so little did he love possessions; and when thieves were robbing the cell of another brother, he said, "Haste, "be quick, before the brethren come" (Vol. II, p. 43). Another brother, when attacked in his cell by evil-doers, brought a basin and entreated them to wash their feet; the thieves were ashamed

Digitized by Google

and repented. Abbâ John nursed Ammon for twelve years, and abated nothing of his own great labours (Vol. II, p. 44). Twelve brethren were led out of their road for a whole night by a brother who had lost the way, but none of them thought it right to tell him. Arsenius changed the water in which he soaked the palm leaves only twice each year, and endured its foul smell in return for the scents and oils which he had enjoyed when he was in the world (Vol. II, p. 46). Through the agency of Satan a monk went blind; he did not pray that his sight might be restored, but only that he might be able to bear his trial patiently (Vol. II, p. 48). "What shall I do?" cried a brother to an old man, and the answer he received was, "Go "and learn to love putting restraint upon thyself in every-"thing" (Vol. II, p. 51). "Bear everything, endure everything "from every man, except any attempt to separate thee from "God," said Poemen.

Obedience was another virtue which the monks cultivated. Abbâ Paule told his disciple Abbâ John to go into a tomb wherein was a savage panther, and bring out some things, and when John asked what he was to do with the panther, Paule said, "Tie him up, and bring him here." Though horribly afraid John did as he was told, and brought out the panther (Vol. II, p. 52). Mark the Scribe, on hearing his master's call, left his copying with the letter "O" unfinished. A life of obedience is better than a life of voluntary poverty, and once when a monk famed for obedience stood up in the river among many crocodiles the creatures "worshipped him" (Vol. II, p. 54). Sisoes told a man who wanted to become a monk to throw his only son into the river, and the man went and was about to do so, when a messenger from the holy man told him not to do so; the man obeyed and, through his obedience, "became "a chosen monk." "Obedience begetteth obedience," said the Abbâ of Îlîû, and "If a man obeyeth God, God will obey him" (Vol. II, p. 55).

Above all things a monk was ordered to watch his thoughts, words, and deeds, and especially his thoughts. The desert shut a man from the sights and sounds of the world, and from speech with men, but it could not save him from his thoughts. "I have died to the world," said one brother, and his friend replied, "Though thou sayest, I have died to the world, Satan "is not dead" (Vol. II, p. 59). Any thought which filled the heart with pride or vainglory was to be regarded as fornication (Vol. II, p. 77). Paphnutius said, "A monk is bound to keep "not only his body pure, but his soul free from unclean "thoughts" (Vol. II, p. 86).

To each other and to all men the monks were bound to

Digitized by Google

show love and charity, and to entertain strangers was one of their first duties. On one occasion two brethren visited an old man, and he gave them his daily portion of food and fasted himself (Vol. II, p. 90). A certain brother had a woman in his cell, and the monks wished to bring the matter home to him. Bishop Ammon knew of this, and going into the cell he made the woman get under a large earthenware jar, and then took his seat upon it. At his order the monks searched the cell and did not find the woman, and when they had all gone out Ammon said to the erring brother, "Take heed to thy soul" (Vol. II, p. 92). Macarius once visited a sick monk, and when he asked him if he wanted anything to eat, the brother replied, "Yes, I want some honey-cakes." Thereupon Macarius set out for Alexandria, which was sixty miles distant, and brought back the sweetmeats and gave them to the monk (Vol. II, p. 92). Theodore was wont to make his own bread, and one day finding at the bakery a brother who did not know how to make bread, made bread for that brother and for two others, and last of all for himself (Vol. II, p. 93). Another holy man entreated God to let the devil which vexed his companion come to him; his prayer was answered, and the evil spirit departed after a few days (Vol. II, p. 95). When Agathon went into the city to sell his work one day, he found a stranger lying sick in the market with none to care for him. He hired a room and lived in the city for four months, and spent what he earned in nursing the sick man, and when he was healed he returned to his cell (Vol. II, p. 98). A brother once admired a small knife which Agathon had, and the holy man did not let him depart until he had taken it. "If I see a brother asleep "in church I place his head on my knees, and I give him a place "to rest upon," said Poemen. A brother said, "And what "dost thou say unto God?" Poemen replied, "I say: Thou "Thyself hast said, First of all pluck the beam out of thine "own eye, and thou wilt be able to see to take out the mote "which is in the eye of thy brother" (Vol. II, p. 103).

With the cultivation of patient endurance grew humility, and this virtue was esteemed very highly by the monks, for the devils told Anthony that humility made a man to escape from the snares of the Evil One, because they could not attain to it, pride being their chief characteristic. A monk when praised should always think upon his sins and say, "I am un- "worthy of the things which are said about me" (Vol. II, p. 108). "The greatness of a man consisteth of humility," said a holy man; and Abbâ John used to say, "We relinquish "a light burden when we condemn ourselves." A monk once fasted for seventy weeks, and his labour did not reach God,

Digitized by Google

but because he humbled himself afterwards the Lord came and gave him rest (Vol. II, p. 110). "Be humble in word and in "deed," said another old man." Abbâ Longinus described himself to an old woman whom he healed of cancer, but who did not know him by sight, as a "lying hypocrite," and, praying that our Lord would heal her, told her that Longinus, who was a liar, could do her no good whatsoever (Vol. II, p. 111). Abbâ John said that humility was the most excellent of the virtues (Vol. II, p. 113), and another old man said, "Humility is salted with salt" (Vol. II, p. 113). Abbâ John, through his humility, "held all Scete suspended on his finger" (Vol. II, p. 116). "The perfection of a monk is humility," said one old man, and another said, "I would rather have defeat with humility than conquest with boasting" (Vol. II, p. 117). And Poemen said, "He who abaseth himself shall never fall" (Vol. II, p. 119). Zechariah took his cloak and laid it beneath his feet, saying, "Except a man let himself be trodden upon "thus he cannot be a monk" (Vol. II, p. 123).

The above selection from *The Sayings of the Fathers* is sufficient to show the high aims and lofty ideals of the Christian monks of Egypt, and we know from the book *Paradise* that many devout women led a life of asceticism as strenuous as that of the Fathers. We see from the lives of the holy men and women printed in these volumes that the labours which they performed and their fastings and prayers made most of them kind and considerate to their fellow men, slow to anger, unwilling to judge others, and patient to bear silence, solitude, hunger, heat and cold, nakedness and poverty and the scorn and contempt of the world. One of their characteristics, which shows itself every here and there in their histories, is the kindliness with which the great solitaries regarded animals. One day a female hyena came and knocked with her head at the door of the court in which Macarius was sitting, and came and dropped a whelp at his feet. He took up the whelp, saw that it was blind, and when he had prayed and spit in its eyes, the little creature was able to see. Its mother suckled it, and then took it up and carried it off. On the following day the hyena reappeared carrying the skin of a sheep which it had no doubt killed and eaten, and left it for the old man (Vol. I, p. 124), who accepted the gift and subsequently handed it on to the lady Melania. In the account of the burial of Mâr Paule we also have a pretty story of the two lions which came and dug his grave. As they stood before Anthony near the body of Paule, they wagged their tails, and rubbed their teeth together, and purred, and then they dug a hole in the ground with their paws; this done they drooped their heads and tails,

Digitized by Google

and licked Anthony's hands and feet. Having prayed over them he told them to depart, laying his hands on them as he did so (Vol. I, p. 203). When they had gone Anthony buried his friend. Whatever the facts of the case may be in this instance, it is clear that Anthony was accustomed to be with lions, and that kindly hermits in all countries have lived on friendly terms with beasts of all kinds is so well known as scarcely to deserve mention. Theon the monk was fond of animals, and loved the sight of buffaloes, goats and gazelle, and gave them water to drink (Vol. I, p. 339).

Digitized by Google

vj. Palladius as a Historian

ABOUT a generation ago several scholars of eminence devoted much time and labour to the study of the *Paradise* of Palladius, and some of them arrived at the conclusion that it was neither more nor less than a work of fiction, in fact, a "pious fraud," perpetrated by a writer who was not called Palladius, who had never been to Egypt or seen the people whom he described, and whose knowledge of the "true history" of the period was incomplete and inaccurate. Others took the view that Palladius had never existed, and even supposing that he had, that he had never been made a bishop. There is no need to discuss here in detail the statements of these writers, for Dom Cuthbert Butler, in his work on the *Lausiac History*, has shown that there are very good reasons for believing that Palladius did exist, that his book *Paradise* rests on a historical framework, and that a great portion of his work has come down to us substantially in the form in which he wrote it. Moreover, the evidence on the subject which is to be derived from a study of the great mass of literature written in Coptic, Syriac, Arabic and Ethiopic, which has been published during the last twenty years, supports or confirms his statements on many points, and justifies us in accepting what he says about matters for which proofs cannot be given from extraneous sources. On behalf of those who denied the existence of Palladius, and the genuineness of his work, it must be pointed out that they had never read the documents which excavators have unearthed since 1885, and knew nothing of the investigations which travellers have made in Egypt and Mesopotamia in recent years. They had, moreover, no practical knowledge of the regions of Egypt wherein Christian monasticism took root and flourished, and even the conditions under which the monks and ascetics live in that country in our own times were unknown to them.

From the *Paradise* we learn that Palladius visited Egypt for the first time in 387, and that he lived there for twelve years; from other sources we know that he passed another six years in the country, i.e., from 406 to 412. During these two periods he travelled all over Egypt, from Alexandria to Syene, and his work contains abundant evidence that he saw every phase of the ascetic life of Christian recluses and coenobites. Many were the cities and villages through which he passed, and every cave and hole in the earth, and every tabernacle in the desert which sheltered a monk, for a distance as far as a monk could walk, did he visit. With several hundreds, and perhaps even thousands, of monks he talked face to face,

Digitized by Google

and the truth of this assertion appears, in my opinion in every page of his work. When he writes about the "athletes" who were dead, he takes care to give the source of his information, and in nearly every case we find that his informant was some one who had known personally the man whose life he describes. The amount of the material which he collected must have been enormous, and we may well believe that his work only contains "very few of the very many exceedingly great triumphs" of the holy men whom he knew and heard of. The toil and labour involved in the desert journeys which he undertook were very great, and they must, at times, have been accompanied by much physical pain. Most of his journeys he performed on foot, for there was no fodder to be obtained for asses or camels in the arid wastes where the monks lived. Whenever possible he, no doubt, obtained a passage on some cargo boat sailing up or down the Nile, but all who have travelled on such know how uncomfortable they are for those who are not in the most robust health. The cold of the night, the chills of the dawn, and the blazing heat of the early afternoon, must often have given Palladius sleepless nights and fever, especially after his health broke down. In spite, however, of sickness and fatigue, he clung to his work, and he succeeded in producing a book which has been the guide in all fundamental matters for those who have followed the ascetic life for hundreds of years.

A perusal of the book *Paradise* shews that Palladius does not describe one side only of the life of the monks, and that he sets before his readers a story which illustrates both their strength and their weakness. The histories of those who have tripped and fallen are given by him as warnings to monks that spiritual excellence may itself become the occasion of stumbling. Thus he tells plainly how Valens the Palestinian, who had been educated in Corinth, became so proud and arrogant that he thought scorn of the Body and Blood of Christ, and at length fell down and worshipped a phantom in the form of anti-Christ. The pious and learned Hero, who only partook of a meal once every three months, was tormented by lust, and then he went to Alexandria and fell into a life of debauchery and drunkenness. His sin, however, brought its own punishment, for he was smitten with a loathsome disease, and he returned to Scete a broken man. Ptolemy, the Egyptian, after living a life of the sternest self-denial for fifteen years, gave himself up to prodigal and riotous living, and "never "more spake a word of excellence unto any man." The failings of the nuns are described as impartially as are those of the monks, and Palladius makes it quite clear that spiritual pride

Digitized by Google

was the chief cause of them all. The great merit of *Paradise* is that the *Histories* make the reader feel when reading them that he has not before him narratives of the lives of a set of beings of a supernatural character, but stories of men who were trying to lead superhuman lives, and Palladius shews clearly how far they succeeded, and in what they failed. He was no mere panegyrist of the monks, but a patient, sober, and impartial critic of their lives, words, and deeds. One by one he makes to pass before us the various types of men with which all are familiar, and his character-sketches enable us to see in our imagination every kind of monk and recluse, from the kindly Anthony to the stern, self-tormenting Macarius. As Palladius composed *Paradise* about thirty-three years after his first visit to the monks in Egypt, it is possible that his remembrance of some of them may be a little blurred, and that some of his statements contain mistakes from a chronological point of view. On the other hand, we must remember that his judgement was more matured, and that he was, so far as knowledge and experience are concerned, better able to write impartial histories of the holy men in 420 than he would have been when he left Egypt for Palestine in 399 or 400. His wide grasp of the subject enabled him to consider the Christian monasticism of Egypt as a whole, and to present to his patron Lausus an account of it, in which the truth was set forth without exaggeration of detail or extravagant praise. Throughout the work Palladius says but little about himself, and although there is never room for doubt as to the side to which his sympathies leaned, his narrative is singularly free from denunciation of his religious opponents. Those who will take the trouble to read the biographies of holy men, written by their disciples and admirers in later centuries, will appreciate the calm and almost judicial manner in which Palladius arranges and states his facts, and keeps himself and his opinions in the background.

Another important fact made clear by Palladius is the toleration shown by the early monks in respect of nuns, and holy women, whether married or single, and he shews clearly the important part which devout women played in the Christian world of the fourth century. Of the sixty-eight histories which are given in the first book of *Paradise*, according to the Syriac version, nineteen are devoted to the lives of women. From these we see that women lived stern, strenuous lives, like the monks, and that some died for their religion. Thus Potamiaena suffered martyrdom by being plunged up to the neck into a cauldron of boiling pitch. A nameless virgin of Alexandria lived secluded in a tomb, and saw neither man nor

Digitized by Google

woman for twelve years. Piamon, the virgin, worked at the weaving of linen by day, kept vigil by night, and ate once a day in the evening; she possessed the gift of prophecy, and had the power of casting spells on men at a distance, which rendered them helpless. Emmâ (i.e., "Mother") Talîdâ was the head of a house of sixty virgins, and very old when Palladius saw her; he relates that when he sat down by her, "in the "boldness and freedom which she had acquired in Christ," she stretched out her hands and laid them on his shoulders. Taor, another virgin of Antinoë, wore neither veil nor sandals, dressed in rags, and worked always. Colluthus had lived for sixty years in her nunnery and had never gone down to the market.

Next we have a group of devout women headed by Melania the Elder, who had visited many recluses in their abodes. She was of Spanish origin, and was the daughter of a man who had held consular rank, and was left a widow at the age of twenty-two. She left her native land, having realized much of her property, and came to Alexandria, whence she went into the desert and lived in Nitria for six months. Here she met Pambo, Arsenius, Serapion, Paphnutius, Isidore, Dioscurus, and many others. She next went to Jerusalem, where she dwelt for twenty-seven years, and there she spent large sums in supporting the faithful and in receiving strangers. She studied and read the works of the Fathers with great diligence, and was a wise and understanding woman; her generosity was boundless, and she gave everything she could to help her religion. Melania the Younger withdrew from the world at the age of twenty, and she gave 35,000 darics to the churches in Egypt, Palestine, and Antioch; Palladius estimates that in other ways she must have given away four times this amount of money. And she set free eight thousand of her slaves. Olympias also, another patrician lady, set free her slaves, gave all her silk apparel to cover the altars in the churches, and spent her wealth lavishly on the brethren. Her garments were the worst to be seen, and she ate the food which her own servants rejected. Palladius knew this woman well, and was, "as it were, a member of her household," and on his advice "she made gifts unto many." Candida, another patrician lady, gave all her possessions to the poor, and night after night she left her bed, ground the corn, made the bread for the Offering, and heated the oven and baked it. She ate no meat, and her food on ordinary days consisted of dry bread dipped in vinegar; on festival days she ate fish, vegetables, and oil. Juliana of Caesarea hid Origen in her house for two years, and kept him at her own expense.

Digitized by Google

Another woman of exceeding merit was Emmâ Sârâ, who lived in a cell above the Nile, and led a most strenuous life. She is one of the few women whose "sayings" were included in the books of *The Sayings of the Fathers*. Though she lived by the Nile all her life she never looked at the river (Vol. II, p. 46), and whensoever she was about to put her foot on the ladder to go to her roof, she set her death before her eyes (ibid., p. 61). She rebuked Paphnutius (ibid., p. 63), approved of the giving of alms (ibid., p. 99), and is said to have contended against the devil of fornication for seven years on her roof (ibid., p. 127). Her character and disposition are well illustrated by one of her Sayings to her brethren which runs: "It is I "who am a man, and ye who are women" (ibid., p. 257). In his *Histories of Virgins* Palladius follows the same plan as when dealing with those of monks, and he records instances of women who, like men, tripped and fell into fornication. He shews also that some nuns were puffed up with spiritual pride, and what steps were taken by the Fathers to abate it. Thus we have the story of the Roman virgin who had lived in the strictest seclusion for twenty-five years, who had never seen a man, and who thought herself perfect. Serapion went to her house, and after waiting two days he was permitted to see her, and in the course of her talk with him she told him that she believed, by God, she was dead. "Then," said Serapion, "come down, and get thee out of thine house"; and she did so, and followed him to a church. There Serapion told her that he would believe that she was dead if she would do one thing, and she said, "Tell me what it is meet for me to do, "and I will do it." Serapion said, "Take off thy garments, "put them on thy head, and walk through the city, and I will "do likewise, and will go in front of thee in the same guise." The woman replied, "If I do this I shall offend many, and "people would say, 'This woman hath gone mad, and hath a "'devil.'" To this Serapion answered, "Since thou art a dead "woman, why shouldst thou consider what people say?" The virgin would not, however, do as Serapion had said, and having shewn her that she had not died to the world, and was not as perfect in the spiritual life as he himself was, he left her (Vol. I, p. 192).

One other instance must be quoted to shew that women existed who were as well able to live the stern life of the solitary as any man. As some of the great sages of Scete were travelling through the desert one day they heard a sound like a groan of a sick person, and having searched they found a cave and a holy virgin lying in it. The cave was absolutely bare, and when the sages asked the woman why she was

Digitized by Google

there, she told them that the place had been her home for thirty-eight years, and that during that period she had lived upon grass. She added, "I have never seen a man before to-"day, and God hath sent you to me this day that you may "bury my body"; having said these words she died (Vol. I, p. 240).

The histories related by Palladius excite curiosity on many points concerning which he gives us no information. Thus we know nothing of the reasons which caused him to dedicate his work to Lausus, and very little about the strong friendship which seems to have existed between the exalted court official and the friend and lover of the monks. It is possible that Lausus, in common with other highly-placed officials and nobles, wished sincerely to know what there was in the teaching of the desert Fathers which induced wealthy virgins and matrons, and nobles like Arsenius, to cast aside the world and to retire to the desert, in order to lead a life of fasting, prayer, and self-denial. That he should have chosen a man of such knowledge and sober judgement as Palladius says much for his sagacity, and we are justified in believing that, when he had received his friend's report and read it, he felt he had before him the evidence of an experienced and truthful witness. Although Christianity had become the official religion of the Empire, many members of the governing class must have been alarmed at the number of wealthy and noble men and women who left their country and joined the armies of monks and nuns in Egypt.

It has already been said that the book *Paradise* has a historical framework, and it must now be stated that in the histories which may be safely attributed to Palladius there is evidence throughout that he was well acquainted with Egypt, and that the manners and customs of the people were known to him. His descriptions of the desert and mountains, and his reproductions of the beliefs, superstitions and traditions of the Egyptians, are full of local colour, and every one who has wandered about Egypt must feel that Palladius himself had travelled much in the country, and at all seasons of the year. Indeed, it is wonderful how well he succeeded in depicting so accurately a phase of life which to most men would have been difficult to appreciate and hard to understand. To those who have visited the hills and mountains of Upper Egypt it is easy to find caves and holes in the rocks similar to those described as the dwelling-places of the solitaries by Palladius, and in the neighbourhood of the Oases there are small isolated hills near the tops of which are still remains of small chambers which must have been inhabited at one time or another by monks. A visit to the "White Monastery" near Sûhâk at once makes

Digitized by Google

known the character and plan of the buildings in which the coenobites of the fourth century lived, and the so-called Monastery of St. Simeon, on the left bank of the Nile, near Aswân, shews that the chief characteristics of such habitations of monks were preserved in the monasteries of later centuries. It is pretty certain that many monks lived in Nubia during the third and fourth centuries, and it is much to be regretted that neither Palladius nor the author of *The Histories of the Monks* visited that country to inspect their abodes and describe the manner of their lives.

On many points of a general character concerning which the modern student wishes for information Palladius is curiously silent. We know that many solitaries earned enough to keep themselves by weaving ropes of palm leaves, and by plaiting mats and baskets of palm leaves, but only the most strenuous workers could do this, and there must have been many who were obliged to live on alms. We wonder how the alms of pious women like Melania (Vol. I, p. 103) and well-to-do men in the towns were distributed among the scattered dwellers in the desert, and what proportion of the recluses needed assistance. In the case of the coenobites the matter was easy enough, for many of them worked at trades, and many of them possessed private means, and the wants of the rest were supplied by the stewards of the monasteries, who received the gifts of friends of the brotherhood, and managed all financial arrangements.

Of the average duration of life among the ascetics also we know nothing. The men who lived on small rations, and who were exposed to the cold of the night and of the early morning, must have suffered from fever, even as men do now, and diseases of the eyes must have been common, especially among those who did not possess head-cloths. Of cuts, bruises, and chafing of the hands caused by excessive work at weaving palm leaves, the monks seem to have taken no notice, and one brother was rebuked by Palladius because he oiled his hands, which were so much cut by the palm leaves that the blood which ran out from them soaked the mat he was weaving (Vol. I, p. 314). The strenuous monk committed his hurts to God, believing that He would heal them, but, notwithstanding, there were in "Mount Nitria physicians for the use of the sick" (Vol. I, p. 100). Many recluses must have died, even as Pambo died, "whilst he was sewing palm leaves for mats, without "fever and without sickness"; and Chaeremon died sitting on a chair and holding his work in his hand (Vol. I, p. 175). At Nitria lived the merchant Apollonius, who devoted his time and his money to providing eggs, raisins, and dried cakes for

Digitized by Google

the sick folk among the five thousand monks who lived there (Vol. I, p. 107), but whether his ministrations extended to the dwellers in the desert is not said. The solitaries did not disdain the aid of the surgeon in certain cases, for we read that Ammonius and Evagrius, when they visited Stephen the Libyan, found him being operated upon by the physician. He was suffering from a cancerous sore, and whilst portions of his body were being cut off he quietly plaited palm leaves and conversed with his visitors (Vol. I, p. 131). According to one story, a certain old man who went naked and lived with the beasts was miraculously cured of a liver complaint which prevented him from standing upright, and he was therefore obliged to pray lying on the ground. One day a man appeared to him, and said, "What is thy pain?" and he said, "My liver troubleth "me and causeth me pain." And when the old man had pointed out the place where he felt pain, his visitor slit his body, as with a sword, and took out his liver and shewed him the sore on it, and having removed the [cause of] the pain he healed the wound in his body forthwith (Vol. I, p. 237).

Throughout Egypt the monks believed, like their pagan ancestors, that pains, and sicknesses, and diseases were caused by devils, but they knew that death would come to all of them, and that nothing could prevent it. Though men like Bessarion cured paralytics with a word, and, like Christ, walked on the water, and, like Joshua, made the sun to stand still, and, like Elisha, made bitter waters sweet, and added years of life to dying men (Vol. I, p. 368), and passed through fire unharmed (Vol. I, p. 370), and collected water from the air in their garments (Vol. I, pp. 244, 367), they died as all other men died. Some, however, reached a good old age in spite of their privations and self-denial, for we read that Pambo lived to the age of seventy, Didymus, Macarius of Alexandria, Dorotheos, Paul the Simple, and others to eighty, Isidore to eighty-five, Arsenius to ninety, Theodore of Parme and James the Less to nearly 100, Anthony to the age of 105, Elijah of Antinoë to 110, and Mâr Paule to the age of 113 years.

The bodies of many of the solitaries who lived in remote places and who died alone must have remained unburied, and have been eaten by the hyenas and jackals. Those who were fortunate enough to have friends near were buried by them in a simple manner, and without apparently service or ceremony. Each community of monks possessed a cemetery, and the excavations made in such burying-grounds during recent years shew that the shrouds of ordinary monks were made of coarse linen, and that it was customary to place at the head of each grave a stone recording the name of its occupant.

Digitized by Google

Sufficient has now been said to illustrate the main facts connected with the rise and growth of Christian asceticism in Egypt, and to shew that in many particulars the beliefs of its leaders resembled those of the early pagan inhabitants of the country. Moreover, it must always be remembered that the rise and progress of Christianity in that country were partly due to the fact that many of the doctrines of the old religion closely resembled those preached by Christ and the twelve Apostles, and by St. Paul. The system of morality made known to us by the Precepts of Ptah-Hetep, who flourished before B.C. 3000, is of a remarkably high character, and is in many respects equal to that formulated by the writers of the Book of Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus. The monks held converse with their souls on spiritual matters, and so did the writer of the Dialogue between a man and his soul which we find in a papyrus at Berlin. The doctrine of rewards and punishments for deeds done in the body was well known to the Egyptians under the Eighteenth Dynasty (B.C. 1700–1400), and the belief that a god could put on human flesh and dwell in the form of a man on the earth also existed at this period. The belief in the judgement and in the resurrection of Osiris is as old as the dynastic history at least, and there are many proofs in the old literature of Egypt that one school of thought believed in the resurrection of a material body, and in the existence of a material heaven which was full of material delights, and that another proclaimed the resurrection of an immaterial or spiritual body, and the existence of a heaven in which the blessed lived with a god whose attribute was light. The denizens of this material heaven lived upon incorruptible food which proceeded from their god, and those of the immaterial heaven fed upon the light which emanated from their god. In each case the blessed succeeded to immortality, that is to say, to an existence which lasted for "hundreds of thousands of "hundreds of thousands of years" (*Book of the Dead,* chapter clxxv, line 16). The heaven of the Christians was filled with saints and martyrs, who awaited the arrival of the blessed from the earth and welcomed them with gladness and songs of joy; and, similarly, the kingdom of Osiris in the Other World was filled with his loyal followers, and with those who had served and worshipped him upon earth. Both the pagan and Christian Egyptians believed in an individual existence in heaven, and each class thought that the blessed would be able to recognize each other and to enjoy each other's society.

From the *Book of Opening the Mouth* we learn that at the time when the pyramids were built the Egyptians believed that, through the performance of certain ceremonies and the

Digitized by Google

utterance of certain formulæ by properly qualified priests standing in places which had been made ceremonially pure, bread and meat and wine could be transformed into spiritual things which were of the nature of the disembodied spirit and of the divine being who was believed to be present at the final funeral ceremony. When the ancient Egyptians ate on this solemn occasion, they believed that they were partaking of food which had been transformed into the substance of their god, and that communion of themselves and their dead with the god was complete. The belief in transubstantiation was, in fact, a fundamental element of their belief in the efficacy of this ceremony. Now in the matter of the Eucharist we find that the monks held two opinions; some thought that the sacramental bread was only a "similitude" of the Body of Christ, and others thought that it was the actual Body. Among those who held the former view was "a man of Scete" (Vol. II, p. 159), and when two brethren heard of his opinion they went and reasoned with him, and tried to convince him that he was wrong. They told him that as man who was taken from the dust of the earth is fashioned in the image of God, so also, since He said of the bread, "This is My Body," the sacramental bread is God. The old man, however, was not convinced, and at length they agreed to pray to God for a week that the difficulty might be made plain to him. At the end of the week the three men went to the church, and when the bread was placed on the table a Child appeared there at the same time. As the priest stretched out his hand to the bread, the Angel of the Lord came down and slew the Child, and pressed out His Blood into the cup, and when the old man from Scete drew near to partake, "a piece of living flesh "smeared and dripping with blood was given to him. Then "the old man cried out,'I believe, O Lord, that the bread is "'Thy Body, and that the cup is Thy Blood,'and straightway "the flesh which was in his hand became bread like unto that "of the mystery." In the pagan ceremony the flesh of the bull, the bread-cakes and the wine or beer, represented the material forms of Osiris, and the god was in all three; but in the Christian ceremony the two monks believed that the Body was turned into bread and the Blood into wine, because "God "knew the nature of men, and it is unable to eat living flesh." It is clear that the two monks who converted the old man of Scete believed that the Eucharist was "not to be regarded as "a merely commemorative thing," and that, like their pagan ancestors, "they could eat their God."

The Christian monks of Egypt, however, lived and preached a religion which possessed characteristics unknown to that of

Digitized by Google

the ancient Egyptians, and among these must stand first Faith, Hope, and Charity. The Egyptian never succeeded in freeing his mind from the idea that the resurrection of his body, whether material or spiritual, depended as much upon the efficacy of amulets, magical and religious formulæ, and the making of offerings, as upon his belief in Osiris, but the sublime Faith of the Christian monk, Anthony, made him declare that mummification was unnecessary, and that Christ would give him back his body, pure and undefiled, at the Resurrection. The pure Hope of the solitary of the mountain or desert was a far loftier conception than that of the pagan Egyptian, for it made him reject every worldly thing and live in and by his faith. Similarly his Charity, as exhibited in the *Histories* and *Sayings of the Fathers*, reached to lengths undreamed of by any except the most spiritually-minded of the ancient Egyptians. In all the known literature of pagan Egypt, no parallel to the following passage can be found: "Fasting is the subjugation of the "body, prayer is converse with God, vigil is a war against "Satan, abstinence is the being weaned from meats, humility "is the state of the great man, kneeling is the inclining of "the body before the Judge, tears are the remembrance of "sins, nakedness is our captivity which is caused by the trans- "gression of the command, and service is constant supplica- "tion to and praise of God" (Vol. II, p. 263). To Palladius we owe the oldest and best history of the lives, and words, and deeds of the solitaries and coenobites of Egypt, and every student of the history of religious thought should be grateful to him for a work which describes truly and impartially a great Christian movement, the effects of which exist even in our own days.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Paradise of the Holy Fathers

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

By the power of our Lord Jesus Christ we begin to write the Book of the histories of the glorious Acts of the Holy Fathers, [who were] monks of the desert and who hated the world and all that belongeth thereto, which was composed by the holy man of spiritual excellence Mar Palladius, Bishop of the City of Helenopolis, and was addressed to Lausus the Prefect.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Life of Saint Anthony, by Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria

Let us begin now, by the help of our Lord, and write first of all the history of the Life and Acts of the Saint and the mighty one of God, the blessed Mar Anthony, which was composed by Saint Athanasius, the Archbishop of Alexandria. May our Lord help and strengthen the writer to write, and [the reader] to read & to perform everything which is commanded [herein]. Amen. O Lord, help me, and bring me to the end [of the work]! Amen.

MARVELLOUS care and the loving urging of your understanding for the monkish brethren who are in Egypt have moved me with solicitude [to hope] that by constant meditation on the following stories your mind may be drawn to perfection, so that you may not be repeating with your mouth[s] only the following triumphs, and others which are like unto them, but that also in your persons you may be preachers of the example of these lives and deeds. Now, your careful solicitude is seemly and is most acceptable, and in this respect you have become ministers of the Sublime Will, for it is right that this appearance should not depart from the mirror of your career, and that ye should know at once the craftiness of the Enemy, that is to say, what form exactly it taketh, and what it actually is, and by what means it bringeth [a monk] to naught. And this thing hath been wrought at this time by God, for behold! monasteries which flourish like the flowers and sweet scents of the springtime have been scattered throughout the whole earth, and the sign of the solitary ascetics ruleth from one end thereof unto the other. It is then a beautiful thing for us to embrace and to lay hold upon this power of discernment which your mind hath conceived, and to be the ministers of the fervour of your love with joy and solicitude. For who could be negligent of this service and be blameless, inasmuch as those who have invited me [to write] the history of the triumphs of a righteous man are themselves righteous? And may the Giver of gifts (blessed be His honour!) Himself open the door of our entreaty, and may we draw into our net each one of the stories which we have been deputed by your love to write down, not for our own sake only, but for the sake of your

Digitized by Google

most excellent entreaty, and for the sake of the courageous [thoughts] which are in you, so that we may fulfil your labour, and for the sake of the work of him who triumphed by these acts and deeds, in order that his triumphs may never die among his sons in our Lord; and finally for his name's sake, that in this history we may also magnify the glory of God [and show forth] how great is the might which He giveth unto those who fear Him.

Now we have been deputed through your affection to write down the triumphs of the blessed man Anthony, and to send by an envoy a history of them to you in writing [which will shew] how it was that he began his discipleship, and what manner of life he led before this took place, and how he was living when he brought his days to a close, and whether all the words which have been spoken concerning him and have come to our hearing are true; and straightway with joy I have devoted myself to the fulfilment of your command. Now by merely writing a commemorative history of the blessed Anthony I also shall gain great benefit, for I am convinced, O my beloved, that by narrating these histories two things will be effected: we shall increase the renown of the man of God in honour and wonder, and we shall begin to instruct your minds step by step; for the acts of the blessed Anthony form a perfect example for the solitary ascetics. Now, O my beloved, as concerning the things which ye have heard about him aforetime, from those who [lived] with him, or [from those] who heard [them] from those who were with him continually, or from those also unto whom accounts of him were handed down by tradition, ye shall have no doubt whatsoever. Ye have, however, only heard a little out of a great quantity, and only just as much as the mind (*or* memory) is able to narrate; now, mine own mind convinceth me that such is the case, and in compiling the present history I have learned that indeed this is so. For when I thought that I had collected and enumerated a large number of stories, suddenly a great many others, which were far more numerous than those which had already been collected by me, sprang up, and made my mind to be confused; but as many as I was able to remember and to collect my mind hath, with joy, committed to writing. And as for you, cease ye not to ask questions and to inquire [concerning the blessed Anthony], especially of those who come by river from the Thebaïd, that is to say from Inner Egypt (i.e., Upper Egypt), for it may happen that from those from whom ye expect to hear nothing ye may increase your knowledge greatly. For when a man belongeth unto those who have knowledge, he repeateth the story which he knoweth, and though we may think and be

Digitized by Google

convinced that we have collected too many already, [we find, on examination, that our] narrative is immeasurably short. Now many of those who openly received [the accounts] of the wonderful things which were wrought by his hands have departed from this world; and of those who are still living, how many are there who have not revealed unto us concerning the conversations which they had with him, or the things done in his presence! And what man would wish to narrate unto his companions only a few stories out of many?

And when I had received [your] letter, and had read and seen the force thereof, and what it demanded, I was wishful to send and bring certain solitary ascetics who were always with him, so that, peradventure, between them and me I might be able to fulfil your desire. But because the time in which ships could travel from Egypt to the Thebaïd, and from the Thebaïd hither, was unfavourable, and because the letter-carrier was in haste, and because I knew that I had been with Saint Anthony continually, I made it to be a care unto me to write myself unto your loving persons, and tell you what I was able to learn about him, and all that happened between us for a long time, and [how] I poured water upon his hands; and I have regarded carefully the word of the truth, lest a man should hear what was superfluous and should be in doubt, or should despise and belittle that which he heard.

Now, by race the blessed Anthony was an Egyptian, and he was descended from a noble family, and was, indeed, an owner of slaves. His forefathers were believers, and from his earliest childhood he was brought up in the fear of our Lord; and when he was a child and was being reared among his own kinsfolk, he knew nothing of his father or of what went on among his own people. He was so silent in disposition, and his mind was so humble, that he did not even trouble his parents by asking them questions. He was exceedingly modest (*or* shy), and he was honest beyond measure. He was unable to read or to write because he could not bear the rough behaviour of the boys [in the school]; his whole desire was to be even according to what is written about Jacob, "He was a "simple man, and a dweller in tents" (Genesis xxv, 27). He clung closely to his parents, and when they came to church he would [run] before them in the flow of his affection; and he was not like an ordinary child, the course of whose customary attendance is broken by the amusements of childhood. He never neglected [the observance of] any of the seasons of the Church, and he neither neglected them in his childhood, nor held them lightly in his early manhood. And from the time when he was a child and knew how to distinguish between

Digitized by Google

good and evil, his going to church was not a mere matter of custom, but was [the result of] discerning understanding. And, moreover, he did not wait for the members of his family (*or* parents) to be admonishers unto him, because by his life and acts he became a teacher unto them. For they learned by the experience [of] his childhood that he did not live among them like an ordinary simple child, and they accepted the proof of the rectitude of his early manhood; he paid them honour after the manner of a full-grown man, and they regarded him as the master of the house (i.e., steward).

Now when the time arrived and they brought their days to an end, and they departed from this world when he was about eighteen or twenty years old, he and one little sister were left behind, and it happened from sheer necessity that he had to rule the house and take care of his sister. And when as yet not six months had passed since the death of his parents, and when, according to his wont, he was continually in the church, it came to pass one day, when he was in the church, that a righteous idea entered his mind, and that he began to meditate within himself how the blessed Apostles forsook everything and followed after our Redeemer; and how the others who succeeded them and walked in their footsteps sold everything which they had possessed and laid [the money which they received] at the feet of the Apostles, that it might be spent upon the poor; and how great was the blessing of those who had in this wise obeyed the voice of our Redeemer. Now whilst he was meditating these and such-like things, the Lesson was being read, and when the Scriptures were ended, the Gospel was read, and he heard the words of our Lord, Who said unto the rich man, "If thou wishest to be perfect, go and sell "everything which thou hast, and give to the poor, and take "thy cross, and come after Me, and there shall be unto thee "treasure in heaven" (St. Matthew xix, 21). And the blessed Anthony received the word of the Gospel as a sign to himself, and he reflected that this reading had not taken place as a matter of chance, but in order that the righteous idea which had taken up its abode in him might be confirmed. And straightway he went out from the church, and departed and set in order his house and the possessions which he had inherited from his parents. Now he had three hundred fields, a great estate [which produced] abundant crops, and these he handed over to the people of his village, so that they might trouble neither himself nor his sister; but the remainder of his other possessions which were in the house he sold, and gathered in money not a little, which he distributed among the poor, but he laid by a little which was sufficient for his sister's wants.

Digitized by Google

And when, on another First Day of the week, he had again entered the church at the time of [the reading of] the Gospel, he inclined his ear carefully to see what word would come forth for him; and as he was inclining his ear, the word of our Lord to His disciples was immediately read out, saying, "Take no thought for the morrow" (St. Matthew, vi, 25, 31, 34; St. Mark xiii, 11; St, Luke xii, 11, 22). And straightway he received the commandment readily, and he went out and distributed that which remained to him for his sister's use among the poor. Now unto his sister he spake words of love, and of truth, and of the fear of God, and he made her mind to be like his own; and he delivered her over to certain chaste nuns who were living there at that time. And when he had made an end of these things, he forthwith became a solitary monk, and he took no care for anything whatsoever except his soul, and he began to train himself in the habits of the strictest abstinence and self-denial. Now he dwelt alone in a house which was by the side of the village, for as yet there were no monasteries for ascetics in Egypt, and among the monks there was no man who had any knowledge of the inner desert; and every one who wished to have a care for his soul used to seek out an habitation of this kind. Saint Anthony did not betake himself to the mountain at a great distance from the village, but only at a sufficient distance therefrom, so that he might be somewhat apart from the habitation of men.

And at that time there was in another village on their borders a certain blessed old man, who from his youth up had lived a life of solitary asceticism, and this man the blessed Anthony saw, and was wishful to emulate his fair deeds. First of all he also began to live by the side of the village, in places which were free from the feet [of men], and whilst living in this abode his mind was rent with doubt about the fair works [of the ascetic life], and he gave his soul no rest, for he was constant in meditation about the truth. And he used to ponder within himself [and say], "How did the righteous men of old live? With "what manner of triumphs did they please God? And who can "make me worthy of even a sight of these?" And as a result of this meditation which arose from love of the righteous men, he began to ask and inquire, "What was the condition of the "righteous men? And who shall inform me concerning them?" And whilst asking questions that he might learn something about any of the righteous men who were in [that] place, in the fervour of his love he used to go forth strenuously to seek him (i.e., the old man); and he did not at first return to his own place, without first of all paying homage to the man of God. And he was like unto the wise bee which hovereth and resteth

Digitized by Google

over plants of every kind which are filled with honey that it may fill its habitation with the goodness of the earth. In this manner he himself also received from the sight of each of the righteous men provision for the marvellous way; and this was his manner at the beginning of his ascetic career. And his thoughts were exceedingly well disciplined by him at the beginning of his [life of] righteousness, so that he might not in any wise be anxious about his family, or be fettered by the love of kinsfolk, or be held fast by the affairs of this temporary life; from all [these] he purged himself that he might be a pure offering unto God. Now he used also to labour with his hands, because he had heard [the words], "If a man doth not work, he "shall not eat" (2 Thessalonians iii, 10); with a very little [of the wages] of the work of his hands he used to provide himself with food, and the rest he spent upon the poor. And he prayed continually, for he had heard [the words], "Pray, and let it not be "tedious unto you" (1 Thessalonians v, 17); and he was wont to listen to the reading of the Scriptures in such wise that not one word might fall to the ground, and henceforth he kept in his mind the remembrance of the commandments which he heard, and they became unto him even as the Scriptures.

Now by these acts and deeds the blessed Anthony was shewing love to his soul, and, even as it is written, "He found fa- "vour with God and with man" (St. Luke ii, 52). For when it happened that he went [to visit] the righteous men, he hearkened unto them and was subject unto them wholly and in everything, and the love with which they loved him was such that, if it happened that he tarried in paying his visit to them, they were wont to send after him with anxious care. They observed how greatly he was the object of [God's] mercy, and how great a measure of the love of the things which were spiritual were found with him, and they saw how easy it was for him to gain a reward by trafficking in the riches of heaven. Therefore each one of them, according to the measure of his power, took him by his hand. And they looked and saw that he was to be perfected as a chosen vessel, and they observed when as yet he himself saw it not that he had adopted for himself a glorious rule of life among the righteous men. For what joy is there unto which graciousness is not found to be yoked? Or what humility is there wherewith those who possess it are adorned in which it doth not dwell? Or what love is there, which is the foundation of all the commandments, which it doth not rule? And what man is there who, when he imagineth himself to be merciful, is not carried away thereby [i.e., by this imagination], and who doth not become a prince of wrath, and jealousy, and calumny?

Now Saint Anthony was the storehouse of fasting, and of

Digitized by Google

prayer, and of ascetic labours, and of patient endurance, and of love, and of righteousness, which is the mother of [them] all, but towards those who were young monks like himself he was not envious, except in one matter only, that is to say, he would not be second to any of them in fair works. And he contrived in every possible manner not to give offence to the wicked man; on the contrary, [he wished] that those who were yoked together with him might be drawn to his opinion (*or* mind) by his solicitude [for them], and by his graciousness, and that they might make progress in their career. And he toiled in his labours in such a manner that they were not only not envious of him, but they rejoiced in him and gave thanksgiving for him. Now by reason of these triumphs every man used to call him "Theophilus," which is, being interpreted, "God-loving," and all the righteous gave him this name; and some of them loved him like a brother, and some of them like a son.

And when the Enemy, the hater of the virtues and the lover of evil things, saw all this great perfection in the young man, he could not endure it, and he surrounded himself with his slaves, even as he is wont to do, and began [to work] on Anthony. At the beginning of his temptings of the saint he approached him with flattery, and cast into him anxiety as to his possessions, and solicitude and love for his sister, and for his family, and for his kinsfolk, and the love of money and lusts of various kinds, and the [thought of the] rest [of the things] of the life of [this] world, and finally of the hard and laborious life which he lived, and of the weakness of body [which would come upon him] with the lapse of time; and, in short, he stirred up in him the power of the thoughts so that by means of one [or other] of them he might be flattered, and might be made to possess shortcomings and be caught in the net through his instigation.

Now when the Enemy saw that his craftiness in this matter was without profit, and that the more he brought temptation unto Saint Anthony, the more strenuous the saint was in protecting himself against him with the armour of righteousness, he attacked him by means of the vigour of early manhood which is bound up in the nature of our humanity. With the goadings of passion he used to trouble him by night, and in the daytime also he would vex him and pain him with the same to such an extent that even those who saw him knew from his appearance that he was waging war against the Adversary. But the more the Evil One brought unto him filthy and maddening thoughts, the more Saint Anthony took refuge in prayer and in abundant supplication, and amid them [all] he remained wholly chaste. And the Evil One was working [upon him]

Digitized by Google

every shameful deed according to his wont, and at length he even appeared unto Saint Anthony in the form of a woman; and other things which resembled this he performed with ease for such things are a subject for boasting to him.

But the blessed Anthony knelt down upon his knees on the ground, and prayed before Him Who said, "Before thou criest "unto Me, I will answer thee" (Isaiah lxv, 24), and said, "O "my Lord, this I entreat Thee: let not Thy love be blotted out "from my mind, and behold, I am, by Thy grace, innocent before "Thee." And again the Enemy multiplied in him the thoughts of lust, until Saint Anthony became as one who was being burned up, not through the Evil One, but through his own lusts; but he girded himself about with the threat of the thought of the Judgement, and of the torture of Gehenna, and of the worm which dieth not. And whilst meditating on the thoughts which could be directed against the Evil One, he prayed for thoughts which would be hostile to him. Thus, to the reproach and shame of the Enemy, these things could not be performed; for he who imagined that he could be God was made a mock of by a young man, and he who boasted over flesh and blood was vanquished by a man who was clothed with flesh.

Now in all these things our Lord, Who put on a [human] body for our sakes, was his helper, and He strengthened him to become a shield against the Evil One, so that by means of this act of grace which was wrought on our behalf, before any of the blessed men lived, by the merit of His agony He taught us in what it is meet that we should boast. For when one repeated too often those triumphs which were wrought for him, Saint Anthony answered and said, "It was not I who worked, but His grace which was with me" (1 Corinthians xv, 10).

And when the Enemy saw that he was vanquished in this fight, and that his craftiness was driven away and brought to naught by the thought (*or* mind) of the righteous man, he gnashed his teeth, and cried out that he would shew the righteous man his [evil] inner nature (*or* thoughts) in an external [material] form, that, peradventure, by means of fear and terror he might find an opportunity to perform his will. And he appeared unto Saint Anthony in the form of an Indian boy, and he began to say unto him, "Whom seest thou? "I have come, and behold I will stand up, and I will overcome "thee, and I will bring thee low, even as I do many." And whilst he was saying these words, the blessed Anthony made over himself the Sign of the Cross, and ceased to tremble, and the Enemy saw the Sign of the Cross, and straightway was terrified. And when the blessed Anthony saw that he was terrified, he began to ask him a question, saying, "Who art thou, by

Digitized by Google

whose voice such words as these are heard by me?" Then the Enemy began [to say] unto him after the manner of a man who blustereth, "I, even I, am the lover of error and of fornication, "and it is I who cast the goadings of these [thoughts] and flat- "teries [into the mind of man]. It is I who have taken upon "myself to lead many astray, and I fight against every man, and "I am against righteousness, and I am, even as the Prophet "called me, the 'spirit of fornication' (Hosea iv, 12), for through "me have gone astray all those who have stumbled. It is I who "have injured thee on several occasions, and thou hast been held "in contempt by me in everything."

And the blessed Anthony gave thanks unto the Lord, and gained great encouragement, and said, "What power thinkest thou that thou hast in thee, O Enemy, to resist the might of the Cross? Thou hast done well to appear in the form of an Indian, for thou art black in thy nature, and thou art as pitiably weak as a boy who hath been brought low by punishment. Thou art esteemed as naught by me, and I tremble not at thy wiles; for the Lord helpeth me, and I shall look [in triumph] upon mine enemies." Now when that black being heard these words, straightway his appearance vanished from Anthony's sight. This is the first strife which Saint Anthony [waged] against his Enemy, or rather, this is the first act of assistance which came to help Anthony from our Redeemer, Who vanquished sin in His own body, that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, and that we might not walk after the flesh but after the spirit (Romans viii, 4).

But although the blessed Anthony saw the Enemy made powerless and brought low, he neither neglected his prayers nor ceased from his [wonted] course [of life], for he knew well that his contest was against a crafty being, who, although he had been vanquished for the time, would not cease [to trouble], and who, whenever he could find an opportunity through some small negligence on his part, would suddenly rise up and vanquish him that had on several occasions gained the victory over him. For Saint Anthony knew that there was no cessation to his wrongdoing, and that he wandered about like a roaring lion seeking whom he might break (1 St. Peter v, 8). And he had learned from the Scriptures that the snares of the Adversary were many, and he was certain from his own knowledge that he strove in this manner; and he therefore contended strenuously in the fear of God, keeping his object before him.

And he pondered in his mind that although the Enemy had not been able to draw him into his net with lusts of divers kinds, he had still other means whereby he was wont to make our humanity to sin; for the nature thereof yearneth to sin always.

Digitized by Google

Now it is especially right for us in the time of our victory, when we have our understanding under our will, to oppress and bring our body into subjection to the will of freedom and of righteousness, lest, while we are imagining that we are victors over one class of sins, we find that we are vanquished by others which are their opposite. And Saint Anthony kept this in mind, and [he was thinking] these thoughts always, and day by day he was adding toil unto his former works of asceticism; and many were wondering at the greatness of the patient endurance which he possessed, and how long-suffering he was in his afflictions. For behold, the freedom of his spirit (*or* soul), and the thoughts of his mind, by reason of the great length [of time] which they were practised by him, as it were renewed him, and changed him from one kind of being to another; and he used to employ as a foundation some small matter from the example of others, and then he would take it and polish it in his own person, and with him it became so beautiful that the spectators thereof imagined that it was to be found with him alone. For he was a perfect handicraftsman in matters which related to the fear of God, and wheresoever he saw that one of the heavenly works of uprightness was being practised by a man who was not honouring it for its own value, he would take it, and polish it in his own person, and would make manifest how great its beauty was.

And Saint Anthony kept vigil to the utmost, and to such an extent that the greater number of his days dawned on him without his having had any sleep. He was wont to eat at eventide daily, but on occasions he passed three days, or four days, or even whole weeks at a time [without eating]. His food was bread and salt, and his drink was water, and in the matter of wine, and flesh, and other dainty meats he declared [them] to be so superfluous, that they ought not to be used even by ordinary monks. What he slept upon was a mat made of palm leaves only, but for a very long time he used to make the bare ground his bed. He was, moreover, exceedingly careful not to anoint himself with oil, for he used to say that oil rendered the body soft and made the members thereof effeminate, and for this reason [he] required young men to distil upon themselves from their inward minds the oil of strenuousness. He was also mindful of the word of the Apostle which he spake, saying, "When I am weak (*or* sick), then am I strong" (1 Corinthians xii, 10). And he possessed a wonderful mind, for he never pondered and thought how far he had advanced in discipleship, but each day he kept in mind that he had only just begun at the beginning thereof; for he remembered the word of the Apostle which he spake, "That which is behind me I

Digitized by Google

"forget, and I stretch forward unto the things which are before "me" (Philippians iii, 13), and also the words of the Prophet Elijah which he spake, "As the Lord liveth, before whom I "stand this day" (1 Kings xvii, 1). Thus he prepared himself to be worthy to stand always before the Majesty, even as the man [Elijah] who stood on that day before the Lord; and he used to say to himself, "It is right that a monk should know that in his manner of life (*or* habitation) and in his acts and deeds he must be an alien unto the world, and an associate (*or* son of the yoke) of the Angelic Watchers."

And after these things he passed into another frame of mind, and, having decided within himself that he would go forth from the village, he departed and took up his abode in a tomb in the cemetery, which was situated in a mountain which lay close by the village; and he commanded one of his acquaintances to bring him a morsel of bread from time [to time]. And having done these things and entered into the tomb and shut the door upon himself, straightway the Adversary, together with a multitude of devils who were his associates, burst in upon him there, for he was afraid to let Saint Anthony go from the village altogether, and he began to say unto him, "How great "is that which thou endurest! And to what limit wilt thou drive "thyself? Thou hast come and hast entered into the place of our "abode. What man is there who hath ever done the like? And "when was it ever heard that men ought to live among the "tombs? We have been driven out of the village, and we shall "also be driven out from among the tombs. Now therefore will "we take vengeance upon thee, for it is thou who hast made "fools of us." Then they began to smite him with blows, and they smote him so severely that at length he fell [on the ground], and nothing but his breath was left in him; and Saint Anthony used to relate that the blows with which the devils smote him were more severe than those of the children of men. But God brought help unto him, and would not deliver him over to death, for He put it into the mind of him that used to visit him to come quickly, and to open [the door of] the tomb according to his wont, and he saw the blessed Anthony, who was like unto a dead man by reason of the blows; and straightway he lifted him up and brought him to the church in the village. And there collected about him no small number of people, and they gathered together and sat by his side as if he had been a dead man. Now by the sweet rest of sleep the blessed Anthony was refreshed, [and he was relieved] from his affliction, and he came to himself, and he turned round and saw that all the people were asleep, and that only his friend who was sitting watching by his pillow was awake; and he

Digitized by Google

made a sign to him, and he drew nigh unto him, and Saint Anthony said unto him quietly, "Come, do [an act of] righ-
"teousness (*or* charity), lest the heart of the people should think
"and mankind should imagine that there is still power left in
"the Evil One, and should be afraid to lift up the heel against
"him."

And the man hearkened unto him, and whilst the people were quiet and asleep, he lifted him up and carried him to the tomb, and shut the door as usual. Then Saint Anthony prayed as he was lying down, for he had no power in him to stand up, and when he had multiplied [his] prayers, he said with a loud voice, "Where are ye, O children of Gehenna? Here am I,
"even I, Anthony, and I will not depart from this place until ye
"are destroyed in this place: for although ye multiply tortures, I
"shall not be remote from the love of Christ." And next he said with a loud voice, "Though a whole legion [of devils] encamp
"against me, my heart shall not fear": such were the words which this man, this athlete, proclaimed in his striving. Then the heart of the Enemy of righteousness melted within him, and he cried unto the dogs his kinsfolk, and spake, emitting smoke from himself as he did so, saying unto them, "Did ye
"not say unto me, What shall we do unto this man, this inso-
"lent fellow, who hath treated us wholly with contempt and dis-
"dain? His heart is not afraid of the quaking terror, his hearing
"is not perturbed by words (*or* voices), his eye is not terrified by
"visions, and his body hath no fear of blows. Who among you
"can give [me] counsel as to what shall be done [with him]?"
And thereupon they contrived the following plan.

Now it is very easy for the Enemy to create apparitions and appearances of such a character that they shall be deemed real and actual objects, and [straightway] phantasms of this kind caused a phantom earthquake, and they rent asunder the four corners of the house, and entered therein in a body from all sides. One had the form of a lion, and another had the appearance of a wolf, and another was like unto a panther, and all the others were in the forms and similitudes of serpents, and of vipers, and of scorpions. The lion was roaring as a lion roareth when he is about to slay; the bull was ready to gore [him] with his horns; the panther was prepared to spring [upon him]; and the snakes and the vipers were hissing, and they appeared to be in the act of hurling themselves upon him; and the sounds which they made and the forms in which they showed themselves were terrible. Now the blessed man Anthony was not disturbed (*or* frightened) by their commotion, and his mind remained wholly undisturbed. And as he was lying down he laughed at these phantoms, and said, "Thus

Digitized by Google

"there is no power in you. Ye have taken unto yourselves the "forms of wild beasts, and if there had been any power whatso- "ever to do harm in you, for one of you only to come [against "me] would have been sufficient; but because our Lord hath cut "off the things which incited you to attack me, and the goad of "your wickedness hath no strength therein, ye lay plots and "contrive snares, thinking that, peradventure, ye will be able to "make men quake by fear only. And, moreover, whosoever "hath had experience of your feebleness [knoweth] that ye have "obtained as your helpers the mere forms and appearances of "wild beasts."

And Anthony also spake unto them in very great boldness of heart, saying, "If ye have indeed received power over "me, or if it be in your power to do me harm, hesitate ye not to "do it, only draw nigh speedily and do ye whatsoever ye lust to "do; but if ye be unable to do anything, wherefore do ye weary "yourselves in vain? For our faith in our Lord is a seal and a "wall unto us." Now our Lord was not unmindful of the athlete Anthony, and He appeared unto him after his victory. And the blessed Anthony lifted up his eyes, and he saw a roof-curtain drawn aside, and a ray of light descended therefrom upon him; and straightway the devils dispersed in terror, and the sufferings of his body were relieved, and the blessed man felt the help of our Lord [nigh unto him], and understood.

Then having waited for a space, and having recovered somewhat from his tribulations, and having enjoyed rest from the graciousness of the revelation of our Lord, he lifted up his voice, and said, "O my Lord, I adore Thine help: where wast "Thou before these sufferings and tribulations came upon me?" And straightway a voice came to him, saying, "Here was I "by thy side, O Anthony, and I have never left thee, for I re- "mained that I might look upon thy strife; but inasmuch as "thou hast triumphed completely, and hast not been broken "down with sadness in thy tribulations, I will be unto thee a "Guide and a Comforter, and I will make thee to be renowned "as a faithful servant throughout all the earth." And when these words had been heard by him, straightway [peace] came upon his body, and he had rest from his afflictions. Then he rose up and bowed the knee, and prayed, and gave thanks unto God Who had visited him; and from that time onwards he perceived that he had very much greater strength in him than formerly. Now at that time Anthony was about five-and-thirty years of age.

And it came to pass that on the following morning he departed from the tomb and went forth to that solitary old monk who used to dwell by the side of the village, and he tried to

Digitized by Google

persuade him to go with him to the desert, but the old man excused himself from this, for one thing because of his old age, and for another because he had not been in the habit of living in the desert, and indeed at that time none of the monks lived there. And straightway Anthony rose up and prayed with the old man, and he besought him to join his prayers unto his that God might make his way prosperous before him; and [afterwards] he went forth [alone] into the desert.

And once again the Enemy went forth after him, and when Anthony was exhausted by reason of the distance [of the way], he began to contend with him. Now when the blessed man Anthony had journeyed along the road [and had arrived] at the skirt of the desert, he perceived that the Enemy had cast down before him a large silver tablet (*or* plate); but the blessed man knew that these things were of the wiles of the Evil One, and he made him to know that this example of his handicraft which had been fashioned by him could not cause him to err. And looking at the tablet he answered and said, "Assuredly the "Evil One [wisheth to do me evil] by means of this tablet. How "can it have come in the desert? This is no frequented road, and "there is no inhabited land near, and thieves do not dwell in "this country; it is the handiwork of the Evil One. Thou shalt "not, O [Enemy], pervert my mind by this thing; may thou and "it go to perdition." And having made an end of his words the silver tablet was consumed and disappeared in the form of smoke before the fire of the words of the blessed man Anthony.

But again the Evil One showed him some gold, and it was real gold, and Anthony fell into anxious thought and pondered [saying], "What is this thing? It is either a piece of the "handiwork of the Evil One, or it is a temptation from God, and "a trial from Him (may His Honour be blessed!) Who hath re-"strained me from the blandishments of the Evil One [who "saith], Behold, I will show him real gold"; but the blessed man was not overthrown thereby, and he esteemed the gold as filth. [And Anthony said unto the Evil One], "Choose thou some other kind of handiwork and snare, for out of this one have I delivered myself." Now whence that gold came or how it got there Anthony telleth us not, and we, even after most careful thought, are unable to afford any information on the matter; but [what Anthony saw] was gold, and gold in large quantities, for the blessed man marvelled at the great abundance thereof.

Now when the Evil One saw that he had protected himself by the Sign of the Cross and was praying, and that he did not remove himself from his place, he stepped aside and

Digitized by Google

passed away quickly in the form of a flame of fire, and he neither turned nor looked at him. And Anthony was particularly well armed for this species of warfare and [he fought] valiantly, and he set out again on the road whereon he had been travelling. And having arrived at the desert, he went up into a mountain wherein there were serpents; but inasmuch as the snakes found there were very numerous, he departed from that place and came to the bank of the river, and took up his abode there. And the snakes, which were there when the righteous man set his foot upon that spot, speedily gave place unto him, and each one of them made the greatest possible haste to escape from him; now his smell caused them to flee, and they knew that this man was not [one] of the people of that country.

Now therefore the blessed man Anthony took up his abode there by himself, and he shut himself in; and he laid in a supply of bread once every six months (for the Egyptians were in the habit of making at one time bread sufficient even for a whole year), and as for water he found that there. And he went and dwelt there in a place which was like unto a cleft in the rocks, with the intention of seeing no man and of being seen by none, and he had his abode there for very many years; in the roof of his house there was a small opening, and through this he used to receive [bread] thrice yearly, for the mountain wherein he dwelt was [remote] from inhabited land. Such people as came to him, whom he could not be induced to admit into his presence remained outside, perhaps for one or two days, and when they strained their ears that they might hear something, they would hear a noise like that of a mighty multitude of people, and confused sounds, and some of the sounds were like unto the voices of men shouting loudly, and some were like unto great cries of lamentation, and some were those of men of war and of a mighty tumult. And among all these was a voice which said, "Depart from us! Why hast thou "come to our country to [cause] our death? Hast thou never "heard that which thy Lord spake concerning us, saying, "Evil spirits dwell in the desert, and in desolate places, and "in the lands wherein there is no water? Behold, henceforward thou shalt know that this is our habitation; depart "thou, and give place unto us once more."

And when these words were heard, those who were outside [Anthony's dwelling] thought that men had entered therein through the roof of [his] house and that they were quarrelling with him; but when they had gone round about the house they found a small opening in the wall, and having looked through it they saw the blessed man alone. Then they understood that

Digitized by Google

those voices were those of the devils who used to wage war against him, and mighty dread came upon them, and they began to cry out to the blessed man Anthony. Now the just man was more ready to hearken unto their words than unto the tumult of the devils, and to hold converse with them, and he would draw nigh to the side of the door, and say unto them, "Come ye nigh unto me, and be not afraid"; and having conversed with them graciously, and filled their hearts, he would dismiss them in peace, and admonish them, saying, "Be ye afraid neither of sounds (*or* voices) nor of phantoms of "this kind, for in this wise the devils are wont to act towards "those who are timid; but seal ye yourselves with the Seal of "the Cross, and return ye unto your homes in confidence, and "forgive those who would make of you laughing-stocks." Thus they were dismissed in peace. And as for Anthony himself he had dwelt in strife with the devils for a long time past, and was very courageous, and the strength which was in him was added to in proportion as he saw that his enemies were vanquished.

Now when the report of the kind of strife in which he lived reached his friends and acquaintances, they set out to go to him, for they thought that they would certainly find him dead; and having arrived at the place where they wished to be, they came to the side of his house and inclined their ears at the door that peradventure they might hear any sound or breathing inside. And they heard a sound like the voice of one who played a harp and said, "Let God arise, and let all His ene-"mies be scattered, and let all those who hate Him flee before "Him; let them be destroyed, even as smoke is made to dis-"appear, and as wax melteth before the fire, let the wicked "perish before God" (Psalm lxviii, 1, 2). And again, "All the "nations compassed me round about, and in the Name of the "Lord I destroyed them." (Psalm cxviii, 10). And the blessed Anthony lived in this habitation about twenty years.

And it came to pass that in the process of time his fame reached all the monks who were in Egypt, and all the other folk therein who did not lead the life of the ascetic and recluse, and men of distinction, and monks in Egypt began to come unto him in large numbers. The Egyptian monks came that they might copy the manner of his life and deeds, and the laity came that he might pray over them, and might heal certain of them of their sicknesses. One day, when a multitude of people had come there in a body [to see him] and they had besought him repeatedly [to speak to them], and he had answered them never a word, they lifted the door out of its socket, and threw themselves down on their faces before him,

Digitized by Google

and made supplication unto him and pacified him, and then each man among them stood up, and made known his request unto him. And having gone forth [to them] even like a man who goeth forth from the depths of the earth, they saw that his appearance was like unto that of an angel of light, and they marvelled why it was that his body had not been weakened by all his confinement, and why it was that his understanding had not become feeble, and why, on the contrary, his appearance, and his bodily stature, and his countenance were then as they had known them always to have been in the times which were past.

Now when he saw a large concourse of people he was not disturbed, and when they brought their petitions unto him, he was not moved to impatient anger, but he remained in a placid and thoughtful state, for the Living Word was unto him a guide. Among those who came unto him, there were many who were indeed very sorely afflicted, and our Lord healed them by the hand of the blessed man; and, moreover, God gave him such a measure of grace in his speech that every man was wholly gratified thereat, for those who were in affliction and distress were encouraged to endure thereby, those who were occupied with contention were quieted thereby, those who were afflicted sorely became long-suffering, the haughty were made humble thereby, and the arrogant were brought low thereby, in order that every man might learn the doctrine of righteousness. For he used to say, "That we should possess "anything besides Christ is unnecessary, and we should not "esteem anything of value besides the love of Christ, neither "possessions nor kinsfolk, not even our soul itself. For if God "did not spare His Son, but delivered Him up on account of our "sins, how much the more is it right for us, having tasted and "known Divine grace, to give our souls not on His behalf, for "such a thing is not required from us, but on behalf of our own "lives!" By these words he used to persuade many to withdraw themselves from this world, and from the tribulation thereof, and to take refuge in a habitation of monks.

And he began to increase from that time with Christ in simple-mindedness, and in love towards strangers, and in long-suffering; now these things not only go with us, but they also go before us, and they make ready for us a place in the country of the humble and meek, and no man should lack them, especially when he knoweth the will of his Lord, and that he is bound to prepare himself according to His will. Would any servant dare to stand before his master's face and say unto him, "Yesterday I toiled, but to-day I have done nothing at "all"? Or have we not heard what our Lord said in the

Digitized by Google

Gospel, "When a servant hath toiled nobly and hath laboured "in the work which is outside, as soon as he hath gone in- "side he shall weave a place for his hands and shall minister "unto his Lord, and then happiness shall be his"? Now, since we have heard these things from the Divine Books, what reason can we have for being without the fear of God? Was it not for this that Ezekiel the Prophet was made a watchman? (Ezekiel iii, 17.) Did not Judas, because of the one night wherein he wrought wickedness, lose the labour of all his days? (St. Matthew xxvi, 47, 49; xxvii, 5.)

Let us continue to be strenuous then, O children of our profession, and let it not become wearisome unto us, for our Lord hath been made a guide unto us and unto every man who hath a desire for the virtues. And that it may not be tedious unto us, the blessed Paul became an example unto us aforetime, and said, "I die daily" (1 Corinthians xv, 31). Now, if we were to think each day that we had to die that day, we should never sin at all, and this is the explanation of the word which was spoken. If when it is morning we were to imagine that we should never arrive at the evening, and if also when it is evening we thought that we should never arrive at the morning [we should never sin]; by this thought also the nature of our life would teach us that it is not a matter for confidence. If therefore we were to prepare our mind in this manner, and if we were to live with this thought within us, we should never be overcome by sin, and the lust which is fleeting would not reign over us, and we should not keep anger against a fellow-creature in the flesh, and we should not love the possessions which pass away, and we should forgive every man who offended us. And the lust for women would die in the heart, for how could it be ministered unto? For at all times everything which is greater than its fellow overcometh its fellow, and the fear of God exalteth itself above everything.

Now therefore, O my beloved, let us be zealous in carrying out the work whereunto we have once bound ourselves, and let us travel to the end on the road whereon we have begun to journey, and let no man among us look behind him, lest we be like unto the wife of Lot (Genesis xix, 26). It is not easy for him that shall turn behind him, after he hath received the doctrine of righteousness, to enter into the kingdom of heaven; he that turneth back, whatsoever be the way in which he turn, will repent of what he hath done, and he will turn to the elements of this world, even as a dog to his vomit (Proverbs xxvi, 2; 2 St. Peter ii, 22). Be ye therefore not afraid as if ye were carrying a heavy burden, for the burden of our Lord is easy and light (St. Matthew xi, 30) unto those

Digitized by Google

who desire it; if therefore we have the desire, everything is easy unto us. The children of this world travel over the seas and make journeys across difficult countries in order that they may learn profane wisdom, in the doctrine of which the means of righteousness is not employed, and in the praise of which there is no profit of life; but we are not wanted either to set out on a journey or to travel on the sea for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, for our Lord declared aforetime, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is within you" (St. Luke xvii, 21). So therefore, O my beloved, life is in our own hands to gain, for it is within us, and it is ministered unto by us. For the soul by its nature possesseth the perception of the understanding, and therefore our soul hath knowledge of what our life is; it is prepared by the nature of its creation, and is ready for everything which it wisheth. Therefore also Joshua, the son of Nun, commanded the people, saying, "Prepare your hearts "before the God of Israel" (Joshua xxiv, 23), and John also said, "Prepare your ways" (St. Luke iii, 4). Now when the Book decreeth the preparation of the soul, it wisheth that the rectitude of the nature of its first creation shall be in it, but when it goeth forth outside its limit it is condemned by the Book like the Evil One. Therefore, the matter is not a difficult one unto us. For, if we remain in that wherein we were created from the beginning, life is in us and with us; and our mind also condemneth us, when it thinketh evil and hath envy of the thoughts, and bringeth forth a deed of injury in an unseemly manner. Everything, therefore, is given into our own power to do, and there is no master set over us to command us what we shall do; moreover, there is no man who can restrain us either from thinking or doing fair things; whether we live or whether we die belongeth unto ourselves. For if we desire to withdraw ourselves from thoughts of the wicked and from usurers and pledges, let us take heed diligently and guard for our Lord the liberty, which hath been given unto us without blemish, as something which we have received from the beginning, and let us be faithful children unto the Lord. Therefore, take ye heed, O my beloved sons, that ye keep not silence like those who have been brought low through sin, or by wrath or by lust; for it is written that the anger of a man perfecteth not the righteousness of God, and besides, lust conceiveth and bringeth forth sin, and when sin hath been performed completely, it bringeth forth death (St. James i, 15; Psalm vii, 14; Isaiah lix, 4).

In this wise, O my beloved, let us lead the life of watchfulness and strenuousness, even as it is written, "Keep thine heart with all diligence" (Proverbs iv, 23), for we have cunning

Digitized by Google

and crafty enemies, and it is against these that our strife must be, even as the Apostle said, "Our contending is not against "flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and "against those who are masters of the world of darkness, "which is beneath the heavens" (Ephesians vi, 12). Their contending against us is very frequent, and there is no respite to their attacks upon us. Now, even between the devils there is a distinction, but concerning their nature and concerning [this] difference it would be a labour to narrate; we will, however, here reveal and describe very briefly those things which are necessary to be learnt concerning their contending against us, and their temptings, and their blandishments (*or,* flatteries), and, in short, the whole system of their cunning.

Before this, however, it is proper for us to learn that the beings which are called devils were not created that they might be devils, for there is nothing evil in the works of God, and even they were created beautiful beings; but when they turned aside from the mind of righteousness, or from the heavenly understanding, they were removed to a distance from the place wherein they lived. And seeing that they were cast away by the exalted Will, they drew nigh and mingled themselves among the created beings of this world, and they made the heathen to go astray wholly according to their desire; and against us, because they have envy of us, they multiply their contendings that, peradventure, they may be able to turn us out of the way of the truth of the kingdom of heaven, and that we may not attain unto the country wherefrom they were swept out and fell. Therefore the labour of prayer and of abundant supplication is necessary for us, that through the Divine Providence, and through the gift which we have received from the Holy Spirit, we may be able to know what distinction existeth between the evil spirits, and what each one of them hath been commanded to [seek] after, and by what manner of means the destruction of every one of them is to be brought about. For their cunning is very great, and they spread abroad the mesh of their net in everything. Therefore the blessed Apostle and the rest of the righteous men, who like him had experience of and had tried the Tempter in everything, and it is for this very reason that they have declared it, said, "The artifices of the Evil One shall not overcome us." And I will now narrate something of what I have endured from them, and a little of the vast knowledge which I have of them, and, like the beloved Prophets, I will tell what I understand about them.

The whole race of devils is beyond measure an envious one, and it is altogether jealous of all mankind, and particu-

Digitized by Google

larly of the monks, for they cannot bear to see heavenly deeds wrought and heavenly lives led upon the earth, and they, therefore, make hidden pits and snares for us, as it is written, "They have laid their nets over my paths" (Psalm lvii, 7): now [the words] "their nets" mean thoughts of iniquity. Let us, however, be not afraid of their stirrings, and let us not be made lax by reason of their blandishments (*or* flatteries); but let us be constant in fasting and in prayer, and straightway they shall be vanquished and disappear. Now when they depart, let us not be confident and say, "Behold, they are put to "shame, and we are freed from them," for this race of beings can never be put to shame, and they know not how to blush; for even whilst their temptations are being brought to naught on this side, they make an attack upon us on the other; and when they have examined and tried by what means our understanding may be flattered or terrified, they plan numberless schemes [to deceive us]. Now the devils are in the habit of leading men astray by declaring something such as the following: "Behold, we will inform you concerning the things which "are about to take place," and then they show them mighty phantoms which reach up to the ceilings, so that by means of these similitudes they may lead astray those whom they are not able to injure in their minds.

It is quite unnecessary that we who are believers should be terrified either by the motions of the various species of devils, or by the various forms [which they take], and we should not be afraid of their voices, which are angry and threatening at one time, and which are flattering at another. For the Evil One is a liar, and there is no truth either in his words or his deeds. But although mankind once gave him power, and sin lifted up its horn, our Lord hath now broken the goad (*or*, sting) thereof, and hath humbled it and brought it down beneath our feet; and it hath been made a thing for the Gentiles to trample upon, and a laughing-stock to the nations. And this is the proof that the matter is thus, and righteousness testifieth that it hath been performed in creation, for behold, he who, in his error, hath exalted himself in his heart, and who boasteth that he can dry up the sea, and can parcel out the dry land, hath not the power to destroy the heavenly mind which is in the monks, and he is unable to turn so small and unimportant a creature as myself from speaking about him. Now the devils are cunning, but they can only lead astray those upon whom they find an opportunity for exercising their wiles; they appear in all kinds of forms and similitudes, and it happeneth that the Evil One even demandeth for himself the form of righteousness, as it is written, "Satan even taketh

Digitized by Google

upon himself the form of an angel of light" (2 Corinthians xi, 14).

There is a time when we see no man and yet the sound of the working of the devils is heard by us, and it is like the singing of a song in a loud voice; and there are time[s] when the word[s] of the Scriptures are heard by us, just as if a living man were repeating them, and they are exactly like the words which we should hear if a man were reading the Book. And it also happeneth that they rouse us up to the night prayer, and incite us to stand on our feet; and they make us to see also the similitudes of monks and the forms of those who mourn (i.e., the anchorites); and they draw nigh unto us as if they had come from a long journey, that they may make lax the understanding of those who are feeble of soul, and they begin to utter words like unto these, "Are we condemned "throughout all creation to love places of desolation?" Or, "Were we not able, when we came to our houses, to fear God "and to do fair deeds?" And when they are unable to work their will by means of a scheme of this kind, they cease from this kind of deceit and turn unto another [and say], "How "now is it possible for thee to live? For thou hast sinned and "committed iniquity in many things. Thinkest thou that the "spirit hath not revealed unto me what hath been done by "thee, or that I know not that thou hast done such and such "a thing?" If, therefore, a simple brother hear these things, and feel within himself that he hath done evil as the Evil One [hath said], and he be not acquainted with his craftiness, his mind will be troubled straightway, and he shall fall into despair and turn backwards.

It is then, O my beloved, unnecessary for us to be terrified at these things, and we have need to fear only when the devils multiply the speaking of the things which are true, and then we must rebuke them severely. For even in the days of our Redeemer, when they spake [unto Him] the things which were true, He rebuked them and made them to hold their peace and to speak not, lest they should mingle their wickedness with the truth that was in the words which they were speaking. We must then not even appear to incline our hearing to their words, even though they be words of truth which they utter; for it would be a disgrace unto us that those who have rebelled against God should become [our] teachers. And let us, O my brethren, arm ourselves with the armour of righteousness, and let us put on the helmet of redemption, and in the time of contending let us shoot out from a believing mind spiritual arrows as from a bow which is stretched (compare Ephesians vi, 10-17). For they are nothing at all, and even if they were,

Digitized by Google

their strength hath in it nothing which would enable it to resist the might of the Cross. Whatsoever they do they do like thieves and robbers, and not after the manner of soldiers (*or*, trained men of war), for they have not the strength to stand up and to contend for any length of time. They shout, and wrangle, and make tumultuous noises and commotions, that, peradventure, by means of the sheer fright which they themselves inspire, they may be able to lead away captive weak minds and to make them do their will. If they had the power to perform anything, or to do any harm whatsoever, so much tumult and outcry and trouble would be unnecessary, and if one of them only were to come, he could perform [by himself] that which he had been deputed to do. For when the angel of truth was sent by the Lord of creation against the camp of the Assyrians he had no need of many companions, and he came not with tumult and terror, but with quietness and firmness he made use of the power which had been given to him, and destroyed one hundred and fourscore and five thousand of the Assyrians (2 Kings xix, 35; 2 Chronicles xxxii, 21; Isaiah xxxvii, 26); but the assembly of the evil ones, because it possesseth not the power of performing its own will, maketh use of means which are full of terror.

Now if any man shall say, "Supposing now the devils to "have no power in them, by what agency did they bring upon "Job all the calamities which are written in the Book?" let him understand that he must think in this wise, that is to say, he must believe that the Evil One hath no power to do harm, and that God only gave power to tempt him into his hands. For if this were not so, He would not have stripped him of everything, and He would have had compassion upon his soul, but mercy is not found with the Evil One. In this wise must a man think. Moreover, the Evil One appeareth to have been particularly feeble, inasmuch as the just man vanquished him in the contest which he waged with a man; yet this is not a matter for wonder, my beloved, for Job the just was not given over wholly into the hands of the Evil One. And know ye that unless God had so wished, he would neither have had power over Job himself, nor over his herds and his flocks, nor over the miserable wealth of those who were spectators of him—if a man may speak thus. And that the matter is thus be ye persuaded from the blessed Gospel, for when our Lord restrained and pursued the devils in one place, they besought Him to permit them to enter into a herd of swine which was nigh unto them (St. Matthew viii, 30; St. Mark v, 2-13; St. Luke viii, 32, 33). If now the devils had not power over the swine, how much [less] can they have power over man, who was

Digitized by Google

made in the image of God? So therefore in proportion as it is necessary for us to increase our fear of God, it is meet for us to add to the contempt which we should have for the congregation of the evil ones. Now in what way can we increase our fear of God? Or in what way are we able to add to our contempt for the evil ones? The means by which both these things are to be performed are similar in each case. Whensoever we make our life and deeds better than they were before, we increase the pleasure which we give to God, and we also multiply the contempt which we have for the evil ones. For the devils are far more afraid of the fasting of the monks, and of their prayers, and of their chastity, and of their abstinence, and of their meekness, and of their gentleness, than they are of their triumphs, and they are afraid most of all of their righteousness, which is in Christ. And all these [virtues] pierce them on every side after the manner of arrows, and for this reason they do all they can, and they become mad and foam at the mouth, that, if they can help it, they may not arrive at this condition of disgrace.

Therefore do not ye give unto them an opportunity in any matter whatsoever, neither when they come against us in the guise of enemies in wars, nor when under the form of friends they attempt to flatter us; for they are wont to draw nigh unto us in the guise of friends and to pretend to reveal matters unto us. At one time they will come unto us and inform us beforehand concerning the coming of the brethren, and at another we hear [from them] also rumours and reports [of things which are] remote; when, therefore, it happeneth that they tell us of something which is going to happen, and it cometh to pass, let us not be surprised. For it is not a great thing, seeing that they themselves are spirits in their persons, that they should see and perceive the brethren who are coming to us, and should tell us beforehand of their coming, and should [make known] a matter which hath happened in a certain place, and that they should be as it were those who revealed it unto us. Now these things a runner who is swift in his course could do, and also a horseman who rideth rapidly. Therefore, let us not be led away after their deeds through such things, and let us neither marvel at them nor think that they are matters of importance, for that they are not things which have not been done already hath been made known aforetime; but to reveal secret things and to make known aforetime what is to be performed are matters which are in the hands of God only.

Know ye, however, O my beloved, that they have made known to many who were afar off the fortune of this our present congregation, and all matters which were in dispute; and

Digitized by Google

of what I have said the following [words] will afford a proof and an explanation. It hath happened by chance that a man hath set out from India, or from some remote country, to come unto us, and when as yet we did not see him, or know anything about him, straightway we have had sight of him and have heard where he was prepared to go, for immediately [the devils] seized upon the news quickly and brought it unto us, saying, "Behold, such and such a man from such and such a "place is coming unto you." It hath happened, moreover, that the man who was coming was a king, or that some obstacle hath prevented him from coming, whosoever he was, or that having travelled a certain distance, which was not little, he returned to his own country, but nevertheless the shameful and reprehensible craftiness of the devils had found it out.

And thus it is also in the case of the waters of the river Gîhôn (Nile) which is in our country, for they inform us beforehand whensoever they are going to rise. And whensoever they see the clouds and the abundant rain which [falleth] in India (now this river Nile cometh from that country), they know and see that by reason of the storm that hath taken place in India, the river will be full from one bank to the other, and when the final rise of the waters of the Nile will come they declare beforehand, and thus they lead astray the souls of various people who lack understanding. Now the inhabitants of India also if they had the power to travel, as the devils have, would come and announce the rise of the waters of the Nile to the people who are in Egypt.

And the matter is like that of the watchman when he goeth up to some high place in the sight of the whole camp and is able to see him that is coming before he arriveth; but he who cometh is also able to afford exact information concerning what is coming and what are the contents of his dispatch, and what is the condition of the nation from whom he cometh. In like manner do the devils see or hear and give information concerning what they see and hear beforehand. Now if God meditateth anything concerning the waters of the river, for He hath power over it, the cunning of the devils is rebuked in the opinion of the wise, but to those who lack understanding of heart their error is sweet. By such means of error as these hath paganism made its way throughout creation, but the Lord of created things came and rebuked him that did these things, and humbled his spirit; and behold, the earth is tilled by the law of righteousness, and by the sword of the Spirit; and behold, the thorns, and the briars, and all the weeds of the seed of the Evil One have been rooted out therefrom. Such are the means which are made use of by the error of the devils,

Digitized by Google

and with such forms as these do they lead astray creation. And supposing there be among you, O my children, any man who shall say, "Behold, do not the devils declare many things "which they have not [before] heard, and do not they describe "many things which they have not before seen?" Now, even if this be so, O my beloved, let not your minds be disturbed thereby; but enter ye into the counsel of your mind, and get understanding concerning the things of [this] world, and from these ye will obtain the power of [preserving your minds] free from storm[s].

And before all things know that the physicians, by means of the experience which they have gotten of their handicraft, are able to know of a certainty before a man falleth sick whether he will live or die, and how long the sickness will last, and when it will be at an end. And it happeneth that, even when a man himself hath no idea that he is about to pass under afflictions, the physicians from their constant practice and from the experience which they have acquired, are able to to inform [him] concerning the sicknesses which are about to come upon him, even when the first symptoms thereof have not declared themselves. Now the power of foretelling things is even greater with those who steer ships than with the physicians, for they have experience of the heavens (*or* sky) and of the wind which is therein, and they are able to declare several days beforehand on what day the heavens (*or* sky) will change, and at what periods the wind will become strong, and these things they can do by their knowledge and by their experience. And know ye also that the ability of the devils is not superior to that of helmsmen and physicians, for they also by their experience of matters are able to declare what they have never before heard, and to describe what they have never before seen. Unto you then these devils and the supplication which is made to them are superfluities; let those who are without them seek these things, but seek ye not freedom therefrom, and let it be unto you an object to finish your work.

For who [hath commanded us] that we should be strenuous in this matter, and should know it? Who among the men of olden time received praise because they had knowledge of events before they happened? And who [among them] was ever blamed because he had no knowledge of events which were afar off, or were about to take place [immediately]? Each one of us will, however, be judged if he performeth not the work of righteousness, and not because he knoweth or doth not know the things of the future. Therefore let us excuse ourselves from this supplication, and let us pray, not that we may

Digitized by Google

know secret things, but that we may please the Divine Majesty, and that power may be given unto us to stand against the darts of the Evil One. And if we also desire to know hidden things, this too is in our own hands, and we must purify our heart as a habitation for the Holy Spirit, and behold, He will abide and rest in us, and by the rays of light which proceed from Him our eye will be able to see hidden things from remote distances. Did not Elisha, who was a man like unto ourselves, through the purity of his heart see that which his eyes had never seen? (2 Kings ii, 9-12.)

Ye must then make a distinction between the things of the Holy Spirit, and the things of the congregation of the Evil One. And perhaps ye will say, "How are we to make the dis-"tinction?" First of all, pray and make supplication unto the Revealer of secret things that He will make you to possess [the power] of distinguishing between these matters; and for the rest I myself am bound to impart unto you gladly, as my sons, whatsoever I have learned from a long experience. The visions and revelations of the Holy Spirit are not of a terrifying or tumultuous character, for they take place under conditions of rest and tranquillity, and in like manner also with gentle pleasure and quiet satisfaction doth the soul feel the rise of the Holy Ghost therein, for it is not wont to put terror into people or to produce trembling where it maketh itself to be seen. Look ye now into the Scriptures and they will inform you in what manner the revelation of the Spirit taketh place, and they will shew you that it taketh place in restfulness, and gladness, and peace (Galatians v, 22, 23): these are the similitudes which are in the revelation of the Spirit, and whensoever it is brought about, it is done in this manner. And if, after the manner of men, a man may be straightway terrified or greatly moved through the love of the thing itself, or through the beauty of the revelation, and through the quietness and pleasure which are caused thereby, in due season the fear or terror will come to an end, and comfort and gladness will come to him in its place, even as Gabriel wrought for Zachariah (St. Luke i, 19), and according to what the other angels did for the blessed women at the grave of our Lord (St. Matthew, xxviii, 5), and the angel who appeared unto the shepherds and proclaimed to them the good news of the birth of our Redeemer (St. Luke ii, 10). And ye will find many other instances which are like unto these in the Scriptures if ye seek for them. Now if the soul be terrified or be afraid by reason of those visions, it doth not follow that such fright is caused by the Evil One, for it may, peradventure, arise in it because the soul thinketh itself unworthy of the heavenly revelation which hath

Digitized by Google

been vouchsafed unto it. This then is the manner of the revelation of the knowledge of the truth.

Now fright of the Evil One cometh about in this wise. First of all the soul is disturbed and terrified, and it heareth the sounds of a great tumult, and of the playing of musical instruments, and of singing, which are like unto those made at a feast of drunken men and in the caves of robbers; and because of these sounds which it heareth, the timid soul is greatly moved; and for this reason it becometh afraid. And other souls which are brave are terrified because they have heard strange sounds, for all their affairs in every possible way belong to tribulation and misery. And there is a time when they seek after the similitudes of the persons of the children of men in very truth, and although [they do] thus, it is well known that it is merely a phantom and the form of a man only [which they obtain]. For however much an Indian were to rub himself, he could never make himself resemble a Greek, and similarly with Satan, however many forms of the children of men he might steal for himself in order to enable him to declare unto those who beheld him that the truth was with him, and to lead into error the children of the truth, and however much the phantom might resemble the reality, that it could be compared with it is impossible. There is therefore no room for the devils to lead us into error by any one of these things, and whatsoever they do, they do to their own disgrace.

Understand ye also the following matter, and learn briefly concerning it, that is to say, in the revelation of the Spirit, and in the tumult caused by devils [in the soul] fear is vouchsafed. In respect of the devils, however, they can certainly stir up in us a tumult, and put terror therein, but they cannot turn them away and make an end of them. Now whilst the Holy Spirit is revealing itself to a man, the soul is greatly moved by the majesty thereof, but the terror which it hath of Him cometh to an end speedily, and perfect happiness maketh its abode in him. Thus are the wiles and crafts of the Evil One, but, even according to the things which I have already said, let us not be moved by the fear which he causeth, and let us not be terrified at his visions, and let us not turn unto him and make ourselves subject to him so that he may say unto us, "Fall ye down and wor-"ship me" (compare St. Matthew iv, 5). By his wiles and crafts he hath led the heathen into error, and they imagine that he is God, but the fearers of our Lord have prevented us, and they have gathered us into His habitation, and [thus] there is not given unto him an opportunity of leading us into captivity. For the Evil One is exceedingly bold, and he is without shame, and he even dared to approach our Lord in his madness and depra-

Digitized by Google

vity, that is to say, the body which He had put on; and our Lord looked upon him and scorned him, and rebuked him, and said, "Get thee behind Me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt wor- "ship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (St. Matthew iv, 10; St. Luke iv, 8). Through the consolation of these things especially the Evil One should be held in contempt in our sight; for the word which was spoken by our Lord to Satan was spoken on our behalf and on account of us, that in the same manner we ourselves might also rebuke the devils, and that as the Evil One was destroyed before the word of our Lord, so he might also perish and come to an end before our words, for in this he cannot multiply boasting.

Now when our word hath power over the devils, and the fiends [run] terrified from before us, let no man marvel when he rebuketh the demons and they become subject unto him, and let him not hold in contempt another man by whose hands a similar thing cannot be wrought, but let him examine first of all and understand the lives and works of various men, and from this scrutiny let him know with whom abideth Divine Grace, and where the righteousness of God resteth. For they will be unto us a very much better mirror than those who cast out devils, aud in them the wicked will be able to see their blemishes and [so] become rebuked, and in them good men will be able to look carefully at their career and become strengthened. Whether a man becometh a prosperous toiler or an abject coward belongeth unto himself, but for a man to stretch out his hand against the devils and for them to yield place belongeth not unto him but unto heavenly Grace. For when the Disciples returned with joy unto their Lord from [preaching the] Gospel which they had been sent out to preach, they rejoiced in that even the devils were obedient unto their words. Now therefore let him that hath discernment look and hearken unto this answer which was given unto them: "Rejoice ye not because the devils also "have been made subject unto you, but rejoice because your "names have been written down in heaven" (St. Luke x, 20). Now for names to be written down in the Book of Life is a testimony to conduct which is pleasing [to God], and it showeth that those who are worthy of this thing have an upright mind; but power over devils is, manifestly, [a mark of] the grace of our Redeemer. And that ye may know that this is so, observe what Christ answered those who took refuge in this thing when the spirits were going forth before Him, and they said unto Him, "In Thy Name we have cast out devils, and have performed "many signs and wonders." And He said unto them, "Verily, "verily, I say unto you I know you not" (St. Matthew vii, 22, 23). Therefore let us pray, as I have already said, that there

Digitized by Google

may be given unto us the grace to seek after the [power to] distinguish between spirits, according to the word of the Book which saith, "Be not ye led astray by the spirits which err" (compare 1 Timothy iv).

[The following is] by the Holy Writer Mar Athanasius.

NOW I merit praise in that whilst repeating the triumphs of the blessed Anthony I desire to keep silence concerning many things, being at the same time very careful not to speak anything on mine own authority only; it is sufficient for me to record the things which actually took place. Let not any man imagine that we declare these things as a pastime, but let him be sure that we narrate them as things which took place in very truth, and that we do so knowing from actual experience that they are true, and that we are only placing on record the wonderful acts of the blessed man that they may form a small memorial of him. Let the wise man know the purity of our intention and that we do not narrate the things which have been said by us in this history without a good object; and we shall be made strong by the measure of your love. For I am convinced that it would be neither useful nor beneficial if matters of this kind were spoken of in a boastful manner, because our Adversary is very crafty, and it might happen that he could cause us to stumble even in a thing which concerneth the truth; therefore, whilst recording the narrative of the histories of the wiles and arts of the Evil One, it is meet that we should make you to be watchful against his subtlety.

The blessed and holy man Anthony [saith]:

HOW often then did they ascribe blessings in a loud voice, and whilst the voice of blessing was reaching my ears, the words of cursing were sent forth by them! For how many times did they inform me beforehand concerning the flood of the Nile, that is to say, of the river Gîhôn, and how many times did I say unto them, "And "as for you what have ye?" And I used to say unto them, "I have no need to learn these things from you," but they would come again to me after this in the guise of thieves, and they would surround me, and would stand up and utter threats against me, having at the same time their weapons upon them. And again, on another occasion they were suddenly found filling my house with serpents of various kinds, and with reptiles in large numbers, and with these there were also horses which neighed; then straightway I made myself ready and I stood up

Digitized by Google

and I lifted up my voice in Psalms, and said, "Some [put their "trust in] chariots, and some in horses, but we will be strong "in the Name of the Lord our God" (Psalm xx, 7), and immediately they came to an end and disappeared from before me. On another occasion they came to me by night, and they were holding torches of fire and were saying, "We have come "now to burn thee [alive], O Anthony," and as they were saying these things unto me, I closed my eyes so that I might show them that I had placed their light in the portion of darkness; and straightway I put on the armour of prayer against them, and whilst I was praying the light of the sinful ones was extinguished, and it was no more.

And again, after a few months they came in the guise of the singers of the Psalms, and they began to speak to me [with words] from the Scriptures; but I, like a deaf man, did not hearken unto them. On another occasion they shook down upon me the habitation wherein I was living, but I laughed at them by reason of my confidence which [was placed] in our Lord, and my mind was in no way whatsoever disturbed by them. And after this they came unto me with whistlings, and they were beating their hands together and dancing with joy; but when they saw that notwithstanding all their clamour I did not cease to pray, and that I held not my peace from the singing of Psalms, like unto men who have been defeated and overcome they turned their songs of joy into lamentations, and they began to wail and to beat their breasts in grief, and at the same time I gave thanks unto my good Lord for all these things, and because He had broken, and destroyed, and brought low, and humbled, their audacious arrogance and mad folly.

And again, on another occasion, there appeared [unto me] a devil of an exceedingly haughty and insolent appearance, and he stood up before me with the tumultuous noise of many people, and he dared to say unto me, "I, even I, am the power of God," and "I, even I, am the Lord of the worlds." And he said unto me, "What dost thou wish me to give thee? Ask and thou "shalt receive." Then I blew a puff of wind at him, and I rebuked him in the Name of Christ, and I made ready to smite him, and when, as I thought, I did smite him, at that very moment all his strength, and all his host [of fiends], at the [mention of] the Name of Christ, came to an end.

And on another occasion, when I was fasting, the crafty one appeared unto me in the form of a brother monk carrying bread, and he began to speak unto me words of counsel, saying, "Rise up, and stay thy heart with bread and water, and "rest a little from thine excessive labours, for thou art a man, "and howsoever greatly thou mayest be exalted thou art clothed

Digitized by Google

"with a mortal body, and [thou shouldst] fear sicknesses and "tribulations." Then I regarded his words, and I held my peace and refrained from giving [him] an answer. And I bowed myself down in quietness and I began to make supplication in prayer, and I said, "O Lord, make Thou an end of him even "as Thou hast been wont to do him away at all times"; and as I concluded my words he came to an end and vanished like dust, and went forth from the door like smoke.

And again, how very many times in the desert hath he shown before me things like phantoms which resembled gold in order that I might bow myself down before him and touch him even with my finger! I, however, never ceased from singing the songs of the Holy Spirit. And how very many times when I was receiving enjoyment in the Holy Spirit did he disturb me in anger, and he even dared so far as to strike me! Not that I myself am of any account whatsoever, but that it may be seen that the power of our Lord is mighty, and that it cannot be vanquished even in the feeble ones who believe in Him. And Satan laid upon me hard stripes (*or* cruel blows), and in proportion as he multiplied them I kept crying out with a loud voice, saying, "There is nothing which shall separate "me from the love of God" (Romans viii, 35); and after these words [had been said] Satan and the members of his host fell one upon the other, and each of them vented his wrath upon his fellow. Now it was God, Who aforetime reduced Satan to subjection, and God alone, Who performed all these things which I have related; and [the Book] saith, "I saw Satan like "lightning fall from heaven" (St. Luke x, 18). And I, O my sons, remember the word[s] of the Apostle, who said, "I have "spoken these things for your behalf, both for myself and for "Apollos, that ye may learn of us" (compare 1 Corinthians i–iii); in this wise ye also must learn of me these things which ye have heard, and ye shall not be wearied [in running] your course, and ye shall not fear the appearances (*or* visions) of Satan and of all his hosts. And even though I, like a simple man, have made use of these histories, it is for you to hold them to be true; for it is meet that we should bring forward in this place whatsoever we remember, lest under one pretext or another, or by some means or other, [Satan] draw nigh unto you, and that ye may find yourselves ready [to fight] against all his schemes.

Now on one occasion Satan approached the house one night and knocked at the door, and I went out to see who was knocking, and I lifted up mine eyes and saw the form of an exceedingly tall and strong man; and having asked him, "Who art thou?" he answered and said unto me, "I am "Satan." And after this I said unto him, "What seekest

Digitized by Google

"thou?" and he answered and said unto me, "Why do the "monks, and the anchorites, and the other Christians revile "me, and why do they at all times heap curses upon me?" And having clasped my head firmly [in wonder] at his mad folly, I said unto him, "Wherefore dost thou give them "trouble?" Then he answered and said unto me, "It is not "I who trouble them, but it is they who trouble themselves. "For there happened unto me on a certain occasion that "which did happen to me, and had I not cried out to them "that I was the Enemy, his slaughters would have come to an "end for ever. I have, therefore, no place [to dwell in], and "not one glittering sword, and not even people who are really "subject unto me, for those who are in service to me hold me "wholly in contempt; and moreover, I have to keep them in "fetters, for they do not cleave to me because they esteem it "right to do so, and they are ever ready to escape from me in "every place. The Christians have filled the whole world, and "behold, even the desert is filled full with their monasteries "and habitations. Let them then take good heed to themselves "when they heap abuse upon me."

Then, wondering at the grace of our Lord, I said unto him, "How doth it happen that whilst thou hast been a liar on "every other occasion, at this present the truth is spoken by "thee? And how is it that thou speakest the truth now when "thou art wont to utter lies? It is indeed true that when Christ "came into [this] world thou wast brought down to the lowest "depths, and that the root of thine error was plucked up from "the earth." And when Satan heard the Name of Christ, his form vanished and his words came to an end. Since, therefore, Satan himself confessed that there was nothing in his power, we are compelled wholly to despise him and his host. Such then are the crafts and wiles which are found with the Enemy and with the greedy dogs which form his host. And having learned the feebleness and helplessness thereof, it is meet that we should make ourselves ready to [march] against them as over a road which our Lord hath trodden for us.

Let then these phantoms be a help unto us so that our minds may not be frightened by his cunning, and fear may not abide in us by reason of his impudence; and let not anxious thought be wrought in us, lest the Evil One gain greater strength, and let us not be afraid when he hurleth his darts at us lest this thing be an occasion unto him for boasting. And let us not be like stricken men, but let us be prepared at all times [to act] as men who have vanquished the enemy; and let this thought be with us at all times, namely, that God, Who hath revealed and exposed the "powers and dominion," is with us

Digitized by Google

at all times. For [otherwise] when the evil ones draw nigh unto us, having made ready to come against us in the hope that they may gain some advantage over us, or may discover some thoughts of fear in us, for they prepare phantoms [which appear] unto us in the event that they may find that we are terrified and afraid, straightway, like thieves who have discovered a place which is without guardians, they will enter into us and will lead us captives of their will, and our miserable souls will be found to be in an agitated state, not by reason of the punishment of the Adversary, but through our own sluggishness. If, however, the evil ones find us in the love of Christ, and meditating continually on the hope [of that] which is to come, and thinking thoughts concerning the commandments of our Lord, and [believing] that the kingdom and dominion are His, and that the Evil One hath neither opportunity nor power to resist the might of the Cross, if, I say, the Evil One shall find any believing man in this state of mind when he draweth nigh unto him, at that very moment he will remove himself from him to a distance.

It was in such a frame of mind that he found Job who was prepared [to resist him], and the Evil One feared, and was ashamed, and he departed from him as from a man of war; on the other hand, he led captive to his will wholly Judah whom he found to be entirely destitute of such matters. Let us learn then fully from such examples and from such narratives, that if we wish to do so it is very easy for us to hold in contempt the Evil One. Let us meditate at all times on our Lord, and let our souls rejoice in His hope, and behold, we shall find that the Evil One will vanish from before us like the darkness, and we shall also discover that those who come to persecute us will turn [their backs] upon us like men who are chased out of the battle, for, as I have already told you, they are cowards. For the decree of doom (*or* judgement) is at all times before them, and they are ever expecting the punishment which is prepared for them, and the fear of the Cross is cast upon them in proportion to their impudent audacity. Let then these and all the other things [which I have said] be unto you the means of understanding the insolent cunning of the Evil One, and of recognizing the similitudes of the forms of his appearances. If it happen therefore unto any of you that the appearance of one of these forms presenteth itself, be ye not forthwith terrified, but look upon it with great courage as it really is, and ask it, "Who art thou? And whence comest thou?" And if it be a true revelation of the Holy Spirit, straightway the mind will feel that it is so, and will have confidence, and courage (*or* consolation) will grow in you and fear will diminish; but if it

Digitized by Google

be an appearance of the error of the Evil One, the thing will be confounded, and there will be no opportunity for it to be bold, and the form of the appearance will not tarry, and the question [which ye ask] will make manifest the courage of the confidence of refuge in our Lord.

On one occasion a manifestation revealed itself unto Joshua, the son of Nun, and he asked that which had appeared unto him who he was, and took his stand upon the question; and similarly Daniel also saw one of the Watchers and rejoiced at the sight, and was afraid at the measure of the honour of him that had come, but he was wholly comforted by the grace of the confidence which he had in his truth. And in like manner a revelation (*or* manifestation) of the truth came to each and every one of the [saints of] olden time, and none of the stratagems of the phantoms of the Wicked One ever led them astray.

AND as the blessed man Anthony was saying these things, and every man was hearkening unto him with gladness, unto every man who listened unto him was given help of one kind or another according to his need; the man who was strong found his strenuousness to be increased, and the man who was weak found that he received encouragement, and the proud man found that his arrogance was overthrown and swept away, and every man was persuaded to reach forward confidently towards the hope which is to come. And all the people with one accord ascribed blessing unto the righteous man Anthony because such a degree of strength had been given unto him, and because such great wisdom had made its abode in him, and because that in the fierce strife and warfare which he waged against devils he was able to distinguish and discern the difference between good and evil appearances, and the manifestations (*or* revelations) of our Lord from those which appertained unto devils.

And in the days of the blessed man the habitations of the monks were accepted as tabernacles of praises, and Psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs were heard therein; and love and righteousness rejoiced therein, and therein was found the rest of prayer coupled with fasting. And the monks toiled in the labour of their hands that they might not be a burden upon any man, and of [the proceeds of] the sweat of their faces the poor and the needy were relieved. And the monastery [of Anthony] became at that time a wonder unto the inhabitants of the country, for behold, the silver, and the gold, and the riches of this world which were so highly esteemed in their sight were despised and accounted as dross by such men as the monks thereof; and those at whose wastefulness, and drun-

Digitized by Google

kenness, and lasciviousness the monks marvelled, returned [to their homes] in wonder as [if they had seen] an angel and not a human being. No sounds of dissension or contention were heard there, and no voice of the violent man (?) or of his gaoler sounded therein; well might a man describe that monastery in the words of the parable which was uttered in olden time, and say, "How fair are thy habitations, O Jacob, "and thy tabernacles, O Israel!" (Numbers xxiv, 5), for the country was as if the desert had been roofed over, and it was like a paradise which was by the rivers, and tabernacles which the Lord had stablished, and like cedars by the side of the stream.

Now therefore the blessed man, according to his wont, withdrew himself and departed to his habitation (*or* cell) and to the place which was convenient for him to dwell in, and there like a mighty man he triumphed in the apparel of war; at all seasons he was mindful of the mansions which were in the heavens, and groaned, for his mind abode between two [worlds]. He despised the world and held it in contempt, and his mind longed greatly for the kingdom of God, for already, even according to the word of the Apostle, he wished to be with his Lord (Philippians i, 23). And moreover, he was greatly troubled when the time drew nigh in which it was proper for him to eat and drink with the sons of his habitation, for he was shamefaced, and he would fain depart from their midst, and he did not like any man to see him eating or drinking; nevertheless, although he felt thus at the appointed season, he would eat [with them]. Now on the greater number of days the love which he bore towards the brethren would in this way draw him to their company, for he did not desire to grieve them in any way whatsoever, and he was as careful for them as if they had been himself; for he was mindful of the word of the Book which saith, "Ye are members, each of the other, "and if one member be glorified, the whole body is glorified" (Romans xii, 5).

And this he used to say and teach unto them: It is right that we should at all times follow after the food of the soul, for the soul worketh together with our spirit in the striving which is against the adversary; but it is meet for the body to be in subjection and tribulation, for it very speedily becometh unduly exalted by the persuasion and flattery of the Evil One. And it is therefore right that the soul should be more prepared and more exalted than the body, that the body may not prevail (*or* be strong) over it, and bring it low by the lusts [thereof]. And our Lord also gave this indication to the blessed Apostles, and commanded them, saying, "Be not careful as to what ye

Digitized by Google

"shall eat, or what ye shall drink, for such things do the peo-
"ples of the earth seek after, and your Father knoweth what-
"soever things ye have need of; but seek ye the kingdom of
"God and His glory, and the things which are superior unto
"these shall be added unto you" (St. Matthew vi, 31 sq.)

Now some short time after these things a storm and a persecution arose in the Church, during the years [of the reign] of Maximinus, the wicked Emperor, and [the soldiers] began to seize and to take into Alexandria a great company of the blessed confessors; and the report of these things reached the blessed Anthony. And straightway he left his habitation and place of abode, and he made haste at the sound of the strife, and he said to himself, "I will go and draw nigh [thereto], so "that if Divine Grace call me, it shall find me prepared, and "if it thinketh otherwise concerning my unworthy self, I shall "at all events be a spectator of the strife." Now he desired exceedingly to enter [the race], and to be accounted worthy of the athlete's crown. So he travelled on his way and drew nigh and arrived at the city, and he went in through the gate, and inquired where the athletes had been made to assemble, and where they had been gathered together, and asked concerning the report of the strife. And when he had heard and had learned where the place was, and in what manner of restraint they were fettered, he made his way thither; and as soon as he saw those who had been called by Divine Grace [unto death] at this time, he planned with all diligence and by every means in his power to be a companion unto every one of them in the contest wherein they were to stand. And he prepared and made himself ready to be with every man, and he became a prisoner in the prison with those who were shut up therein, and he ministered unto them and relieved their wants; and he passed his time continually in close companionship with the rest of the prisoners who were to be exiled, and those who were to be sent out from the country to the mines, and to the islands, and he ministered unto them with great pains and care. And he was found to be ready to accompany all such as were brought and were going in to their doom, both in their going in and coming out; as they went in he gave them encouragement and admonition, and as they came out he ascribed blessings unto them and sang hymns of praise. And it was his custom [to do this] day by day, and his acts were so well known and so famous in all the city that at length [the report thereof] came to the ears of the governor. Now when the wicked governor learned concerning him, and the people had informed him concerning Anthony's disposition and work, he marvelled at [the bravery of] his mind, and because he was neither moved by the tortures

Digitized by Google

and tribulations which were falling upon his companions, nor was afraid; and he commanded that he should no longer be found in the city, and that the other monks who were with him should not come therein, because they also were doing the same work.

And on another day certain athletes were summoned to the contest, and when the blessed Anthony knew of the command and threat (*or* prohibition) of the judge, he washed and made white the apparel with which he was clothed (now his tunic was without shoulder coverings and was like the tunics with which the Egyptians cover themselves), and having arrayed himself in his clothing, he went and stood up inside the hall of judgement, opposite to the wicked judge. And when the men who had heard the commands of the king concerning Anthony and his companions lifted up their eyes and saw him, they prevented him that day from appearing before the judge, for they marvelled at him and at his boldness concerning himself, and his courage in the face of death. Now all this threatening was very sad to him, and [in spite of] his contempt for the Enemy, the door which would enable him to testify was not opened; but God preserved him for the strengthening of those who testified, and for the benefit of those who were about to do so, and for the increase of the monasteries of the monks, and for the praise of the whole Church. And he continued to do this work until God was pleased to put an end to this persecution of the Church (now in those days the blessed Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, bore his testimony) (i.e., was martyred); and after these things the blessed Anthony departed to his monastery and habitation, and he bore testimony continually, and, as it is written, he died daily (1 Corinthians xv, 31), and after the persecution he was always adding a little more to the toil of his daily life.

Now he wore his apparel with the hair inside, and the skin outside, and to the day of his death he never touched his body with water, for he wished to keep it meagre, and he never dipped his feet in water without the sternest necessity; and no man ever saw him naked or exposed, except when he died, and his body was carried in honour by his disciples. He once decided that for a short time he would remain in silent contemplation, and that he would neither go outside his dwelling nor be seen by any man, and it came to pass that during the days wherein [he was thus occupied] a certain Roman nobleman whose name was Martinianus came to visit him, and he drew nigh and besought him to come forth and to pray with him, and to lay his hand upon his daughter, who was torn by a devil. And when the nobleman had waited a very long time,

Digitized by Google

and had besought the blessed man incessantly to open his door, though he would not be persuaded to do so, Anthony looked [out of the window] and saw him, and said unto him: "O man, why dost thou weary me? I am a man like unto thy-"self, but if thou dost believe in the Christ Whom I serve, "depart in peace, and according as thou believest pray, and "it shall be [unto thee] even as thou wishest." Then straightway that man had full and complete confidence in the word which he had heard, and went by the way he had come, taking his daughter with him, and she was delivered from the power of the subjugation of the Evil One. And God, Who did say, "Ask ye and receive" (St. Matthew vii, 7; St. Luke xi, 9), performed very many things like unto this by the hands of Anthony; now many people who were smitten with diseases of several kinds thronged to him, and came and sat down by the side of his cell, and each of them obtained relief from his afflictions.

Now when he saw that much people were gathered together to him, and that the trouble which men and women caused him increased, he became afraid either lest he should be unduly exalted in his mind by reason of the things which God had wrought by his hand, or lest others should esteem him beyond what was right and more than he deserved, and he determined to go away from that place and to enter the Thebaïd. Then he took a little bread and went and sat down by the side of the river, and waited until he should see a boat going to that district to which he was ready to go. And as he was pondering these things in his mind, suddenly a voice from heaven was heard by him, and it called him and said unto him, "Anthony, whither goest thou? Why art thou departing from "this place?" Now he was not afraid of the voice which came to him, but like a man who was accustomed to do so he spake with it, and answered and said, "Because, O my Lord, the "people will not permit me [to enjoy] a little silent contem-"plation; it is for this reason that I am wishing to go up to "the Thebaïd, and especially do I desire it because the people "are seeking at my hands that which is wholly beyond my "powers."

Then again the voice came to him, saying, "If thou goest "up it will not be to the Thebaïd only, and even if thou "goest into the Thebaïd as thou art thinking [of doing], thou "wilt have to endure toil greater than that which thou [per-"formest] here; if, however, thou wishest to enjoy silent con-"templation and to be at rest, get thee gone into the innermost "desert." And Anthony the blessed answered and said, "O my "Lord, who will shew me [the way to] that difficult place? For

Digitized by Google

"neither do I myself know it, nor am I acquainted with or "have knowledge of men who do." Now whilst he was standing up, there passed by certain Arabs who had made ready and set out on their way to go to that region, and the blessed man drew nigh unto them, and entreated them to let him go with them, and they received him gladly because it was manifest that it was the commandment of God which was to be performed in this matter. And having travelled with them for three days and three nights, he arrived at a certain high mountain, and he found in the lower parts thereof water which was clear, and cool, and sweet, and a few palm-trees, for the land which was by the side of the mountain was a flat plain; and the place was pleasing to the blessed Anthony, and he loved it well, and he loved it especially because God had been his Governor and had led him to that spot. Therefore Anthony encamped there and dwelt in that place, and he was exalted there like a king in the courts [of his palace]. Now when those Arabs who had brought him to that place saw [this], they wondered and marvelled, and they left with him a little bread which was found with them; and from that time forward whenever they were journeying into Egypt and returning therefrom, those Arabs, by reason of the wonderful things which they saw in the man, always passed by the place where he was, and also brought him bread. Now there were found in that region a few small birds [which came] from the palm-trees.

And it came to pass that after a time it was heard by the brethren where he was, and like beloved sons they remembered their righteous father, and they made inquiries and found out where the place was, and they laboured strenuously and sent to him everything that could be of use to him. Now when the blessed Anthony saw that the brethren had begun to take trouble for him, he besought those who had begun to go to him to bring him a little wheat and a hoe; and when they had brought them to him, he went about the land at the foot of the mountain, and found a little place which was suitable for cultivating and watering; thus he was able to provide himself with as much bread as he needed, and he rejoiced greatly because he had found the means which would prevent him from troubling any man, and because he would be a burden to himself only. And having seen that the brethren were thronging to him, and that they would not be prevented from coming to him, he tilled a portion of that ground and made it into a vegetable garden for the benefit of those who came to him. Now when he first began to sow wheat in that place, the wild animals used to come there in large numbers for the sake of the water, and they damaged the crop, but one day when they were among

Digitized by Google

the corn according to their custom, he went quietly and seized one of them, and he said unto them all with a laugh, "Why do ye "do harm to me, seeing that I do no harm to you? Get ye gone "therefore in the Name of the Lord, and come ye never again "nigh unto this place"; and from that hour this was a command from heaven to them, and they never again did harm to that place.

And the blessed Anthony was alone in that desert, for the place wherein he had his habitation was waste and desolate; and his mind therefore dwelt the more upon exalted things, and it was content therewith. Now the brethren who used to go to visit him besought and entreated him to allow them to bring him there month by month a few garden herbs and olives and oil; and although he contended with them about it they overcame him with their entreaty, and compelled him [to receive them], and they began to pay him visits, one at a time, according to their entreaty to him. And the blessed man was exceedingly old, and he was far advanced in years. And in that desert also he endured strife, not with flesh and blood, but with devils and with impure spirits, and we have learned this also from those who were going to visit him continually. They used to hear also there the sound of tumult and of outcry, and to see flashing spears, and at night time they would see the whole mountain filled with fiery phantoms, and those men were greatly terrified; but the blessed Anthony was trained in stratagems (?) of war like a man of war, and he was prepared, and he stood up and rebuked the Evil One, who straightway ceased according to [his] wont; and he encouraged the brethren who were with him not to be terrified or to tremble at [the sight of] such visions as these. For, said he to them, "They are only empty phantoms which perish "as if they had never existed at the Name of the Cross"; and wonder and admiration laid hold upon every man at the greatness and at the manner of the righteousness which was found in the blessed man.

He was not terrified at the devils, he was not wearied by the desert, and his soul had no fear of the wild beasts which were therein; but Satan suffered torture from all these things. And one day he came to the blessed man who was singing the Psalms of David, and he gnashed his teeth upon him loudly; but the blessed Anthony ceased not [to sing], and he was comforted and helped by the grace of our Lord. One night whilst he was standing up and was watching in prayer, Satan gathered together all the wild beasts of the desert, and brought them against him, and they were so many in number that he can hardly have left one beast in its den; and as they

Digitized by Google

compassed him about on every side, and with threatening looks were ready [to leap upon him], he looked at them boldly and said unto them, "If ye have received power over me [from "the Lord], draw nigh, and delay not, for I am ready for you; "but if ye have made ready and come at [the command of] "Satan, get ye back to your places and tarry not, for I am a "servant of Jesus the Conqueror." And when the blessed man had spoken these words, Satan was straightway driven away by the mention of the Name of Christ like a sparrow before a hawk.

And on another day, when he was weaving palm leaves—for such was his occupation, and he used to toil thereat so that he might not be a burden upon any man, and that he might [make baskets] to give as gifts to the people who were continually coming to visit him—suddenly he put up his hand over the door, and took hold of a rope of palm leaves to bring outside, and he leaped and stood up to look out. And as he looked out from the door, he saw an animal which had [the following] form: from its head to its side it was like a man, and its legs and feet were those of an ass. When the blessed Anthony saw it he only made the sign of the Cross over himself, and said, "How can anyone imagine that the Evil One is "crafty? And how can anyone be agitated [by him] more "than once or twice? Is it not within the scope of his cunning "to know that these things are accounted by me merely "empty phantasms? And now, if there be anything whatsoever in the power of him that sent thee, come hither and "perform that which thou wast sent to do; but if Christ, "Who shall make an end of thee, and in Whom I have "my hope, liveth, and if He be true, let the destruction of "thyself and of him that sent thee take place immediately." Thereupon, at the word Christ, there fell upon the creature quaking and trembling, and he took to flight, and [as] he was going forth in haste and was running along terrified, he fell down and burst asunder at no great distance from [Anthony's] abode. Now the devils did all these things in order that they might drive the blessed man from the desert.

And it came to pass after a time that the brethren [who were] monks appeared before him and besought him to come down and visit them in their monastery for a long period, and having multiplied their entreaties he granted their request; and he rose up and travelled with them in the desert to the borders of Egypt. Now there was with them a camel which was laden with bread and water [and] provisions for the way, for no water whatsoever was to be found in the whole of that desert. And having travelled for one or two days, the water

Digitized by Google

was finished and came to an end, for the men with him were not a few, and in those days the heat was very fierce, and the people were overcome by thirst; and they were troubled the more because they had wandered about the whole of that district that they might find water, and they threw themselves down on the ground, being in trouble and in great danger, and because they were in despair about themselves they turned the camel adrift to wander about in the desert. Now when the blessed old man saw the people in such great distress, he sighed heavily, and having departed from them a short distance, he bowed his knees upon the ground and spreading out his hands towards heaven, he cried out to God, and said, "Consider, O Lord, at this time also the prayer of Thy ser-"vant"; and before the words of his prayer were ended, water sprang up from that place whereon he had prayed, and he brought all the people and made them to come [there], and they prayed and gave thanks unto God, and they drank and were relieved from their tribulations, and they also filled the water-skins with the water. Then they went forth in quest of the camel, and they brought him back [to their camp]; now they found him quite near, because it happened that, through the Providence (*or* Dispensation) of God, whilst the animal was wandering about his cord was caught by a root and he was unable to move, and he stood still until they went and brought him [back]. And they gave the camel water to drink, and they loaded up his load upon him, and they set out on their road.

Now when they had come to a district which was inhabited and had entered the villages, many people rushed forth from the whole of that neighbourhood and came to the place where the blessed man was, for every man was waiting and longing for him, and the love of him was hot in their minds, and they drew nigh and made obeisance unto him as unto a righteous father. And the blessed man spread abroad the things which he had provided and was carrying [with him] when he came from the desert, and he made them happy with the enjoyments of the Spirit; and at that time there was twofold joy in the monasteries of the monks, and they rejoiced in the triumphs of the blessed old man whom they saw renewing his youth like the eagle. Now the chief of all the commandments which he used to give unto all the monks was that they should freely confess, before everything, the true faith of Christ, and should love it with all their strength; that they should preserve themselves from evil thoughts, and from the lusts of the body; that they should flee from vain boasting; that they should pray continually, and should be prepared and ready [to sing]

Digitized by Google

Psalms and [to recite] the Office before they went to sleep; that after sleep they should read and remember the words of the Scriptures, wherein was their life; that they should meditate upon the acts and lives of the Apostles, and should consider what they were before they approached Christ, and also what they were after they had drawn nigh to Him, and how in their former state they were despised and held in contempt by the world, and how in the latter state they suddenly waxed great, and were held in high honour, both in this world and in the kingdom of God; and that it was not their own strength which had made for them this exalted estate and honour, but their perfect righteousness towards God. With these and such-like [admonitions] did he make zealous and strengthen their minds.

And, moreover, he spake the following words: "Since "we, who are monks, are not held fast by anger in anything "whatsoever, Satan filcheth us away through this very thing "that we may rage one against the other; and it is therefore "meet that we should at all times remember the word of our "Lord which saith, 'If thou bringest to the altar thine offer-"'ing, and there rememberest that thou art held by anger against "'thy brother, go thou and be reconciled with thy brother, and "'then offer up thine offering' (St. Matthew v, 23, 24). We "should remember also the word of the Apostle, 'Let not the "'sun go down upon your wrath' (Ephesians iv, 26). Now "this command, 'Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,' "was not written merely [to tell us] that we were never to be "angry, but [to warn us] against offences of every kind, and "against keeping wrath one against the other; for it is very "right and seemly that the sun should not go down by day and "leave us in sin, and that the moon should not overtake us in "the same by night, and should not find us in the service of the "Wicked One, or thinking of him. Since therefore it is well for "us [to be] thus, it is right that we should consider and examine "into the word of the Apostle which admonished us, saying, "'Try ye one another, examine ye one another' (2 Corin-"thians xiii, 5). Let us then each and every day meditate in such "a way that every man among us may receive from his soul the "computation of all his works and thoughts, both by day and "by night; and let every man be an honest investigator of his "own thoughts for himself, before shall come the righteous "Avenger Who shall reward righteously (compare St. Matthew "xvi, 27), and shall punish even according as the Holy Gospel "hath admonished us; for the wages of the mind are always "the same. Those who have fought against sins He will encou-"rage, and him that standeth in the truth He will admonish

Digitized by Google

"and urge to new exertions, lest he be filched away by boast-
"ing, and be despoiled by means of over-confidence, and lest he
"despise one man and love another, and justify his own soul.
"[Let us then do these things], even as the Apostle Paul said,
"'until our Lord cometh' (1 Timothy vi, 14), Who shall judge
"the things which are hidden.

"For it may happen that we ourselves do not know our
"own manner of life and works, but though we have lost this
"knowledge it is manifest before God, Who knoweth the things
"which are hidden. Let us therefore appoint Him to be the
"Judge. Let us, at all times, take each the burden of the
"other, and let us suffer for each other even as our Lord suf-
"fered for us; but let us examine our souls unceasingly, and
"let us provide and fill our houses in this world with whatsoever
"things we lack with the greatest care. And let this thing also
"be an admonition to us against sin, and let each man of us
"write down both his actions and his thoughts upon the tablets
"of his heart, as if he were obliged to read and lay them out in
"due order under the eye of every man. For when he pondereth
"and considereth [he will find] that it would be a shame and a
"disgrace that these things should come to light, and when he
"meditateth further [he will see] that, inasmuch as the mere
"hearing of the same would cause him great ignominy, it is
"manifest that the doing of the same [would work] great de-
"struction. And since it is difficult for sin to come to the light,
"it is certain that falsehood clingeth and cleaveth thereto; for as
"when the natural eye seeth [what is happening] no act of
"shame is to be expected, so also if we were men who were
"obliged to tell each other our manner of life (*or* conversation)
"and thoughts, no sin would ever be committed by us because
"of the shame which would result therefrom. Let then the
"writings wherein are inscribed our shortcomings be things
"of which to be ashamed, for they take the place of the eyes
"of the spectators, and since we are as much ashamed of the
"writings as if they had been spectators, let us, like men of
"understanding, cease from the doing of and from meditating
"upon the works which bring in their train reproach. Now
"therefore by such means as these, if our souls are a care unto us,
"let us bring our bodies into subjection, so that by our works
"we shall please God, and treat with contempt the Enemy by
"means of our strenuousness."

Now it was with such matters as these that the blessed man Anthony used to rejoice the monks who went to visit him, and the others, that is to say, those who were smitten with sickness, and those who were evilly entreated by evil spirits he would comfort by his words, and would aid by his

Digitized by Google

prayers. And our Lord at all times made him to be happy in his prayers, for when they were heard he was not unduly lifted up in his heart, and when they were not hearkened to he murmured not, but in all of them he gave thanks to God. And, moreover, he encouraged those who were smitten with sickness not to be disheartened by reason of their tribulations, and he told them that they must know that neither he nor any other man had power to grant relief to them, and that it was God alone Who could do so, and that He would do so for whomsoever He pleased whensoever He pleased. And these and such-like words became a relief and an aid for those who were smitten with sicknesses, and he gladly lightened the weight of their trials by more than the words which were offered unto them; but those who were made whole were told before everything else that they must not return their thanks and gratitude to the blessed Anthony, but that they must ascribe praise wholly unto God [for their healings].

Now there once went to the blessed Anthony in the inner desert a certain nobleman who was an officer in the palace, whose name was Parnîtôn, and he had an evil spirit; he was always gnawing his tongue, and the light of his eyes was wellnigh destroyed. And this man went to the blessed Anthony and entreated him to pray over him, and having done so he answered and said to that man, "Depart, and thou shalt be "healed," but Parnîtôn entreated him that he might remain with him for some days. And the blessed man was saying unto him continually, "Thou canst not be healed here. Go away "from this place, and when thou arrivest in Egypt thou wilt "see suddenly the wonderful sign which God hath wrought "upon thee." And having confidence in [these words] the man went forth, and before he saw Egypt, there came unto him deliverance straightway, and he became healed, according to the word of the blessed man which was revealed unto him in the Spirit by our Redeemer.

And there was a certain virgin of Busiris who suffered from a severe and terrible disease, for the water (*or* tears) which flowed from the pupil of her eyes, and the matter which fell from her nostrils, before it fell upon the ground became worms, and her whole body was in a state of putrefaction; and because of the progress of the disease her eyes had lost the power of natural sight and were useless. Now when the kinsfolk of this young woman heard that certain brethren [who were] monks were preparing to go to the blessed Anthony, because they believed wholly in the man who had healed a woman of a flow of blood [which had lasted] twelve years, they entreated them to allow them to go with them also and to follow in their

Digitized by Google

company; and as the brethren received their petition and permitted them to go in their company, they arrived [in due course] at the place [where the blessed man was]. And the kinsfolk of the maiden remained with their daughter a short distance on this side of the mountain, at the place where dwelt the man of God, Paphnutius the confessor and anchorite. And when the brethren had gone in and had greeted the blessed Anthony, and whilst they were meditating about relating to him concerning the maiden and her kinsfolk, he began to speak before they did about her sickness and afflictions, and said how it happened that she came to be in their company. Then making the conversation of the blessed man the pretext for their words they besought and entreated him to allow the maiden to come into his presence, but he would not be persuaded to do so, and he said unto them, "Get ye back to the "place where the maiden is, and if she be not already dead, "ye will find that she hath been wholly healed; now this hath "not happened either through me or through the gift which "my poor and contemptible person possesseth, but it is a gift "from our Redeemer, Who performeth grace and mercy in "every place for those who cry unto Him in affliction. Get ye "out then quickly, for the merciful God hath hearkened unto "the prayer of the maiden, and hath regarded the toil and "labour of her kinsfolk; and behold, His lovingkindness hath "made known and revealed unto me in this hour that relief "from her affliction hath come unto the maiden. Thus this "wonderful thing hath taken place." And the brethren went forth and found the kinsfolk of the maiden rejoicing, and their daughter was freed from and was completely healed from her affliction.

And at the same time there went forth from Egypt two brethren to visit the blessed Anthony, and when they were near to arrive at the place where he was, it fell out that the water failed, and they were so completely brought low for want thereof that, by reason of his great tribulation, one of them departed from this world, and his companion was well-nigh departing likewise. Then the blessed man called suddenly unto two of those brethren who happened to be with him, and said to them, "Take ye a little water in a vessel and get ye "down quickly on the road to Egypt, for two brethren set "out together to come to us, but when they had left behind "them the greater part of the mountain road, they lacked "water; one of them hath already fainted and died, and the "other is nigh unto death, [and will die], if ye do not speedily "overtake him. For thus hath it appeared to me when I was "praying." And the brethren having made haste arrived at the place and found [a dead man] according to what had been

Digitized by Google

said to them, and they took up the body of him that was dead and carried it away, and they fed him, in whom the spirit was still found to be, with bread and water, and took him and brought him with care to the old man. Now the blessed man was distant from them a journey of two days. And if any man ask why and wherefore the vision did not appear unto the blessed Anthony before the man died, he will ask that which is unseemly, for it belonged not to him to know what God was meditating concerning every man; this thing belongeth unto God only Who, whensoever He pleaseth, maketh a revelation unto him that feareth Him.

And the blessed Anthony possessed this wonderful attribute. When he was dwelling in the mountain, his mind was alert and watchful to observe and to see, by the operation of the Holy Spirit which dwelt in him, that which was afar off as if it were near. For, on another occasion when he was in the mountain, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and suddenly saw a man being taken up therein; and wonderment having fallen upon him he magnified [God] and ascribed blessings unto him that had been accounted worthy of this [honour], and he besought the Lord that he might know who the man was who had attained unto such exalted greatness. And suddenly a voice from heaven was heard, saying, "This is the soul of the blessed man "Ammon who used to dwell in the country of Nitria." Now Ammon was a mighty man and a valiant fighter [in the ascetic life], and he had been a monk from his early manhood even unto his old age, and the end of his life was greater than the beginning thereof; and the distance of the country of Nitria from the mountain wherein dwelt the blessed man Anthony was a journey of thirteen days. And when those who were found with the old man Anthony saw him marvelling in this manner concerning the blessed Ammon, they entreated him that they might learn when his departure from the world took place, and he informed them that it had happened when the revelation appeared unto him.

And there was also another famous man with whom many were acquainted, for he used to come very frequently to the blessed Anthony, and many glorious deeds and signs and wonders were wrought by his hands unto our Lord. Now on a certain occasion one reason or another made it necessary for the blessed Ammon to cross the river, the name of which was Dâbhâ (i.e., the Wolf River), and he had with him the righteous man, [who was called] Theodore; and this blessed man also was mighty in the ascetic life. And when they had come nigh unto the river, and were standing on the bank, they agreed that each should go away a short distance from the

Digitized by Google

other so that they might not see each other's nakedness as they were crossing the river. Now when the righteous man Theodore had removed himself from him, the blessed man Ammon began to have shame even of himself, and whilst he he was in this state of mind suddenly Divine Grace seized him, and set him up upon the [other] side of the river. And when the righteous man Theodore had crossed the river, he drew nigh unto the blessed Ammon, and examined him attentively, [and found] that his feet had not been dipped in the water, and that not a drop of water had touched either his body or his garments. Then Theodore began to entreat Ammon to inform him how his passage over the river had been effected, and when he saw that he was making many excuses about it and was debating the matter, he became certain in his mind that it was Divine Grace which had taken him across the river. And he persisted strongly in questioning Ammon, and took hold of his feet, and said unto him, "Yes, or no? I will not leave "thee until thou hast shown me" [this thing]. Now when the old man Ammon saw the persistence of the righteous man Theodore, and [remembered] especially the word which had gone forth to him, he entreated him to make the matter known to no man until his departure from this world had been effected, and then he revealed to him that he had indeed been carried across the river [by the Spirit], and that he had never walked upon the water thereof at all. And this thing our Lord Himself did by His own power, and He made the great Apostle Peter to do so (St. Matthew xiv, 29), and it was done [by Ammon] also by the command of our Lord; and [it was only] after the old man Ammon was dead that this matter was spoken of by the righteous man Theodore, according to the agreement which he had made with Ammon.

Now the brethren, who had heard from the blessed Anthony the story of the departure of the old man Ammon from the world, bore in mind the day and the hour wherein it took place, and three days later, when certain brethren came from the country of Nitria, they inquired of them concerning the death of the blessed Ammon, and they learned that the days of the old man had come to an end at the very moment and at the very hour when the blessed Anthony had spoken to them, and when he himself saw Ammon being taken up into heaven. Then the brethren did indeed marvel among themselves concerning the purity of the soul of the blessed Anthony, and how he had seen performed clearly and openly before him that which had taken place at a distance of a journey of thirteen days, that is to say, the ascension of the soul of the blessed Ammon into heaven.

Digitized by Google

And moreover there came unto him a certain Count called Archelaus, and he found him in the outer mountain praying by himself, and he made entreaty unto him on behalf of the nun Polycratia, who was from the city of Laodicea, and was faithful and devoted to the ascetic life. Now she was much afflicted by pains in her stomach and in her right side, and, in short, her whole body was in a state of suffering. And when the blessed man had prayed for her, Archelaus wrote down the day and the hour in which the prayer had been made, and after this the blessed man dismissed him, and he returned to his own country; and when he had gone to the province of Laodicea he found Polycratia the nun in perfect health. Then he asked at what time she had found deliverance from her sufferings, and by what means it had been brought about, and they related to him that the mercy of God had been poured out upon her at a certain time suddenly, and that she had felt relief and found herself made whole and free from the violent pains of her disease. And immediately that the words of their narrative concerning her illness had come to an end, Archelaus brought forth the paper whereon were written the day and hour wherein the prayer had been made on behalf of the believing woman (Polycratia), and the words of their narrative agreed with those which were written on his paper as if they had been written down [at the same time] with a pen. Then wonder laid hold upon every man, and they all admitted openly that the time at which the prayer was made by the blessed man was precisely that at which relief had come to her.

And multitudes of things similar to those which have already been described were performed by his hands; and also when the brethren used to set out to come from Egypt to him, he knew it beforehand and was able to declare it to those who happened to be with him, and it was revealed unto him sometimes even months and days beforehand that they were coming to him, and the reason for their journey. For some used to come to him merely to see him, and others [came] that they might be with him for a few days, and others came to him because of their diseases and afflictions of various kinds; and no man found that long road exhausting or fell into despair thereon, because the relief which each man obtained from the blessed Anthony was greater than the toil which he had endured thereon. And when a man saw these triumphs, and felt anxious to narrate them, the blessed man used to entreat him not to marvel at these deeds, but to wonder at the Divine Grace of God which considered unworthy and feeble men worthy of such great [care].

And on one occasion the brethren entreated him to visit

Digitized by Google

their monasteries, and when they had come to a certain place they besought him to embark in a boat and to cross over the river; and when he had gone up into the boat a foul and fetid smell smote him suddenly. And when the brethren heard of this, they answered and said unto him, "Master, this smell "ariseth from the fish and the salted meat with which the boat is loaded," but he would not be persuaded that it was so, and he said, "This smell ariseth not from these things." Now whilst he was ending his words, a young man, in whom was an evil spirit, was found in the boat, and as soon as he saw the blessed man, he shrank away from him straightway; but when the devil abused him, he cried out and uttered threats against the blessed man from among the people. Then the blessed Anthony turned himself round, and rebuked him, and silenced him, and immediately the young man felt the deliverance from him; and every man was persuaded that the smell was that of the devil whereat they had wondered.

And again there came to him a certain well-known man who was very sorely tried by an unclean spirit, and he was so distressed through him that his mind was carried away, and he was unable to understand any question which was asked of him; and in his whole body there was not a spot which was not lacerated by his bites, and those who had brought him took him to the blessed man Anthony and besought him to pray for him. Then the old man Anthony looked upon him, and his mercy having revealed itself, he took him by the hand, and made him stand up, and he knelt down on his knees before him, and he watched with him the whole night. And at the time of dawn the young man approached the blessed Anthony from behind his back, and smote him, and those who had brought him began to rebuke him; but the blessed man answered and said unto them, "Let no man be wroth against "him; this act is not of him, but of the Evil One who is in him, "for he hath been commanded to depart from that which God "hath created, and to return to his place, and he is, in conse-"quence, incensed with him, and hath done this thing. Glorify "ye then God, because of this thing which hath taken place, "for it hath given unto you a sign whereby ye may be sure "that God hath wrought for him deliverance." And when the blessed Anthony had said these things, straightway the young man was made whole, and he came to himself, and remembered where he was, and through whom deliverance had come unto him, and then he began to salute the blessed man, and to confess God with many loud protestations. Now believing men have related very many [wonderful] things like unto this, but in comparison to the other deeds which

Digitized by Google

were wrought by the blessed man these are not very important.

On one occasion he stood up to pray at the ninth hour, and he perceived that his mind was exalted, and, what was still more wonderful, that whilst he was on the earth his mind was transformed, and he did not feel that he was upon the earth. For he saw that his soul was not being lifted up by the power of his mind, but was being governed by the angels; and when he himself was raised up, he saw other beings who came and stood opposite to him, and they prevented him from passing on. And they said, "Let us see of what kind are his deeds, "and if we cannot by any means make him to be taken (*or* "held) by us." Then those who were guiding him turned round and rebuked them, and said unto them, "Our Lord "by His grace blotted out his shortcomings and his sins before "he became a disciple, but ye are embodied in his triumphs "and in his works and deeds [which took place] after he had "become a disciple"; and thereupon his soul was immediately exalted to the place unto which it attained. And after this his mind took up its abode in him, and he felt and perceived that which had happened to him; and he magnified and gave thanks to (*or* confessed) God by reason of everything which had taken place, and [he remained] in prayer the whole night which followed that day, and he tasted no food of any kind whatsoever therein.

And a man must also marvel at the severity of our contest, and at the great labour by which he passeth to this air; and he must remember and say, "This is the word of the Apostle, who "spake, saying, 'Your contending is against the ruler who "'holdeth the power of this world'" (Ephesians vi, 12). For this reason the Apostle himself commanded, saying, "Put on "the armour of God in order that ye may be able to stand "against him in the evil day" (Ephesians vi, 13), so that the Enemy may have no occasion in any way to say about us that we have been sorely put to shame. And, my beloved, in connexion with the history of the blessed man, let us remember the matter of the Apostle who said, "Whether in the body or "out of the body, I know not; God knoweth" (2 Corinthians, xii, 2). Now, the blessed Paul was snatched up into the third heaven, and heard words which may not be uttered, and came down [again]; but the blessed Anthony was lifted up into the place to which he was lifted up, and he received a pledge of the confidence of his labour, and he returned and took up his abode with himself. And the [sign of] grace was also found with him. Whensoever he had in his mind any matter the truth of which he could not comprehend with his thoughts, he would

Digitized by Google

make supplication in his prayer, and it would be revealed unto him, and in all these things he was taught by God even as it is written (St. John vi, 45; Isaiah liv, 13).

And after these things he had a disputation with certain men who came to him about the ordering and disposition of the soul, and the place to which it went after its departure [from the body]. Then, on another day, he heard a voice from heaven, which said, "Anthony, get thee forth, and thou shalt "see." And, moreover, this thing had also been wrought for him: he was able to distinguish between heavenly voices and the voices of enemies. And he lifted up his eyes and saw the form of a man which was immeasurably abominable; his head reached up into the heavens, and round about him on all sides were numbers of beings, some of which were flying about with their wings, and were soaring up above him; and he put forth his hands that he might lay hold of some [of them], but he was not able to do so. Now those winged beings who were flying about were those who had preserved (*or* guarded) their faith and their works; but the others he could lay hold of because they were those who had not received the faith, and who were remote from works. Then the blessed Anthony saw that the form of the man was gnashing his teeth with bitterness at those who were being lifted up into life, for [that] son of perdition would have been content that every man should perish with him. And straightway a voice came unto the blessed Anthony, and said: "Know thou that which hath been made"; and then he understood that this was the passage (*or* bridge) of souls, and that he who was standing in the midst was Satan, the enemy of righteousness. Such was the vision which came unto him, and it roused him up and incited him exceedingly to triumph in his old age.

Now these things were not related by his will, but the brethren who saw him when he was sighing during his prayer to God perceived that something had been seen by him, and they clung to him and pressed him with entreaties to inform them what had happened. And having examined his mind, and seen that it was free from boasting, he decided within himself that the report of such things as these would certainly admonish the youthful monks to stand up like mighty warriors in the war which the Enemy maketh against us, and not to be caught by him in any way, so that he might not be able to lift up his heel against us; and having thus decided he revealed and made known unto them the whole matter even as it appeared unto them. For he was exceedingly long-suffering in respect of the things which were fitting, and he was thoroughly meek in spirit, and in all these things he preserved scrupulously the

Digitized by Google

Canons of the Church, and made answer unto every man according to his grade and rank. Unto Bishops and Elders he paid honour like a man who was in duty bound so to do, and he was not ashamed to bow his head before them at the time of the blessing; but deacons he received with joy and with affection, and although like a father he made them to hear words of righteousness and admonition, during the time of prayer he would set them in front by reason of the authority which had once been given unto them by God. He meditated continually upon righteousness, and he did not seek only to make another hear the Word, but he himself rejoiced to hear it, and he was never ashamed to do so, even though he was an old man and a famous one; for on several occasions he asked questions of those who were with him at all times, and entreated that he might hear that which was suitable to his life and deeds, and he would confess that he had been benefited whensoever a subject of this kind was debated among them.

And the countenance of the blessed man was clothed with the splendour of praise, and wonder thereat laid hold upon every man. Whensoever it happened that he was with many people, and it fell out that a man came there who had never seen the blessed Anthony, his eyes would glance quickly over all the people, and he would gaze intently upon them all, and would at once distinguish the newcomer, who, by reason of the splendour of grace which dwelt in the blessed man, would, as if drawn by cords, leave the other people and boldly make his way direct to him. Now this did not arise because the stature of the blessed Anthony was greater than that of any other man, or because his external appearance was more beautiful than that of any other man, but by reason of those spiritual triumphs which were within [him], even as it is written, "A "happy heart maketh beautiful the body; and an evil heart "maketh gloomy the countenance" (Proverbs xvii, 22). And, moreover, Jacob discerned by the appearance of the countenance of Laban that he was meditating fraud concerning him, for he said unto his wives, "I see that the face of your father "is not towards me as it was yesterday and formerly" (Genesis xxxi, 5). And in the same manner Samuel recognized David, for his eyes were beautiful (1 Samuel xvi, 12) and his features were joyous. And thus was it also in the case of the blessed Anthony, and by such indications he was known by those who saw him; when he was troubled [they saw that] his visage was disturbed, and when he was angry that his thoughts were ruffled.

And, moreover, he was immeasurably firm in the faith, and

Digitized by Google

he held fast thereunto with honour and discretion (*or* discernment); he did not conduct himself in the matter of faith like a man who made himself a stranger unto the children of men, or like one who dwelt in the desert, either in common with other monks, or by himself; and he would not receive the people who used to go to him without question and also enquiry. For he never joined himself to the Meletian heretics* who were in Egypt, for from the very beginning he was well acquainted with their dissensions (*or* schisms), and their restlessness, and he never took count at all of the other heresies, and he even exhorted every man to withdraw himself from them, for he used to say, "Neither in the discussion of them nor in their "result is there any advantage." Similarly the Arian heretics were so detestable and contemptible in his sight that he withdrew himself altogether from having any dealings with them, and he also exhorted other people to keep themselves far from their words and their doctrines. And it happened on one occasion that some of these Arians went to him, but when he had enquired at their hands, and had asked them questions and learned that they belonged to the dough of the leaven of Arius, the unbeliever, he drove them forth from his presence like the other wild beasts and vipers. And he said unto them, "Ye are "more bitter and more evil than the beasts of prey and deadly "serpents." Now on one occasion the Arians spread a report and made a scandal which they cast upon the world, and they went about, saying, "Anthony hath agreed to our faith and "hath accepted it," and when this report came to his ears, astonishment laid hold upon him, and he marvelled greatly at the falsehood of the Arians, and how easily error came to them through the impudence of their minds.

Now when the bishops and the other brethren saw that the wickedness of the Arians was prevailing, and that they had spread this report through the whole city, they entreated the blessed man to exert himself a little in order that those liars might be put to great shame; and he was persuaded by them to go down to the city of Alexandria, and to proclaim openly there that the Arians were blasphemers, so that their iniquity might come back upon their own heads. And having gone down [to Alexandria] a vast multitude of people thronged there at the report [of the coming of] the blessed man, and when all the people were gathered together [to him] he admonished and exhorted them in a loud voice to beware of the error of the Arians, and he said, "This [i.e., Arianism] is the essence of all "heresies, and it is the work of the Christs of falsehood; get

* i.e., the followers of Meletius, Bishop of Lycopolis; he was deposed for his irregular behaviour A.D. 306.

Digitized by Google

"ye away then from them afar off that ye become not cor-
"rupted by them. God forbid that the Son of God should be
"proclaimed to be a thing which hath been made, or that He
"should be named as something which came from nothing.
"For He is of the substance of the Father, and He is His
"Child, and it is therefore great wickedness for a man to say
"that there was ever a time when He was not; for the Word
"existed at all times with God. Therefore flee ye from associa-
"tion with them, lest ye have a portion in their blasphemy, for
"light hath no connexion with darkness, and ye must have no
"connexion whatsoever with them, and ye must have no like-
"ness to or association with them, for ye are in the righteous-
"ness of your faith believing Christians, and those who say
"that the Son of the Living God is a created thing are in no
"wise different from the heathen. Believe me, O my beloved,
"the very creatures are far more to be desired than those
"who worship the creatures in preference to their Creator, and
"who confound and compare the creatures with the Lord and
"Creator of the universe."

Thereupon all the people held the Arians to be like other heretics, and they were esteemed in their sight wholly as blasphemers and unbelievers, and all men were confirmed in the correct view concerning the faith. Then [the people of] the city, both the Christians and the Armâyê (i.e., the heathen of Alexandria), and also those who were called "priests," ran into the church to see the "man of God," for by this name and title was he called; and in that city also our Lord wrought by the hand of the blessed man many signs and wonders, and so many of those whose minds had been injured through error obtained through him the means of healing that more people became Christians on that day than in the whole year [previously]. And large numbers of the heathen entreated to be allowed to see the blessed man, and to draw nigh unto the cloak of the righteous man; to this wonderful pass did the measure of the power of the blessed man come. Now when the brethren saw that a great uproar had arisen, and that the people were troubling him by thronging about him, they made a way through them and surrounded him, for they thought that he would be choked by the throng; but the blessed man answered and said unto them quietly, and with a smile, "Let the people "perform their desire. For what think ye? Is it not as easy for "me to bear with this crowd of believers as with the throng of "devils which are in the desert?"

And when he had made an end of all these things in Alexandria, he went forth to depart into the wilderness, and the whole city clave unto him; and when he had come to the side

Digitized by Google

of the gate of the city, a certain woman came running with all her strength after the crowd, and cried out, "Wait a little for "me, O man of God. My daughter is grievously vexed by a "devil and tormented, and I beseech thee to wait, and let "healing be to my daughter; and moreover, let not my soul "be carried out of [my body] through running overmuch." And when the voice was heard by the ears of the old man, he paused and stood still until the woman drew nigh unto him and cast her daughter down by his feet. Then the blessed man looked up to heaven and cried out the Name of Christ over the devil, and straightway the damsel stood up, and turned towards her mother, being freed from the subjection of the Evil One; and every man gave thanks unto God, and the mother of the damsel also glorified him that had wrought deliverance for her. And immediately after the blessed man had performed this work he turned [again] to his journey, for he rejoiced exceedingly at his going to the desert, and he was even like unto the man who rejoiceth at going [again], after a long absence, to his own house, and the house of his kinsfolk. Now the blessed Anthony was a wise man, and he was one who was full of understanding, and it was a very great wonder in the sight of men how such knowledge and understanding could dwell in a man who had not learned to read or to write.

On one occasion there came unto him two philosophers to try him (now he was living on the outer mountain), and so soon as he perceived them afar off he knew and discerned what they were by their garb. And having gone forth to meet them, he said unto them by means of his interpreters, "Why have "ye given yourselves all this trouble to come and see a man "of low estate?" and they answered him [in these] word[s], "Thou art not a man of low estate, but a wise man." Then, after he had understood (*or* tasted) their words, he began to say unto them, "If ye had come to a man of low estate, ye "would have given yourselves all this trouble in vain, but if "your words are true, and if ye believe indeed that I am a "wise man, become ye even as I am, for it is meet that we "should at all times be zealous to obtain the things which are "fair. Had it happened that I had come unto you, I should "have been impelled to become like unto you; and now that "ye have come unto me, become ye Christians like myself." And when these philosophers heard these words, and saw in what a state of subjection the devils stood before him, they marvelled exceedingly and turned away on their heels in silence.

After these there also came unto him others who were like unto them to the outer mountain; now they came prepared to make a mock of him as if he had been a fool, for they had

Digitized by Google

heard that he possessed no learning. And when they had pressed their talk upon him after this manner, the old man said unto them, "I will ask you a question, and ye shall return "me an answer. Which is the older, learning or the mind? And "which is the source (*or* cause) of the other? Is learning the "source of the mind, or the mind of learning?" Then the philosophers said unto him, "The mind is the prince of learn-"ing, for it hath discovered learning." And he said unto them, "Doth not then the man whose mind is enlightened and bright "surpass greatly [him that hath only] learning? For by the "first word [which he uttereth] do men test a man, and they "understand whether he possesseth a wise and understand-"ing mind [or not];" then they also marvelled at what they had seen and heard, and they likewise went back to their own country.

For he was a man whose intelligence was profound, and he was wise and exceedingly understanding, and he was not in any way like unto a man who had been brought up in the desert from his youth. And when he became old and waxed aged he was simple in his speech, and austere and stern(?) in his mind, but still he was perfect and complete in everything, and every [good] quality was found in him in the state which was most fitting. Now his speech, even as we have already said, was so exceedingly savoury and so well seasoned with heavenly salt, that none of his hearers could be angry at his words, and no man could be envious of the acts of his daily life, for he was ready and prepared to hear and answer every kind of opinion.

Now on another occasion it happened that certain men, who were wise according to the world and who were received gladly among the Greeks, went to him, and began to ask him questions concerning the faith which is in our Lord Jesus Christ, wishing to confound him in a discussion concerning the matter of the Cross and of the preaching of our Lord, and having seen that they were ready to scoff and to mock, he bore with them a little, and then, having observed them, he roared greatly in his heart concerning the error which dwelt in them. Then he spake unto them by means of an interpreter, who was exceedingly skilled in translating words from the Egyptian into the Greek language, and he said unto them first of all, "Which "is the easier? For a man to confess the Cross, or to believe "that adultery, and fornication, and impure acts with men are "committed by those who are called 'gods.' For the [doctrine] "which is spoken and believed by us is a mark and a likeness "of the men by whom death is held in contempt, and the "world is considered to be of no account, but the religion

Digitized by Google

"which ye preach is a service of impurity, and the desire of "foul lusts. Which thing then is more beneficial for us to be- "lieve? That [Christ] is the Son of God, and that that which "He was in His Godhead was in no way changed, although "through His care for the redemption of the children of men "He took upon Himself the body of our human nature, and "with His Godhead was mingled therewith, so that by means "of His union with our human nature He might mingle it "with His Godhead, or that we should liken God unto beasts "and cattle, and that in consequence thereof man should make "himself like unto the similitudes of beasts and of the creep- "ing things of the earth and should worship them? Now, our "belief proclaimeth that the coming of Christ took place for "the redemption of the children of men, and that it should "not be unto us a cause for fornication, and falsehood, and "injustice (*or* avarice), and gluttony, and drunkenness, and "lasciviousness, and the rest of the luxurious practices which "exist in the world. And we exhort and admonish [men to "avoid] all these things, for a penalty hath been decreed for "every man who shall dare to transgress in respect of one of "these things. Now ye, through the fable of error, labour in "the work of abomination, but we, because we have trust in "the power and lovingkindness (*or* mercy) of God, believe that "the preaching of the Cross is easiest for us [to follow]. And "ye, without any discernment, ascribe all kinds of hateful prac- "tices to your gods, so that ye without any further thought "may do everything [ye please].

"And moreover, as concerning the soul ye say that it is an "image of the mind (*or* understanding), and when ye have "meditated well upon this subject ye go back and say that it "will be dissolved; and therefore, because of this opinion "which cometh from [your] study, ye lay it down that the "mind itself will be divided (*or* broken up) and changed. "For, of necessity, the image must in its form and similitude "be exactly like that of which it is the copy; and ye should "know that when ye think in this manner about the mind "ye also blaspheme the Father thereof.

"And in respect of the Cross, which is it better for us to "say? That it endureth patiently the anger of the attack of "the madness of our human nature, and that it neither de- "parteth by death, nor doth the terrible death which striketh "fear into the mighty man come unto it, or [shall we ascribe "to it] the error, and the allegories, and the cunning plans, "and the vain stories, and the incitements [to sin], and the "flight, and the mockery, and the shame, which are written "down in your fables, wherein your gods took refuge, when

Digitized by Google

"strife and death came upon each one of them? For such "things are the wisdom of your wisdom. And wherefore do "ye make a mockery of the Cross only and hold not in won- "der the Resurrection? For those who have written [the "account of] Christ's crucifixion have also proclaimed His "Resurrection. And why, when ye make mention of the Cross, "do ye not also recount the miracles, and the Resurrection from "the dead, and all the other things also, that is to say [the "restoration of] the sight of the blind, and the cleansing of "the lepers, and the healing of the paralytics, and the walking "upon the waters? For from these ye would be able to have "understanding of Christ, and ye would learn that he was not "only a man but God also. Indeed, ye appear to me to act "wholly unjustly. For ye do not judge matters rightly, and "the Scriptures are not read in a proper manner by you; and "since certain things are accepted and believed in by you, "whilst others, which are akin to them, are not, where is "your fair dealing in this matter?

"Narrate ye now unto us your scriptures, and explain ye "unto us what is therein. What are the animals which are "worshipped, and what are the reptiles unto which are given "the names of gods, except subjects for mockery and con- "tempt? But if a man void of understanding cometh to you, "ye liken each one of them [unto gods] in the speech of ra- "tional beings, and ye expound the unlikely things [which "are declared concerning them], so that the foolish may think "that they are true. Ye give names to the earth, and to the "heavens, and the sun, and the moon, and the air, and "the sea, and the fire, and the waters, and to other created "things, and call them gods, that ye may lead man astray "thereby from the One God Who is the Creator of the uni- "verse. The quest of the God of truth is not among you, and "ye are found worshipping the things which have been created "rather than Him Who created them. For, if ye gave the names "of gods to such similitudes because created things were so "exceedingly beautiful, it would have been sufficient for you "to be able to admire them, without holding them in such "absolute and singular honour in your minds. And because "of this opinion of error which dwelleth in your mind, it is not "difficult for you either to divert to the house which He hath "fashioned and adorned the honour which is due to the Mas- "ter-handicraftsman, or to hold lightly the King, and to ascribe "the glory which is His due to His household which ministereth "unto Him. What then have ye to urge against these [words], "O wise men? [Speak,] so that we may know if there be in "the Cross anything which meriteth mockery." And when the

Digitized by Google

blessed man had spoken unto them in this fashion the things which they could not endure to hear from him, they began to look to the right hand and to the left.

Now when the blessed man knew that they were silently seeking to make objections to his words, he spake unto them again through an interpreter, saying, "The work (i.e., proof) "of these my words is also their testimony; but because ye "yourselves take refuge in words of guile and falsehood, "and because ye employ them with the greatest skill, ye "desire that we, like yourselves, shall also journey on without "the truth of investigation. Show ye me now briefly the work "[*or* proof] of [your] words. First of all, How can the know- "ledge of God be truly comprehended? Which is the older: "the faith which is in works, or the quest of words?" They answered and said unto him, "The faith which is indeed faith; "and this is the true knowledge." The old man saith unto them, "Ye have well said, for faith is the sign of the love which is "made perfect in the soul. For discussion cometh from words "which are strung together, and therefore the faith which is "in works, and which is closely united to them, is not sought "after, because the quest of words is superfluous; for the "matters which we comprehend by faith ye try by every means "to represent by comparisons and similitudes, and howsoever "much ye weary yourselves ye will never be able to narrate "the things the truth of which we have comprehended. It is, "therefore, well known and evident that our faith which is in "works is far more excellent than your wisdom [which con- "sisteth of] a discussion of words, and that your wisdom can- "not by any means be [rightly] compared therewith."

"For we Christians have not acquired the mystery of life "through the wisdom of strange words, but by the power of "faith which hath been given unto us by God, the Lord of all; "and that the[se] word[s] are true accept the proof from the "following. Behold, we are not learned in books, yet we be- "lieve in God, and we possess understanding concerning His "creation, and concerning the mercy of the Providence of His "grace, and we have confidence through the faith of Jesus "Christ that our faith is sure, [whilst] ye have only words "which are full of contentions; in your case the phantom of "the adornment of your idols gradually cometh to an end, but "in ours our faith increaseth and becometh more abundant "day by day everywhere. In your case, in spite of the abun- "dance of your discussions and wisdom, ye have no power to "turn even one Christian to paganism, but in ours, by the "faith of Christ which we preach, we despise your doctrine, "and there is in your well-ordered, carefully arranged and

Digitized by Google

"polished words no power which can do away the teaching "of Christ. And, moreover, we by means of the Cross which "ye hold in contempt chase away and put to flight those devils "which ye worship as gods, and wheresoever the name of the "Cross is mentioned all the crafts and wiles of error come to "an end. If it be divination it is destroyed, and if it be sor- "cery it is made an end of; and that such hath been done in "very truth ye must admit when ye are asked by us, 'Where "'is divination? Where are the magicians who were in Egypt? "'Where are the phantoms of the errors of the sorcerers? "'When were these things which appertain unto you de- "'stroyed except when the Cross of Christ was mentioned?' "Is then this Cross worthy to be despised? Judge ye this "matter in your souls, and consider it also and marvel there- "at. It is a matter of wonder that your doctrine hath never "before been a subject for persecution, and that it hath only "become so at this time when Christian kings [live] in honour "and majesty in every place.

"In proportion as persecution cometh your doctrine hideth "itself, but ours, against which storms innumerable have "arrayed themselves, becometh stronger and stronger. Your "doctrine, notwithstanding that it is praised and magnified, "becometh despised and rejected, whilst ours, although held "in contempt, is great in its acts and glorious in its operation, "and being harassed [spreadeth] from one end of the earth "even unto the other without men taking care about it. For "when did the knowledge of God come down into the world, "and chastity flourish, and virginity shed its light abroad, "and death become held in contempt, if it be not after the "Cross of victory came and triumphed throughout all the "earth? And of this fact no man can have any doubt, when he "considereth the blessed martyrs by whom death was de- "spised because of the victory of the Cross. And behold, do "we not see that the Church rejoiceth in innumerable congre- "gations of virgins, both men and women, who preserve their "bodies in all holiness? These are the true likenesses which "make known and shew forth the faith of Christ, which is a "living confidence and a knowledge in faith unto those who "put their trust therein. Now if ye have been in doubt [con- "cerning these things] up to this present, it is because your "mind (*or* opinion) hath been fettered with words of binding "and loosing, the end of which ye will never be able to find; "for we do not, like you, go astray through the blandish- "ment of the words of alien wisdom, but, according to what "our Teacher spake, we give a proof of our faith, and we "readily make manifest in the clearest possible manner the

Digitized by Google

"truth of our opinion unto every one who wisheth [to "see it]."

And behold, there were in that place certain men who were suffering from injuries to their bodies, and the blessed man commanded them, and they came forth and stood in the midst; then he answered and said unto those wise men, "Draw nigh "now and, by whatsoever means ye wish and will, whether "by the wisdom of your renowned idols, or by your sorceries "and enchantments, give the word, and let these afflicted "souls have relief from their sufferings. But if ye are not able "to do so, stand aside and cease your hostile attacks upon us, "and ye shall straightway see the power of the Cross of "Christ." Then he made the sign of the Cross over them three times, and the people were healed immediately and stood up; and when those philosophers saw [this], they praised him greatly, and they marvelled in very deed at the understanding of the man, and at the visible sign which had been wrought by his hand. And the blessed man said unto them, "Why marvel ye at this thing? It is not we who have done "this, but Christ Who is wont to do suchlike things by the "hands of those who fear Him. Therefore do you also believe "even as do we, and become like us, and see that we possess "none of the handicraft of devils, but only the faith which is "made perfect by means of the love of Christ, our Lord Jesus. "If ye possess this also, ye have no need of the quest of much "discussion, for the deed itself will convince you that it is not "by words, but by manifest works, that our doctrine increaseth "and giveth the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ." Such were the words which the blessed man spake unto those philosophers, who tarried to hear [them], and who put to the test and then received the proof of all the [mental] adornment of the old man; and thus having received his grace, they applauded his words and his acts, and having saluted him with great honour they returned to their own country.

Now the fame of the blessed man reached even unto the king and the princes, and the Emperor Constantine and his sons Constantius and Constans heard concerning his works and triumphs, and they began to write epistles unto him as unto a father and to entreat him to pray for them, and they longed greatly to become the recipients of letters from him. Now he did not write letters quickly, and he did not consider too highly or boast about those which he received, but he continued to preserve the humility and sweetness of disposition which he possessed before he received the imperial epistles, and after he had received them he remained unchanged. Whensoever he received the imperial letters, he would call and gather

Digitized by Google

together the monks who happened to be with him, and say unto them, "Ye marvel, perhaps, that the kings and the "princes should write epistles unto us, but what [need] is "there for wonder, seeing that it is only one man writing "letters to another? but what ye should wonder at is how "God wrote the Law for the children of men, and how He "hath spoken unto us through His only Son." He preferred, however, not to receive epistles which were sent unto him by the king and the princes, for he said, "It is not in my power "to write epistles like theirs"; but inasmuch as the king and the princes were Christians, he did not consider it seemly that their epistles should be held lightly, lest they might become offended and be displeased, and he permitted them to be read before every one who happened to be with him.

Now the manner in which he wrote his epistles [in answer] was as follows: In the first place he magnified [those to whom they were addressed], and returned thanks because they were worshippers of Christ, and he gave them advice and united thereto the counsels which were suitable, and which would benefit them both in this world and in that which is to come. And he told them that the wearisome labours which were visible should not be accounted overmuch by them, and exhorted them to remember the judgement which is to come, and that it is Christ Who is the true and everlasting King. And he advised them to let lovingkindness be found in them, and to be careful for that which is right, and to have considerate regard for the poor. Kings used to receive him and rejoice in him greatly, and he was greatly esteemed by every man, and regarded as a righteous father.

Whensoever certain matters had to be done, and certain things had to be talked about, he was in the habit of going back to the inner mountain, and as something which was gratifying unto him he would work his triumphs there. On many occasions when he was sitting with those who went to him, or was walking about, he would hold his peace for a long time, and would keep wholly to himself, according to that which is written in [the book of] Daniel (Daniel vii, 28); and after a season he would utter in its order the word which would bind him to the brethren. Now those who saw him [act] in this manner used to know that some vision had appeared unto him, and indeed on several occasions when he was in the mountain he saw things which were being wrought in Egypt; and Serapion,* the Bishop, related that during the whole of the

* Bishop of Thmuis, the site of which city is marked by the Arab village Tamai-al-Amdîd; he was surnamed "Scholasticus," and died about A.D. 360.

Digitized by Google

time which he remained with him he had seen the blessed man for several days at a time labouring seriously with visions in this manner.

One day whilst he was sitting down at work on the palm leaves he fell into a state of profound stupefaction, and remained for an exceedingly long time therein seeing a vision of revelation, and he groaned frequently, and after a season he turned round to those who happened to be with him, and groaned again; and he trembled greatly, and began to pray, and he bent his knees and [then] stood up with his eyes full of tears. Now those who saw the old man thus troubled were beginners in the monastic life, and they were greatly moved and were afraid with a great fear; and after a season they began to entreat them to tell him what was the vision which he had seen, and which had troubled him in this fashion. Then when they had pressed him, he sighed the more, and said unto them, "It would be much better for me to die than for that "which hath appeared unto me to happen." And being urged by their entreaty, he spake sadly and excitedly, saying, "Great "wrath is coming upon the Church, which is about to be de- "livered over to men who are in no wise different from the "wild beasts. I have seen an altar surrounded by mules which "without mercy kicked all the people, both great and small, "for they were as excited as a drove of horses which had been "turned loose without bridles. When I sighed concerning "these things, even ye heard the sound of my sighs, and I "heard a voice which said, 'My altar shall be defiled.'" Such were the things which the old man saw. Two years later (about A.D. 343) the trouble with the Arians took place, and the spoliation of the churches by the hands of the pagans in the sight of all the people of the city who were gathered together, and they caused the performance of the holy service to be set aside and abrogated. Now these pagans went forth into the streets of the city, and they thronged them and brought forth people from their shops, and compelled them to assemble with them, and before their eyes they performed the service of the Church and [administered] the Holy Mysteries. It was then that we understood [what] the kickings of the mules [meant], that is to say [the vision] which had appeared unto the blessed man, and the whole work which was wrought with such iniquity and wickedness by the hands of the Arians in the Church.

Now when the blessed man saw this vision, and perceived that it was very grievous to the brethren, he consoled them, and said, "My beloved sons, be not afflicted, for as God is "angry now even so will He become pacified again, and after

Digitized by Google

"no [great] interval between these trials and injuries rest and "peace shall come upon the Church of God. And ye shall see "those who have been persecuted for righteousness' sake "return to their places, and the Evil One, together with those "who work his will, shall turn on his heels, and the horn of "the righteous men who hold the true faith shall be exalted, "and they shall openly proclaim the truth in the ears of a perse-"cuted but believing nation. Hearken ye then unto these "things from me, and take heed that ye keep yourselves from "fornication in respect of the faith, and from intercourse with "people who are polluted therewith; for the time of these "things shall be short, and there shall be redemption for the "people of God, and the righteous man shall live by faith.

Such were the things which were spoken by the blessed man, and it is not a great matter that such things were uttered and seen by the man who was crucified unto the world, and to whom the world was crucified. For our Lord made the promise unto believers, saying, "If ye have in you faith like a "grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, 'De-"'part'; and it shall depart, and there is nothing which shall "be too hard for you" (St. Matthew xvii, 20); and again He said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask of My Father in My Name "shall be given unto you." And He commanded His disciples, saying, "Go ye forth, and preach, and heal the sick, and cast "out devils; freely ye have received (St. Matthew x, 8), freely "give." Now the blessed man did not perform healings by his own power after the manner of a master, but only with prayer and the mention of the Name of Christ, so that it might be manifest unto every man that it was not he who was the doer of these things, but that God wrought them by his hands. Thus the old man was triumphant in all such matters, for his strength was renewed from day to day even as is the youth of the eagle, by the fervour of his mind, and he had pleasure in the constant works which our Lord Jesus wrought for him.

Now he was afflicted and suffered much by reason of the people who were continually coming to him, and he enjoyed no respite from them, and he was therefore compelled to withdraw to the outer mountain; and moreover the judges and the governors of the country entreated him to come back to a place of habitation, because it was difficult for them to come near him on account of the numerous people who clung to him, and because of the fatigue of the journey which [they had to endure] in going to him. And this matter was exceedingly hard to the blessed man, and he excused himself from suchlike things. Now when the judges and the governors saw that he refused to do what they wanted, they dealt craftily with him in this

Digitized by Google

matter, for they sent to him the Greeks and the other people who had been arrested for evil dealing and wickednesses of various kinds, and they entreated and besought him with much supplication to come back to the habitations of men so that he might work deliverance from prison for them; and by such means and excuses the judges were able to see him continually, and the toil which he suffered on such journeys was not in vain, for his coming was beneficial to every one. Now the judges heard from him that which helped them to rule [righteously], and they learned to know that they themselves were men, and were even as those who were subject unto them, and that they must not behave towards them angrily, but judge them righteously, for, "With what judgement ye judge [ye shall be judged]" (St. Matthew vii, 2). But although the blessed man rejoiced in the works of the fear of God which he wrought, he was more pleased with his habitation in the desert than with any other thing. And after he had been led by force by those men who had made supplication unto him, and had entreated him to come to the outer mountain, so soon as he had performed for them his kind offices and had spoken unto the governor words which were suitable to his majesty and dominion, he would hasten back to his place. And when the governor did homage to him, and begged him to remain with him for a day or two, the old man entreated him courteously [to be allowed to depart], saying, "This thing is impossible, for as fish die if a "man lift them out of the water, so, if we monks prolong our "stay with men, do our minds become perverted and troubled; "therefore it is meet that as fish [pass] their lives beneath the "waters we also should let our lives and works be buried in "the wilderness." Now when the governor heard these and other things like unto them, he marvelled and said, "Verily "[this is] a true servant of God. He speaketh not that which "cometh from himself, but that which is given unto him from "heaven. How could this simple man possess such rich know-"ledge unless he was beloved by God?"

Now a certain duke whose name was Bâlak (Balacius) persecuted the Church sorely at the instigation of the Arians, and his wickedness increased to such an extent that he would beat the nuns, and strip the monks naked and flog them. And when the blessed old man heard of the wickedness of this man, he wrote a letter and sent it to him, and in it was thus written, "Behold, I see that wrath is coming upon thee; desist there-"fore, and accept rebuke, and persecute not the believers, "that peradventure the angel of wrath may be restrained, for "behold, he hath set out to come." When Balacius received the letter, he looked thereat and laughed, and he spat thereon,

Digitized by Google

and took it up and threw it away; and in his hatred he cursed the bringer of the letter, and said unto him, "Get thee back and "tell these things to him that sent thee." And he said unto him, "Inasmuch as thou hast exceedingly great regard for "the churches and for those who are persecuted, behold I will "speedily execute judgement upon thee also"; but after these words he went no further than five days before wrath overtook him. For he set out to journey to the first stopping-place [on the road from] Alexandria which is called Chaereus, and as the duke Balacius and Nestor, the prefect of Alexandria, were riding together—now they were riding two of Balacius's horses which were the gentlest of all his horses—before they arrived at the place [of destination], the horses began to play together according to their wont, and suddenly the gentler of the two horses, that is to say the animal whereon Nestor the prefect rode, seized the thigh of Balacius with his mouth and dragged him from his horse and fell upon him and rent him like a dog. And they took Balacius and brought him into Alexandria, and after three days he died; and thus the word of the blessed man actually came to pass, and wonder laid hold upon every man.

And these were the things which he was wont to say to the judges of [this] world, and he would give them counsel in a loving manner, that they should not be puffed up in their minds, and that they should not magnify themselves over the people, for there was no governor at that time who would not gladly hearken unto him, and they repented of their [evil] deeds, and ascribed blessing unto those who despised the world and became aliens thereto. And moreover, he had such great care for those who were treated unjustly, and were plundered of their possessions, that he himself would bear all their [troubles]; and his words were so grateful and pleasant unto all those who drew nigh unto him that many of the dwellers in villages and in towns, and pagans (*or* rustics) and men who served in the army would forsake their riches and their occupations and would go and enrol themselves in the order of the monks. Now he was unto Egypt like a good physician who had been given unto the people thereof from God. For who ever came unto him being afflicted that did not go away rejoicing? Or who ever came unto him in sorrow because of the sufferings which had come upon him that did not come back wholly encouraged? And who ever came unto him full of rage and wrath that was not enriched with graciousness and long-suffering? And what poor man ever came unto him broken by poverty who did not [afterwards] by reason of his words and the sight of him despise all riches? And what monk ever came to him sorrowful in mind who did not depart full of strength like a mighty

Digitized by Google

man of war? And what young man ever came unto him with lusts burning in him, and saw that the old man had conquered in the strife, who did not go away with his lusts quenched and dead within him? And what youth who was afraid of the war which had come upon him ever came unto him, and seeing his triumphant old age did not [henceforward] contend in the forefront of the battle? And what man ever came unto him troubled in mind who did not go away with it composed and in a state of reason?

And there was found in him the gracious gift of being able to distinguish and understand the wiliness of the devils, and the various ways whereby each one of them caused injury [to man]; and he comprehended not only those things which were wrought by the Evil One, but also the various causes whereby men were troubled and perturbed, and he could inform them concerning the craft and cunning of the deceitful one. And every man hearkened unto these things and learned them, and he went away bearing armour and a shield against the profound wiles of the Evil One. And, moreover, how many were the virgins who saw the blessed man afar off and left the men to whom they were betrothed, and betrothed themselves to Christ! And many people used to come to him from outside Egypt, and unto all the questions he would return suitable answers; and he was so great, and was so much beloved by every man, that after he had departed from this world, and had left all men orphans, the memory of him never died among the people, and every man gave himself courage by the repetition of his triumphs and of his words.

Concerning his Death

IT is meet that we should call to remembrance his death, and should relate how it took place, and in what manner he finished his life, for I know that ye will be exceedingly pleased therewith. Now he was accustomed to go out and visit the memorial stones of the brethren in the outer mountain. Now the matter of his death also was not hidden from him, and he went forth [to visit them] even when he knew that his departure was nigh. And after he had spoken to the brethren according to his wont, he said unto them, "This act "which ye have just performed is the end of all acts; and I "marvel at this world. Let each look [for himself] alone; for "it is time for me to die." Now he was then about one hundred and five years old.

And when the brethren heard [these things], they wept bitter tears, and each of them began to embrace and to kiss him, and the old man, like unto a man from a strange country who is

Digitized by Google

about to depart thereto, with great gladness besought them to be quiet, and exhorted them, saying, "Be not ye in despair by "reason of your tribulations, and be not lax in your lives and "works, but even as men who are dying daily prepare ye for "life, and, as I have already said, be watchful ever. Keep ye "your souls from thoughts of iniquity, and strive ye for good "gifts, and guard ye yourselves against associating yourselves "with the Meletians (see page 57), who are heretics, for ye "know the cause of their schisms, and how cunning and bitter "they are. And flee ye with all your might also from the doc- "trine of the Arians, for their wickedness is clearly manifest, "and take good heed to avoid them, and be not like unto "them for ever, neither if they be mighty in their help, nor if "they be many in bearing burdens, for however often error "raiseth up her nest (?) it shall never be able to contend "against the truth. Be ye, therefore, free from all intercourse "with them, and thus shall ye be able to take good heed to "the true doctrine of our fathers, and to the preaching of the "truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, which ye have received from "the Scriptures."

Now when the brethren heard concerning the matter of his departure, they entreated him that he would remain with them in order that his course might be ended there, but he would not accede to their request for many reasons which he had made known in his silence, but for the following reason especially. The Egyptians were in the habit of taking the dead bodies of righteous men, and especially those of the blessed martyrs, and of embalming them and placing them not in graves, but on biers in their houses, for they thought that by so doing they were doing them honour. And the blessed old man had on very many occasions besought the Bishops to preach to the people and to command them to cease from this habit. And he himself used to entreat and exhort the multitudes who came to him, saying, "This work is neither seemly "nor right. Moreover, the burial places of the early Fathers, "and of the Prophets, and of the Apostles are known unto "this day, and even the grave of our Lord Who rose on the "third day." And by these words he showed forth that it was a transgression of a command for a man not to hide [in the ground] the bodies of those who were dead, even though they were righteous men. Therefore many hearkened and were persuaded not to do so, and they laid their dead in the ground, and buried them therein, and they thanked God because they had accepted [his] entreaty, which was seemly. And it was through fear of this thing that he would not grant the entreaty of the brethren and remain with them, but departed to his own place.

Digitized by Google

And after a few months he became sick, and he cried out to the brethren who were with him (now these were only two in number, and they had been with him from the time when his old age [began], which was nearly fifteen years before, and they ministered unto him with the greatest care), and said unto them, even as it is written, "Behold, I go the way of my "fathers, for I have felt within myself for some days [past] "that I have been called by my Lord. Observe ye now how "carefully ye can maintain this contest, and take good heed "that ye lose not the long-suffering which ye have acquired, "and that, like men who are just beginning [the strife], ye "increase it more and more and add to it day by day. Ye are "well acquainted with the baneful devils and their craftiness, "and ye know well this fact, that if ye please they shall be ac- "counted as nothing by you. Be ye therefore not terrified by "them, but always take refuge in Christ. And remember ye "everything which ye have heard from me during all this time "[which ye have been with me], that ye have no intercourse "whatsoever with the Arians, the heretics, for ye know how "filthy they are in my sight because of their blasphemy of our "Lord Jesus Christ. Take ye also heed then diligently at all "times that ye cleave to the Spirit of Christ and agree there- "with, and be ye, moreover, friends and associates of just "men that they may receive you into their everlasting habita- "tions as friends and men of whom they have good know- "ledge. Therefore meditate ye upon these things and keep "them in your minds. And if your minds are [set] upon me, "and ye remember me as a father, permit no man to take my "body and carry it into Egypt, lest, according to the custom "which they have, they embalm me and lay me up in their "houses, for it was [to avoid] this that I came into this de- "sert. And ye know that I have continually made exhortation "concerning this thing and begged that it should not be done, "and ye well know how much I have blamed those who ob- "served this custom. Dig a grave then, and bury me therein, "and hide my body under the earth, and let these my words "be observed carefully by you, and tell ye no man where ye "lay me; [and there I shall be] until the Resurrection of the "dead, when I shall receive [again] this body without cor- "ruption.

"And divide ye my garments [into lots], and give one "leather tunic to Bishop Athanasius, and the covering of this "my bed which he gave unto me when it was new; but now "it hath become old. And to Bishop Serapion do ye give the "other leather coat; and this covering of my bed which is "made of hair ye yourselves shall keep; now therefore, my

Digitized by Google

"children, abide in peace, for, behold, Anthony bringeth his "journey to an end, and he goeth whither Divine Grace shall "bring him."

And when he had spoken these words, he straightway stretched out his legs, whereupon the brethren began to cry out [to him], and to kiss him; now his face was full of joy unspeakable at the meeting of those who had come for him, and it resembled that of a man when he seeth a friend whom it rejoiceth him to meet. So the blessed man held his peace and died, and was gathered to his fathers.

Then the brethren, according to the command which they had received from him, wrapped him round in the garment which he wore, and they carried him out, and dug a hole in the ground and buried his body in the earth, and no man knoweth where they buried him except those two brethren who laid him in the earth. Now whosoever received any one of the clothes of the blessed Anthony regarded it as a most valuable possession, for whensoever a man looked thereat he imagined that he was looking at the blessed man in it, and whensoever any man put on one of his garments he felt as if he were arrayed in the commandments and promises of the blessed Anthony.

Here end the history of the life of the blessed old man in the body, and the previous narrative thereto which [dealt with] the beginning of his deeds and labours; and if these appear to be too small in comparison with [the number of] the triumphs of the blessed man, still from these ye will be able to imagine how great was this man of God, who, from his earliest youth to his old age, never desisted from his career in the fear of God. Old age did not reduce his vigour and compel him to gratify the body, and he was not urged by the sickness of his body even to touch water with his feet; and whilst he was thus keeping his body in restraint God preserved him unharmed. For, in spite of his great old age, his eye waxed not dim, and not one of his teeth dropped out, and both his feet and his hands were in a sound and healthy state; and notwithstanding that he kept his body low [in respect of food], his appearance was more glorious than that of all those who fed themselves luxuriously on dainty meats, and who wore fine clothes, and who made use of baths. And moreover he possessed strength which was out of all proportion to his aged body.

¶Now inasmuch as the fame of the blessed Anthony hath gone into every place, and every man holdeth him in wonder, and worshippeth him, it is a sure and certain sign of the truth of his acts and deeds and of his perfect love towards God. For he did not become known unto all the world by means of [his]

Digitized by Google

discourse, or by the wisdom of words, or by means of crafty plans and schemes, but by radiant righteousness towards God, for it was God Who performed this work, and he who hath a doubtful mind about this shall be held in contempt. Otherwise how is it possible that a man who lived in seclusion and who dwelt alone in the desert should become known and proclaimed abroad in Spain, and in Âlânîâ, and in Rome, and in Africa and other countries unless God, Whom Anthony confessed from the earliest times, had revealed him [to them]? For although these men of God live in secret places and do not desire to be seen and known, yet our Lord [maketh them] to shine like lamps upon all men. Thus also let those who hear [me], and who are mighty men before God, and who love His commandments, be persuaded to keep [their] steps, not that they may be praised but that they may be justified. Let all the brethren then who are monks read these things so that they may know how it is meet for them to live their lives, and let this little book be unto every man like the testament of a righteous father who had divided his riches and possessions among his beloved sons in our Lord; for when we gather together and reveal unto the believers those means whereby he gained possession of and collected all his wealth, we deliver up riches and give them unto prosperous and beloved sons, even as doth the man who gathered up wealth [for his family].

Let every man know then and have confidence that our Lord Jesus Christ our Redeemer honoureth those who honour Him, and who serve Him unto the end, and that He doth not only invite them to the kingdom of heaven and lead them into it, but in this world also, even though they live in seclusion and hide themselves, He revealeth them, and proclaimeth abroad [their names] for their own glory, and for the benefit of our humanity. And if it be seemly, do not excuse yourselves from reading these things even in the sight of (*or* before) the heathen, for peradventure even by hearing the same they may become convinced that our Lord Jesus Christ is not only God and the Son of God, but also that for those who serve Him in purity of heart, and who believe in Him in truth, those devils who are imagined to be gods take to flight at the name of Christ. Now that they are not gods the matter itself maketh known, for behold, they are held in contempt, and they are trodden down like the furrows of a field, and they are expelled as thieves and destroyers by the believers everywhere.

Here endeth, by the help of our Lord, the History of the Triumphs of the blessed Anthony, the athlete and perfect man, who triumphed in the contest and re-

Digitized by Google

ceived the crown of victory. By his prosperous trafficking he made double his merchandise through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who helped him and made him to triumph, the Lord [of righteous men] and the Conqueror.

Digitized by Google

The Paradise of Palladius

And again we begin to write the Book of the Triumphs of the holy Fathers who were Monks, which is called Paradise.

The First History

The Epistle of Palladius, the Bishop of the city of Thelenopolis, which he made (or wrote) to Lausus the prefect who asked him to write for him an account of the lives and deeds of the Fathers who were monks; and he wrote thus:

PALLADIUS the Bishop to LAUSUS the prefect: greeting (*or* peace).

I ascribe blessing to thy beautiful desire, for we may begin [this] epistle with blessing, because whilst many men are devoted unto vain things, and build buildings of stone wherein there is no profit, thou hast shown thyself strenuous to learn concerning the building of the words of the narratives of holy men. For there is One alone Who hath no deed of doctrine (*or* learning) that is to say, God, Who is over everything, for He existeth of Himself, and there is no other being who existed before Him. Now all rational beings are learners, because they are beings who have been made and created. The ranks of the celestial hosts who existed first of all, and the orders of beings who are the most exalted of all possess teachers in the Trinity, Who is exalted above everything. The orders of beings of the second group learn from the beings of the first group, and those which belong to the third group learn from those of the second group, which is above them, and in this manner each of the later groups learneth from that which is above it, even down to the lowest group of all; for those among them who are superior in respect of knowledge and excellence teach knowledge unto those who are inferior to them. Therefore those who imagine that they have no need of teachers, and who will not be convinced by those who teach them things of good, are sick with the want of the knowledge which is the mother and the producer of pride. Now those who are princes and the foremost ones among these in respect of destruction are those who intentionally (*or* wilfully) fell from sojourning in heaven, and from the service thereof, and these are the devils who fly in the air because they forsook the heavenly Teacher and rebelled.

Digitized by Google

For polished words and sentences, or words strung together in admirable order, are not doctrine, for these things are for the most part found with evil-doers and sinners; but this is doctrine, which is the correction of the natural habits and disposition, and the leading of a life of spiritual excellence according to rule, by which I mean the possession of the faculty which shall make a man superior to affliction and to emotion, and to timidity, and to wrath; and which shall make him to possess freedom of speech before every man, and which shall, through the fervour of Divine Love, produce works that shall be like unto coals of fire. For if doctrine be not this, the Great Teacher would not have said unto His disciples, "Learn "of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart" (St. Matthew xi, 29), for He did not instruct (*or* order) His Apostles merely in the beauty of speech, without at the same time making manifest a proof (*or* work) in His own Person. And He caused grief unto no man except those who spurned doctrine, and those who hated their teachers. It is meet that the soul which leadeth its life in God should either learn in faith that which it knoweth not, or should learn wisely that of which it hath knowledge; but if it will do neither of these things it is, if it be possible, sick through madness.

The beginning of instruction (*or* discipline) is the fullness which is of doctrine, and density of speech is a helper of the fear of God, and for these things the soul of him that loveth God hungereth continually. Be strong then, and play the man. Farewell. And may God grant thee the gift of pursuing at all times the knowledge of Christ.

The Plan of the Book [of Paradise]

IN this book are written the excellent deeds and the marvellous lives of the holy and blessed Fathers, who took upon themselves the yoke of the solitary life, and who made themselves to be remote from the world, and who lived in the desert, and who wished to live wholly the heavenly life, and to travel on the road which leadeth unto the kingdom of heaven. Let us emulate their example and endeavour to do with all our might what they did! And together with these we commemorate also the marvellous women who led their lives in the Divine Spirit, and who waxed exceedingly old, and who with a brave mind brought to an end the strife of the labours of spiritual excellence, according to the Divine manifestation and ove, for they wished to lay hold upon their souls, and to bind [upon their heads] the crown of holiness and impassibility.

And as for myself, (because of the sweet manners of the man by whom I have been commanded [to write], whose mind

Digitized by Google

is full of doctrine (*or* learning), whose habits are those of a lover of peace, who feareth God in his heart, who loveth Christ in his mind, who in the things which are needful is an associate, and who, because of all these qualities, hath been chosen from among many, and hath been honoured with the highest rank of all), being protected by the might of the Holy Spirit—especially if it be right to speak the truth—I would rouse up our heavy minds to the contemplation of the things which are spiritually excellent, so that we may strive to imitate the most excellent lives and deeds of the pious men, and of the immortal and spiritual fathers, whose lives in the flesh were passed in laborious and stern service and in pleasing God. Of the virtues of such athletes of the fear of God it is my desire to set down some account in writing and to send it to thee, and I would make clear in my discourse the manifest spiritual excellences of each one of these great men. And he who loveth a divine and spiritual desire like unto this is thyself, Lausus, who art triumphant among men, and who, in accordance with the Divine nod, hast been established as the guardian of this kingdom which loveth Christ.

But inasmuch as I have not been trained in language (*or* speech), and as I possess spiritual knowledge only in the very smallest degree, and am unequal to the task [of describing] the company of the holy Fathers and [their] spiritual lives and works, I am afraid of the greatness of [thy] command which surpasseth my capacity. I have, therefore, up to this present, been urging myself to escape(?) from this work, because I am in great need both of the wisdom which is [essential] externally and of spiritual understanding. But being put to shame first of all by the strenuousness of the excellence of him that stirred me up to [do] this work, and considering also the benefit which shall accrue to those who shall come across these histories, and being, moreover, afraid of the danger of the penalty of disobedience, which is right, I will first of all commit the weight of the matter unto the Providence of God, and I will, with all diligence, make use of the prayers of the holy Fathers, so that I may be able to mount up as upon wings to the place where their contests were waged, and may tell the story briefly of those athletes, who though young became great and divine men who did valiantly and who triumphed in the works and deeds of spiritual excellence. And I will also relate the histories of those blessed women who were adorned with the fair garb [of the monastic life], and who attained to pre-eminence in divine labours. Now some of these divine persons of whom I am about to tell the story I was held to be worthy to see face to face; and concerning the heavenly lives

Digitized by Google

of the others who died in the contest of the fear of God I have learned from the athletes of Christ, who were arrayed in God.

Therefore, through very many cities, and villages, and in caves and holes in the earth, and in the tabernacles which the monks had in the desert for a distance as far as a man could walk have I gone round about for the sake of the labour of the fear of God, and I have set down in writing with exactness the things which I have seen. And I have also made known unto thee in this book the things which I have heard from the holy Fathers concerning the triumphs of great men, and concerning the women who for the sake of the hope which is in Christ performed mighty works which were above nature, and I have sent it to thy hearing which loveth divine words. O thou Lausus who art triumphant among men, and who art fair among the friends of God, and who art the ornament of this believing and God-fearing kingdom, and art the true friend and servant of God, I have written down for thee as far as my feebleness is able, the [history of] the strife of each of the athletes of Christ, both male and female, a name which is honourable and which meriteth praise. And I have narrated unto thee only very few of the very many exceedingly great triumphs which belong to each one of these athletes, and of many of them I have added [the names of] their families and cities, and also the places where they lived.

And we have also commemorated the men and women who, indeed, attained to the highest excellence in the labours of the spiritual life, and who, because of the pride (*or* arrogance), which is the mother of that [quality] which is called vainglory, were brought down to the lowest depths of Sheol, and so wasted the great work in the spiritual qualities which they had only acquired after a very long time, and the triumphs in the ascetic virtues which they had won, through [their] pride and boasting in one brief moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Nevertheless, by the Divine Grace of our Redeemer, and by the carefulness of the holy Fathers, and by the cherishing influence of the mercy of the Spirit, they were plucked [finally] out of the net of the Calumniator.

Counsels to Lausus

LET the following be before thy mind in all [thine] acts, and thou shalt sin in no particular.

I. To do good to the fool and to bury the dead; both are alike.

II. It is meet that a man should put on armour over the breast, and the word of our Redeemer Christ [over] grief;

Digitized by Google

armour and shield will hide the breast, but [only] faith and action [can hide] the soul.

III. As it is possible to see the skill of the painter on a small tablet, so a small gift [sheweth] the greatness of the disposition of the soul.

IV. Have no confidence in the belief that that which is placed outside thy soul is thy possession.

V. Clothes and raiment drape statues, but habits and manners drape men.

VI. An evil word is the beginning of evil deeds.

VII. Speak thou according to what is right, and where it is right, and concerning the things which are right, and hearken not unto that which is not right.

VIII. It is better to shake a stone vainly than [to utter a vain] word, and it is better to be under subjection to the Barbarians than to evil passions.

IX. The excellence of a horse is made apparent in battle, and the disposition of a friend is put to the test in tribulation.

X. It is impossible to divide the sea, and it is also impossible to still the waves thereof, although for them it is always easy [to still themselves].

XI. The wise and God-fearing man is he who hateth that which is not right.

XII. The gentle and gracious man is he who treadeth pride under foot; but he who is set upon that which is the contrary of this is one who is governed by arrogance.

XIII. Constant prayer is the strength, and the armour, and the wall of the soul.

XIV. Wine maketh warm the body, and the word of God [warmeth] the soul.

XV. Know thou that not even much time will bring oblivion upon one act which thou wouldst hide.

XVI. The believing mind is a temple of God which it is meet for a man to adorn daily and to burn incense therein, inasmuch as it is God Who dwelleth there.

And numbers upon numbers of books at divers times and in various ways have they left unto the habitations of men, and some of them are according to the Mind which is above and Divine Grace, and were [written] for the edification and protection of those who wished to [follow] carefully after the faith and the doctrine of our Redeemer, and some of them are according to the adulation of the children of men, and the corrupt mind which is mad after the lusts of the body, [and some of them] are for the consolation of those who destroy vainglory; but others are from some vain madness and the

Digitized by Google

agency (*or* operation) of that evil Devil who hateth the things which are good, and [their writers] made use of arrogance and hatred, and in order to corrupt the children of men whose minds have been laid waste and who have no understanding they introduced [them] that they might defile the purity of the holy Catholic Church, and hinder its pure life and deeds of ascetic excellence.

And, moreover, it hath seemed to me—I who fall short of the hope which is in Christ, and who am shamefaced before the command of thy greatmindedness—O thou man who lovest doctrine, that I ought first of all to narrate to thee the story of how I was reared, and concerning the gradual growth of my mind of such excellence as I possess towards God. I lived a life of rule and was in a monastery of solitary brethren for the first part of my life, that is to say until the thirty-third year of my age, and I served the office of Bishop for twenty years; thus the whole period of my life hath included fifty-six years.*

It is, therefore, absolutely necessary, inasmuch as it hath seemed to me that thou art very anxious to hear the triumphs of the holy Fathers, because of the divine and spiritual profit [which is therein], that I should tell thee in writing [concerning] the men and the women, of whom some I have myself seen, and concerning others of whom I have heard from believing men, and concerning others whom I have met with when I was travelling about in the land of Egypt, and in Libya, and in the Thebaïd, and also in the region of Syene, and among those who are called men of Tabenna, and afterwards in Mesopotamia, and in Palestine, and in Syria, and among these in the countries of the West, and among the Romans, and among the people of the Campagna. And I must also set down in writing with careful exactitude the history of everything which appertaineth closely to these men from the very beginning and set before thee as an example that which will be a most excellent memorial and a benefit of the soul, that is to say, a sure and certain binding up, so that by means of it thou mayest be able to dispel from thy soul all the slumber of error, which cometh into being through irrational desire, and all the doubts of the soul in respect of faith, and sluggishness in respect of the things which are useful, and all loathing and littleness of soul concerning habits of virtue, that is to say, keenness of wrath and perturbation and animal ferocity and empty fear.

Then shalt thou flee from the vain and corrupt delight of this world, and through [thy] constant eager desire thou shalt

* There is some mistake in the numbers here given, for $33+20=53$.

Digitized by Google

draw nigh to the hope which is in God; and thou shalt govern thyself in the desire of the fear of God, and those who are with thee, and those who are under thine authority, and moreover, unto him that feareth God thou wilt become king. For through these triumphs all those who have become friends of Christ shall hasten to be united unto Him, and they shall also look for the loosing of the soul from the body, for it is well known that daily [they will do this], even as it is written, "I am con-"strained by the good desire which I possess [to wish] to "become free and to be with Christ" (Philippians i, 23). And exceedingly excellent is all that which is said, "Make ready "thy works for [thy] going forth, and prepare thy field" (Proverbs xxiv, 27). For he who remembereth death continually, [and keepeth in his mind the knowledge] that he must most certainly die, will neither be negligent of nor commit sin in respect of great matters, even according to what is said, "In all thy "words remember thine end, and thou wilt never commit sin" (Ecclesiasticus vii, 31). And beside all these things I will add this also, so that thou mayest not belittle the tradition of this our faulty history, and mayest not hold in contempt the simplicity and want of polish of the language [thereof]; for this matter appertaineth not to the divine doctrine (*or* teaching), that we should compose speech with wise skill, but we should strengthen the mind with sure and certain words of understanding, according to that which is said, "Open thy mouth "with the word of truth, and judge every man in a sound "manner" (Proverbs xxxi, 9); and moreover "thou shalt not "forget the narratives of the old men, because they also have "them from their fathers" (Ecclesiasticus viii, 9).

I therefore, O thou lover of doctrine, thou godly man, have lighted upon many things with the holy men, not through making use of ordinary thought, but by making journeys [among them] which have lasted thirty days, yea, even thirty days twice told. And [I say it], as before God, that in travels and journeyings I would have trodden the whole of the territory of the Greeks so that I might have the opportunity of conversing with each of the lovers of God, and I would have undertaken the labour of a journey such as this gratefully so that I might be able to traffic for a profit (*or* benefit) which I did not possess. For if that man who was far more excellent than I am, and perhaps far more excellent than the whole world, and who in his life and works, and in his knowledge, and in his wise opinions of the Spirit, and in his faith which was in Christ, surpassed many, I mean the blessed man Paul, who in order that he might see James, and Cephas (Peter), and John made a journey from Tarsus to Judæa, and it is well known that he

Digitized by Google

related the fact of this journey somewhat as a boast when he was declaring abroad and revealing his labours in order that he might stimulate those who were living lives sluggish and indolent in respect of spiritual excellence, and when he said, "I went up to Jerusalem (Galatians i, 18) that I might see "Cephas (Peter)," not that he was denying the spiritual excellence of Peter of which he had received [information] by report, but because he was longing for converse with him also. [Now, if this Paul had need of converse with Peter], how much more did I, who am a debtor of ten thousand talents, need to do this (i.e., to visit the holy men), for the sake of the benefit, not for the sake of any good which I could do them but for the sake of the advantage which I the sinful man should myself gain? And moreover, the things which writers have written down about the holy Fathers, I mean Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and Elijah, and the other saints, were not composed and narrated to glorify them, but that those who should peruse them might profit thereby.

Therefore, O chaste and believing man, Lausus, thou servant of God, knowing these things, and having also instructed thyself in many others, be convinced by our discourse also and let the matters thereof be laid up in thy God-fearing mind as in a secure storehouse which is not wont to be disturbed by evil things of divers kinds, either visible or invisible, and which only constant prayer and the converse which concerneth the service of the soul can make to be moved.

For many of these brethren who in the fear of God won spiritual excellence, and who waxed great in ascetic labours and lovingkindness, and who were famed (*or* boasted) because of their perfect chastity and virginity, and who protracted to great length their meditations upon the Holy Scriptures, and placed their trust upon [their] strenuousness in spiritual doctrine, were never held to be worthy of the state of impassibility, because they served with a mind which possessed not discretion and employed only the form of the fear of God, and because they were diseased with the love of external converse, wherefrom are produced all vices which enter [into a man] from without, and which eradicate that which is the mother of the service which taketh place in the soul.

Be strong, therefore, in all wisdom, and nourish not thy soul in the riches which thou hast made (*or* gotten), having made them sufficiently little by means of the gifts to those who are needy, so that the ministration which ariseth therefrom may perfect the service of excellence, for [this] cometh into being neither through any urging whatsoever, nor through the foolish thoughts of any form whatsoever for the sake of vainglory. And

Digitized by Google

do not bind thyself to [do] anything under a penalty [secured] by oaths as many men do, as for example those who for the sake of vainglory strive eagerly neither to eat nor to drink, for though by the force of [such] oaths they may bring their feeble will into subjection, through this same thing they fall miserably, either by means of pleasures and the loathing [which followeth thereafter], or through the sickness of the body, or else through the delightful gratification of some lust they bring forth falsehood. And as thou receivest [what is good] according to reason, so according to reason shalt thou make thyself to be remote [from what is evil], and thou shalt never sin at all; for by the word of God shall all motions of fear be extinguished, and thou shalt draw nigh unto the things which bring [thee] profit, and shalt trample down those which would cause [thee] loss. For for the righteous the Law was not laid down.

It is better to drink wine in moderation than to drink water immoderately, and it appeareth to me that those who drink wine in moderation are holy men, and that those who pridefully use water in an immoderate fashion are depraved and pleasure-loving. Do not therefore ascribe blame or praise to the eating [or not eating] of food, or to the drinking [or not drinking] of wine, but ascribe praise, or woe, unto those who make use properly or improperly of meat and drink. Joseph in olden time drank wine with the Egyptians, and was in no way injured in his mind thereby, for he took good heed unto [the admonitions of] his understanding; but Pythagoras, and Diogenes, and Plato, and with them also the Manichaeans, and other sects of philosophers [did not], and they came thereby to such a pitch of licentiousness and vainglory that they even forgot the God of the universe and worshipped soulless images. On the other hand, the blessed Apostle Peter and those who were with him drew nigh to wine and made use thereof, and because of this the Jews reproached our Lord, the Redeemer of all [men] and their Teacher, and made complaints against Him, saying, "Why do not Thy disciples fast like John?" (St. Matthew ix, 14; St. Mark ii, 18.) And again they lifted themselves up (?) against the disciples and blamed them, saying, "Why doth your master eat and drink with tax-gatherers and "sinners?" (St. Matthew ix, 11; x, 18, 19.) Now they did not make their complaints about bread and water only, but also about wine and delicate viands, for it is evident that they only wanted to lay blame upon the disciples in everything.

Thereupon our Redeemer made answer, and said, "John "came in the path of righteousness, neither eating nor drinking"—now it is well known that flesh and wine [are here referred to], for it was impossible for him to live without food

Digitized by Google

of other kinds—"and ye say that he hath a devil in him; and "the Son of Man hath come, eating and drinking, and [ye] "say, 'Behold a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax-"'gatherers and sinners!'" What then is it right for us to do, so that we may neither go after those who make complaints [of our acts], nor after those who praise them? For we must either fast with John according to discretion, even though the Jews said that there was a devil in him, and that he was certainly mad, or we must drink wine with Christ with knowledge, if the body shall have need thereof, even though the children of men shall say concerning us, "Behold a glutton and a "winebibber." For in very truth neither the eating of food nor the abstaining therefrom is anything, but the faith and love which are made perfect in works; for when a man followeth after faith wholly by actions, he who eateth and drinketh is blameless for faith's sake, for everything which is not of faith is sin. But perhaps one of those who love the carnal lusts, or perhaps one of those who sin not, will say that if they eat in faith, or if they do anything else by the irrational thought of the carnal appetite, or through a corrupt intent, those who support themselves on faith commit sin. Now our Redeemer made a distinction, saying, "By their fruit ye shall know "them" (St. Matthew vii, 20); and the fruits may be recognized by the word of God, and by spiritual wisdom, according to the word of the blessed Apostle, who said, "Love, peace, "gladness, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meek-"ness, patient endurance" (Galatians v, 22, 23)—these are the fruits of the Spirit according to the word of the Apostle.

Whosoever then is eager to possess these fruits will never, without reason and without thought on any occasion, eat flesh, or drink wine, or dwell with a man with evil intent. Moreover, the blessed Paul saith, "Whosoever is about to strive in a con-"test preserveth his mind free from every other thought, and "thus keepeth his body healthy, and maketh himself to be remote "from the things which would make him fat" (Compare 1 Corinthians ix, 25, 27). But if he fall into sickness, or into severe sufferings, or he become a companion unto afflictions which fight against him externally, he must then make use of meat and drink by way of a binding up, and a healing medicine for the things which work tribulation for him. Let us then keep ourselves remote from the evil things which are wrought in the soul, I mean anger, and envy, and vainglory, and dejection, and evil discourse, and the suspicion which is not seemly, for whilst a man is giving thanks unto God he cannot commit sin.

Now therefore, having spoken sufficiently concerning these

Digitized by Google

things, I have another entreaty to bring nigh unto the love of doctrine which is in thee, that is to say, I would that thou didst flee with all thy strength from the converse of men from whom thou canst gain no benefit, although their outside skin be ornamented with various patterns; even if they be orthodox they will cause thee to suffer loss, and if they be heretics that loss will be very much greater. And although they appear to be exceedingly aged, and their bodies be shrivelled and withered, and it may seem to thee that thou canst not in any way be injured by them because of the beautiful dispositions which are in them, that which is in them and which appeareth to thee to be a small matter, will do thee an injury; for thou shalt become lax in thy mind in respect of them, and whilst laughing at them thou wilt become unduly exalted, and that thou shouldst be driven to arrogance would be a loss for thee. Follow then after the mind of pious men and women who shine with the light which entereth in through the windows, so that by means of these, like a book the lines of which are extremely close together, thou mayest be able clearly to see what is in thy heart by comparison with them, either of sluggishness or strenuousness. For there are very many things which testify concerning spiritual excellence, [such as] the colour of the face which blossometh with ascetic labours, and the manner in which the apparel is put on, and a peaceable manner, and a mode of speech which is not inflated, and modesty of the countenance, and a discourse which is not crooked, and cheerfulness of the mind, and an understanding which is full of knowledge; by these things both thine own fair beauty will be made strong, and also all those who follow after the goal of the fear of God, even though they be [living] in a state of negligence or in some other similar [vice]. For, according to the word of the wise man, the behaviour of a man, and the gait of his legs, and the laughter of his mouth testify concerning him (Ecclesiasticus xix, 30).

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Here begin the Histories of the Holy Men by Palladius.

Chapter j. The History of Abba Isidore [Bishop of Hermopolis Parva (Damanhur) in Lower Egypt].

BY the help of our Lord I will, therefore, begin [to write] for thee, [O Lausus,] the histories of the holy Fathers, and I will omit nothing concerning them which I will not make known in [my] discourse, neither the histories of those who lived in cities, nor of those who lived in villages or in caves, nor of those who became famous in the desert. Nay, I will even add to my discourse the histories of those who lived among the general assembly of a community, for no special country or place wherein they lived and wherein they perfected the life of ascetic excellence needs to be sought out, for [everywhere] they led the pure life and conversation of chastity and integrity, and performed the deeds of the simple mind wherein, through the help of Christ, they wrought and fulfilled the lives and deeds of angels.

Now at first, when I went to Alexandria in the second consulship of the Emperor Theodosius the Great, who now because of the orthodoxy of his faith in Christ sojourneth with the angels, I met in the city a wonderful man who was adorned in every respect with the most beautiful qualities of speech, and knowledge, and life and conversation, whose name was Isidore. He was a priest and was the overseer (i.e., manager *or* secretary) of the hospital, of the church of Alexandria, and it was said of him that in his early youth he had lived in a monastery in the desert, and that he triumphed in the contest of the ascetic life: I saw, moreover, his cell in the mountain of Nitria. I met him when he was an old man seventy years of age, and when he had lived fifteen years longer he departed from this world. Now to the end of his life this holy man never put on either a linen tunic or even a head-covering; he never washed, and he never ate flesh, and he never ate a full meal seated comfortably at a table; and yet, through Divine grace, his body shone. He possessed a sound and healthy body, and he was, by the grace of Christ, so fully endowed with strength that those who beheld him and who did not know him would not be persuaded that he lived a life of self-denial, and they thought and said that he must lead a life of great luxury and that he must eat abundantly of rich meats. Now, if

Digitized by Google

I were to undertake to declare the marvellous character of his life and deeds, and wished to recount the excellence of his soul, and to make manifest every fact concerning them, all time would not suffice [for me to declare them], nor would paper [suffice for me to write them]. For this man was so lovingly merciful and so full of peace that, by the reason of orthodoxy of his faith in Christ, even his enemies who did not believe were put to shame by him, from his early youth up, and at his good deeds and at the abundance of his graciousness were put to the blush; for he was gracious unto every man.

Now he possessed the gift of the spirit and the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and the comprehension of divine learning, and he kept the commandments [so strictly] that at noon, the time when the brethren were wont to take their food, the mind of this holy man was carried away as it were in a slumber, and the greater number of the brethren were marvelling at his example and knowledge, and many, many times they tried to persuade him to relate unto them the things which he saw, and entreated him to tell them concerning the marvellous state which had come upon him, but he could not be persuaded [to do so]. Finally he was constrained by the power of their love, and he answered and said unto them, "My mind de-"parted and was carried away by contemplation, and I was "snatched away by the similitude of a thought, and I was fed "with the food of glory, which, however, it is impossible for "me to describe."

Now I knew this man, and on several occasions he burst into tears at the table; and when I asked him, "What is the "cause of these tears?" he said unto me, "I am ashamed of "myself because, being a rational being, I eat the food of an "irrational creature; I desire to live in Paradise, where I should "enjoy the food which is imperishable. For [although] we have "received that power which is from Christ, yet am I drawn to "partake of the food which perisheth. I would partake of the "food which is spiritual, and I would that I were in the Para-"dise of delights in the dominion which God hath given unto "me; and behold I am eating the food of the beasts."

And unto this man were known all the members of the Roman Senate and the free-born women of the nobles [of Rome], because in former times he had gone with Bishop Athanasius to that city, and he had also been there with the holy man Bishop Demetrius.* And Isidore, having great riches, and wanting nothing, was wont to give abundantly and without

* Bishop of Pessinus in Galatia Secunda, and friend of St Chrysostom, whose letter to Innocent I he took to Rome; he was in Rome again in 405.

Digitized by Google

sparing to the poor and needy. And when he had ended his days and came to die, he made no will whatsoever; and he left no money to any man, and he left nothing to his brethren. To his sisters who were virgins he also left nothing, and he made no provision at all for them, but committed them to the care of Christ, saying, "He who created you will provide for your "living and also whatsoever things of which ye have need, "even as He hath [provided] for me." Now with his sisters was a company of about seventy sisters.

Now when I had come unto him to be his disciple, and I was persuading him to hold me worthy of the rank of those who lived in a monastery, being in the vigour of my early manhood and needing not the word only but also the labour of the body, and severe physical exercises, even like the young unbroken animal, I besought him to teach me his beautiful way of life and to let me dwell by myself, for I was heedful of nothing, being in the vigour of my early manhood, and I had no great need of doctrine, but only [to learn] to subdue the passions of the flesh. Then, like a good teacher, he took me outside the city unto a place which was six miles distant, and wherein there was restful solitude, and he handed me over unto an anchorite whose name was Dorotheos,

Chapter ij. The History of Dorotheos of Thebes

AND whose life was one of spiritual excellence, and who had lived in a cave for sixty years. And he commanded me to live with him, and to lead a life of self-denial with him for a period of three years, so that the passions of the flesh might leave me. For the blessed Isidore knew that blessed old man, and he knew that his life was stern and severe, and he admonished me, saying, "When thou hast completed this period of "three years, return unto me for the remainder of the doctrine of "spiritual knowledge." But I was unable to fulfil these three years with him, on account of a severe illness into which I fell, and so I departed from Dorotheos before the end of the period, and I returned to him that had brought me out, and entered his abode [that I might learn] the doctrine of the spirit.

Now the life of Dorotheos was one of exceedingly hard toil, and the manner thereof was severe, and his food was meagre and wretched, for he lived on dry bread. And he used to go round about in the desert by the side of the sea the whole day long in the heat of the noonday sun and collect stones with which he built cells, which he used to give unto the brethren who were unable to build [cells for themselves]; and he used to finish one cell each year. One day I said unto the holy man, "Father, why workest thou thus in thine old age? for thou

Digitized by Google

"wilt kill thy body in all this heat." And he said unto me, "I "kill it lest it should kill me." He used to eat one small bread cake, which weighed about six ounces, each day, and a little bundle of green herbs; and he drank water by measure. What then? I know not. As God is my witness I never saw this man stretch out [his legs] and lie down as [men are] wont [to do]; and he never slept upon a bed of palm leaves, or upon anything else, but he used to work the whole night long weaving baskets made of palm leaves to provide himself with the daily bread which he required and food. Now I imagined at first that he used to work in this manner because I was present, and then I thought, "Peradventure it is only for my sake, and "to show me how to perform such severe labours, that [he "doeth this]." So I made enquiries of many of those who had been his disciples and who were then living by themselves and were emulating his spiritual excellencies, and I also asked others of his disciples who were living by his side if in very truth he always laboured in this wise, and they said unto me, "He hath held to this practice from his youth up, and he hath "never been in the habit of sleeping according to what is "right. In the daytime he never sleepeth willingly, but [some-"times] when he is working with his hands, or when he is "eating, he closeth his eyes and is snatched away by slumber. "As he sitteth working he eateth, and unless slumber over-"came him [suddenly] he would never sleep at all. Many and "many a time he is overcome by slumber while he is eating, "and the morsel of bread falleth out of his mouth because he "is overcome by drowsiness." And when from time to time I used to urge him to sit down, or to throw himself upon a mat of palm leaves and to rest a little, he would answer and say unto me in a grieved manner, "If thou art able to persuade "the angels to sleep, then thou wilt be able to persuade me."

One day, towards the ninth hour, Dorotheos sent me to the fountain from which he drank water to fetch him some water, so that he might eat his meal, for he used to eat about this time, and when I had gone there I chanced to see a viper going down the well; and because of [my] fear I was unable to fill [the pitcher] with water, and I went back to him, and said unto him, "O father, we shall die, for I have seen a viper "[going] down into the water." Now when he heard [these words] he laughed reverently, and constrained himself, and he lifted up his face and looked at me not a little time, and he shook his head, and said unto me, "If it were to happen that "Satan had the power to shew thee in every fountain an asp, "or again to cast into them vipers, or serpents, or tortoises, "or any other kinds of venomous reptiles, wouldst thou be

Digitized by Google

"able to do without drinking water entirely?" And when he had said these words unto me, he went forth and departed [to the fountain] and drew water, and brought [it back], and having made the sign of the Cross over it he straightway drank therefrom before he ate anything. And he constrained me to drink and said unto me, "Where the seal (*or* sign) of "the Cross is, the wickedness of Satan hath no power to do "harm."

And this blessed man Isidore, the overseer of the hospital [in Alexandria], related unto me the following story, which is worthy of record, and he heard it from the blessed Anthony where he lived with him in the desert in the days of Emperor Maximinus, the prosecutor.

Chapter iij. The History of the Virgin Potamiaena

THERE was a certain young virgin [called Potamiaena] who was exceedingly beautiful and she was a Christian; she was the handmaiden of a certain worldly man who was given over to a life of pleasure, and she lived in very great luxury, and her master flattered her greatly, wishing to destroy her. And being unable to bring her into subjection to his will, he at length was seized with madness, and he became furiously angry with her and delivered her over to a certain prefect who lived at that time in Alexandria (i.e., Basilides), saying, "She "is a Christian, and she revileth the government, and uttereth "blasphemies against the Emperor." And he promised to give him much money saying, "If she can be persuaded to do my "will, keep her for me without disgrace and punishment, but "if she persisteth in her obstinacy of heart, punish her with "every kind of torture thou pleasest, and let her not remain "alive to laugh at me and at my luxurious way of life." And when they brought the valiant woman before the throne of the judges, she was greatly moved, but she was not persuaded; and the prefect tortured the body of the virgin of Christ with many different kinds of tortures. Then again after these things he thought out a crafty plan, and invented a method of punishment by torture which was as follows. He commanded them to bring a huge cauldron which was full of pitch, and to light a fierce fire under it, and when the pitch was melted and was boiling, the judge cried to her, saying, "Go thou and submit "thyself to the will of thy lord, and know thou if thou doest "not this thing thou shalt straightway fall into this cauldron." Now when she heard this, she sealed her soul, and answered and said, "Thou judgest with iniquity, O judge, for thou com-"mandest me to become subject unto fornication. I am the "handmaiden of Christ, and it is meet that I should stand be-

Digitized by Google

"fore His throne without blemish." And when the judge heard this, he was straightway greatly troubled and filled with wrath, and he commanded them to bring her and to cast her into the cauldron. Then the virgin said unto him, "I adjure thee, by "the head of the Emperor, if thou condemnest me to this "thing of thine own self, to command them to put me into "the cauldron little by little, without stripping my apparel "from me, so that thou mayest know the patient endurance "which I have through Christ for the sake of my purity." And as they were dipping her little by little into the cauldron, for a very short space of time, immediately the pitch reached her neck it became cold; thus she delivered her soul unto God, and she was crowned with a good martyrdom. And a great congregation of holy men and women were made perfect (i.e., they suffered martyrdom) at that time in the church of Alexandria, and they became worthy of that land which the meek inherit. [Potamiaena was martyred, with her mother Marcella, in the reign of Septimius Severus.]

Here end the triumphs of Isidore, and Dorotheos, and the Virgin Potamiaena

Chapter iv. The History of Didymus [born A.D. 309 or 314]

TOGETHER with these I also saw a certain blessed man who was in Alexandria, and whose name was Didymus, and who also, with us, wrote these things; now he was blind, and he could not see at all; he was a marvellous man, and I went several times to see him. He was eighty years of age, and he told me that he became blind when he was four years old and could not see at all, but according to what he himself related to me, "After forty years I perceived the faces "(*or* external aspects) of things." And although this man had never learned the Testaments, and had never entered a school, the gift of an excellent and healthy mind had been given unto him by God, and he became learned in the knowledge of books through an enlightened understanding. And he was adorned with goodness and with the knowledge of the truth to such a degree, and was so ready and was so wholly wise that there was fulfilled in him that which was written, "The Lord openeth "the eyes of the blind" (Psalm cxlvi, 8). He could interpret the Old and New Testaments word by word in its proper place, and had investigated carefully the commandments and could repeat all the words which were in them. And he was so thoroughly well acquainted with the belief of the truth (*or* of the true faith), and he comprehended so deeply all heresies that his knowledge

Digitized by Google

was more excellent than that of many who were before him in the Church. Now [once] when he was urging me to make a prayer in his cell and I was unwilling to do so, he spake unto me and related unto me concerning Abbâ Anthony who, he said, "came three times and visited me in this cell. And when "I begged and entreated him to pray, straightway he knelt "down upon his knees, and prayed, and waited not for me to "speak one word about it, but at the first word he corrected "me by his obedience. He did not let me finish my speech, but "by work he made manifest obedience." And Didymus said unto me, "Thou also, if thou wishest to walk in his footsteps "and [to imitate him] in [his] life and deeds, and in hospitality, "and if thou wouldst walk in the life of excellence and in the "love of God, remove thyself from contention."

And this blessed man Didymus himself told me the following ing story. "Once on a time I was suffering by reason of the "wretched Emperor Julian. Now one day, when it was even- "tide, and I had eaten no food through my anxiety about this "matter, whilst I was sitting on my seat I dropped into a light "slumber, and there fell upon me a marvellous thing. I saw and "behold there were white horses galloping about, and they had "on them riders who were dressed in white, and they were cry- "ing out and saying, 'Tell Didymus that Julian died this day "'at the seventh hour. Rise up, then, and eat, and send and "'make [this news] known unto Bishop Athanasius, so that "'he also may know and rejoice.' And I wrote down the day, "and the hour, and the month [wherein this vision took place], "and it was found that it had happened even as it had been "told me in the vision."

And the blessed man himself also told me the following story:

Chapter v. The History of the Maiden Alexandra

THERE was a certain maiden of Alexandria whose name was Alexandra, and she left the city and shut herself up in a tomb until the end of her life; she used to receive her food and whatsoever she needed through a window, and no man and no woman saw her face, neither did she see the face of any man, for twelve years. And a few days afterwards she yielded up her soul, and she lay down and went to her rest in peace. Now when her serving woman went to visit her according to her wont, she knocked at the window, but Alexandra gave her no answer, and straightway she knew that she was dead, and she came and made known unto us concerning her mistress. And we took off the door of her cell and we found her body dried up.

Digitized by Google

Now the blessed woman Melha also related unto us the story of Alexandra, saying, "I have [never] seen her face to "face. And I stood outside the cell, close to the window, and "entreated her to tell me for what reason she had shut her- "self up in the grave. And Alexandra answered and said unto "me, 'Inasmuch as the thought of the love of God was pre- "'sent in my mind, I prayed before the Lord, and I entreated "'Him to permit me to offer unto Him my virginity in the "'state in which it had been born with me. Now a certain "'young man regarded me in his thoughts, and looked upon "'me, and desired me, and sought to destroy me. But because "'I did not want to grieve him, or to say what was evil unto "'him, or to be to him an occasion of sin, I chose rather to shut "'myself up alive in this grave than to cause a man who was "'made in the form of the image of God to stumble.' And I "said unto her, 'How canst thou bear [to] live here not seeing "'the face of any man without being driven to despair?' Then "she answered and said unto me, 'I occupy myself with my "'prayers and with the work of my hands, and I have no idle "'moments. From morn until the ninth hour I weave linen, "'and recite the Psalms and pray; and during the rest of the "'day I commemorate in my heart the holy fathers, and I re- "'volve in my thoughts the histories of all the Prophets and "'Apostles, and Martyrs; and during the remaining hours I "'work with my hands and eat my bread, and by means of "'these things I am comforted whilst I await the end of my "'life in good hope.'" These things we have heard from the blessed woman Melania who told the story of the maiden Alexandra. But in this history I must not underrate those who have toiled in the faith of Christ, to the glory of the perfect and to the admonition of those who hear.

Chapter vj. The history of Abba Macarius [the Alexandrian] and a certain Virgin

THERE was in Alexandria a certain virgin who though meek in appearance was of a haughty disposition. Now she was exceedingly rich and had possessions without number, but she never relieved the poor, and the strangers, and those who were in misery, and she never gave a drachma to the Church, and notwithstanding the frequent rebuke with which the Fathers rebuked her, she never allowed any portion of riches to leave her. And this woman had kinsfolk, and she adopted her sister's daughter, to whom she used to promise by day and by night [to give her] all that she had, for she had fallen from heavenly love. Now, it is a customary thing which belongeth to the deception of Satan that he pro-

Digitized by Google

duceth avarice under guise of love of family, for that he hath no genuine care for kinsmanship is well known from the fact that he taught murder in order that he might make war [between] brethren, and is admitted by the Holy Book. (Compare St. John viii, 44.) And, if he imagined that he implanteth solicitude for kinsfolk in [the hearts of] men, [it must be remembered] that he is not moved to do this on their behalf because of [his] love for them, but only that he may minister unto his own will, for manifestly he knoweth the sentence of judgement which hath been passed, that the wicked shall not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians vi, 9). For if a man be moved by spiritual understanding and by divine desire, he will be able to care for his kinsfolk if they be in want without bringing himself into contempt; but if he devoteth the whole of himself to the care for his kinsfolk, and he bringeth himself into contempt by making himself to labour under poverty, he will fall from the divine law. And the divine man David singeth in the Psalms concerning those who possess themselves of the solicitude of the fear of God, and he saith, "Who shall go up into the mountain of the Lord?" (Psalm xxiv, 3.) Now, inasmuch as he saith, "Who," he maketh known concerning the smallness of the number [who shall go up]. And [again he saith], "Who shall stand in His holy place? "He whose hands are clean and whose heart is chosen, and "who giveth not himself unto poverty" (Psalm xxiv, 3, 4). For those who devote themselves to poverty are those who think that the soul is dissolved with this body.

Now this virgin, who was so in name only, became a stranger unto the various kinds of [spiritual] excellence. And there was a certain priest whose name was Macarius (*or* Isidore) who wished to cut away as with iron and to lighten the weight of the possessions of those who loved money, and he had the care of, and was the governor (*or* secretary) of a house for the poor who were sick and infirm in their bodies. And this man thought out the following plan whereby he might entrap the virgin. From his youth up he had been a skilful workman in the cutting of gems, and he went to her and said, "Certain "very precious emeralds and gems have fallen into my hands, "and whether they have been stolen or not I do not know; "their value cannot be ascertained, because they are above "price, but the man who hath them will sell them for five "hundred *dînârs*. If thou wishest to take them thou wilt "be able to recover the price of five hundred *dînârs* from [the "sale of] one of the gems, and the rest thou wilt be able to "employ in the adornment of thy sister's daughter." Now when the virgin heard this she was perturbed, and she fell

Digitized by Google

down at his feet making entreaty unto him, and saying, "I "beseech you to let no other person take them." Macarius saith unto her, "Come to my house and see them," but she would not consent to this; and she poured out for him five hundred *dînârs*, and said unto him, "According to what thou "dost require even so take, but I do not wish to see the man "who is selling them."

And having taken the five hundred *dînârs* he spent them on food and on things for the use of those who were hungry, and on the poor. And when much time had passed, inasmuch as he was a famous man in Alexandria—now this blessed man was well known for his love of God, and for the merciful disposition which was in him, and he was almost one hundred years old, and we also knew him and had tarried in his house with him—the virgin was ashamed to call the matter [of the five hundred *dînârs*] to his mind. But finally she found him in the church and said unto him, "I beseech thee [to tell me] how "thou hast disposed of the gems for which we gave thee the "five hundred *dînârs*." And he answered and said unto her, "When thou gavest me the money I gave it for the price of the "gems; if thou wishest come and see them in my house, for there "are they deposited. Come and see them, if it pleaseth thee [so "to do], and if thou wilt not then take thy money." So she went with him joyfully. Now the place to which [she went] was a house of the poor; in the upper parts thereof were lying women whose bodies were destroyed, and in the lower parts were men. And when they had come there Macarius brought her in through the door, and said unto her, "Which wouldst thou "see first, the emeralds or the gems?" She saith unto him, "Whichever thou pleasest." Then he took her up to the upper parts of the house and showed her the women whose faces and bodies were diseased and deformed, and said unto her, "These "are the gems"; and he brought her down to the lower parts, and showed her the men, and said unto her, "These are the "emeralds. If these please thee [good and well]; but if not "take thy money." Then was the virgin ashamed, and she went forth and departed, and by reason of her grief she fell into a sickness, because it was through God and of her own will that she had in this wise performed the matter. Finally, however, she came to herself, and was exceedingly grateful to the priest, and as for the maiden for whose wedding feast she was laying up her riches, she died.

Digitized by Google

Chapter vij. Concerning the Monks who lived in Nitria

NOW having held converse with many of the saints, and having gone round about among the monasteries which were nigh unto Alexandria for three years, & having met about two thousand of the great and strenuous men who lived there, and who were adorned with the excellence of spiritual lives, I departed from there and came to Mount Nitria. Now between this mountain and Alexandria there lieth a certain lake which is called "Mareotis," which embraceth a space of seventy miles. And having seated myself in a boat I crossed this lake in a day and a half, and I came unto the mountain to the south, whereunto is joined the desert which reacheth unto Cush (Ethiopia). In this mountain of the Mazaki and of the Mauritanians there live excellent men who are adorned with divers kinds of ascetic virtues; and every monk leadeth the ascetic life as he wisheth and as he is able, either by himself or in a community. Now in this mountain there are seven bakers who make bread and who minister unto them, and unto the chosen men of the inner desert, of whom there are six hundred, and also unto the people of that mountain. And when I had dwelt in this mountain for a year, and had profited by the fathers, the pious and blessed men, I mean Rabbâ Barsîs [i.e., Arsisius], and Bûsîrîs, and Petâ-Bast, and Agîôs, and Khrônîs, and Serapion, the elder, and had learned from them also concerning the ancient and first spiritual fathers [who had lived there], I entered into the inner desert wherein is Mount Nitria.

In this mountain is a great church, and in the courtyard thereof are three palm trees, in each of which hangeth a whip. One of these is for the correcting of the monks who transgress through folly; the second is for the punishing of the thieves if they be found falling on the place; and the third is for the chastising of the strangers who flock there and who transgress in any matter whatsoever. And it is the same with anyone who shall commit any offence, they bring him to the palm tree and punish him, and he receiveth upon his back the number of stripes which they have appointed unto him. Adjoining the church is a house in which the strangers who arrive there may lodge, and if any man wisheth to work [there] one year, or two, or until he departeth of his own accord [he may do so]; and every week of days they permit him to rest, so that he may do nothing, but they give him work during the remaining days of the week, either among the bakers, or in the refectory. And if there was among these anyone who was suf-

Digitized by Google

ficiently educated they used to give him a book to read, but they did not allow him to hold converse with any man until the sixth hour. There were also in this mountain physicians for the use of the sick, and those who sold cakes; and they also used wine which was sold there. All these people worked at the weaving of flax with their hands, and there was no needy man there. Now when the evening cometh thou must rise up to hear the praises, and the Psalms, and the prayers which are sent up to Christ by the people from the monasteries which are there, and a man might imagine, his mind being exalted, that he was in the Paradise of Eden.

Now the monks only came to church on the Sabbath and on the First Day of the week. Belonging to this church there were eight priests and governors, but as long as the first one lived none of the others ministered in the church; he neither judged nor spake with any man, and they lived with him a life of silent contemplation. Now this great man Arsisius and many of the ancient holy men whom we saw were followers of the rule of the blessed man Anthony, and Arsisius himself told me that the holy man Ammôn, who was from Nitria, and whom he knew, and whose soul was taken up and carried by the angels into heaven, even saw Anthony. And Arsisius also spake to me concerning the blessed man Pachomius, who came from Tabenna of Hekhâm, and who possessed the gift of prophecy and who became the governor and head of three thousand men; of this man I will relate the virtues at the end [of this book].

Chapter viij. The history of Abba Ammon, [the "Father of Egyptian Monasticism"]

CONCERNING the blessed man Ammôn, he used to say: He became a monk in this wise: When he was a young man, and was about twenty-two years old, he was left an orphan by his parents. His father's brother wanted to give him a wife, and because he was unable to resist the counsel of his uncle he was compelled by force to marry one, and to fasten the crown of bridegrooms upon his head, and to take his seat in the marriage chamber, and to fulfil everything according to the law of the marriage feast. Now, Ammôn submitted to everything outwardly, but after every one had gone forth having put Ammôn and his wife to bed in the marriage chamber, the blessed man rose up and shut the door and seated himself. And he called to the true and blessed woman his spouse, and said unto her, "Henceforth thou shalt be my lady "and my sister; come therefore, and I will relate unto thee "concerning a matter which is more excellent [than marriage].

Digitized by Google

"The marriage which men contract is a perishable thing, but "let us choose for ourselves the marriage which perisheth not, "and the marriage feast which never endeth. Let us each sleep "alone, for in this wise we shall please Christ; and let us "guard the glory of our virginity unspotted, so that we may "take our rest at the marriage feast which is incorruptible." Then he took out a book from his bosom and read to the maiden [passages] which were uttered by the Apostles and by our Redeemer, and since she had no knowledge of the Scriptures he added unto their words from his own divine mind. And he read many passages unto her and talked much to her concerning virginity and purity, and at length, by the grace of Christ, she was persuaded. Then she answered and said unto him, "Master, I know well that a rule of life of purity is very "much more excellent [than marriage]; therefore whatsoever "pleaseth thee that do. And I also from this time forth will be "persuaded [to do] whatsoever thou wishest to do."

Then Ammôn said unto her, "I beg and entreat thee to let "each of us from this time forth dwell alone"; but she would not agree to this, and said, "Let us live in the same house, "and let each of us have a separate bed." So they dwelt together holily in the same house for eighteen years. In the morning Ammôn used to go forth and pass the whole day in cultivating the balsam trees which he had in his garden; now the balsam tree is like unto the vine, and must be planted and pruned and cultivated, and it demandeth great attention—and in the evening he entered into his house, and recited his prayers, and then ate with her. And he also rose up to [say] the praises (*or* hymns) of the night, and as soon as the dawn had come he would depart to the garden. Now as they were doing these things they both removed themselves from passions, and attained unto impassibility, and the prayers of Abbâ Ammôn helped [his wife]. And at length the blessed woman said unto him, "Master, I have something to say unto "thee, if thou wilt hearken unto me, and I am convinced that "for God's sake thou lovest me." The blessed man said unto her, "Tell [me] what thou wishest [to say]"; and she said unto him, "It is not right (seeing that thou art a God-fearing "man, and one who liveth a life of righteousness, and that "thou hast also made me, outwardly, to yearn for this path "[of life], and by the help of divine grace I have gotten "purity), to live with me. It is not good that, for my sake, "thou who dwellest with me in purity for our Lord's sake, "shouldst hide the spiritual excellence of thy philosophy; for "it is not seemly that thy fair deeds should be hidden, and "should not be known. Let thy dwelling be apart from me

Digitized by Google

"and [thus] thou shalt benefit many." Then Ammôn praised God, and said unto her, "O lady, this mind is beautiful, and "if it be acceptable unto thee do thou remain and abide in "this house in peace, and I will go and make another for my-"self." And having gone forth from her Ammôn departed and entered into Mount Nitria, where as yet the monasteries were not numerous, indeed up to that time there were no monasteries at all there; and he built himself a habitation there, and dwelt therein for two and twenty years. And having attained unto the highest practice of the labours of the ascetic life he ended his days, that is to say, the holy man Ammôn went to his rest and slept when he was sixty-two years of age. Twice in the year he used to go and see his spouse; and he died in his virginity, and his wife likewise brought the years of her life to an end in purity.

Now the following wonderful thing is told concerning him by the blessed Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, in the book which he composed about the life and deeds of the blessed Anthony. Once when he was about to cross the river which is called "the Wolf" with Theodore his disciple, he was ashamed to take off his clothes [lest] he might see the nakedness of his person. And being doubtful in his mind (*literally* thoughts) how he should cross over wonder fell upon him, and through an angel he crossed the river without any [boat] whatsoever [on his part]. It was the same Ammôn who saw the blessed man Anthony, who lived and died in such wise that his soul was taken to heaven by angels, and it was he who passed over the waters by the might of the Holy Spirit. Now as concerning this river which is called "the Wolf," I myself was once in great fear when I was crossing it in a boat, because it is filled with the overflow of the waters of the Nile.

Chapter ix. The history of the Blessed Man Hor

NOW in Mount Nitria there was a certain man whose name was Hor, concerning whom men, especially all the brotherhood, testify to many of his triumphs, and also that marvellous and excellent woman Melhâ (i.e., Melania), the handmaid of Christ, who went into this mountain before I did. As for me, I never became acquainted with this man. And in his history they say this one thing: "He never "told a lie in his life, and he never used oaths; he never "uttered a curse, and beyond what was absolutely necessary "he never spoke at all."

Digitized by Google

Chapter x. The History of the Blessed Man Pambo [died A.D. 393]

IN this mountain there also lived the blessed man Pambô (*or* Panbîs), who was the teacher and master of the Bishops Dioscorus, Ammonius, Eusebius, [Euthemis] (Eutymius), and Origen the nephew of Dracontius, a marvellous man. Now this man Pambô possessed [the power to utter] words of prophecy, and splendid triumphs, yet with all these he despised gold and silver, even as the Word demandeth. Now the following things [concerning him] were related unto me by the blessed woman Melhâ (i.e., Melania):

When I first came from Rome to Alexandria I heard concerning the life and deeds of Pambô, inasmuch as the blessed man Isidore, who also brought me unto him in the desert, told me about him. And I brought unto him a basket which was filled with stamped silver (i.e., coined money) three hundred pounds [in weight], and I begged him to accept some of my possessions for his needs. He was sitting and plaiting the leaves of palm trees, and as he was doing this he merely blessed me, and said, "God give thee thy reward!" Then he said unto his steward, whose name was Origen, "Take and distribute [this] "among all the brethren who are in the 'Island' and in Libya"; for these monasteries are exceedingly poor, and he commanded the steward not to give unto any man who dwelt in Egypt, for those who dwell therein have [abundant] means of subsistence. Now I stood there and I expected to be treated with honour or to be praised for the greatness of the gift, but when I heard nothing from him, I said unto him, "Master, knowest "thou how much money it is, and that there are three hundred "pounds [in the basket]?" Then Pambô, without lifting up his gaze, said unto me, "My daughter, He unto whom thou "hast offered thy money hath no need [to know] the weight. "For He who weighed the mountains in a balance knoweth "how much is the weight of thy silver. If thou hadst given "the money unto me thou wouldst have done well to have "informed me concerning the weight thereof; but since thou "hast given it to God, Who did not despise the two mites of "the widow, [what need hast thou to tell Him?] Hold thy "peace."

Now our Lord so directed that in the day on which I entered the mountain this blessed man died without having been ill, for he died whilst he was sewing together palm leaves for mats, without fever and without sickness. And he was seventy years old. Now he was sewing together palm leaves for a mat, and coming to the end of it he sent and called me.

Digitized by Google

And when he had finished sewing it, he said unto me, "Take "this mat from my hands, so that thou mayest keep me in re- "membrance, for I have nothing else whatever to leave thee"; and having given it unto me he straightway died. And I wrapped his body in linen swathings, and buried him, and then I departed from the desert; and I shall treasure the mat as a sacred relic until the day of my death.

Now at the time of the death of this holy man Pambô there were standing before him certain famous men, Origen the priest and steward, and Ammonius, together with the remainder of the brethren, and they told [me] that at the time of his death, he said, "From the day wherein I came into this desert "and built this cell in which I have lived [until this day] "I know not that I have [ever] eaten the bread of idleness "(*or* bread) which did not come from the labour of mine "own hands; and my soul repenteth not that I have ever "spoken an empty word in my life; thus I go to God like one "who hath, as yet, not made a beginning in the fear of God." And Origen and Ammonius, the servants of Christ, in telling us the story of his life, bore witness concerning him that he was never asked a question by any man about a saying from the Book, or about the rules and labours of the ascetic life which he did not either answer immediately, or say, "I have "not as yet understood the matter." Now there were times when he spake these words [only] after three months' consideration of a matter; and he used to make answer with such understanding that every man received the things which were said by him with as great reverence as if they had [been said] by God. Now this excellence was also attributed to Anthony the Great and to the rest of the holy men. Among other things which are said concerning the holy man Pambô is the following. The blessed man Pîôr once went to Pambô's cell and took with him some bread, and Pambô made a complaint, saying unto him, "Why hast thou done this?" Then Abbâ Pîôr made answer, saying, "Let [this thing] be not grievous "unto thee"; but Pambô was silent and sent him away. And after some time Rabbâ Pambô went to the cell of Abbâ Pîôr, and he took with him bread which had been dipped in water; and being asked, "Why hast thou done this?" the blessed man Pambô said unto him, "Let it not be grievous unto thee that "I have also dipped the bread in water."

Digitized by Google

Chapter xj. The history of the Blessed Ammonius

NOW this man Ammonius and his three brothers [i.e., Dioscorus, Eusebius, and Euthymius, who were called the "Tall Brothers" by Sozomen] and his two sisters were disciples of Rabbâ Pambô; and when they had attained unto the perfection of divine life and conversation they departed from the desert, and founded two monasteries, I mean, one for men and one for women, but they placed the monastery of the women at a sufficient distance from that of the men, for Ammonius did not greatly love the intercourse of speech. It was for this reason that a certain city desired that he should be its bishop, and the people thereof drew nigh unto the blessed man Timothy, Bishop of Alexandria, and entreated him to make the blessed Ammonius their bishop; and Timothy [who sat from 381–385] told them to bring Ammonius unto him and that he would make him their bishop. Then they took with them much people, and they went unto Ammonius to bring him, and when he saw them he tried to find means to take to flight. But when he saw that he was unable to escape from them, he tried to persuade them, with many oaths, that he would not accept it, but he was unable to make them give up their intention. And when they would not be persuaded by him, he seized a razor and cut off his left ear at the root, and said unto them, "Now I am indeed persuaded that "I cannot be that which ye are urging me to be, for the Law "also commandeth, 'The man whose ear hath been cut off "'shall not draw nigh unto the altar'" (Leviticus xxvi, 17); so they left him and went and informed the Bishop, who said unto them, "This law is observed among the Jews, but even "if his nose was split and he had fine qualities I would make "him Bishop." Then the people went to Ammonius again and entreated him [to come], and when the pious man would not be persuaded by them, they wanted to take him and to make him come by force; but he said unto them, "If ye do [not] "leave me I will also slit my tongue"; and when they heard this they left him and departed.

Concerning this man Ammonius so wonderful a thing as the following is said. Whenever a carnal thought entered his mind he never spared his body, but he would make a piece of iron hot on the fire and lay it upon his members, so that they might always be in a state of wounds. From his youth up his rule was as follows: whatsoever had been cooked by fire he would never eat. He could repeat the books of the Old and New Testaments by heart, and he used to read also the books [which were composed by] excellent men, by Origen, and by

Digitized by Google

Didymus, and by Pierius, and by Stephen [containing] about ten thousand six hundred sayings; concerning this the great fathers who lived in the desert bear witness. It is also said that this man possessed the power of foretelling events, and living in his cell he was so great a comforter to the brethren who lived in the desert that no other man could be compared with him. Now the blessed Evagrius, who was clothed with the spirit, and was skilled in examining thoughts, used to say, "I never saw any man who had attained more closely unto im-"passibility than Ammonius."

Once a certain need of those who were dwelling in the desert called the blessed man Ammonius, and Rufinus who was at that time the prefect [also] greatly persuaded him, and he went up to Constantinople. And with him there were also the holy bishops, and other monks who had come from various provinces [to be present] at the service of restoration of a certain martyrium which Rufinus had built. And Rufinus wished him to receive him after holy baptism at the service of restoration of the temple which he had built, and so the blessed man received him from the bishops who had baptized him. Thus, as was right, Rufinus paid to the blessed man Ammonius the honour which is due to a life of asceticism, and he used to listen to him in everything; and after a short time he died and was buried in the martyrium which is called the "martyrium "of Rufinus," and many helpful acts took place at his grave on behalf of those who [were worthy] of help.

Chapter xij. The History of the Blessed Benjamin

AND there was also in the mountain of Nitria a marvellous man whose name was Benjamin, who attained to a high state of perfection in the ascetic life, for he had fasted and toiled for eighty years. Now he was held to be worthy of the gift of the craft of the physician, and from every wound (*or* stripe) upon which he laid his hand, and which Christ blessed or gave [him the power to heal], straightway every pain departed. And this man, who was worthy of such a gift, collected water in his body for eight months before his death, and he was so much swollen that he might well have been called a second Job. And Dioscurus took us, that is to say, the blessed Origen and myself, and said unto us, "Come "ye and see a new Job, who whilst [suffering from] such a "severe disease of the body as this healeth others." And Benjamin gave thanks concerning his affliction beyond measure, and glorified God continually, and his soul rejoiced and was glad in the hope which it laid up for the saints. Now when we had gone and seen the swelling of his body we found

Digitized by Google

that it had become so large that a man could not with all his hand encircle one of his fingers; and being unable to look upon such a terrible affliction through disease we turned away our eyes. Then the blessed man Benjamin said unto us, "My sons, "pray that the inner man may not collect water. Even when "this my body was in health it in no wise helped me, and now "that it is sick it in no wise hindereth me." Now during the [last] eight months of his illness they made a broad chair for him, and he used to sit therein always, because he was not able to lie down upon a bed by reason of the necessity of his belly and of the other [members of his] body. And whilst he himself lived in such suffering through all his affliction he was healing others, and it is for this reason that I am compelled to narrate to you concerning the affliction of this righteous man, so that when such an affliction as this happeneth unto the righteous we may not hold the matter to be hard. Now when this blessed man died, the whole of the framework of the doorway had to be removed to enable them to bring out his body from his cell, for his body was very large indeed.

Chapter xiij. The history of Apollonius the Merchant

AND again another man, whose name was Apollonius, used to dwell in this Mount Nitria; and he was a merchant who had come there to learn to lead the life and conversation of an anchorite. Now this man found no handicraft at the exercise of which he could employ himself, and he could neither fast nor keep vigil like the other ascetics to any great extent. During the twenty years which he lived in this mountain it was his rule of life and triumph that by his own labour and toil he used to buy from Alexandria everything which was required by the brethren, and the things which were needed for the healing of the sick, and carry them to the sick. And it was a marvellous thing to see him going about among the monasteries and cells of the brethren each day, from the earliest dawn, when he set out, until the ninth hour, and he used to stand by the door and say, "Is there, peradventure, "anyone sick here?" And he carried about pomegranates, and dried cakes, and raisins, and eggs, and the things which are necessary for the sick. Now he found this rule of life easy to acquire, and to continue until his old age, and he was able to attend to the affairs of the five thousand brethren who were dwelling in the mountain. And when he died he left whatever he had unto another man like unto himself, and he begged him to carry out this ministration, because the [place where the monks lived] was a desert and was destitute of the things of the world

Digitized by Google

Chapter xiv. The Histories of the natural Brethren Paesius and Isaiah

AND there were also there two brethren, whose names were Paesius and Isaiah, who were the sons of a certain merchant who traded in Spain; and when their father died they divided his inheritance between them, and there came to each of them money which amounted to five thousand *dînârs*, and furniture, and raiment, and slaves, and property of all kinds. And these blessed men took counsel together and meditated together and said unto each other, "By "what manner of trafficking shall we live in this world? If we "continue to exercise the trade of our father, we shall only "double our labour and toil for [the benefit of] others; and "perhaps [our wealth] will fall into the hands of thieves by "land or of pirates by sea." And whilst they were being troubled by such thoughts as these they answered and said unto each other, "Let us come to the way of truth, and let "us acquire the life and conversation of the Christians, whereby "we shall both keep the benefit of what our father hath left us, "and get possession of our soul." And this proposition concerning the labour of the dwellers in the monasteries was pleasing unto them, and each of them found in his discipleship the power to judge as to what work he should embrace. And having divided their father's inheritance they both possessed the eager care to please God by the various kinds of labours of life of the mourner. One of them divided everything which had come to him and gave it to the churches and monastic habitations, and distributed it among the poor and needy; and he learned a handicraft at which he could work and earn [his] daily bread, and he was constant in prayer and fasting. The other brother did not distribute [his possessions], but he built himself a monastery and gathered together unto him a few brethren and providing therefor became a care unto him. All strangers and poor folk, and all the aged men and sick folk who thronged unto him he used to receive and relieve their wants. And every first day of the week, and every Sabbath, he used to prepare three tables and relieve the wants of every one who happened to be present there; and thus he spent all his possessions.

Now, when the two brothers died abundant blessing was ascribed unto them by the whole brotherhood, but the one brother pleased some of them [most], and the other the others; and although the brethren praised both brothers, a dispute arose among them concerning the superior merit of one or the other of the two brothers. Then the brethren went to the blessed

Digitized by Google

Pambô and related the matter unto him, and wished to learn which rule of life and labour was the greater and more excellent. And Pambô said unto them, "They are both perfect. "One man made manifest the work of Abraham by his hospi- "tality, and the other the self-denial of Elijah." And again the brethren said unto him, "How is it possible for the two to "be equal in merit? We praise and magnify him who em- "braced poverty, for we find that he did the work of the "Gospel in selling everything that he had and giving it to the "poor, and that every day, and at every season, both by day "and by night, he took up his cross and followed after his "Lord by his fasting and his prayers." And again the other brethren contended with them, saying, "The other brother "showed such supreme compassion on those who were stran- "gers and on those who were afflicted that he would even sit "in the highways and gather together the passers-by who "were in trouble; and not only did he relieve his own soul, "but he also brought a lightening unto many souls that were "heavy laden, and he would make ready the dead for the "grave and bury [them]." And the blessed Pambô said unto them, "Again I say unto you that both are equal [in merit], "and I will tell you how each of them became so. Unless the "one had fasted he would not have been worthy of the good- "ness and compassion of the other, and again, the other in "relieving the wants of strangers also lightened his own load, "for although a man may think that he hath trouble in recei- "ving [them] yet he also gaineth rest of body. But tarry ye "here a few days so that I may learn [the answer] from God, "and come ye [back] to me and I will declare [it] unto you. And after a few days they came unto him, and they asked him to tell them what had been revealed unto him; and he answered and said unto them, "I have seen them both standing in the "Paradise of Eden, as it were in the presence of God."

Chapter xv. The History of Macarius, the Child of his Cross

THERE was also a certain youth whose name was Macarius, and when he became a young man about eighteen years old, he used to pasture flocks and herds, along with [other] young men of his own age and position, by the side of the lake which is called Mareotis, and without wishing to do so he unwittingly committed a murder; and without saying a word to any man he straightway rose up and departed, and he went out and journeyed into the desert. Thus he attained to the fear of God, and to the love of men, in such wise that he esteemed himself lightly; and he passed three

Digitized by Google

years in the desert, in the open air, and without a roof [over his head]. Now in that country no rain falleth, and this every one, so to say, knoweth, either from hearsay or from actual experience. And after three years he built himself a cell, and he dwelt therein for five and twenty years [and performed] great labours; and he was held worthy of the divine gift of being able to treat with contempt the devils, and he was completely happy in the ascetic life and in the noble labours thereof. Now I dwelt hard by this man for no short time, and once I asked him, "What is thy thought about the sinfulness of "that murder [which thou didst commit]? And he said unto me, "I am entirely untroubled by it, for I am bound to con- "fess that the sin of [this] involuntary murder was the good "cause of the redemption of my life, and the testimony of the "Book confirmeth this view, saying not even Moses, the ser- "vant of the Lord, would have been held worthy of the divine "vision unless, through fear for the murder which he had "committed, he had forsaken Egypt, and come unto Mount "Sinai, where he was held to be worthy of converse with "God, and to compose the commandments of the spirit."

Now we speak these things, not because we wish to help murder, but only in order that we may particularly shew that spiritual excellences spring from tribulations, when a man is not of his own will persuaded to draw nigh unto goodness. Some spiritual excellences arise from the will, and some from tribulation; and in the works which I have found appended to this history I have discovered that the murder which Macarius committed belonged to this latter class. And Macarius prayed always, and he prayed with his arms and hands extended in the form of a cross. And when he had drawn nigh to the end of his course, which was not caused by illness, at that time [I say] he stood up in the corner of his cell, and extended his hands and arms in prayer, and thus praying he yielded up his spirit. And when he who used to bring him food came and saw him standing by the side of the wall with his hands stretched out, he remained standing outside thinking that Macarius was standing up in prayer, as was his wont. Then, having waited for about three hours, he opened the door and went in, and he said unto him, "Bless, master!" And when he did not answer him he drew nigh and shook him; and when he saw that he was dead he came to us and told us, and having come we saw him standing in the form of a cross, and we marvelled. Now when we had laid him out upon the ground we were unable to bring his hands nigh unto his body, and so we dug his grave in the form of a cross and laid him in it. And I was sorely grieved because of his depar-

Digitized by Google

ture, and I fell into a slumber and slept, and a voice came unto me, which said, "Inasmuch as during his lifetime he "loved the cross, which he bore through his good works, in "it also he shall have his rest; in the form of that which he "desired longingly hath he been buried, and in the same form "shall he stand up at the right hand on the day of Christ." And having heard these things I awoke, and I glorified God and the power of the Cross.

Chapter xvi. The History of the Blessed Nathaniel [died about 376 A.D.]

AND there was also another man among the aged ones whose name was Nathaniel, and him I never met in his life, for he died fifteen years before I entered into this mountain; but I have met those who dwelt with him for a long time. And having made enquiries of these I learned concerning the triumphs of the man, and they also shewed me his cell wherein at that time no man was living, because it was nigh unto the world; but Abbâ Nathaniel built it long ago when the monks were few in number.

Now they used to relate concerning this man that his patient endurance in his cell was such that he never moved from his place to go outside the door of his habitation for the disposition of his will. At the beginning he was laughed at by the Evil One, who mocketh at and leadeth astray every man, and he made Nathaniel to feel weariness in his first cell, and he went and built himself another cell in the neighbourhood of the city. Now after he had built the other cell and had dwelt therein, some three or four months later the devil, who had waged war against him from the beginning, came by night holding in his hand a sling like a hunter, and he was dressed in the garb of the Romans, and he was slinging [stones] with the sling which he was holding. Then the blessed man Nathaniel answered and said unto him, "Who art thou who "doest these things in the place wherein I dwell?" The devil said unto him, "I am he who made thee to flee from thy first "cell, and I have come that I may make thee to flee from this "place." Now when he knew that the devil was laughing at him because he had departed from his first [cell], straightway he turned and went back thereto, and he lived in his first cell for the space of thirty and seven years in such strict abnegation that he never passed outside the door, and meanwhile he was warring with the devil. And the wicked devil made him to experience so many afflictions and troubles in order to drive him out of his cell that it would be impossible for [any] man to recount them. But the Evil One watched [and obtained his

Digitized by Google

opportunity] in the arrival of the Bishops who came to Nathaniel (now they were all holy men), and whether the ordering of the matter was due to the will of God, or to the temptation of the Evil One, we know not, but he made Nathaniel to fall away somewhat from his intention. For when the Bishops had prayed and had gone forth, Nathaniel did not escort them the distance of one step, and the servants who were with them said [to him], "Dost thou possess the faculty "of pride that thou wilt not accompany the Bishops?" Then Nathaniel said unto them, "I died once and for all to my "lords the Bishops, and to the whole world, and I have a "secret matter concerning which it is God only Who knoweth "my heart, and why I did not go forth and escort them."

Then that devil, who was still making a mock of this self-abnegation, nine months before Nathaniel's death took upon himself the form of a young man who was about twenty years old, and he was following after an ass which was carrying bread in the bed of the river. Now when it was far into the evening the young man passed close to the cell, and pretended that the ass had fallen down under its burden, and he began to cry out, and said, "Abbâ Nathaniel, help me, and come "and render me assistance." And Nathaniel heard the voice of the young man who he thought was crying out, and he opened the door, and as he was standing inside, he spake with him, and said unto him, "Who art thou? And what dost thou "want me to do for thee?" And the young man said unto him, "I am such and such a young man, and I am carrying bread "to such and such a brother because he wisheth to make a "love feast, and the day which dawneth to-morrow will be the "Sabbath, and [bread for] the Offering will be necessary. "I beg of thee, therefore, not to tarry in assisting me, lest the "hyenas come and devour both me and the ass." Now there were many hyenas in that place.

Then the blessed Nathaniel stood still in great astonishment, and he was much troubled in his mind by the mercy which had revealed itself to him, and he meditated within himself, saying, "It is either through the command of God that I "must fall, or through my will [having reached] its limit." Finally he meditated within himself and said, "It is better for "him who hath guarded for all these years the limit of his "will, and hath not passed over his door, to remain in the "same condition which will put the Evil One to shame than "to go out"; and he prayed to God. Then he made answer unto him whom he believed to be a young man crying out, and said unto him, "Young man, hear me! I believe that the "God Whom I serve will send thee help if it be needed by

Digitized by Google

"thee, and that neither the hyenas nor anything else will harm "thee; but if thou art a temptation may God discover thy "craftiness!" And he shut the door and held his peace. And that devil was put to shame, and by reason of his wickedness he took the form of a whirlwind and the forms of wild asses which dance about and skip and break wind. This is the [story of the] triumph of the blessed Nathaniel, and this is the [story of] his labour and of his ending.

Chapter xvij. The history of the two exalted and excellent men, Macarius the Egyptian, the Disciple of Mar Abba Anthony, and Macarius the Alexandrian

CONCERNING the holy and immortal fathers, that is to say Macarius the Egyptian, and Macarius the Alexandrian, who were men to be feared and who were invincible athletes, and concerning the strife of their life and deeds, and conversation, it is exceedingly right and good that we should tell the story. Perhaps it will not be accepted by the unbelievers, and therefore I find it difficult to relate their history, and to set it down completely in writing, lest by so doing I should be accounted a liar; and that the Lord destroyeth those who speak falsehood the Holy Spirit maketh clearly manifest. Now, as I myself do not put to the lie the help of Christ, do not thou, O Lausus, thou believer in men, become an unbeliever in the triumphs of the holy fathers which are spoken of, but adorn thyself more and more with the deeds and conversation of these glorious men who were in very truth, even as they are called, blessed men.

The athlete of Christ, the first Macarius, was by race an Egyptian, and the second Macarius, although he was second to him in the matter of age, was nevertheless first in the opinion of the monks (*or* solitaries); and this man, whose name also was Macarius, which is interpreted "blessed," was from the city of Alexandria, and he was [one] of those who sold dried fruit and wine.

In* another manuscript I have found a different version [of the history of the two Macarii which I have used] in the preparation of [this] history, and I set this down here also; now it reads as follows:

And as concerning the two blessed men whose names were the same, inasmuch as their rule of life and conversation were of an exceedingly exalted character, perhaps many will not believe [what I write]. I, however, am afraid lest I may understate and belittle their triumphs in any way whatsoever, and lie

* This is a note of a careful scribe or editor.

Digitized by Google

concerning them, for it is written, "Thou wilt destroy those "who speak falsehood" (Psalm xii, 3). The Holy Spirit hath passed this sentence upon me, therefore, O beloved and faithful men, believe ye me. Now one of these two blessed men was an Egyptian by race, and the other was an Alexandrian who sold dried fruits. First of all I will tell the story of the ascetic excellences of Macarius the Egyptian, the whole of whose years were ninety; he was thirty years old when he went up to the desert, and [he] lived therein for sixty years. And he was given the gift of [performing] mighty deeds in such a remarkable manner that he was called by the fathers "the "aged youth," because straightway and quickly he ascended to the highest grade of ascetic excellence and gifts, and to the power of interpreting the Scriptures, and to spiritual foresight. And the gift of possessing power over devils was also given to him, and he was also esteemed worthy of the priesthood. With this blessed man there lived in the further (*or* inner) desert, which is called "Scete," two disciples; one of these was his servant, for many folk were wont to come unto him to be healed, and the other remained always in a cell which was nigh unto Macarius. And when much time had passed by, Macarius looked and said unto him that ministered unto him (now his name was John, and he afterwards became the elder in the place of the blessed man), he answered, I say, and said unto him, "Hear me, O John, and receive the rebuke with "which I rebuke thee. For thou art suffering temptation, and "behold the spirit of the love of money (i.e., avarice) tempt- "eth thee, for even so have I seen. And I know that if thou "wilt listen unto me thy end in this place shall be praised, and "no harm shall draw nigh unto thy habitation. But if thou "wilt not hearken unto me, because of the love of money which "moveth thee, the leprosy of Gehazi (2 Kings v, 27) shall "come upon thee at the end." And it came to pass some fifteen or twenty years after the death of the blessed man, John forgot his commandment, and because he used to steal from the poor, his body became so covered with leprosy that there was not in the whole of it one sound spot large enough for a man to lay his finger upon. Thus the prophecy of the blessed Macarius concerning John actually came to pass.

Now if we were to attempt to describe the food and drink of the holy man, we should do what is superfluous, because among the thoughtless monks who lived in that place there was not to be found any one thing which could lead to excess either in eating or drinking; first because of the poverty of the spot, and secondly because of the divine zeal which they display towards each other. But I may mention his sad and stern

Digitized by Google

habits of self-denial in various other ways. And they relate concerning him that he was at all times in a state of wonder at some divine vision, and that he used to become like a drunken man by reason of some hidden vision, and that his mind was more often exalted unto God than it was concerned with the things which are in this world, and those which are under the heavens. And, as concerning the wonderful things which God wrought by his hands, it is not seemly that we should keep silence, and of him the following marvellous things are told.

A certain Egyptian loved another man's wife, but since he was not able to incite her to love him and to make her yield to his will, he spake unto a certain magician, saying, "Make "this woman to love me, or employ thy sorcery in some way "so that her husband may hate her, and cast her out." Now when the magician had received money not a little, he made use of his sorceries, and he made the woman to appear in the form of a mare; and when her husband went into his house from outside, and saw her, astonishment seized him [at the sight of] a mare lying upon his bed. Then he lifted up his voice in a sorrowful cry, and he wept tears, and heaved sighs; and he spake with her, but she made no reply unto him, and she answered him not a word. And having seen what had taken place, he went to the elder of the village (i.e., the Shêkh al-Balad), and told him concerning this matter, and brought him and took him in and shewed him what had happened. And for a space of three days he knew not what the matter was, for the mare neither ate dried grass like an animal, nor did she partake of bread like a daughter of man; and she did without food of either kind. Finally, however, in order that God might be glorified, and a miracle might also be made manifest at the hands of the blessed Macarius, and his spiritual perfection be made known, it entered into the mind of the man who was the woman's husband to take her to the desert to the blessed Macarius. And having saddled her like a mare, and thrown over her a halter, like an animal, he led her away and departed to the desert.

And when the man arrived at the cell of the blessed Macarius, the brethren who were standing by the side of the cell of the blessed Macarius saw him, and they wanted to keep back the husband of the woman, and strove with him, saying, "Why hast thou "brought this mare into the desert?" And the man said unto them, "That she may receive mercy, and be healed." They said unto him, "What aileth her?" And he answered and said unto them, "She is a woman who hath been suddenly trans-"formed into a mare, and behold, she hath eaten no food for "three days." Then the brethren went and told the blessed

Digitized by Google

Macarius what the matter was, and when they came to inform him they found him standing inside [his cell] and praying for her, for God had already revealed this matter unto him, and he was praying for the woman. And the holy man Macarius answered and said unto his disciples: "Ye are mares which "have the eyes of horses; but that mare is a woman. She "hath not been changed from her nature of a woman except "in the sight to those who have made a mistake; and that "she appeareth as a mare is only an error of the sight of those "who see her." Then the blessed man took water and blessed it, and he threw it over her head and it ran down all over her body; and the blessed man prayed and straightway he made her to appear in the form of a woman to every man. Then he gave her some sacramental bread and made her to eat it before every man, and then he sent her away healed with her husband; and they departed from him rejoicing and praising God. And the blessed man exhorted the woman, and said unto her, "Be not at any time remote from the Church, and deprive not "thyself of the Holy Mysteries, for all these things have hap-"pened unto thee because for five weeks thou didst not partake "of the Offering."

Let us now speak about his other excellences, and also of his sad and stern habits of self-denial in other particulars. Now because the large numbers of people who came to be blessed by him gave him much trouble, he thought out the following plan in his mind. He dug out a passage (*or* trench) in his cell which was about twenty measures [in width], and he made from it a tunnel of considerable length, [and it extended] from his cell to the distance of half a mile; at the place where the passage came to an end he made above the end of it a small cave. And when large numbers of people came to him and troubled him, he used to leave his cell secretly and pass along hidden by the tunnel and hide himself in the cave, where no one could find him. Now he used to do this whenever he wished to escape from the vain praise (*or* glory) of the children of men. And one of his most strenuous disciples told us, saying, "As he "was going from his cell to the cave he used to recite four "and twenty antiphons, and as he was coming back four and "twenty also; and whenever he went from his cell to the church "he used to pray four and twenty prayers during his passage "[thither], and four and twenty as he was coming back." And moreover, they say that he gave life to a dead man in order that he might convert a certain heathen who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, and this was spoken of throughout the desert.

Once a certain unmarried man who was vexed by an evil

Digitized by Google

devil was brought unto Macarius, being carefully fettered by two other men, and his mother had caused him to be brought unto him. Now the devil used to act upon him in the following manner. After he had eaten three baskets of bread and drunk three bottles of water he used to vomit, and scatter the bread and water in the air in the form of smoky vapour, and in this wise his food and his drink were consumed in waste, even as anything which is cast into the fire is consumed. Now there are certain kinds of devils which are called "fiery," for there are varieties among devils even as there are among men, in disposition if not in nature. And inasmuch as his mother had not that wherewith to satisfy him, he used to eat his own offal and drink his own water; and his mother besought the blessed man with tears on behalf of her son, and Macarius took him and prayed over him, and entreated God on his behalf. And a day or two after he had healed him of his trial, the blessed man cried unto the mother of the young man, and said unto her, "How much hast thou need of for the food of one day for him?" And she said unto him, "Ten pounds of bread." Then he rebuked her and said, "Thou hast said too much." And after seven days Macarius made the young man so that he needed to eat three pounds [only, which was sufficient for him] to work upon and live. Now this miracle God wrought by the hand of the blessed Macarius, whose soul now sojourneth with the angels. I never saw this man, for he died one year before I entered the desert.

Chapter xviij. The History of Macarius the Alexandrian, the Glorious

AS for the other Macarius, the Alexandrian, I did see him, for he was an elder in the place which is called the "Cells," wherein I myself lived for nine years, and he lived for three years after I entered therein; some of [his] wonderful acts I myself have seen, and some of them I have learned from others, and [of others] I have also heard rumours. Now his sad, stern life of self-denial was as follows: Whensoever he heard of any beautiful deed being done by any man whatsoever, he must straightway carry it into practice in a fuller form. He once heard from a certain man that all the brethren of Tabenna never tasted any food whatsoever which had been cooked by fire during the whole of the Forty Days' Fast, and he straightway determined within himself that for seven years he would not eat any food which had been cooked by fire, and that he would not partake of anything except young wild herbs, and vegetables which had been made soft by soaking in water, or similar things. And when he had completed this rule of life he

Digitized by Google

heard of a monk in a certain monastery who only ate one pound of bread each day, and he straightway broke his bread into pieces and cast it into a vessel with a narrow mouth, and he determined within himself that he would eat nothing that his hand could not draw up out of the vessel the first time [he put it in]. And time after time, he used to tell the story with a smile, and say, "When I put my hand down I could fill it "readily, but I could not draw it up full because the mouth of "the vessel was [too] narrow, and it would not let me take it "out full." Now he lived this hard life for three years, and ate [daily only] four or five ounces of bread; and of water also he only drank sufficient to enable him to eat his bread. Of oil [he took] only one flask each year, making use of it only on the great First Day of the Resurrection, and on the great day of Pentecost, and at the Nativity, and at the Epiphany, and when he received [the Mysteries] during the Forty Days' Fast. I will tell also of the various other practices of his sad, hard life. He determined [once] to vanquish sleep, and it is related that he never entered under a roof for twenty days, and that he was burnt up by the exceedingly great heat of the sun at noonday during all this time, and that during the nights he was without rest. And he himself told us, "Had I not quickly gone in under a "roof and slept, and rested myself the brains in my head would "have dried up, and I should become like a drunk man. But," he would say, "I have been conquered against my will, for "although the nature of the body hath been overcome I have "given it what it needeth."

And again, once when he was sitting in his cell a gnat bit him in the leg and he suffered pain, and he crushed the gnat in his hand and killed it. Then straightway he despised himself because he had avenged himself upon the gnat, and he passed upon himself the sentence that he should go to the place which is called "Scete," that is to say, the inner desert, and sit there naked for six months. For there were many great gnats (i.e., mosquitoes) there, and they were so savage that they could pierce the skins of pigs, and they resembled wasps; and his whole body was so eaten and swollen that a man would have thought that he had the hide of an elephant, and when he came [back] to his cell six months later they could only recognize from his voice that he was Macarius.

And again he desired greatly to go and see the garden of Jannes and Jambres, the magicians of Egypt, because, as he himself told us, they had obtained power, and riches and dominion, and had built there a tomb, and had established there great works in marble; now their tomb was ornamented with many things, and they had also placed there gold and

Digitized by Google

things of a marvellous character, and trees and plants, for the place had been made into a garden, and they had also dug a well there. Now because Macarius did not know the way, he observed the course of the stars, and travelled thereby; and thus he journeyed through the open desert as upon the sea. And he took with him also a bundle of thin reeds, and at the end of each mile he used to drive a reed into the ground like a rock, so that he might be able to find the way when he had to come back. And when he had journeyed for nine days, and had drawn nigh the place wherein was the tomb, the Evil One, who always wageth war against the athletes of the Lord, gathered together all the reeds which the blessed man Macarius had driven into the ground, and put them under his head for a pillow whilst he was asleep, when he was about one mile from the garden, and when the blessed man woke up he found the reeds. Now it is probable that God permitted this thing to happen for His own glory and for the triumph of His servant, so that Macarius might not put his confidence in reeds, but upon God, Who by means of a pillar of cloud led the children of Israel in the desert for forty years. And Macarius told us, saying, "Seventy devils came forth against me from that gar-"den, and they flew about before my face like ravens, and "they were crying out and groaning, and saying, 'What "'seekest thou here, O Macarius? What seekest thou, O "'monk? Why hast thou come hither? Thou canst not stay "'here.' And I said unto them, 'I only want to go in and see "'[the garden], and then I will depart.' And I entered therein, "and I saw everything, and [I found] hanging over the well "an iron chain with a brass bucket, but they were rusted "through age; and the pomegranates which were therein "were dried up and burnt by the sun." And having seen [the garden] he turned and came back in twenty days.

Now when he was coming back he lacked water, and the bread also which he had carried was finished, and he was nigh to perish, and was in great tribulation through thirst, when suddenly he saw a damsel who was arrayed in a spotless linen garment and who carried a pitcher of water wherefrom water dripped, and she was distant about half a mile from him. Then he followed her for three days, thinking that he would overtake her and drink, but he did not do so, although she seemed to him to be standing still in one place and bearing a pitcher. Then he despaired of obtaining water to drink, and he was brought very low, when suddenly there appeared unto him there a herd of buffaloes. And among them there was one which had with her a little sucking calf, and she stood still before him; and he drew nigh and sucked milk from her. And

Digitized by Google

she came with him through all the desert even unto his cell and gave him milk to drink, and she would not let her calf suck from her in those days.

And on another occasion the brethren were digging a well in a certain place which was called Thrônôn, when a serpent which belonged to the class of deadly serpents bit him. Then Macarius took hold of the serpent with his two hands by his upper and lower lip and, grasping him tightly, tore him in twain, from his head even unto his tail, and said unto him, "Since Christ did not send thee, why didst thou dare to "come [here]?" Now the blessed man had four cells in the desert: one in Scete, in the inner desert, one in Libya (?), one in the "Cells," and one in Mount Nitria. [Two] of these were without windows, and in them he used to dwell in darkness during the Forty Days' Fast, another was so narrow that he could not stretch out his legs, but another, wherein he used to receive the brethren who came unto him, was wide and spacious. And he healed so many people who were possessed by devils that no man could count them. Once when I and the blessed Evagrius were there in his cell they brought unto him from Thessalonica a certain virgin who had been a paralytic for many years, but by means of prayers and by anointing her with oil with his hands he cured her in twenty days and sent her away whole to her city and home; and when she had departed she sent to him gold and goods of various kinds.

And again, he heard from a certain man that the monks of the Monastery of Tabenna lived stern lives of self-denial, and he took counsel with himself, and put on the garb of a young man and a husbandman, and in fifteen days he went up to the Monastery of the Broken Ones by the way of the desert, and came to the Monastery of Tabenna, seeking to see the head of that Monastery whose name was Pachomius. Now Pachomius was a man elect and perfect, and he had the gift of prophecy, but the [business] of the blessed Macarius was hidden from him. And when Macarius saw him he said unto him, "Abbâ, "I beseech thee to receive me into thy monastery that I may "be a monk therein." Pachomius said unto him, "Thou art "an old man, and art not able to fast. The brethren are men "who fast, and thou canst not endure their labours, and be- "cause thou art not able to do this [thou wilt] be offended, "and thou wilt go forth and wilt abuse them"; and he would receive him neither the first day nor the second day, nor any day until seven days [were passed]. But since he remained fasting throughout all these days he said unto the head of the monastery, "Abbâ, receive me. And if I do not fast like unto "you, and toil as ye do, command them to cast me out;" so

Digitized by Google

the head of the monastery persuaded the brethren to receive him. Now the number of the members of the brotherhood of that monastery were four hundred men, [and they are thus even] unto this day; and they brought in Macarius.

And when a few days had passed, the Forty Days' Fast drew nigh, and Macarius saw that large numbers of the brethren kept the fast and observed the rule of the house in various ways. There were some who ate daily at eventide, and some [who fasted for some] nights, and there were also some who ate once in five days; and some stood up the whole night through, and sat down in the daytime. And the blessed man Macarius took a large quantity of leaves of date palms, and brought them [to his cell], and he stood up in one corner thereof, and he neither touched bread nor water, nor bent the knee, nor lay down, until the forty days had passed, and the days of unleavened bread had come; but each Sunday he used to eat a few moist cabbage leaves so that he might pretend to be taking food. Whensoever he went outside his cell for a needful purpose he returned straightway and stood up in his place without speaking a word unto any man; and he stood in his place and held his peace, and he used to do nothing else except pray within himself, and as he stood up he wove rope of the palm leaves. And when all the brethren saw him they made a tumult against the head of their monastery, and said unto him, "Whence hast thou brought upon us this "man, who hath no body and who is incapable of being tired "out, to judge us and to take vengeance upon us? [Either "send him away and let him depart], or know that we all will "go away." Now when the head of the monastery had heard from the brethren concerning the fasting of Macarius and his rule of life, he prayed to God and entreated Him to reveal to him who this man was, and it was revealed unto him by God. Then he went and took him by his hand, and he brought him to the house of prayer to the place where the altar was stablished, and he answered and said unto him, "Come, O blessed "old man, thou art Macarius, and thou hast hidden thyself "from me. For many years past I have earnestly desired to "see thee, and now I thank thee that thou hast broken the "heart of the brethren somewhat, so that they may not imagine "any longer that they observe their fast with excessive rigour. "Go then in peace to thy place, for in no slight measure hast "thou edified us, and do thou continue to pray for us"; then Pachomius having persuaded him, Macarius departed from thence.

And Macarius used to say, "Every kind and variety of rule "of the life of self-denial and fasting which I have desired to

Digitized by Google

"observe with all my heart have I kept, but there came upon "me the desire that my mind should be with God in heaven "[if] only for five days, and that I should be exalted above "the anxious cares and thoughts of material things. And "having meditated upon this thing, I shut the door of the "courtyard and of the cell, and I constrained myself so that I "might not give a word to [any] man. And I continued thus, "and I began [to fulfil this thought] on the second day of the "week, and I commanded my mind, and said unto it, 'Thou "'shalt not descend from heaven, for behold, there thou hast "'angels, and the princes of angels, and all the hosts which "'are in heaven, and especially the Good and Gracious God, "'the Lord of all. Thou shalt not come down from heaven.' "And continuing thus I was sufficient for this thing for two "days and two nights, and I constrained the Evil One to such "a degree that he became a flame of fire and burnt up every- "thing which I had in my cell, and at length the very mat "upon which I stood blazed with fire, and I thought that I "should be wholly consumed. Now when, finally, fear of the fire "took hold upon me my mind came down from heaven on the "third day, because I was unable to keep my mind collected "in the state in which it had been, and I came down to the "contemplation of the world and the things thereof. And this "happened so that I might not boast."

And on another occasion I went to his cell, and I found a priest lying there by the side of the door; his whole head was consumed, and was eaten into holes by the disease which is called cancer, and the bone of his skull was shewing through. Now this man had come unto him to be healed, but Macarius did not wish to see him. And I myself besought the blessed man and said unto him, "I beseech thee to have mercy upon "him, and to give unto him a word." Then he answered and said unto me, "He is not worthy to be healed, for [this] "punishment was sent upon him from God. But if thou de- "sirest that he shall be healed persuade him to forsake the "ministration at the altar, for he used both to be minister at "the altar and to commit fornication, and for this reason he "was punished. Persuade him then to forsake [his ministra- "tions], and God will heal him." And having said these things to the sick man he pledged himself and swore an oath, saying, "I will never minister at the altar again"; and afterwards Macarius received him, and said unto him, "Dost thou be- "lieve that God existeth?" and the priest said unto him, "Yea, "master." And again Macarius said unto him, "Peradventure "thou art able to scoff [at God]," and the priest said unto him, "Nay." Then the blessed man said unto him, "If now thou

Digitized by Google

"dost acknowledge thy folly, and also that thy punishment "was from God and that it was a fitting punishment for thy "deeds, first of all confess thy transgressions." And the priest gave a promise that he would not sin again, and that he would not minister at the altar, but that he would lead a life which was suited to the capacity and grade of those who were in the world; and Macarius laid his hand upon him, and in a few days he was made whole, and the hair grew upon his head [again], and he went to his house healed whilst I was looking at him.

And again a certain young man who had an evil devil was brought unto him and he laid one hand on the head of the young man and another on his heart, and he prayed until he made the devil to rise up in the air, whereupon the young man breathed out his breath and became like a great [empty] skin bottle; and he suddenly uttered a cry, and water flowed out from all parts of his members, and he was made whole and became as he was before the devil entered into him. Then Macarius anointed him with the oil of the martyrs, and commanded his father that he was not to taste flesh or wine for forty days, until he was thoroughly healed.

And again on a certain occasion certain thoughts of vainglory vexed him, and urged him to go forth from his cell and to depart and heal the multitudes in Rome and to give assistance unto those who were lying [there] sick, for the grace and might of God were inciting him greatly to heal those who were possessed of devils and to make whole those who were diseased; but although he was much disturbed in his mind [on this matter], yet he was not persuaded to go, for the Evil One greatly pressed upon him in his thoughts. Finally, however, he lay down inside the door of his cell, and having set his legs (*or* feet) on the threshold, he cried out and said, "Pull, un-"clean devils, pull hard, for I will never go [thither] on my "legs, and if you are able to carry me you must do so thus." And he took an oath to them [i.e., the brethren], saying, "I "continued to lie thus until the evening, and if ye had not "lifted me up, I should never have moved from my place." And when the night had come he stood up.

And again, on another occasion, when these thoughts were mounting up [in his mind] he filled with sand a basket which held two or three bushels, and lifting it on his shoulders he began to wander about [with it] in the desert. And his kinsman Theosebius the Antiochian met him and he said unto him, "What art thou carrying on thy shoulders, father? Tell "me, so that I may carry thy load, and that thou mayest not "toil thyself." And he said unto him, "I am making to work

Digitized by Google

"that which hath made me to work, for it wisheth to go forth "from its state of rest, and it fatigueth me"; and having walked about for a long time he went into his cell, having exhausted his body.

And one day there laid hold upon me the chills of fever, and I went and sat down, and watched him from the window (*or* opening in the wall), in the feebleness of his old age. And I was thinking about him that he was like unto one of the brethren of old, and I began to listen unto him that I might see what he was saying, or what he was doing; now he was alone inside [his cell], and he was one hundred years old, and moreover, his teeth had fallen out by reason of his old age. And I listened unto him and to what he was saying, and he was striving with his soul and with Satan, and he was saying unto himself, "What dost thou wish for, O thou wicked old man? Behold, "thou hast eaten oil, and thou hast drunk wine, what more "dost thou wish for? Wouldst [thou] eat Satan's white food?" And he was reviling himself. And moreover he said unto Satan, "I cannot conquer thee in any wise, and thou art not able to "do anything unto me; get thee gone from me." And again he said unto himself, "How long shall I be with thee?"

And moreover, Paphnutius, the disciple of this man, related unto myself and unto the blessed Evagrius, saying, "One day a female hyena took her whelp, which was blind, "and came and knocked with her head at the door of the "court when he was sitting therein, and she dropped the "whelp at his feet. And he took up the whelp, and prayed, and "spat in its eyes, and straightway its eyes were opened and it "saw; and its mother gave it suck, and then took it up and "went forth. And one day later she brought unto the blessed "man a sheep-skin cloak, that is to say, a skin which hath "been stripped off a sheep; and the blessed woman Melania "spoke unto me concerning this sheep-skin cloak, saying, 'I "myself received this sheep-skin cloak from the hands of "Macarius as a blessing."

And Paphnutius also spake thus, "From the first day where-"on he received baptism he never spat upon the ground, and he "lived for sixty years after his baptism."

Now in his latter days he was beardless, and he only had a small quantity of hair upon his [upper] lip and upon his chin; because by reason of his excessive fasting and the abstinence of his solitary life not even the hair of [his] beard would grow. I once went unto him when weariness of the ascetic life had laid hold upon me, and I said unto him, "Father, what shall "I do? For my thoughts vex me, and say unto me, 'Thou "'art doing no [good], get thee gone from here.'" And he said

Digitized by Google

unto me, "Say unto thy thoughts, 'For Christ's sake I will "'guard these walls.'"

I have written for thee these few things out of a very large number concerning the life and deeds of the holy man Macarius, and concerning the solitary monks who were his companions; and everything is indeed true. I entreat all those brethren who read in this book, or who desire to take a copy therefrom, not to forget [to write] after [this section] the narrative which is found in certain of the codices at the end of the above history which relateth unto the matters of Macarius, as if these histories had been composed by Hieronymus, but they must know that of a certainty that they were composed by Palladius. For I have found the absolute ending of this book which belonged to the histories of the matters of Macarius, with an apology and a preface which were composed by Palladius [and addressed] to Lausus the Prefect, wherein he maketh known concerning all the various kinds of the divers histories of men and of women which were composed by him; and I will prepare this apology and preface, and by the help of God I will write them down in the proper place.

Chapter xix. Of the Blessed Man Paul the Simple, the Disciple of Abba Anthony

NOW there was a certain husbandman whose name was Paul, who was more simple and innocent in nature than are [usually] the children of men; and he had a wife who was beautiful in her appearance, and wicked in her deeds and actions, and she had wandered from him and had been committing adultery for a long time. And one day, suddenly Paul went into [his house] from the field, and he found her and another working impurity together; now this took place so that Divine Grace might incite Paul [to follow] that which was more excellent. And having [gone in and] seen them, he laughed chastely, and answered and said, "It is good, it is "good, truly she is not accounted mine by me. By Jesus, "henceforth I will not take her again. Get thee gone, and be-"hold she is thine, she and her children: and as for me, I will "go and become a monk." And saying nothing unto any man he went away a journey of eight stages, and he arrived at the cell of Mâr Anthony the Great. And having knocked at the door, the blessed man Mâr Anthony went out, and he said unto Paul, "What dost thou seek?" Paul said unto him, "I "seek to become a monk." Mâr Anthony answered and said unto him, "[Thou art] an old man eighty years old, and it is "impossible for thee to become a monk here; but depart to

Digitized by Google

"the village, and work in the fields for thy living, and give "thanks unto God at the same time that thou art not able to "endure the afflictions of the desert." And again Paul answered and said unto him, "Whatsoever thou wilt teach "me, that will I do." Anthony said unto him, "I have told "thee that thou art an old man, and thou canst not [do it]; "but if thou wishest to become a monk, get thee gone to some "monastic house, and abide where the brethren are many, "and where they will be able to bear with thy sickness (*or* "infirmity). As for me, I live by myself alone here, and I only "eat once in five days, and even then I do not eat a full meal." With these and suchlike words did Anthony frighten Paul. And as he would not be persuaded to depart, Anthony went into [his cell], and shut the door upon himself for three days, and because of him he did not go outside his cell for three whole days, not even for his need's sake. Nevertheless Paul did not go away; and on the fourth day, when his need compelled him, Anthony opened the door and went forth. And again he said unto Paul, "Get thee gone, O old man, why dost "thou trouble me? It is impossible for thee to stay here." Paul said unto him, "It is impossible for me to die in any other "place except this."

And the blessed Anthony, having looked carefully and seen that he was carrying no food with him, and no bread and no water, and that he had fasted during the four days which he had remained, said within himself, "Peradventure he will escape and "die, and will plunge my soul in tribulation"; so he accepted him and brought him into [his cell]. And because of Paul during those days Anthony performed exceedingly severe ascetic labours, the like of which, even in his early manhood, he had never performed. And he soaked [palm] leaves in water, and gave them unto Paul, and said unto him, "Take these palm "leaves, and weave a mat therefrom even as do I myself." And the old man Paul took [them], and wove them [into a mat] fifteen cubits [long], until at the ninth hour he was exhausted. And Anthony, seeing what he had woven, was angry with him, and said unto him, "Thou hast woven [the leaves] "loosely, unweave [them], and weave [them] over again neatly "and closely." And Paul unwove what he had woven, and wove the leaves over again, but still he wove too loosely, because the leaves had become twisted through [the former] weaving and unweaving. Meanwhile Paul was fasting all these days, and Anthony laid these hard labours upon him while his soul was vexed with hunger, so that he might become disgusted and depart from him.

Now when Anthony saw that Paul was neither angry nor

Digitized by Google

wrathful, and that he made no complaint, his mercy made itself manifest; and behold when Paul had lived [there another] day, he said unto him, "Dost thou wish to eat a piece "of bread?" The old man Paul said unto him, "As it pleas- "eth thee, father." And this also especially shamed Mâr Anthony, that he did not hasten in his desire to the promise of food, but that he cast all his desire upon him. Thereupon Anthony said unto him, "Set the table and bring "bread." And Anthony placed on the table four loaves, each of which was of the weight of about six ounces, and he dipped them in water because they were dry, and he placed one before himself and three before Paul. And having placed them [there] he sang a psalm which he knew twelve times, and he recited twelve prayers that he might try Paul, but Paul prayed with him in gladness; and after the twelve prayers they sat down to eat in the late evening. Having eaten one loaf Anthony did not touch another, but the old man Paul ate slowly, and [when Anthony had finished] he had still some of his loaf [to eat], and Anthony was waiting for him to finish it. And having finished it, he answered and said unto him, "Little father, "wilt thou eat another loaf?" And Paul said unto him, "If "thou wilt eat another I will also; but if thou wilt not, I will "not." Anthony saith unto him, "I have had enough, for I "am a monk." And Paul said unto him, "I also have had "enough, for I also seek to become a monk." And after these things Anthony again stood up, and made twelve prayers, and when they had said together the psalms twelve times they slept for a little during the night, and then they sang and prayed until the morning.

And when Anthony saw that the old man was carrying out with gladness a rule of life similar unto his own in every respect, he said unto him, "If thou art able to bear every "day passed in this wise, then stay with me." Paul said unto him, "Although I know nothing else, yet the things which "I do know I can perform easily"; and on another day Anthony said unto him, "Behold, thou hast become a monk." And a few months afterward when Anthony saw that his soul was perfect before God, and that he was simple beyond measure, and that Divine Grace was helping him, he built him a cell at a distance of about three or four miles away, and said unto him, "Behold, thou art a monk, and henceforth thou must "live by thyself so that thou mayest receive the temptation of "devils." Now when Paul had lived by himself for a year, the gift of healing and of casting out devils was given unto him

And in those times they brought unto Anthony a certain man who was vexed by a fierce devil, and that devil was one

Digitized by Google

of the princes of the devils, and he was so fierce that he would even revile and blaspheme the heavens. And when Anthony saw the man he said, "I cannot heal this man, for [over this "race of princes] neither the gift nor the power [of healing] "hath been given unto me; unto Paul it belongeth to heal "this man." And Anthony therefore took them with him and went unto him, and said unto him, "O Abbâ Paul, cast out "this devil from this man, so that, being made whole, he "may depart to his house." Then Paul said unto him, "And "what wilt thou do?" And Anthony said unto him, "I am "not able to do it, for I have other work [to do]"; and he left the man with Paul and went [back] to his cell. Then the old man Paul rose up and prayed a prayer with great feeling, and he began to speak unto that devil, saying, "Father Anthony "saith, 'Go forth from this man.'" And the devil answered with blasphemies, saying, "I will not go forth, O thou who "eatest white bread"; then the old man took his shoulder garment (*or* skull cap), and began to smite the devil on his back and sides, saying, "I tell thee that Abbâ Anthony saith, "'Get thee forth from him'"; whereupon the devil began to curse and revile Abbâ Anthony and the old man Paul. Finally Paul said [unto him], "Wilt thou go forth, or must I go and "tell Christ, yea Jesus? For if thou wilt not go forth I will "go and tell Christ, and great woe shall come upon thee"; and again he blasphemed and said, "I will not go forth." Then was the blessed man Paul wroth with him, and he went out from his cell; now it was the season of noon, and the heat with the Egyptians [at this time] is so fierce that it is akin to the heat of the fiery furnace of the Babylonians. And he stood upon a stone and prayed, and spake thus, "Behold, O Jesus "Christ, Who wast crucified in the days of Pontius Pilate, I will "not come down from this stone, and I will neither eat nor "drink until I die unless Thou dost cast out that devil from "this man, and dost set him free from him." And whilst these words were yet in his mouth the devil cried out by reason of his tribulation, and said, "By Hercules, by whom am I ruled, "by Hercules, I am being persecuted with violence, for the "simplicity of Paul pursueth me; whither shall I go?" Paul saith unto him, "To the uttermost depths of the abyss"; and straightway the devil went forth from the man, and he transformed himself and became like unto a mighty dragon seventy cubits long, and he wriggled along the ground and in this wise went down to the Red Sea, that might be fulfilled that which is written, "Perfect faith removeth mountains" (St. Matthew xvii, 20). This is the triumph of Paul, who was called the "Simple" by the whole brotherhood.

Digitized by Google

Chapter xx. Of the Blessed Man Pachomius

AND there was also another man whose name was Pachomius, who was seventy years old and who dwelt in that mountain which is called Scete; unto him I once went when lustful thoughts concerning women were afflicting me, and when my mind was dark and obscured by the thoughts of lust, and by the visions and heaviness of the nights, and when I was well nigh departing from the desert, for lust laid upon me many things [hard to bear]. Now I did not reveal unto my neighbours and unto the brethren who were living with me my tribulations, and not even unto my master Evagrius; but I went forth and I began to wander about in the desert, and I saw one of the old men who had grown old in the place—now they were all perfect fathers—and after this I saw this blessed old man Pachomius, and I found that he was superior to them all in his life, and deeds, and in his understanding. And I took courage to reveal unto him the strife of my mind, and he spake unto me thus: "Do "not imagine that this is a strange matter in any way. This "thing hath not happened unto thee through thine own negli- "gence, and the place itself in which thou livest is a witness "for thee, for it is restricted in the matter of things of every "kind, and there is no woman therein; this lust hath fallen "upon thee through [thy] strenuousness. For this warfare "of lust and also of fornication is of a threefold [character]; "sometimes it setteth our body against us when it is healthy "and well fed, and at others lust itself, with the natural pas- "sion which is implanted in us [attacketh us], and at others "the Evil One himself because of his envy. And I have "watched many times, and I have found that it is even as "I have said unto thee." And he said unto me, "I, the old "man whom thou seest, have lived in this cell for forty years, "and I have taken the utmost care for my life and for the re- "demption of my soul, and even in this period of great old "age, wherein thou seest that I am, I am greatly tormented "by lust."

And he assured me with an oath, saying, "When I was "fifty years old lust placed itself [upon] me for twelve years, "never going away from me either by day or by night, and I "thought in my mind that God had forsaken me, and there- "fore (for to such an extent had lust gained dominion over "me) I determined in my heart that I would either suffer "death through dumb beasts, or that I should become a "laughing-stock or a man condemned through the lust of the "body. And I went forth and wandered round about in the

Digitized by Google

"desert, and I found a den of hyenas, and I laid myself down "naked at the entrance thereof that they might come out and "devour me. And when it was evening—as it is written, 'He hath "'made the darkness, and it becometh night, wherein all the "'beasts of the forest do move (Psalm cxiv, 20), and the lions "'roar to break [their prey]'—the hyenas, both male and female, "came out, and they all sniffed at (*or* smelt) me, and licked "my body from my head to my feet, and while I was thinking "that they would eat me they went away from me; and there "I remained the whole of that night, and they ate me not. "And again I thought that God had had compassion upon me, "and straightway I returned and came to my cell. And that "devil of lust, having forborne with me a little, returned once "again, and moreover he attacked me more fiercely than be-"fore, and he did so with such vigour that by reason of my "affliction I well nigh cursed myself. Now, this devil of lust "used to take the form of an Ethiopian damsel whom I saw "in my early manhood gathering canes in the summer, and he "came in her form and sat upon my knees, and he used to set "me on fire with lust to such an extent that I imagined I was "having intercourse with her, and when through the burning "of my heart and the madness thereof, I gave her the cheek, "straightway she would lift herself up from me and take "to flight. And from the time when I touched her my hand "was so polluted that for the space of two hours [afterwards] "whensoever I brought my hand near me I was unable [to free "it] from her foulness. But again I went forth because of my "affliction, and I began to wander about in the desert, and I "found a small asp, and I took it and placed its head upon "the members of my body, and I squeezed the head of the "asp so that it might bite me and I might die, and so find "relief, but it bit me not. And after this I heard a voice which "came to my ears and said unto me, 'Depart, Pachomius, "'and be strong; I have allowed thee to be overcome in order "'that thou mightest not imagine that thou wast a mighty "'man and a man of perfection, and that thou hadst triumphed "'through thine own life and deeds, but that thou mightest "'know thine infirmity, and the feebleness of thy nature, and "'that thou mightest not rely upon thine asceticism but "'mightest confess the help of God and cry out to Him al-"'ways.' And having heard these words I returned to my cell, "and I dwelt therein with great boldness of heart, and I never "again had anxious care concerning this warfare of lust, but "I continued in peace for the rest of my days after this war-"fare. Now, the devil of lust, seeing that I no longer medi-"tated about the matter, never again approached me." With

Digitized by Google

these words about the striving against Satan the holy man Pachomius confirmed me, and he made me strong to play the man more and more, and to be mighty in the warfare against the devil of fornication, and he dismissed me and said unto me, "Be strong and mighty in our Lord."

Chapter xxj. Of the Blessed Man Stephen

STEPHEN was a man who was by race of the Libyans who [dwell by] the side of Marmarica and Mareotis, and he lived there for sixty years. Now in another codex [the text readeth] differently, thus: There was also in the desert a certain blessed man whose name was Stephen, and he was by race a Libyan from the border (*or* side) of Marmarica; and he dwelt there in the desert for sixty years. And having attained unto the heights of a perfect rule of life, he was esteemed [by Divine Grace] worthy of the gift of discerning prudence and of the faculty of giving consolation to such an extent that whosoever drew nigh unto him, being afflicted in any way whatsoever, departed from him with joy. Now the blessed Anthony was acquainted with this man. And this Stephen continued in this life even unto our own days, but I never lived with him and I never met him, because the mountain [wherein he dwelt] was a long way off from me. The holy men Ammonius and Evagrius, however, who went to visit him related unto me stories concerning him, and they said, "Having "gone to him we found him grievously sick of a certain sore "sickness which had come upon him, for a cancerous sore "had broken out in the lower parts of his body; now this "sore is called 'gangrene,' and we found him being cut by a "certain physician. Nevertheless the holy man was working "with his hands and was plaiting [palm] leaves, and he held "converse with us whilst portions of his body were being cut "off. And he possessed the faculty of patient endurance to "such a degree that it seemed as if the body of some one else "was being cut instead of his own; now when his members "had been shorn off like hair he continued, through the "grace of God, to be without perception thereof. And whilst "the physician was binding him up he sat still and plaited "baskets with his hands, and he conversed with us, rejoicing "and giving thanks unto God. And moreover, he displayed "such patient endurance whilst his member was being cut off "that one might have thought that it had not been cut off at "all, and he resembled altogether a man from whose body "threads of hair are being plucked. Now we stood there and "marvelled at this affliction, for we could not bear to see the "man who had led a life of such ascetic and spiritual excel-

Digitized by Google

"lences fall into such a state of suffering that at length "amputation of his members was necessary. And the blessed "man, having perceived our thoughts and seen that it grieved "us, answered and said unto us, 'O my sons, be not ye "'afflicted concerning this matter, and do not lessen your "'faith because of this thing, for God never performeth any-"'thing whatsoever that is evil, on the contrary, He looketh "'for a happy conclusion [to His work]. Oh, how many were "'the times when these members were condemned to punish-"'ment! For they merited being cut off, and it is better that "'they should receive their reward here than after their depar-"'ture out of this world.' These were the things which he "spake unto us, and he comforted us and sent us away, say-"ing, 'Be not ye scandalized when ye see trials of this kind "'coming upon holy men, for by such God hath built us up "'and comforted us, and hath made us to be confirmed in the "'laws which are against tribulations.'" I have related these things in order that we may not wonder when we see the saints falling into tribulations.

A Preface concerning those who have fallen into the Errors of Sins

IT is very necessary, O my brethren, that we should also keep in memory the histories which concern the life and deeds of those who have tripped up and fallen as an excellent admonition of those who come across this book (just as among the trees that were in Paradise the Tree of Good and Evil was also found), so that if it happen that certain men lead good lives through the Grace and help of God, Who is wont to help those whose motive of soul is [directed] straight to the mark, they may not be exalted overmuch and have pride in their works of ascetic excellence. For on many occasions this very excellence itself hath been the cause of a fall when it hath not been made perfect by means of a correct motive, for it is written, "I have seen the righteous man who hath perished in his righteousness, which also is vanity" (Ecclesiasticus vii, 15).

Chapter xxij. Of Valens the Palestinian

AND there was a certain man whose name was Valens, who was by race a Palestinian and by education a Corinthian; now the blessed Paul ascribed to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians iv) as a special attribute the passion of pride and inflatedness. And having come to the desert and dwelt with us for many years, at length he arrived at such a degree of vaunting that he was laughed at by the devils; and

Digitized by Google

from this state he went astray, little by little, until he was derided by them, and they became able to make him think that angels were appearing unto him. Now therefore one day, according to what they relate concerning him, as he was working in the dark at the labour of his hands, the needle wherewith he was sewing together the palm leaves fell down [on the ground], and although he searched for it he could not find it; and a devil lit a fire for him until he found it, and because of this thing he became the more proud. And at length he became so proud, and allowed such arrogant thoughts to rise up in his mind that he despised and thought scorn of the Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ. And moreover, it came to pass that certain men of discernment came and brought unto the church some dried fruits as a [means of obtaining a] blessing, and the blessed Macarius, our elder, received [them] and sent [them] to the brethren, that is, some to every man in his cell, and among the brethren he also sent [some] to Valens. And Valens took the man who had been sent to bring the fruit to him, and heaped insults upon him and smote him, saying, "Go and say unto Macarius: 'I am neither inferior unto thee "'nor am I more of a servant than art thou, that thou shouldst "'send me a blessing.'"

Now Macarius knew that he had been laid hold upon by error, and he rose up and went unto him at the turn of the day that he might persuade him, and he said unto him, "Valens, Valens, thou hast made thyself a laughing-stock, and hast fallen into error; receive then correction"; but seeing that he was unwilling to hearken unto his admonition and reproof he left him and departed. And having become more confirmed in his pride, and having reached the summit thereof, that devil, who had completely led him astray, went and made unto himself a form wherein he resembled our Redeemer; and he came unto him by night, together with phantoms of angels in great numbers who marched along bearing lamps and wax candles, and they advanced with chariots and carriages of fire, as if that devil were Christ Himself. Then one of the angels came forward unto him, and said unto him, "Christ "loveth greatly thy life and deeds, and thy boldness of speech, "and He hath come to see thee. Get thee forth from thy cell, "and do nothing whatsoever except such things as I shall tell "thee. When thou seest Him afar off fall down and worship "Him, and go back to thy cell." Now therefore when Valens had gone forth and seen the ranks [of phantoms] bearing lamps of fire, and Antichrist himself sitting upon a chariot of fire—now he was distant from him about a mile—he fell down and worshipped him. And Valens was so much injured in his

Digitized by Google

mind that at the turn of the day he was sufficiently mad to come into the church and to say before all the brotherhood who were assembled therein, "I have no need to become a "partaker in the offering, for this day I have seen Christ "Himself." Then the fathers tied him up and put iron fetters upon him for about the space of one year, and in this way they made him whole; and he was praying continually, and they humbled him and brought him down from the exalted conception which he held concerning himself by means of sundry and divers works of a lovely and humble character, and thus they rooted out from him pride, even as it is written, "Each opposing sickness must be healed by medicines which are contrary and opposite thereto."

Chapter xxiij. Of Hero the Alexandrian [Bishop of Diospolis about A.D. 365]

AND there was also my neighbour, a man whose name was Ahrôn (Hero), who was by race an Alexandrian; now his early manhood was exceedingly glorious, and he was enlightened in his mind, and his intellect was keen, and the habits of his life were pure. This man, I say, after [performing] many labours was also seized by the passion of boasting and pridefulness, and he wavered and fell; and he evolved in his mind and imagined great things against the fathers, and he reviled also the blessed Evagrius, saying, "Those who allow themselves to be persuaded [into accept-"ing] thy doctrine certainly go astray and err, for [men] re-"quire no other teacher than Christ." And he put forward and urged in witness of his words, with foolish intent, the speech from the Gospel (which our Redeemer also spake), "Ye shall "call no man master on the earth" (St. Matthew xxiii, 8). And his understanding became so greatly blinded that at length on him also iron fetters fell, and he was fast bound, because he would neither be persuaded nor would he receive or be a partaker of the Holy Mysteries, although he loved the truth greatly. Now, the food upon which he lived was too little and the habits of his life were immeasurably strict, for, according to what those who were continually with him used to relate, on several occasions he only partook of a meal once in three months, the participation in the Mysteries only being sufficient for him; but if it happened that he came across some wild herbs by chance [he would eat them].

Now I myself, with the blessed man Albinus, received an experience of him when we were going to Scete. Scete was forty miles distant from us, and we partook of two meals and drank water three times [on the way], whilst he tasted nothing

Digitized by Google

at all during his journey with us. He travelled on foot, and he was repeating [passages] from the Scriptures by heart; during the time that he went with us, he repeated [passages] from the Scriptures and sang fifteen Psalms, and he repeated the Beatitudes and the Epistle to the Hebrews, and [the book of] Isaiah the Prophet, and a portion of Jeremiah, and after [that] the Gospel of [Saint] Luke, and after [that] the Proverbs; and in spite of all this we were unable to overtake him as he trudged along. Now therefore this man was at length persecuted by lust as by a fire, and he was never again able to dwell in his cell, but he went to Alexandria, and by reason of his pride it happened unto him, through Divine Providence, even as it is said, "One good is rooted up by another." Nevertheless, having fallen willingly into a state of indifference, he finally found redemption. Now he was present continually at the shows of the theatres and circuses, and he was never absent from the public drinking rooms of the taverns; and thus whilst he was leading this life of prodigality and drunkenness he fell and was brought to a standstill in the miry ditch of the lust of women. At length he went to one of those women who are at the head of the grade of harlots, and because of his passion with all boldness he held converse with her, and these things having thus been done by him there broke out in the place of his nature a carbuncle which grew with great vigour, and his sickness waxed sore upon him for a space of six months, and his members rotted away and they had to be cut off. By these means he became finally cured, but he remained without members; and afterwards he went back again to the integrity of [his] nature, and to divine thoughts. [And he came to the desert] and confessed all these things to the fathers, and though he remained not a long time [there] he did not flee from leading the ascetic life, nor from weeping because of what had happened to him, nor from offering up the repentance which was meet. And after a few days he died and departed from this world.

Chapter xxiv. Of Ptolemy the Egyptian who was in Scete

AND there was also another man whose name was Ptolemy, and he was by race from Egypt, and he observed a rule of life which no man is able to describe, or rather it is very difficult to relate the story of his life. He dwelt away beyond Scete in that [district] which is called "Klimax." Now the place which is thus called it is impossible for a man to dwell in by reason of its ruggedness, and it was distant from the stream of water wherefrom the brethren used

Digitized by Google

to draw twelve miles. Now this man Ptolemy used to take many vessels for water, and carry [them] to a certain spot where much dew fell, and in December and January he used to collect it, for in those countries the dewfall is abundant. And having gathered together for himself water in sponge[s] from time to time they were squeezed out by him, and the water which he had collected from the dew ran out, and this he was in the habit of doing during the fifteen years which he dwelt there. Now this man, having for much time been deprived of doctrine (*or* teaching), and of the meetings with the holy fathers, and of the intercourse of edifying speech, and especially of participation in the Mysteries, went as wholly astray from the straight path as if he had said, "The matters of service, "that is to say, the Holy Mysteries, are nothing at all." And from this state he senselessly departed and went on until at length he went into Egypt and delivered himself over to prodigal and riotous living, and he never more spake a word of excellence unto any man. And his madness came upon Ptolemy also because of the senseless and exalted opinion which he held of himself, even as it is written, "Those who are not under "the law of the governors shall fall like leaves."

Chapter xxv. Of Abraham the Egyptian

AND there was also a certain man whose name was Abraham, and he kept a rule of life of the sternest hardness in the desert; and he was hurt in his understanding by reason of the vain opinion which he held concerning himself. One day he came to the church and strove with the elders, saying, "I have been made an elder by Christ "during the past night, and ye must associate me in the "ministrations of the priesthood." And when the fathers had come to a decision concerning him, and had brought him out of the desert, they laid a light rule of life upon him, and in this manner they cured him of his arrogance, and brought him to the state of being sensible of his feebleness, and of having knowledge of his infirmity, through which the devils made a mock of him.

Chapter xxvj. Of a certain Virgin who was in Jerusalem

AND moreover, I saw a certain virgin in Jerusalem who had been clothed in sackcloth for three years, and she had secluded herself in a solitary cell, and had never permitted herself to enjoy any of the desirable things wherein there is pleasure. Now this woman, having been forsaken by the Divine Providence, because of her immeasurable pride and

Digitized by Google

arrogance fell into the ditches of fornication, and she opened the window of the habitation in which she had secluded herself, and received [therein] the man who ministered unto her, and she had intercourse with him. And because she did not continue to persevere in faith and in the ascetic life with a perfect will, and with a mind which possessed Divine love, but [departed therefrom] for the sake of men, that is to say, for the sake of vainglory, doing so, moreover, with an evil intent and with a corrupt and lascivious mind—for her own thoughts having been cut off, since they had been robbed of the Divine understanding, she came to the condition of casting blame upon others—the guardian of chastity did not remain with her.

Chapter xxvij. Of the Virgin who was in Caesarea of Palestine*

AND again there was a certain virgin who was the daughter of an elder in Caesarea, and having been beguiled and led astray by a man, he who led her astray taught her to bring an accusation against a certain reader of the church of the city. And the time having arrived when it was known [unto all] that she was with child, and being called upon by her father to confess her matter, she made an accusation against that reader. Now her father, the elder, because he believed [her] implicitly, made known the matter unto the Bishop, and the Bishop was a holy man, and a fearer of God, and one who did not hastily pass sentence of death or punishment upon any man, and then only when it was revealed unto him by God whether he who was accused before him was indeed guilty [or not]. So the Bishop went and shut himself up until the matter was made plain [unto him]; and because God informed him that the reader had never been nigh unto the woman he held him to be innocent, and condemned the virgin.

Chapter xxviij. Of a certain Woman who fell and repented

THERE was a certain virgin who was a nun, and who dwelt with two other nuns, and she had led a life of abstinence and voluntary self-denial for nine or ten years. And having been beguiled and led astray by a certain singer of Psalms, she tripped, and fell, and conceived, and gave birth to a child; now she hated with the fullest hatred him that had beguiled her. [And she repented within herself with a perfect repentance,] and she followed after repentance with such vigour that she went beyond the bounds of what was seemly,

*See Chapter xxix.

Digitized by Google

and she continued to observe fasts with such self-denial and strictness that she well nigh died of hunger. In her prayers she used to make supplication, saying, "O God, Who dost "support and sustain all creation, and Who desirest not the "death and destruction of those who err and commit sin, if "Thou wishest me to live before Thee, shew me a marvellous "thing in this matter, and gather in this fruit of sin which I "have brought forth, lest, because I cannot again attain to "chastity, I kill myself through reproach and disgrace." And having made supplication for this thing, she was hearkened unto, and he who had been born unto her did not remain very long alive. And from the day wherein she fell and onwards she neither saw him that had beguiled her and led her captive, nor held converse with him, but she gave herself to frequent fasting and to ministering unto the women who were sick and smitten with disease for the whole of a period of thirty years; and thus her repentance was accepted by God, and He at length revealed unto a certain holy old man concerning her, saying, "Such and such a woman is very much more pleasing "unto Me by her penitence than by her virginity." Now I write down these things in order that, if any man be observing a correct rule of life of any kind whatsoever which is pleasing unto God, he may take heed lest he fall, and that even if he be tripped up in a snare and fall he may not come to despair, and remain in his fallen condition, but that by leaning upon the staff of the hope of the Divine Mercy, and by arraying himself through repentance in the apparel of simplicity and humility he may again become strong enough to stand up, for we should not despise those who truly repent.

Chapter xxix. Of another Virgin who fell and repented

A CERTAIN virgin, the daughter of an elder in Caesarea of Palestine, having been beguiled and led astray by a man, fell, and he who had beguiled her instructed her to make an accusation against a certain reader of the church of the city. And the time having arrived when her conception became known, and being called upon to confess her matter by her father, she made the accusation against that reader, and the elder, her father, thereupon, like one who believed [her] implicitly, made the affair known to the Bishop. Then the Bishop laid his hand upon the shrine, and commanded that the reader should be called, and his affair having been enquired into, like one who was confident in his own integrity, he was unwilling to confess [that he had done the wrong]; for how was it possible for him to accuse himself of that which he had not done? And the Bishop becoming angry said unto him, "Wilt thou

Digitized by Google

"not confess, O wretched and polluted man, thou guilty one "who art full of uncleanness?" And the reader made answer unto him, saying, "Master, I have neither knowledge nor "feeling about this matter, for my thoughts and mind are clean "in respect thereof, and [no thought] concerning this woman "hath ever entered my mind. But if thou wishest to hear that "which hath never taken place [I will say that] I myself "committed the offence"; and having spoken thus, the Bishop straightway removed the reader from his position. Then the reader drew nigh and entreated the Bishop, saying, "Master, "since I have tripped up and fallen, give the command that "the woman be given unto me to wife, for I am no longer a "cleric, and she is not a virgin"; so the Bishop gave the woman to the reader to wife, because he thought that he was held by love of her, and that he could not cut the affair concerning her out of his thoughts.

And when the reader had received the woman from the Bishop, he placed her in a religious house for women, and he begged the woman who ministered unto the wants of the sisters to take great care of her straightway. Now a short time afterwards the day arrived wherein she must give birth to her child, but the poor creature was not able to bring it to the birth, and although she could hardly bear the cruel and violent pains of her birth-pangs which were bringing her to the house of the dead, her child did not come forth. And one, two, three days passed by until the seventh [day arrived], and by reason of her great and frequent sufferings the woman was nigh to come unto Sheol; and she neither ate, nor drank, nor slept, but she was crying out and saying, "Woe unto me, for I am "dying, and I made an accusation of fatherhood against such "and such a reader." Now the women who were standing before her having heard these words made them known to her father, who, however, fearing lest he should be blamed severely because he had made an accusation of fatherhood against the reader, held his peace concerning the matter for another two days; and meanwhile the young woman neither gained relief from her sufferings nor died. Now therefore when the nuns could no longer bear the pain of her violent shrieks, they ran and told the Bishop, saying, "Such and such a woman hath "for some days past been crying out and confessing that she "made an accusation of fatherhood against the reader." Then the Bishop sent deacons unto him with the message, "Pray "thou that the woman who made an accusation against thee "may have relief"; but the reader answered them never a word. Now he had not opened his door since the day on which the accusation had been made against him, but he entreated

Digitized by Google

God and made supplication unto him that the matter might become known and the truth revealed. Thereupon the father of the woman went to the Bishop, and prayer was offered up in the church, but even by these proceedings the woman did not obtain relief. Then the Bishop rose up and went to the reader, and knocked at the door and the reader opened [it] to him, and he went in to him and said, "Eustathius, rise up and "unloose that which thou hast fastened." And at once the reader knelt down with the Bishop, and they prayed to God, and straightway the woman gave birth to her child. Thus were the supplication of this man and his constant persistence in prayer able to clear away oppression and to chastise and rebuke also the woman who made the false accusation, for from that day onwards she fulfilled the days of her life with good works; and we should learn to be constant in prayer and to recognize the power thereof when it is offered unto God with the deep feeling of the whole heart.

Chapter xxx. Of the Blessed Woman Thais or Thaisis

AND now I desire to narrate unto you the excellent history and the great repentance of the blessed woman Thais or Thaisis, for speech concerning her is most excellent, and it is full of encouragement and penitence of soul unto those who love God. Now this woman had a mother who, because her daughter was beautiful of face, made her to take up a position in the market, and the rumour of her beauty travelled unto every place, and those who were living afar off desired greatly to see her; and no man who looked upon her was satisfied with the sight of her face, because she burned like a flame of fire into the hearts of those who saw her, and many by reason of their mad love for her sold whatever property they had to her parents that they might have commerce with her. Now when Bessarion, the servant of God, heard these things concerning this woman and that through her beauty she was dragging many to destruction, he arrayed himself in the apparel of a man who was in the world, and took with him one *dînâr* and went unto her, and when he saw her he brought forth the *dînâr* and gave it to her; and having taken the *dînâr* she said unto him, "Let us go into a room," and he said unto her, "Yea, let us go in." And having gone in, the blessed man Bessarion saw the couch which was laid out, now it was a very high one, and the woman said unto the old man, "Come, get up on this bed"; and he said unto her, "Hast thou not inside this chamber another room?" and she said unto him, "Yea." Then he said unto her, "Let us then go in there." And Thais answered and said unto him, "If it

Digitized by Google

"be that thou art ashamed of men [seeing thee, know] that no "man can see [us] in this chamber; but if it be God of Whom "thou art afraid He can see us in whatsoever place we enter." And the blessed man Bessarion hearing these words, said unto her, "My daughter, dost thou know that God existeth?" And she said unto him, "Yea, I know that God existeth, and [that "there will be] kingdom, and judgement." Then the old man said unto her, "If thou knowest that God is, and [that there "will be] kingdom and judgement, why dost thou destroy men "in this manner?" And straightway the woman cast herself at his feet, and said unto him, "I know that there is repen- "tance for those who sin. But I beseech thee, master, to tarry "with me for three hours, and whatsoever thou wishest to do "unto me that do because of all the evil things which have "been wrought by me"; and having told her in what place he would await her he left her and went away.

Then in that same hour the woman took everything which she had gained by fornication and burnt it with fire in the midst of the city, and she said, "Come, O all ye who have had commerce with "me, and see that I am burning before your eyes every possession "which I have gathered together by means of sin"; and the things which were burned were [worth] three hundred pounds of gold, and there were there also goods and apparel of all kinds; and after she had burned up everything she went to the blessed man Bessarion. And when Bessarion saw her he took her by her hand and led her along and brought her to a religious house of sisters, and he shut her in a little cell, leaving her only one small window in the wall through which a woman passed in food to her. And the blessed Bessarion said unto the head of the house, "Give her a pound of dry bread each day, and water according to her need." Then the blessed woman Thais said unto the venerable Bessarion, "With what petition dost thou command me to pray unto God? "That He should forgive me my sins?" The blessed Bessarion said unto her, "Thou art neither worthy to pray unto God, nor "to make mention of His Name with thy lips, nor to stretch out "thy hands unto Him; for thy lips are unclean and polluted, and "thy hands are contaminated with impurity; thou shalt only sit "down and gaze towards the East, and thou shalt say nothing "except, 'O Thou who didst create me, have mercy upon me.'" And having dwelt in that cell for a space of about three years, the blessed Bessarion had mercy upon her, and the blessed man went to Abbâ Anthony that he might learn from him whether God had forgiven her her sins or not. Then having spoken concerning her unto Anthony that blessed man called unto his disciples, and said unto them, "Let each one of you shut himself "in [his] cell all night, and pray ye unto God that we may see

Digitized by Google

"unto whom shall be revealed the matter concerning which "the blessed Bessarion hath come unto us [this day]."

And when they all had done as they had been commanded and when a long time had elapsed, the blessed Paul, the chief of the disciples of Mâr Anthony, looked into the heavens and saw a couch which had been spread with great splendour, and three angels who were carrying three lamps were standing before that couch, and a crown of glory was laid thereupon. And having seen all this glorious sight, he said, "This couch can only be "for my father Anthony." Then a voice came unto him from heaven, saying, "This couch is not for Anthony, thy father, but "for Thais the harlot"; and the blessed Paul rose up early in the morning and related the vision which he had seen. And the blessed Mâr Bessarion came back from Abbâ Anthony in great joy, and he went to the religious house of the sisterhood, and he opened the door that he might bring the woman out from the cell wherein she was secluded; but she made entreaty unto him, saying, "Leave me here until my death, for my sins are many." Then the blessed man said unto her, "Behold the merciful God "hath had compassion upon thee, and He hath accepted thy re-"pentance"; and then she wished to go forth from her cell. And she answered and said unto him, "Believe me, O Father, from "the day wherein I entered this cell I have made all my sins a "mighty burden and I have set it before my eyes, in suchwise "that as the breath of my nostrils hath not separated itself from "me, so my sins have not separated themselves from me until "this hour."

And the blessed Bessarion answered and said unto her, "God "hath not forgiven thee thy sins because of thy repentance, but "because of the thought which thou hadst—that thou wouldst "deliver thyself over unto Christ." Now this blessed woman Thais lived (*literally*, made) after her repentance fifteen days, and she departed unto our Lord in peace. Thus was the crowning of the blessed Thais, who was lost and was found, and was dead and who came to life by the grace of Christ, unto Whom belong mercy, and compassion, and glory, and honour, for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter xxxj. Of the Blessed Man Abba Elijah

THERE was a certain man whose name was Elijah who loved the virgins exceedingly, for there are souls which are thus inclined, and having compassion upon the order of virgins [and] women who lived celibate lives in Thebes, and in the cities which were [round about], and in the city of Atrêpe (near Akhmîm), and possessing many flocks and herds, he built a large nunnery, and he gathered

Digitized by Google

together thereunto every woman who chose to adopt the garb of the nun, and placed them therein. And with ready will he took care to provide them with everything which was necessary for them, and he supplied everything required for their well-being, and he also made a garden for them, and he filled their every want with great zeal and care, for our Lord's sake. And inasmuch as these women were gathered together from various places, they used to quarrel with each other continually, and because it was meet to keep them in order (now he had gathered together about three hundred), he was obliged to take means to pacify them; and he hearkened unto their affairs and arranged the disputes which broke out among them for the space of two years.

Now this man being young, that is to say being about thirty or forty years old, more or less, was vexed by the passion of lust, and for this reason he departed from that nunnery, and wandered about for two days in the desert, and he made entreaty and supplication unto God, saying, "O Lord, either kill me so that I may "not see those who are in trouble and may not become afflicted "thereby, or remove from me this passion, so that I may be able "to provide for the women in everything." And when the eventide had come he lay down and slept in the desert and, according to what he related, three angels came to him and took hold of him, saying, "Why didst thou go forth from the nunnery?" And he related unto them the matter and said unto them, "I "was afraid lest I should do harm not only unto them, but unto "mine own soul also." The angels said unto him, "If now we "make thee to be free from this passion wilt thou go and take "care of the women in the nunnery?" And having promised that he would do this they required from him an oath, and the oath which he uttered was as follows; the angels said, "Swear an oath unto us," and he said: "I swear by Him Who taketh "care of me, that I will take care of them." Then having laid hold of him by his hands and his feet, one of them took a razor and mutilated him, not indeed in very truth but only apparently and in a phantomlike manner, and he imagined in the vision that, as one might say, he had been cured of his malady. And next they asked him, "Feelest thou that thou hast been helped?" And he said unto them, "I am greatly relieved, and I feel sure "that I have been set free from the pain and suffering, and "that I have already been delivered therefrom." Then the angels said unto him, "Depart and return." And after five days, whilst the women who were in the nunnery were weeping because of what had taken place, and because he had forsaken them, and because the care which he had taken for their needs had come to an end, he entered into the monastery wherein

Digitized by Google

they were; and he dwelt there from that time onward in the cells, in a place which was nigh unto them, and according to his power he ordered their lives for them. And he lived other forty years, and he said unto the fathers, "This passion of lust hath never "since roused itself up in my mind"; now this act of grace happened to that holy man because of care which he exhibited in respect of that nunnery.

Chapter xxxij. Of the Blessed Dorotheos

NOW there was there besides this man Elijah, the chosen man Dorotheos, who had grown old therein leading a life of excellent and sublime ascetic rule; and as he did not wish to dwell in the nunnery by the side of the women, as Elijah had done, he shut himself up in a certain upper chamber, but left therein a window which faced and looked into the interior of the nunnery; and when he knew that it was proper to do so he used to open it or shut it. He always sat by the window, and he shewed the women that he knew everything which they were doing, and by these means they were rebuked and prevented from quarrelling. And thus he grew old in that upper chamber, and no women ever went up to him, and he was unable to go down to them, for there was no ladder, and in this manner of life he brought his days to an end according to the will of God by the help of His grace.

Chapter xxxiij. Of the Blessed Pachomius the Great, and of the Sons of his Monastery, and of the Nunneries which were in the Thebaid

IN the country of Thebes, and in the district thereof which is called Tabenna, there was a certain blessed man whose name was Pachomius, and this man led a beautiful life of ascetic excellence, and he was crowned with the love of God and of man. Now therefore as this man was sitting in his cell, there appeared unto him an angel who said unto him, "Since "thou hast completed thy discipleship it is unnecessary for "thee to dwell here; but come, and go and gather together "unto thyself those who are wandering, and be thou dwelling "with them, and lay thou down for them such laws as I shall "tell unto thee"; and the angel gave him a book (*or* tablet) wherein was written the following:

"I. 'Let every man eat and drink whensoever he wisheth, "'and according to the strength of those who eat and drink "'impose work; and thou shalt restrain them neither from eat- "'ing nor fasting. Furthermore, on those who are strong thou "'shalt impose severe labours; and upon those who are of

Digitized by Google

"'inferior strength and upon those who fast thou shalt impose
"'light labours.

"II. 'And thou shalt make for them a cell, and they shall
"'dwell together three by three.

"III. 'And they shall partake of food all together in one
"'chamber (*or* house).

"IV. 'And they shall not take their sleep lying down, but
"'thou shalt make for them seats so that when they are sitting
"'down they shall be able to support their heads.

"V. 'At night time they shall put on garments without
"'sleeves, and their loins shall be girded up, and they shall be
"'provided with skull-caps; and they shall partake of the
"'Offering on the Sabbath and on the First Day of the Week,
"'wearing skull-caps without any nap upon them, and each
"'skull-cap shall have in the front thereof a cross [worked in]
"'purple.

"VI. 'And thou shalt establish the monks in four and
"'twenty grades, and to each grade give a letter of the Greek
"'alphabet from Âlâf to Tâw (i.e., from A to Z); every grade a
"'letter.'"

And the blessed Pachomius performed and fulfilled [these things] according as he had been commanded by the angel; and when the head of the monastery asked him that was next to him concerning the affairs of the brethren, the man said unto him, "The voice of Alphâ [and] the voice of Bîtâ salute "the head [of the monastery]." Thus the whole of that assembly of brethren had letters of the alphabet assigned to them, according to the designation of the four and twenty letters. To those who were upright and simple he assigned the letter *yôdh* (i.e., ι), and to those who were difficult and perverse he assigned the letter *ksî* (i.e., ξ), and thus according to the dispositions and according to the habits and rules of life of the orders [of monks] did he assign letters unto them.

And he (i.e., the Angel) commanded that "a monk who was "a stranger and who had a different garb from theirs should "not enter in with them to the table; the man who sought to "be accepted as a monk in that monastery was obliged to "labour there for three years, after which he was to receive "the tonsure. When the monks were eating together they "were to cover up their faces with [their] head-coverings, "that they might not see each other eating, and might not "hold converse together over the table, and might not gaze "about from one side to the other." And he commanded that during [each] day they should repeat twelve sections of the Psalter, [and during [each] evening twelve sections of the Psalter], and during [each] night twelve sections of the Psalter,

Digitized by Google

and that when they came to eat they should repeat the Great Psalm.

And the blessed Pachomius said unto the angel, "The "sections of the Psalter which thou hast appointed unto us "[for repetition] are far too few"; and the angel said unto him, "The sections of the Psalter which I have appointed [are in- "deed few], so that even the monks who are small (i.e., weak) "may be able to fulfil the canons, and may not be distressed "thereby. For unto the perfect no law whatsoever is laid "down, because their mind is at all seasons occupied with "God, but this law which I have laid down for those who have "not a perfect mind is laid down for them, so that although "they fulfil only such things as are prescribed by the canons "they can acquire openness of face." Now very many nuns hold fast unto this law and canon.

And there were living in that mountain about seven thousand brethren, and in the monastery in which the blessed Pachomius himself lived there were living one thousand three hundred brethren; and besides these there were there also other monasteries, each containing about three hundred, or two hundred, or one hundred monks, who lived together; and they all toiled with their hands and lived thereby, and with whatsoever they possessed which was superfluous for them they provided (*or* fed) the nunneries which were there. Each day those whose week of service it was rose up and attended to their work; and others attended to the cooking, and others set out the tables and laid upon them bread, and cheese, and vessels of vinegar and water. And there were some monks who went in to partake of food at the third hour of the day, and others at the sixth hour, and others at the ninth hour, and others in the evening, and others who ate once a day only; and there were some who ate only once a week; and according as each one of them knew the letter which had been laid upon him, so was his work. Some worked in the paradise (i.e., the orchard), and some in the gardens, and some in the blacksmith's shop, and some in the baker's shop, and some in the carpenter's shop, and some in the fuller's shop, and some wove baskets and mats of palm leaves, and one was a maker of nets, and one was a maker of sandals, and one was a scribe; now all these men as they were performing their work were repeating the Psalms and the Scriptures in order.

And there were there large numbers of women who were nuns, and who closely followed this rule of life, and they came from the other side of the river and beyond it, and there were also married women who came from the other side of the river close by; and whensoever anyone of them died, the [other]

Digitized by Google

women would bring her and lay her down on the bank of the river and go away. Then certain brethren would cross over in a boat and bring her over with the [singing of] psalms and with lighted candles, and with great ceremony and honour, and when they had brought her over they would lay her in their cemetery; without elder or deacon no man could go to that nunnery, and then only from one Sunday to the other (i.e., they could go only on Sundays). Now it happened that a certain tailor, who was a stranger, came to that nunnery looking for work, and one of the sisters went forth to talk with him, and she said unto him, "We have our own tailor"; and one of the sisters saw her speaking with him, and she held her peace and informed no one concerning the matter. And after a short time the two women had a dispute about a certain matter, and the sister who had seen the other talking to the tailor went and brought an accusation against the other before all the sisters, saying about her in an evil manner, "This is "the Satan who hath sown the strife among us"; and then many of the women having heard [these things] believed [them]. And the sister, not being able to endure the accusation wherewith she had been accused without cause, by reason of her distress went and cast herself into the river and was drowned; and when the sister who had made the accusation against the other perceived this, seeing that she had calumniated her evilly, and that she had caused the sisters pain in a most serious manner, she also secretly drowned herself. And the elder who had been made [guardian] of them, knowing this matter, commanded one of them that none of the sisters who had believed that sister who had made the accusation against her companion should receive the Offering, and he was not reconciled unto them, and prevented them from [participating in] the Offering for seven years.

Now in that same nunnery there was a certain sister who was a virgin, and she made herself an object of contempt, and she had had a devil in her; and the [other] sisters used to treat her so contemptuously that they would not even allow her to eat with them. And the woman herself was well content at this [treatment], and she would go into the refectory and serve the food and wait upon the whole company [there], and she became the broom of the whole nunnery; and indeed she made manifest that which is written [in the Book of] the blessed Apostle (1 Corinthians iii, 18), who said, "Whosoever wisheth "to become a wise man in this world, let him become a fool "in order that he may become wise." And this woman used to throw over her head a roughly cut piece of cloth, whilst the other women wore veils, well cut and well made, according to

Digitized by Google

the rule which they had, and in this garb she used to minister in the refectory, and they would not allow her to sit down with them at the table. And whilst she was eating they never looked at her, and she never touched a whole loaf of bread, but used to eat the broken bits and crusts [that fell] from the tables, and [she drank] the rinsings of the basins and of the hands, and they sufficed her; and she neither reviled anyone of them, nor murmured, nor spoke superfluous words, though they constantly reviled her, and struck her, and thrust her away with harsh words and blows.

Now at that time the blessed Pitêroum (Piterius), that man of wonder, appeared, and he dwelt in the region which was called "Porphyry Mountain," and an angel appeared unto him and said, "Why holdest thou in thy mind the proud opinion "that thou art more excellent in ascetic practices than many? "If thou wishest to see a woman who is more excellent than "thou, go to the nunnery which is in Tabenna, and behold "thou shalt find there a woman [with a roughly cut piece of "cloth thrown over her head] who is far superior to thee in "ascetic practices; and this woman is far more excellent than "thou art, for although she ministereth as a servant to a "great congregation her whole heart is set upon God, whilst "as for thee, though thou dwellest here, thy mind wandereth "about in many countries." And when the man who had never gone forth from his monastery had heard those things, he went quickly to the nunnery, and he besought their visitor (*or* inspector) that [he might be allowed] to see the nuns; and when he had gone inside the house they all came that they might be blessed by the blessed man (Piterius), but the woman who had made herself a creature of contempt did not show herself at all. Then the blessed man Piterius said unto them, "Have all the sisters come, for there is one lacking?" and they said unto him, "Master, we have one more, "but she is a woman of no account, and she is in the refec- "tory." And Piterius said unto them, "Bring her that I may "see her also"; and they went to bring her, but she did not wish to come, for she felt that the matter of herself would be certainly revealed unto him. Now since she did not wish to go to the blessed man they dragged her along and brought her unto him by force, saying unto her, "Mâr Piterius wisheth to "see thee"; and when she had come, the blessed man looked and saw the roughly cut piece of cloth which was thrown over her head, according to the sign which the angel had given concerning her. Then he bowed down before her, and said unto her, "Bless me, Mother," and she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, "Bless thou me, master." When the sisters

Digitized by Google

saw [this] they were all struck with wonder, and said unto him, "Let there be no disgrace to thee, master, for she is a "creature of no account." Then the blessed man Piterius answered [and] said unto them, "Ye yourselves are creatures "of contempt, but this woman is your Mother and mine, and "I entreat God that He will give unto me a portion with her "in the day of judgement." Now when all the sisters heard this from the blessed man Piterius, they fell down at her feet, and offered unto her regret for everything which they had been accustomed to do unto her; for some of them used to throw the rinsings of the vessels over her, and others used to buffet her, and she endured many insults from them all. So the blessed Piterius prayed over them and went forth from that place. And a few days afterwards, because the blessed woman could not endure the honour and the praises of all the sisters, and the penitence which they showed unto her, she went forth from that house altogether, but where she went and where she died no man knoweth.

Chapter xxxiv. An Apology, and Preface, and Admonition

NOW therefore, O my brother, it sufficeth for me that I have called to mind all these things, and that I have handed them on in writing; for this thing did not happen without [the Will of] God, because thou wast moved in thy mind to command me to make this compilation and also to hand down in writing an account of the lives and acts of the holy fathers. And, according to the command of the love of God which is in thee, I will write down also the upright lives of holy women who have prospered in the good works of patient endurance, and afterwards I will also write down the account of the stumblings of those who have fallen away from a straight rule of life through the pride which seized upon them, and through the wicked and vain opinion that came upon their souls, and who were tripped up, and stumbled, and fell through their weakness and the war of the Adversary, although not of their own will, for after their fall they triumphed still more gloriously, and acquired rectitude. And I will do this for the benefit of those who are about to meet with this compilation, so that they may set the edifice of their building upon the firm ground of humility with zeal and care, and may fly from pride, and may take refuge in humility; and it shall be my object to write with extreme care concerning the humility of the holy men, and concerning their long-suffering, and concerning their patient endurance, and the questions which they asked each other, together with their answers, and the sundry

Digitized by Google

and divers things which I shall be able to call to mind concerning the lives of the holy fathers. And, O thou faithful servant of Christ, having lighted upon this book with pleasure, and having derived therefrom sufficiently a demonstration of the Resurrection, and of the lives and labours of the holy fathers, and also of their patient endurance, and being able to grow up in a good hope, and to advance easily in virtues, turn thyself round for once, so that thou mayest see that which is behind thee, and seeing my feebleness do thou pray for me. And take good heed to guard thy soul, even as I know thou [hast been able to do] from [the time when] thou didst hold the consular power of Titianus unto this day; and again as I found thee when thou wast the prefect and officer of the bed-chamber of the God-fearing king. For the man who hath such power as this, and who is able to enjoy himself with wealth in abundance, must not forget the fear of God, and he must take the greatest care possible to emulate Christ, Who heard from the Calumniator [these words], "All these things will I give unto thee if thou "wilt fall down and worship me" (St. Matthew iv, 9). Therefore take good heed unto thyself, and be vigilant, so that thou mayest at all times be exalted over the neck[s] of thy secret and invisible enemies. Amen.

The Triumphant Deeds and Exploits and Histories of Holy Women

Of the Virgin of Alexandria who bid Athanasius

NOW therefore it is necessary for us to remember also the chosen and mighty women unto whom God also gave an equal measure of strength of will as unto men, so that they might have no cause for being feeble in the performance of the labour of ascetic excellence. I have seen large numbers of widows who were exceedingly glorious and excellent in the performance of ascetic virtues, and among the chaste virgins whom I saw in Alexandria there was one whom I estimated to be seventy years old, and all the clergy testified concerning her that when a young woman, about twenty years old, she possessed exceeding beauty, and she was more looked at than many women, and because of her beauty she fled lest she should become the cause of stumbling unto men. Once when the Arians were plotting against the blessed Athanasius, the Archbishop of Alexandria, and were acting craftily in respect of him that they might do him harm through the prefect Eusebius, and through the wicked men who were his partisans in the days of the Emperor Constantine the Less (i.e., Constantius), and were spreading abroad infamous reports about him, and were

Digitized by Google

accusing him of many things which were unseemly for Christians to do, Athanasius fled that he might not be condemned in their wicked and corrupt hall of judgement, and he told no man, neither kinsmen, nor friends, nor ecclesiastics, nor any other men [where he was going]. And as soon as certain men from among the magistrates had entered into the episcopal palace suddenly, and begun to search for him and to enquire for him, he rose up at midnight, and took his tunic, and fled to this virgin who, being greatly astonished and struck with wonder at the matter, was moved exceedingly. And the blessed Athanasius said unto her, "Because I am sought for "by the Arians, who are making unseemly accusations against "me, and because I do not want to spread about an unseemly "opinion of myself, and I wish not to prepare a great punish- "ment for those who would be condemned for my sake, and "be made guilty for me, I determined to betake myself to "flight, and God gave me a revelation this night, saying, "'There is no other person with whom thou canst find deliver- "'ance except this virgin.'" Now therefore because of her exceedingly great joy she removed from herself and set aside all thoughts [of shame], and she became wholly [the servant] of our Lord, and she hid that holy man for the whole period of thirty years, that is to say, until the death of Constantine. She used to wash his feet, and she prepared everything of which he had need, and she attended to his bodily wants, and whatsoever he needed that she provided, and she borrowed books and brought [them] to him; and no man in Alexandria knew during that whole period of thirty years where the blessed Athanasius was. And when the death of Constantine (i.e., Constantius) was announced, and Athanasius also heard thereof, he rose up and came by night and he was suddenly found to be in the church, and all those who saw him marvelled as they looked carefully at him, for he was like unto a man who had risen from the grave. And he made an apology to those who truly loved him, and spake unto them, saying, "I did not flee unto you, for the reason that there might not be "unto you an occasion for swearing [false] oaths. And moreover, "because of the search and enquiry which they were sure to "have made for me I fled unto that woman concerning whom "no man could suspect of harm, for she is young and beauti- "ful. And I have gained two things, my own life and hers; "I have helped her in many things, and I have taken care and "preserved myself."

Digitized by Google

Chapter xxxv. Of Piamon the Virgin

PIAMON was a virgin who lived all her days with her mother, and she spent her nights in constant vigil, and she ate food at the time of evening, and she laboured at the [weaving of] linen; and she was held to be worthy of the gift of knowing what was going to happen before it happened. Now it happened on a time that there was in Upper Egypt a certain village which was fighting with another village, for the villages quarrelled with each other concerning the division of the waters [of the Nile], and they fought so violently that frequently murders were committed, and men were beaten to death. And the village which was stronger than the village of this virgin rose up against it in fierce wrath, and there came against the inhabitants of her village a crowd of boastful and violent men carrying staves and spears to kill them; and the angel of the Lord appeared unto her, and revealed unto her the craft of those who were ready to fall upon them secretly. Then she sent and called the elders of the church of her village, and said unto them, "Go ye forth to meet the "inhabitants of that village, for behold they are coming "against you, lest peradventure ye and the village perish; and "make entreaty unto them that perhaps they may be turned "aside from their daring attack, and they may spare the vil-"lage."

Now the elders of the village were afraid, and they fell down at her feet and made supplication unto her, saying, "We do "not dare to go forth to meet them, for we are well acquaint-"ed with their miserable nature and their arrogance; but if thou "wishest to spare the village and thine own house, do thou "thyself go forth to meet them." And the virgin would not undertake to go forth, but she went up upon the roof, and stood up there in prayer the whole night long, without once kneeling down, and she made bowings and entreaties unto God, saying, "O Lord, Thou Judge of the earth, Who hast "no pleasure in whatever is iniquitous, O my Lord, when the "prayer which Thine handmaiden prayeth and her supplica-"tion reach Thee, let Thy power transfix [the enemy] in the "spot wherein they are"; and straightway, on that very day, at a distance of three miles from the village they became fettered, and stood still, being unable to move [from] the spot. And it was revealed unto them also that they were hindered from moving by the supplication of that woman, and thereupon they sent to the inhabitants of the village, and made peace with them, and became reconciled unto them, and they also sent a message unto them, saying, "Give ye grateful thanks

Digitized by Google

"unto God, for it was the prayers of Piamon which prevented "us [from coming to you]."

Chapter xxxvj. Of our Blessed Mother Talîda, the Old Woman of Antinoe

NOW in the city of Antinoë there were twelve nunneries, and the women thereof conducted themselves according to a rule of beautiful spiritual excellence; here I saw the aged handmaiden of Christ whose name was "Mother "Talîdâ," who had dwelt in the holy house, according to what she herself and those who were her associates told me, for eighty years. And there lived with her sixty virgins who followed the path and rule of the ascetic life in purity, and they led a life of happiness under the teaching of this good old woman, whom they loved, and on whom they depended; and because of the great affection which they poured out upon her, the key was never taken away from any one of them, as is customary in other religious houses for women, and through her divine doctrine she changed them into a state of incorruptibility. Now this old woman arrived at such a state of impassibility that when I entered into her presence and sat down by her side, she stretched out her hands and laid them upon my shoulders, in the boldness and freedom which she had acquired in Christ.

Chapter xxxvij. Of the Virgin Taor

NOW in this nunnery there was a certain virgin whose name was Taor, who was the disciple of a certain old woman of ascetic excellence, and who had lived therein for thirty years; and she would consent to receive neither beautiful apparel, nor a veil, nor sandals, saying, "I do not "require [them], for I am not compelled to go down into the "market." Every First Day of the Week the other women used to go down to the church to partake of the Offering, but this virgin used to remain by herself in the nunnery dressed in rags, and she would sit at her work at all hours. And by these means she acquired such a sagacious, wise, and ready appearance that every man who was wont to abhor the sight of women would have been nigh to being snared and falling at the sight of her, had it not been that shamefacedness, which is the guardian of chastity, was ever with her, and that she ordered her gaze in a chaste manner by means of shame and fear.

Digitized by Google

Chapter xxxviij. Of the Virgin and the Martyr Colluthus

NOW there was another virgin there who was a neighbour of mine, and who dwelt near me, but whose face I had never seen, for, according to what they said about her, she had never gone down to the market from the day whereon she had become a nun, but had completed sixty years with the head of her nunnery. And finally, when she was about to depart from the world, the martyr, whose name was Colluthus, who had lived by the side of the nunnery, appeared unto her, and said unto her, "This day thou art about to de-"part from this world unto thy Lord, and thou shalt see all the "saints; but come and eat a meal with us in the martyrium." Thereupon she rose up early in the morning and arrayed herself in her apparel, and taking bread, and olives, and garden herbs in her basket, she went forth as she had done for many years; and having gone to the martyrium, she prayed, and having watched for the space of the whole day for an opportunity when no man would be found therein, she drew nigh and cried out unto that martyr, and said unto him, "Ask a "blessing on my food, O Saint Colluthus, and accompany thou "me on this my journey by thy prayers." And having eaten her food and prayed, she came back at sunset to her nunnery, and she gave unto the head thereof the Book of Clement which is called "Stromata," and [containeth] a commentary (*or* explanation) of Amos the prophet, saying, "Give this book to "the Bishop who is in Alexandria in exile, and say unto him, "'Pray for me,' for I am about to depart." And she died in the night without suffering either sickness or from pain in her head, but she rolled herself up in her garments and died.

Chapter xxxix. Of the Virgin and of Magistrianus who fought with Wild Beasts for her Sake

IN the ancient book which was ascribed to Hippolytus, who knew the Apostles, I have found the following history written:—There was a certain woman who was of noble birth and beautiful in her face, and who came from the city of the Corinthians, and who continued to live in a state of virginity, and certain people laid an accusation against her before the governor, who was a heathen, at the time of the persecution [of the Christians], and calumniated her, saying, "She "hath abused the Government and the Emperors, she hath "uttered blasphemies against the gods (i.e., the idols), she "hath treated the sacrifices with contempt"; such were the lying words which the wicked men concocted [about her], be-

Digitized by Google

cause they had been led captive by her beauty. Now because the governor was more addicted than they all to lasciviousness, he accepted such calumnies as those, and he became mad with desire like lustful stallions, even as it is written, "He was in-"flamed by lust" (Jeremiah v, 8).

And having tried to seduce her by means of cunning schemes of every kind, and being unable to do so, he became furious with her and handed her over to be punished, not by means of stripes and scourgings, but he wanted to make her earn her living by fornication. And he commanded the man unto whom he had delivered her to collect daily from the money which should be paid to her for hire three darics and to bring them to him; and this man, in order that he might not make use of the command in any sluggish manner, and that he might not lose money and also make the governor exceedingly angry, set her up as a gift before all those who wished [to have her]. Now, therefore, when those who were as keen in their lust for the maiden as are hawks for a snared sparrow perceived those things, they thronged into the tavern of destruction (i.e., brothel), and having given money unto the man to whom the virgin had been delivered, they drew nigh unto her and spoke unto her such things as [they thought] would be helpful to their intentions. But the virgin, who was wise among women, urged them on with blandishments in a gladsome manner, and strengthened her mind in the hope of Him for whom she had guarded her virginity, and she made petitions unto them, saying, "I have a hidden sore in a certain place, and the smell "of its running is exceedingly strong; and I am afraid that "after ye have embraced me it will bring you to hate me and "that your souls will loathe me. I therefore beseech you to "wait a few days until I am well again, and [then] ye shall "have the power to do whatsoever ye like with me for no-"thing."

And having with suchlike words dismissed them, she offered up unto God during those days with her whole heart prayers, and supplications, and bowings to the ground that He would help her, and that she might be saved and delivered from such hateful destruction as this, and that she might be kept in a state of unsullied virginity. Then God seeing her chastity sent a fervent longing [for her] into a certain young man [called] Magistrianus, who was wholly excellent, both in mind and in body, and it burned like fire even unto death. And he went as it were in a lustful passion, and at the time of evening he entered the house of the man who had been commanded to receive the money, and he gave him five darics, and said unto him, "Let me be with the virgin this night"; and he permitted

Digitized by Google

him to be with her. Then having gone into the place which was her sleeping room, he said unto her, "Rise up and save "thyself." And having stripped off her apparel, and dressed her in his own clothes, and covered her with his cloak, and completed her attire after the manner of that of a man, he said unto her, "Muffle up thy head in the hood of the cloak, and go "forth," and having done this she signed herself with the sign of the Cross, and went forth. And at the turn of the day the fraud became known, and Magistrianus was delivered up and was cast to the beasts. Thus was the evil Devil put to shame because that martyr, who is worthy of admiration, was able to crown himself with the two crowns of a double martyrdom, one on behalf of himself, and one on behalf of that blessed woman.

Chapter xl. Of the holy Woman Melania the Great

MELANIA, the holy woman who is worthy of all blessings, was of Spanish origin, and she grew up in Rome, for she was the daughter of Marcellinus, a man who had held consular rank. Now her husband was a man who performed a large number of duties under the Government, and she became a widow when she was twenty-two years old. Now this woman, having been held worthy to be seized upon by divine love, revealed the matter to no man, for she would not have been permitted to perform her own will, because she lived in the time of the rule of Valens (A.D. 364-378); and having arranged that he should be named the procurator of her son's affairs, she took everything which she possessed which could be easily moved and carried off, and placed it in a ship with tried servants, both men and women, and sailed hastily to Alexandria, where she sold her property and changed it into gold. And she went into the mount of Nitria, and saw the fathers, that is to say, Pambô, and Arsenius, and Serapion the Great, and Paphnutius of Scete, and Isidore the Confessor and Bishop of Hermopolis, and Dioscurus; and she remained with them for half a year, and she went round about through all that desert, and saw all the holy men and was blessed by them. And when Augustus, who was in Alexandria, sent into exile to Palestine and Caesarea, Isidore, and Pissimius, and Adelphius, and Fîsânîs, and Paphnutius, and Pambô (now with these also was Ammonius, that is to say, twelve* holy bishops), this blessed woman clave to them, and she ministered unto them of her own possessions. And when the servants whom she used to send unto them were stopped, this brave woman (according to what the holy men Pîsânîs, and Paphnutius, and

* Some of the names of the twelve are omitted.

Digitized by Google

Isidore, and Ammonius related unto me, for I used to hold converse with them) used to clothe herself in the garment of one of her servants, and carry unto them late in the evening the food which they needed.

Now when the governor of Palestine learned this thing, wishing to fill his purse, and hoping and expecting to make profit by her, he seized her and cast her into prison, being unaware that she was a woman of noble rank. Then she sent unto him a message, saying, "I am the daughter of such and "such a man, [and the wife of such and such a man], and I "am the handmaiden of Christ. Do not treat lightly my poor "garb and estate, for I have the power to exalt myself if it "pleaseth me to do so, and thou hast no authority either to "hamper me in this fashion or to carry off any of my property. "Now, in order that thou mayest not dare to do anything in "ignorance, and so fall under condemnation, behold, I send "thee [this] message; for it is meet that towards senseless and "foolish men we should act in a masterful manner, and with "pride, even as our noble rank enableth us to do, and should "treat them as fools and men of no understanding." And when the governor learned this thing he apologized to Melania, and entreated her to forgive him, and he fell down and did homage unto her, and gave orders that she should have the power to visit holy men without hindrance.

And after the return of these blessed men from exile, this holy woman built a house in Jerusalem, wherein she dwelt for twenty-seven years, and wherein she had a congregation of sisters, who were in number about fifty; and moreover, the honourable nobleman Rufinus, who came from Italy and belonged to the city of Aquileia, clave unto her her whole life long, and he led a life of glorious works, and finally he was held to be worthy of the office of elder. Now among men one would not quickly find one who was more understanding, and gracious, and pleasant than he. And Rufinus and Melania during the whole of that period of twenty-seven years received and relieved at their own expense all those people who came unto Jerusalem to pray, bishops, and dwellers in monasteries, and virgins, and they edified and benefited all those who thronged to them. Now they healed the schism of the Paulinists, who were in number about four hundred monks, and they all were heretics who fought against the Holy Spirit; and having made entreaty unto them they turned them back unto union with the Church. And they loaded with their gifts all the clergy who were in the cities, and they provided with food all those who were strangers and needy [therein]. In this manner they ended their lives, and they never became a stumbling-block unto

Digitized by Google

[any] man. Now as concerning the possessions of which she stripped herself, and the things (i.e., money) which she distributed, being hot as fire with divine zeal, and blazing like a flame with the love of Christ, I alone am not able to recount, for it belongeth also unto those who dwell in the country of the Persians [to declare it]; for there was no man who was deprived of her alms and gifts [whether he came from the] east, or the west, or the north, or the south. She lived in exile for thirty-seven years, and her possessions sufficed for her to give alms to churches, and to religious houses, and to strangers, and to those who were in prison. And meanwhile her relatives and her kinsfolk were sending [money] unto her continually, and her own son, and those who had charge of her property also sent some of their own money unto her; and she never lacked anything, and during the whole of the time in which she was in exile she never consented to the acquisition of a span of land. And she was never drawn to long for her son, and the love for her only child neither parted her nor divided her from the love of Christ, but through her prayers her son attained unto perfect discipline and unto the ways and habits of excellence; and he became the son-in-law of honourable and noble people, and there also came upon him much power and divers positions of great honour; now he had two children, one boy and one girl.

Now after a long period of time had elapsed, when she heard that the daughter of her son and her husband wished to be sanctified, and fearing lest they should fall into the hands of the heretics who would sow in them evil doctrines, and lest they should grow up in a life of dissolute luxury, that old woman, who was then sixty years old, embarked once again in a ship, and sailed from Caesarea, and after twenty days arrived in Rome. And whilst she was there she converted and made to become a Christian a man called Apronianus, who was of exceedingly high rank and was also a pagan; and she moreover persuaded him by means of most perfect admonition and exhortation to become sanctified, and also his wife, who was her own sister and whose name was Avita, to receive the garb of the followers of the ascetic life, and to become prosperous in all patience in the labours of the life of abstinence and self-denial. And she also strengthened by means of her excellent counsels the daughter of her son, whose name was Melania, and her husband, whose name was Pinianus, and she also converted her daughter-in-law, whose name was Albînâ; and she persuaded all these to sell everything which they possessed and to give [the money] to the poor; and she brought them out from Rome, and led them into the

Digitized by Google

quiet and peaceful haven of the life and labours of asceticism.

And she contended with all the women of senatorial rank and with the women of high degree, and strove with them as with savage wild beasts, for the men tried to restrain her from making the women do even as she had done, that is to say, to prevent her from converting them and making them to forsake their worldly rank and position. And she spake unto them thus, "My children, four hundred years ago it was written "that that time was the last time (1 St. John ii, 18). Why "do ye hold fast thus strenuously to the vain love of the "world? Take ye heed lest the day of Antichrist over-"take you, and keep not fast hold upon your own riches "and the possessions of your fathers"; and having set free all these she brought them to the life of the ascetic and recluse. As for her [grand] son Publicola, who was a child, she converted [him] and brought [him] to Sicily; and she sold the whole of the residue of her possessions and taking the price [thereof] came to Jerusalem, and, having distributed it in a wise fashion and arranged all her other affairs, after forty days she died at a good old age, being crowned with an abundance of gratification and happiness; and she left in Jerusalem a house for religious folk and money for the maintenance thereof.

Now therefore when all those who clave unto her had gone forth from Rome the great barbarian whirlwind, which had also been mentioned in ancient prophecies, came upon the city, and it did not leave behind it even the statues of brass which were in the market-places, for it destroyed by its barbaric insolence everything whatsoever; and it so thoroughly committed everything to destruction that the city of Rome, which had been crowned and adorned for twelve hundred years with edifices and buildings of beauty, became a waste place. Then those who without contention had been converted by means of her admonition, ascribed glory unto God Who, by means of a change in temporal affairs, had persuaded those who did not believe her; for whilst the houses of all the latter were plundered, the houses of those only who had been persuaded by her were delivered, and they became perfect burnt-offerings unto the Lord, through the care and solicitude of the blessed woman Melania. And it happened by chance that I and they once travelled together from Aelia to Egypt, and we were accompanying on our journey the gentle virgin Sylvania, the sister of Rufinus, a man of consular rank, and Jovinianus was also with us; now he was at that time a deacon, but subsequently he became bishop in the Church of God of the city of

Digitized by Google

Askelon, and he was a God-fearing man and was exceedingly well versed in doctrine. And it came to pass that a fierce and fiery heat overtook us on the way, and we came into Pelusium that we might rest therein; and Jovinianus, who is worthy of admiration, came by chance upon a trough for washing, and he began to wash his hands and his feet in a little water that by means of the coolness thereof he might refresh himself after the intensity of the blazing heat. Then having washed himself he threw on the ground a sheep-skin whereon he might rest from the labour of the journey. And behold, the mighty one among women stood up over him like a wise [mother], and in her simplicity rebuked him by her words, saying, "Seeing "that thou art still in the heat of youth how canst thou have "confidence that by means of carefulness [on thy part] thou "wilt be able to resist the [natural heat of] the constitution of "the body which still burneth in thy member[s]? And dost "thou not perceive the injurious effects which will be produced "in thee by [this washing]? Believe me, O my son, for I am "this day a woman sixty years old, from the time when I "first took upon myself this garb water hath never touched "more of my body than the tips of the fingers of my hands, "and I have never washed my feet, or my face, or any one of "my members. And although I have fallen into many sick-"nesses, and have been urged by the physicians, I have never "consented nor submitted myself to the habit of applying "water to any part of my body; and I have never lain upon a "bed, and I have never gone on a journey to any place reclin-"ing on a cushioned litter."

Now this wise and blessed woman also loved learning, and she turned the nights into days in reading all the books of the famous Fathers, I mean to say the works of the blessed Gregory and of the holy man Stephen, and of Pierius and of Basil also, and of other [writers], more than two hundred and fifty thousand sayings; and she did not read them in an ordinary fashion or just as she came to them, and she did not hurry over them in an easy and pleasant manner, but with great labour and with understanding she used to read each book seven or eight times. And because of this she was enabled, being set free from lying doctrine, to fly by means of the gift of learning (*or* doctrine) to great opinions, and she made herself a spiritual bird, and in this wise was taken up to Christ her Lord. And may He in His mercy grant unto us through her prayers the power to act mightily, even as she did, and may we see her with all the saints who love Him, and with them may we lift up praise to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.

Digitized by Google

Chapter xlj. Of the Blessed Woman Melania the Younger

NOW inasmuch as I have already promised above to relate the history of Melania the Younger it is meet that I should pay [my] obligation, for it is not just that I should consign to oblivion a young woman who, though so very young in her years, by reason of her indefatigable zeal and knowledge was very much wiser than the old women, or that I should omit to make manifest by words the history of one who, though a girl in stature, was old in the mind of the fear of God. Now therefore the parents of this maiden drew her by force into marriage, and they united her unto one of the nobles of Rome, but she kept in mind continually the words which had been spoken unto her by her aged relative, and kept herself as was fitting, and became strengthened especially in the fear of God. And she had two sons, and as both of them died she came to be possessed of such a hatred of marriage that she said unto her husband, whose name was Pinianus, the son of Severus, a man of consular rank, "If thou wishest "to live with me a life of purity I will regard thee as the hus- "band and lord of my life; but if, inasmuch as thou art a "young man, this is too hard for thee, take everything which "I have and leave only free to me my own body, for in this "way I shall be able to fulfil my desire which is in God, and "I shall become the heir of the excellences of that woman "after whose name I have been called. For if God desired me "to lead the life of this world He would never have taken "away the children to whom I gave birth."

And when they had been for a long time debating the matter, at length God had mercy upon that young man, and He placed in him the zeal of the fear of God to such a degree that he also sought to be excused from all the material things of this world, and thus was fulfilled the word which had been spoken by the Apostle, saying, "How knowest thou, O woman, whether "thou shalt give life to thy husband [or not]? Or how knowest "thou, O man, whether thou shalt give life to thy wife [or "not]?" (1 Corinthians vii, 16.) Now when she was married to her husband she was about twelve [*or* thirteen] years old, and she lived with him for seven years, for she was twenty years of age when she withdrew from the world. First of all she bestowed all her raiment of silk upon the holy altars, which also did Olympias, the handmaiden of Christ, and the remainder of her apparel of silk she cut up, and made it suitable for the service of the church in other ways. Her silver and gold she entrusted to an elder whose name was Paul, who was a monk

Digitized by Google

from Dalmatia, and she sent it by sea to the countries of the East, I mean to Egypt and to the Thebaïd, to the amount of ten thousand darics; and she sent in this manner ten thousand darics to Antioch, and to the countries which were nigh thereunto, but to Palestine she sent fifteen thousand darics. To the churches which were in the islands, and to the people who were in exile she sent ten thousand darics, and to those who were in the West, I mean in the churches, and in the monasteries there, and the houses for the reception of strangers, and to all those who were in want she distributed [her gifts] with her own hands. And I speak as before God [when I say] that she must have given away four times these [amounts besides], and that she snatched away [her money] from Alaricus her confidential servant as from the mouth of a lion. Of those who wished to be free among her servants she gave freedom to about eight thousand in number, and on the remainder who had no wish to have their freedom, and who preferred rather to remain in the service of her brother, she bestowed three thousand darics. All the villages which she had in Spain, and in Aquitania, and in the island of Tarragon, and Gaul she sold, as well as those which she had in Sicily, and in Campania, and in Africa, and received [the proceeds thereof] in her own hands, so that she might give them to the monasteries, and churches, and all those who were in want. Such was the wisdom of Melania, this lover of Christ, and such was the mature and divine opinion which she adopted in respect of the weighty burden of these riches.

And her manner of life was thus. She herself ate once a day, though at the beginning she ate once in five days, and the young women whom she had converted and who lived with her she commanded to partake of food every day. And there lived with her also the mother of Albînâ, who observed the same rule of life, and who distributed her possessions among the needy after the manner of Melania; and sometimes they dwelt in the plains of Sicily, and sometimes in the plains of Campania, and they had with them fifteen men who were eunuchs, and a proportionate number of virgins who ministered as servants.

And Pinianus, who had once been her husband, was now one who helped in the work of ascetic excellence, and was her associate, and he dwelt with three hundred men who were monks and read the Holy Scriptures, and he enjoyed himself in the garden, and conversed with the people. Now these men who were with him helped and relieved us in no slight degree, and we were very many in number, when we were going on our way to Rome on behalf of the blessed man John the Bishop,

Digitized by Google

for they received us with the greatest good will and they supplied us with provisions for the way in great abundance, and they sent us on our way in joy and gladness.

And their kinsman, whose name was Pammachius, a man of consular rank, withdrew from the world as did they, and he lived a life which was pleasing unto God, and during his lifetime he distributed his possessions among the needy, and left them [to them] after his death; and thus he departed unto our Lord. In like manner the man Macarius, and Constantinus, who was the assessor to the prefects in Italy (now they were well known men and men who merit mention), arrived at the highest pitch of ascetic excellence which I describe even as it is; and they abide in the body at this present and lead a life of glorious and divine deeds, and are awaiting the perfect life which is full of happiness.

Chapter xlij. Of the Blessed Woman Olympias

NOW the holy and chaste woman Olympias, whilst journeying in the footsteps of this woman Melania, was emulating her in the excellence of her divine life and labours, and she was seized with a fervent desire of travelling in the path which leadeth to heaven, and in every respect she made herself cling close to the Divine Books. This woman was in the flesh the daughter of Count Seleucus, but, if we say what is true, in the spirit she was the daughter of God. Now she was the daughter of the son of Ablavius, a man who had held consular rank in Constantinople, and she was for a few days the daughter-in-law of Nebridius, the sub-prefect of Constantinople, but in truth she was not the wife of the man, for they say concerning her that she died in purity and in her virginity, and that she only lived according to the Divine Word in chastity, wherein was mingled true humility, and that she made herself a friend of and ministered unto all those who were needy. Now her abundant riches sufficed for this work, and it is impossible to reckon up that which she used to distribute to every one with a sincere intent; for there is not a city, or a district, or a desert place, or an island, or a shore which did not enjoy the gifts of this glorious woman. And she gave gifts also to the churches for their maintenance, and to the houses wherein strangers were received, and also to the prisons and, moreover, to those who were in exile, and, so to speak, on the whole world this blessed woman scattered her alms broadcast. And she leaped upon and ascended the uppermost part of the lofty mountain of humility, wherein nothing whatsoever was to be seen of the acts and deeds of vainglory or of deceitful action (*or* appearance), but the life of simplicity, and

Digitized by Google

the common garb, and the emaciated body, and the submissive mind, and the understanding which is without arrogance, and the lowly heart, and the watching of vigil, and the spirit which is without anxious care, and the love which hath no limit, and friendship without end and the holding in contempt the operation of the feelings, and the restraint from everything [harmful], and the mind which is simple towards God, and the hope which never faileth, and the lovingkindness which is unspeakable, and the thoughtful care of all poor folk.

Now this woman suffered many temptations through the agency of that evil devil, who loveth hateful things and who hath never had experience of things which are good, and she endured great contendings for the sake of the name of Christ. And she gave herself unto tears which were without measure both by day and by night, and she submitted herself unto all sorts and conditions of the children of men for the sake of God, and she bowed down reverently before the holy Bishops, and she paid homage to the elders, and she entreated in an honourable manner the clergy, as well as the orders of monks who dwelt in the monastic houses, and she received with welcome the virgins, and she visited the widows, and she reared the orphans, and she strengthened [those who were in a state of] old age, and she had care for the sick and she mourned with the sinners, and she led the erring into the right path, and she tended every one, and she converted many women among those who did not believe, and prepared them for life. She left behind her to the world a beautiful remembrance, and she changed the slavery into freedom of all the members of her household, who were about a myriad in number, and she shewed unto them honour in the same degree as to her noble family; and if, as is right, we must tell the truth, she made them to become of more account than herself.

It was impossible for any man to see apparel worse than hers on anyone, for the garments of this brave woman were not as good as those of the people who cover themselves with the oldest rags; and the food which she offered to her body was of such an inferior class that on account of its poorness it was rejected even by her servants. By this woman who was clothed in Christ, no blame was ever found in anyone, not even in her neighbours, all through her life—which was not a life—by reason of the repentance and in the vehement tears wherewith she burned; one may perchance see a fountain which, owing to the violence of the heat, hath dried up, but no man ever saw the eyes of this woman, which were fixed upon Christ, lacking tears. But of what use is it for us to tell and to devote myself so strenuously to narrate [things] concerning her? For the contendings of this woman, who was perfect in excellence, were so exceedingly numerous

Digitized by Google

that they were more in number than those which were declared concerning her, and men would only imagine concerning me that I was narrating from hearsay great things which were not true about this woman Olympias, who became a vessel of honour of the Divine Spirit, and who was above [all] passions. Nevertheless I was a spectator of her excellence and of her angelic acts and deeds, and I was, as it were, a member of her household, and her kinsman in the Spirit, and she made, by my counsel, [gifts] unto many from her possessions. And this woman who never thought about the things which were in the flesh, suffered many vain calumnies for the sake of the truth, and those who were living in Divine fear in Constantinople rightly deemed that she should be numbered with the confessors, because even unto the death she persisted in striving for righteousness' sake, and in [performing her works] she received perfection, and she waited hopefully for the never-withering crown, which was full of all blessings in the everlasting mansions on high, with all the saints who were like unto her, and she sought after the reward of her good deeds with freedom (*or* boldness) of speech.

Chapter xliij. Of the Blessed Woman Candida

AND after the manner of the blessed woman Candida, the daughter of the blessed man Trajan, the general, also laboured, and she arrived at the perfection of ascetic excellence; and she offered unto the Bishops, who were the ministers of the Mysteries of Christ, the homage which was meet for them, and she provided suitably for the performance of all the service of the church, and supplied the clergy with gifts, unto each man according to his grade. She converted her daughter and placed her in the ranks of the virgins, and she offered unto God this gift of the fruit of her womb, and sent [her] before her, and finally she herself also became like unto her daughter in the chastity of her purity, and she distributed her wealth among the poor and needy. And I know that night after night this brave woman used to rise up [from her bed] and grind corn, and heat the oven, and make bread for the Offering, and bake it with her own hands, and she was wont to say that she did this in order to reduce the strength of her body, for, she added, "Be- "cause I am unable to receive any benefit from fasting I have "taken upon myself this labour for watching, so that I may do away with the greedy appetite of Esau." Now she separated herself from every kind [of meat] where there is blood, fish alone excepted, and she made use of oil and vegetables, but these only on festival days; and on all other days she used to live on dry bread dipped in vinegar, and it sufficed her. And she awaited with

Digitized by Google

hope the Resurrection which was to be full of happiness, in return for these stern labours, and she hoped to enjoy the everlasting delights which God hath prepared for those who love Him.

Chapter xliv. Of the Blessed Woman Gelasia

AND Gelasia, the daughter of a man of the rank of tribune, desired earnestly to follow in the fear of God after this woman whose life and deeds were glorious, and her excellence consisted in never allowing the sun to go down upon her wrath against man, neither against her servants nor against [any] other man; and this blessed woman fled from the path of men of wrath which leadeth unto everlasting death.

Chapter xlv. Of the Blessed Woman Juliana

AND again, there was a certain virgin, whose name was Juliana, in Caesarea of Cappadocia, and it was said concerning her that she was a believing woman, and a woman of understanding, and that in the time of the persecution when the writer Origen was fleeing from the heathen she received [him] and hid him [in her house] for two years; and she fed and kept him at her own expense, and made him to be satisfied and content with her ministration. Now I have found these things set down in a certain book which was in the handwriting of Origen himself, and I found this book in the possession of the excellent virgin Juliana in Caesarea who had hidden it, and who used to say that she received it from Symmachus, the expositor of the Jews. And I have not set down [in writing] the story of the excellences of these glorious women for any ordinary purpose, but that we may learn that by every means whatsoever we may, if we wish, find sundry and divers occasions for [obtaining spiritual] advantage.

Chapter xlvj. Of Heronion and his Wife [Bosphoria]

IN Ancyra, a city of Galatia, I met a man whose name was Heronion, an "Apakomots," and an enlightened man, and his wife whose name was Bosphoria (*or* Dosphoria), and of their mode of living and acts I experienced an example. Now these folk had such a firm hope in the happiness (*or* good things) which were to come, that they neglected even their children, for they awaited with hope the actual [fulfilment] of the things to come, and they distributed among the poor and needy the income which they derived from their villages, notwithstanding the fact that they had four male and two female children. To these [children] they never gave anything whatsoever, except to the daughters who had married husbands.

Digitized by Google

And finally, they used to say, "After we are dead everything "will be yours, but during our lifetime the income which we "derive from our villages we shall take for ourselves." Now they used to divide their moneys among the churches and monasteries, and houses for the receiving of strangers (*or* hospitals?) and among the poor and needy. And besides these things they performed the following act of excellence. There was a great famine, and every man shut up (*or* restrained) his mercy, but these folk opened the storehouses which they had in their villages, and gave [food] to eat to those who were famished, and through this act the heretics who were living in that country were changed and were turned unto the [true] knowledge when they saw their unspeakable lovingkindness; and they gave praise unto God for the simplicity of their faith. And other examples of their excellence were the following: The modest garb, common and simple apparel, food eaten but rarely, and then only in such quantity as was sufficient [to maintain] life; and they lived meanwhile in a state of chastity which was acceptable unto God. They dwelt in the fields several days [at a time], loving a life of silent contemplation, and they fled from the tumult of cities and from the evils which are begotten of them, lest when they were living among a crowd of people something might come upon them to disturb them, and they might fall from the[ir] divine state of mind. For this reason these blessed men were doing all these excellent things, because that with the eyes of the understanding they had already looked upon the good things which had been for ever prepared for them.

Chapter xlvij. Of the Blessed Woman Magna

IN this city of Ancyra there were also many other virgins who led lives of ascetic excellence, and they were two thousand, or more, in number; and they kept themselves in restraint and served God with great humility. And among them were also famous women who triumphed with glorious strenuousness in the contending of the fear of God, and of those was Magnâ, the chaste and proved wife; now I know not whether I ought to describe her as a virgin or as a widow, for this woman, owing to the pressure which was put upon her by her mother, was yoked unto a husband. But she used to make pretences to her husband in divers ways, and she avoided his embraces by urging the bodily sickness which she had on her as an excuse, and thus she was, according to what the members of her household said, preserved spotless from him. Now, after a short time the man died, and he left everything which he had unto her alone, and she exchanged the

Digitized by Google

things of time for those which were everlasting, and she offered herself wholly to God and devoted herself unto the things which belonged unto the life which is to come; and thus she lived a life in the great chastity of the fear of God, and even the Bishops were put to shame by the sight of her. Now the rest of the building (i.e., the edifice of her spiritual excellences,) she made perfect in the furnace of the love of voluntary poverty, and whatsoever there remained unto her she gave, as it is written, gladly unto the churches, and monasteries and houses for receiving poor strangers, and unto the orphans and widows; and she abode continually in the church and served God, and awaited the hope which was to come.

Chapter xlviij. Of the Monk [Misericors] who lived in Ancyra

AND moreover, we found in this city a certain monk, and we met him at the time when he had [just] received the laying on of hands as an elder; formerly he had been a husbandman, but he had laboured in the life of a solitary recluse (*or* monk) for twenty years, and he had lived in close intercourse with the Bishop of the city, who was a holy man. He was such a benevolent man that even in the night time he would go round about and visit those who were poor and needy, and he was so indefatigable in his work that he neglected neither the prison-house, nor the house of the sick (i.e., hospital), nor the houses of the rich and poor, but he helped every one. He urged the rich with words which were full of mercy, and exhorted them to fair deeds, and he toiled with anxious care on behalf of the poor and needy, in respect of those things which were meet for them. Those who were struggling in contention he brought nigh unto peace, and those who were naked he clothed with raiment, and he laboured for the sick and brought them the bindings up which conduced to [their] healing. Now there existed in this city of Ancyra that which existeth rightly in large cities, that is to say, in the porch of the church thereof there lay a great number of poor folk, who were in the habit of going about begging for their daily bread, and among them were certain men who had wives; and it fell out on the night of a certain day that one of these women was about to give birth to a child. And by reason of the pain which was darting through her, and the severe anguish of the birth-pangs, she cried out loudly, and the blessed man heard her outcries from the church as he was praying; and the blessed man ceased praying, and went forth to see [what was happening], although it was winter. And seeing that there was no man nigh unto her in her necessity, he himself filled the

Digitized by Google

place of midwife, and he abhorred not the shame which attacheth unto those who give birth to children; for the great act of lovingkindness which he was about to perform did not grant unto him the perception of such things.

Now of this blessed man the garments (*or* possessions) were so utterly poor that they were worth nothing at all, for by reason of the great lovingkindness which dwelt in him he took no pains at all to acquire any possession whatsoever. For if anyone gave him a book he straightway went and sold it, and unto those who enquired of him concerning it, saying, "Why "didst thou sell [the book]?" he said, "How am I to persuade "the Master (*or* Teacher) that I have in truth learned His "handicraft, unless I make use of His testimony as to the true "[meaning] of His handicraft?" And this holy man thereupon persisteth in this course of action until this day, and he hath left behind him unto all those who dwell in that country a never-fading remembrance. And he is happy in the expectation of the good things which are for ever, and he waiteth to receive the reward of the labours of his triumphs in the kingdom from Him Who said, "I was an hungered and ye gave Me to eat. "I was naked and ye clothed Me" (St. Matthew xxv, 35, 36).

Chapter xlix. Of John of Lycus, a City of the Thebaid

JOHN, who lived in the city of Lycus, and who had learned in his youth the craft of the carpenter, and whose brother was a dyer, afterwards, when he was about five and twenty years old, took upon himself the garb of monkhood; and having lived in divers monasteries for five years, he finally departed by himself to the mountain which is in Lycus, to the lofty eminence which is on the top of the mountain, and made three cells for himself there. Now he built and prepared these for himself in the first year after he went to the mountain and went up into it. The first cell was for the needs of the body, in the second he laboured at the work of his hands and took his food, and in the third he said his prayers, and during the three (*or* thirty) years in which he was in seclusion there he was wont to receive whatsoever was necessary for him through the window from him that ministered unto him.

Now this blessed man was worthy [to receive] from God the gift of being able to declare things before they came to pass, and on several occasions he made known things before they happened unto the blessed Emperor Theodosius, I mean he foretold that he would conquer Maximus the rebel and would return from Gallia, and he also announced to him beforehand concerning the defeat of Eugenius the rebel, and thus the fame of this holy man went forth greatly, and he was held to be a

Digitized by Google

man of spiritual excellence. Now therefore when we were in the desert of Nitria, I and the members of the following of the blessed Origen wished to gain exact information concerning the state of spiritual excellence to which the man [had attained]. Thereupon the blessed Evagrius said, "I am very desirous "of learning from some one who is skilled in the investigation "of the mind and understanding what manner of man [John "of Lycus] is; for although I myself am unable to see him, "still I can learn from another man [concerning] his qualities "of excellence if he be able to narrate them, but I cannot go "so far as [his] mountain." Now when I had heard these things I said nothing whatsoever to any man, and I held my peace for a day, but on the morrow I shut up my cell, and having confided myself to the hands of God I set out on my journey to go to the Thebaïd, where I arrived after eighteen days, on some of which I walked on my feet, and on others I sailed on the river. For it was the period of the year when the river riseth, and when many folk fall sick, the which also happened unto me. And when I had gone [to John of Lycus] I found that he had shut himself up in the place wherein he lived in seclusion, and I took up my abode with the brethren in a great house which contained about one hundred men, and which the brethren had built a long time; for though they shut in John during the other days of the week on Saturday and Sunday they used to open his window.

When therefore I had learned the rule concerning his seclusion, I waited until the Saturday, and at the second hour I drew nigh and found him sitting in the opening in the wall (*or* window), wherein he waited to administer comfort and consolation unto those who thronged unto him. And having saluted me he said unto me through an interpreter, "Whence art thou, "my son? And why hast thou come? Thou appearest to me to "belong unto the congregation of Evagrius." And I said unto him, "I am a stranger from [the country of] the Galatians," and I confessed that I also belonged unto those who were the followers of Evagrius. Now whilst we were conversing together behold, Alipius, the governor of the country, came unto him, and as the governor turned to him John ceased to talk to me and I left them for a little space and gave them opportunity to talk, and I rose up [and departed] from the mountain. And when they had passed much time in their converse I became impatient and angry, and I murmured against that excellent old man because it seemed as if he had treated me lightly and had paid honour to the governor; and being offended in my mind at this [treatment] I made up my mind to go away because of his disregard of me. Then John called unto his inter-

Digitized by Google

preter, whose name was Theodore, and said unto him, "Go and "say unto that brother, 'Be not angry and impatient, for I will "'dismiss the governor immediately, and [then] I will speak "'with thee.'" Thus it appeared to me that, like a spiritual being, he had knowledge of secret things, and I made up my mind to remain.

And when the governor had departed John called unto me and said unto me, "My son, why wast thou vexed with me? "What hast thou found which is worthy of [being considered] "an offence? Thou hast imagined things which are not to be "found in me, and which are not creditable unto thyself. Dost "thou not know that it is written, 'Those that are whole have "'no need of a physician (St. Matthew ix, 12; St. Mark ii, 17; "'St. Luke v, 31); only those who are in very evil case have "'need of him.' Thee I can find whensoever I wish, and if I "myself do not comfort thee the brethren and the other fathers "will do so. But this governor who hath come to us is tightly "bound unto the Calumniator by means of the affairs of this "world, and, having obtained respite for a brief space from "the vain labour of [his] abominable servitude, he fleeth like a "slave from his master and cometh to be helped; therefore it "would not be seemly to leave him, and to be constant in "attention unto thee, for thou art at all seasons occupied with "the cultivating of thy life."

And having said these things I entreated him to forgive me, and I became certain in my mind that he was a spiritual man. Then with a smile he patted my left cheek with his right hand, and said unto me, "Many temptations will rise up for thee to "endure, and moreover, for many years [past] thou hast "struggled to go forth from the desert, and thou strugglest "even to this day, but thou hast been afraid; and the causes "thereof, which were thought [by thee to arise from] the fear "of God, hath the Evil One himself sowed in thy mind; and "although thou didst drive away thy thought from thee thou "hast kept him with thee. For he sowed in thee the thought "of desire, which was also pleasant unto thee, that is to say, "thou didst care greatly to bring out of the world thy father "and also thy sister that they might take upon themselves "the garb of the monastic life. Now there still remain to thy "father seven other years of life, therefore continue to abide "in the desert, and do not on account of these thoughts desire "to go to thy kinsfolk, for it is written, 'No man who hath "'put his hand on the ploughshare and looketh back is useful "'to the kingdom of heaven'" (St. Luke ix, 62). Now, therefore, being helped by these words whereby I triumphed I gave thanks and praise unto God Who had quieted and laid to rest

Digitized by Google

in me the cause which was urging me to go forth from the desert.

Then afterwards he said unto me with a smile, "Wishest "thou to become a bishop?" And I said unto him, "I have "already been made one"; and he said unto me, "Where?" Then I answered and said unto him, "I am the bishop of the "public eating-houses, and of the taverns, and of tables, and "of wine-pots, for I am a visitor of them. And if the wine "hath gone sour I know enough to observe it, and that which "is fit [to drink] I drink. Similarly I visit the cooking pot and "if it needeth salt, or any seasoning whatsoever, I season it "with sauces and then I eat thereof. For this, that is to say, "my visiting, is my episcopate, and it is the love of the belly "and gluttony which hath made me the visitor of these." And with a smile he said unto me further, "Quit these [words] of "jesting, for a bishop thou must needs be, and thou wilt have "to labour and to be troubled greatly; now if thou wishest to "flee from tribulations and temptations go not forth from the "desert, for in the desert no man will make thee a bishop."

And when I had departed from him I came to the desert, that is, to my place wherein I dwelt, and having related these things unto the blessed fathers, who after two months went and held intercourse with him, I forgot his words. And three years afterwards I fell sick with a sore sickness which was caused by my kidneys and stomach, and I was sent to Alexandria by the brethren who believed that I was collecting water (i.e., becoming dropsical), and the physicians counselled me to leave Alexandria, and for the sake of the air (*or* climate) to go to Palestine, where the air (*or* climate) was temperate and light and would be beneficial to my body. From Palestine I went to Bithynia, where, for what reason I know not, whether by the care and solicitude of men, or whether by the Will of God, Who is exalted above all things, I was held to be worthy of the laying on of hands for the episcopacy, which was far above my deserts, and I became an associate in the temptation (*or* trial) which rose up against the blessed John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople. And having been secluded for a period of about eleven months in a dark cell I remembered that blessed man who had told me of the things which had happened to me before they came to pass. Now the blessed man John related the things unto me, according to my opinion, that by means of the narrative he might incite my mind and bring me to continue to dwell in the desert; and he said unto me, "Behold, I have passed eight and forty years in this cell, "and I have never seen the face of a woman [during the "whole time], and no man hath either seen me eat or drink."

Digitized by Google

Now the handmaiden of Christ Pœmenia came unto the blessed man and begged that she might see him, but the blessed man would not allow her to do so; and he sent unto her other spiritual words to give her consolation, and he commanded her that when she was going down from the Thebaïd she should not turn aside to Alexandria, saying, that if she did so, she would certainly fall into temptations. But Pœmenia, forgetting this [advice] and never letting it enter her mind [again], turned aside to Alexandria that she might see the city, and on the way, by the side of the city Nicius, she stopped her ship that she might rest herself. And when her servants had disembarked, through some untoward circumstance strife broke out between them and the people of the country, who were truculent men, and they cut off a finger of one believing man, and another they killed, and without knowing it they drowned the holy Bishop Dionysius in the river. And they made the venerable woman to endure many revilings and threatened to do much violence unto her; and they beat all her servants with many severe stripes, and they would hardly allow them to proceed on their way.

Chapter I. Of the Blessed Man Possidonius

NOW the things which [are narrated] concerning the holy man Possidonius the Theban are so many that it is impossible to describe them all; he was so gentle, and gracious, and patient, and enduring, and his soul had so much goodness in it that I do not know that I ever met another man who was like unto him. For I lived with him in Bethlehem for a year, at the time he was living beyond the Monastery of the Shepherds, which was close to the town, and I observed in him many qualities of excellence, of which I will relate [an example of] one or two. He told me one day when I was living by the side of Porphyrites, [saying], "I have not spoken to a "man for a whole year, and I have not heard the speech of "one. I have not eaten bread, but the insides of palm leaves "soaked in water and, whenever I could find it, wild honey. "Once, however, the time came when these things failed me, "and I was in sore tribulation because of it. And I went forth "from the cave that I might go to the habitations of men, and "having journeyed on the whole day I was scarcely two miles "distant from the cave. And I turned [and looked] behind me, "and I saw, as it were, a horseman whose appearance re-"sembled that of a knight, and he had upon his head the "similitude of a helmet, and thinking that he was a Roman I "turned back to the cave, and I found outside it a basket of "grapes and new, ripe figs, and I took them and went with

Digitized by Google

"them into the cave rejoicing; and that food sufficed to be a "consolation unto me for a period of two months."

And the blessed man wrought in Bethlehem the following miracle. A certain woman had conceived, and she was possessed of an unclean spirit, and being near to the bringing forth of her child she was greatly afflicted by birth pangs and was violently tortured by that spirit; and as she was writhing by reason of the workings of that devil, her husband came and entreated the holy man to go and pray over her, and we went into [her house] therefore that we might pray together. And having stood up and prayed, after he had knelt down twice he cast out that unclean spirit; when he stood up he said unto us, "Pray ye, for straightway the devil shall go forth." But there was a certain sign, the fulfilment of which [he wished] to shew us, and therefore when that devil had gone forth, he overturned the whole of the courtyard wall unto its very foundations; now that woman had not spoken a word for a period of about six years, but after that devil had gone forth she brought forth her child and spake.

And, moreover, I also saw [an example] of the prophecy of this blessed man. There was a certain elder, whose name was Hieronymus, who dwelt in these parts, and he was exceedingly well versed in the art and practice of grammar and of eloquence, and he was greatly skilled in the Latin language; but he possessed the vices of envy and evil-eyedness to such a degree that the excellence of his very great skill and ability was entirely hidden. Now the blessed man Possidonius had dwelt with him for many days, and he told me that the free-woman Paula, who had taken care of him, departed from this world before her time in order that she might escape from his envy, and, according to my opinion, it was on account of this man that none of the holy men would live in these districts; and the envy of this man continued to such a degree that it overtook his own brother, which thing took place even as he had foretold. And he also persecuted the blessed man Oxyperentius, who came from Italy, and the wonderful men, Peter the Egyptian and Simeon, who were seen by me. And Possidonius the Great himself told me that for the whole period of forty years he had not tasted food made of bread, and that wrath against any man did not abide with him as long as the half of the day.

Digitized by Google

Chapter lj. Of Chronius who was from the Village of Phœnix

THERE was a certain man whose name was Chronius, who came from the village which was called Tomârtâ (i.e., Phœnix) which was nigh unto the desert; and when he had gone away a little distance from human habitations, and had departed from his village, having measured out along the road with his right foot about fifteen thousand paces, he prayed and dug in that spot a pit, and he found [therein] good and sweet water. Now the well was about seven fathoms in depth; and he built there a little habitation wherein to dwell, and from the day wherein he shut himself up in that place, he prayed to God that he might never return to a region inhabited by men. Now when he had dwelt there some few years, he was esteemed worthy to become a priest unto the brotherhood, for there were gathered together unto him about two hundred brethren. And these excellent things are said concerning him: that during the whole of the period of sixty years, wherein he was performing the ministrations of the altar, he never once went out of the desert, and that he never ate bread which he had not [earned by] the labour of his hands.

Chapter lij. Of James the Lame [and of Paphnutius Cephala]

NOW by the side of this Chronius, who is [mentioned] above, there used to dwell a certain man who was called James the Lame, and he was an exceedingly learned man; now both of these men knew the blessed Anthony.

And it came to pass one day that there happened to be there also Paphnutius, who is described as a man who watered gardens by machines, and who possessed the gift of knowledge to such a degree that he knew how to expound the Books of the Old and New Testaments without reading from them; and he was such a gentle man that his meekness overcame the gift of prophecy which was found with him; now the former was voluntary, and the latter was an act of Divine grace. And of this man it was said that he possessed spiritual excellence to such a degree that for a period of eighty years he did not own two tunics. Now when I and the blessed man Evagrius came to these men we desired to learn the reasons for the stumblings of the brethren and for their transgressions against the strict rules of the ascetic life.

And it came to pass in those same days that Chaeremon the anchorite departed from the world whilst he was sitting on his seat and holding his work in his hand.

Digitized by Google

And it came to pass that another brother was buried by a fall of earth when he was digging a well.

And another died of want of water as he was coming from Scete.

And in addition to these [we wished to learn] concerning the matter of Stephen, which ought not to be spoken about, for he fell into foul lasciviousness.

And [we asked] concerning Eucarpius, and those which concerned Hero the Alexandrian, and the Palestinian, and Ptolemy the Egyptian, who were in Scete. And we were asking among ourselves the question, "What is the reason why men live "lives of this kind in the desert, whereby some receive in-"jury mentally, and some are ensnared by lasciviousness?" Whereupon Paphnutius, that man of great learning, made answer unto us in the following words, saying, "All the "various things which take place in the world must be divided "into two categories, for some happen through the direct "Will of God, and the others by His permission only; the "things which are wrought to the praise of God, especially "happen by the direct desire of God, but all those which "appertain to loss (*or* injury), and danger, and to matters "which produce tribulation take place by the permission of "God. Now permission ariseth from a fault on the part of the "mind. For it is impossible for the man who thinketh rightly "to fall into foul sins, or into the error which ariseth from the "devils, for all of these take place through a corrupt intent "(*or* disposition), and through the [love of the] approval of "the children of men, and by the daring of the thoughts, "[which] hope to make perfect spiritual excellence. Such men "fall into reprehensible wickedness, and God permitteth them "so to do, that they may be a help unto others, that when they "feel the difference which hath come upon them through this "permission, they may remember themselves and may turn again "unto spiritual excellence, either that which existeth in the "mind, or that which existeth in deeds. And sometimes it is "the mind which sinneth, that is to say, when that sin which "taketh place is committed with evil intent; and sometimes it "is the deeds themselves which must be rejected, as, for ex-"ample, when they are performed in a manner which is quite "beyond everything which is right and seemly, and this latter "case happeneth frequently. Thus a man of lust will, with "corrupt design, give alms unto young women in order that "he may fulfil his foul desire, even though at the beginning "he may say, 'It is a beautiful act for us to offer help to the "'maiden who is an orphan, and alone [in the world] and in "'misery.' And again it may happen that a man may begin to

Digitized by Google

"do alms with a good and acceptable intent to those who are "sick, or to those who have lost their riches and become "poor, and that though he giveth his gift in a niggardly "manner, and may murmur [at the expense] and wax wroth, "his motive in giving will be found to be a right one. Now the "deed is not [to be thought] equal to the motive. For it is "right for the man who would shew mercy to make his gift "gladly and with a good eye."

And they also spoke the following: "There is a difference "between the gifts which exist in various souls. Some of "them possess keenness of mind, and some of them find it "exceedingly easy and simple to acquire the habits of ascetic "self-denial, or to do that which is difficult for other souls to "do; but when a man maketh use of [his] gift of keenness of "mind without a good object for so doing, or when he exerteth "his faculty of performing things because it is easy for him to "do so, or when men exercise the gifts which they have re-"ceived, they do not ascribe, as would be right, the correct-"ness of their spiritual excellences unto God, but to their own "desire, and to their own keenness of mind. And those to "whom it is sufficient to perform fair works are permitted by "the Divine Providence to be caught in a snare, either by "filthy deeds or filthy passions, or by the contempt or by the "disgrace which cometh unto them from the children of men, "so that through the shame and the contempt which [they re-"ceive] from the multitude they may little by little and by de-"grees cast away from them their boasting about the spiritual "excellence which they imagine they possess.

"For he who is inflated and unduly exalted at the keenness "of speech [which he possesseth] doth not ascribe to God, as "is right, such keenness, or the discovery of the knowledge "which is from Him, but to his own training, forsooth, or to "his own naturally keen disposition; [therefore] doth God "remove from him the Angel of His Divine Providence, and "the Angel being separated from him, this man is immediately "vanquished by his Adversary, and he who was [unduly] lifted "up in his keenness [of mind and speech] falleth into lascivious-"ness, or into some kind of filthy passion, because he was [un-"duly] exalted. And because he was lifted up, and because the "witness of chastity hath separated himself from him, the "things which are said by him become unworthy of credence, "and those who fear God flee from the teaching of the mouth "of the man who is in this condition, even as they would flee "from a fountain which is full of leeches, so that there may be "fulfilled that which is written, 'Unto the sinner God saith, "'What hast thou to do with the Books of My Command-

Digitized by Google

"'ments? (Psalm l, 16.) For thou hast taken My covenant in "'thy mouth.'

"For in very truth the souls of those who are moved by pas- "sions are like unto fountains of divers kinds; the souls of glut- "tons and of those who live in impurity and drunkenness are "like unto muddy springs; and the souls of those who love "money and are avaricious are like unto wells which are full "of frogs; and the souls of those who live in envy and pride, "even though there be found in their nature a facility for re- "ceiving doctrine, are like unto wells which breed snakes, and "which, even though their flow be continual, no man is able "to drink from because of the bitterness of their manners and "habits. And because of this the blessed man David asked and "entreated God to give him three things: graciousness (*or* sweet- "ness), knowledge, and instruction. [For without graciousness "knowledge hath no use], and if a man whose manner of life "is thus correct shall himself lift from off himself the cause of "the permission [from God], which is boasting, and shall take "upon himself humility, and shall recognize his true capacity, "and shall not, at the same time, exalt himself over any man, "and shall confess (*or* give thanks unto) God, the witness of "knowledge will return unto him again."

"Now this is the behaviour of spiritual excellence. For the "spiritual words of a chaste mode of life do not permit to "grow up together with them the parched spear-grasses, and "ears of corn which have been smitten by the south wind (*or* "drought), and which by reason of their appearance make men "think they are full, whilst there is no [flour of] bread in "them. Every lapse (*or* calamity) which taketh place, either "through the tongue, or through some feeling, or through "some action, or through the whole body, taketh place in pro- "portion to the measure of a man's pride, and by the permission "of God, Who showeth compassion upon those who commit "themselves to His Divine Providence. For if, in addition to "their skill in ordering their speech and their keenness of na- "ture, the Lord were also to testify to the beauty of their words "by never permitting them to fall, the arrogance with which "they would exalt themselves in impurity would probably sur- "pass that of the devils."

And the following also did these men of the house of Abbâ Paphnutius say unto us: "When thou seest evil deeds and "acts, that is to say, the conversation of him who leadeth an "evil life [and knowest] that they are fair and exceedingly "plausible, remember the Devil who, [as we learn] from the "Holy Scriptures, spake with Christ [St. Matthew iv, 3ff.], and "also the testimony which saith, 'Now the serpent was the most

Digitized by Google

"'subtle (Genesis iii, 1) of all the serpents which were on the "'earth,' and that it was by reason of his subtlety that des- "truction came upon him, because he possessed no other quality "of excellence which attached itself closely to his cunning. "For it is meet that the believing man who feareth God should "ponder upon that which God giveth unto him. And let him "speak that which he meditateth, and let him do that which "he speaketh. For if to the asseveration of words there be not "attached a brotherhood in acts and deeds, it is bread without "salt, which cannot be eaten, lest digestion be disturbed, even "as the blessed man Job said, 'Can the thing which is insipid "'be eaten without salt? Or, is there any taste in the juice of the "'ox-tongue plant?' (Job vi, 6.) Even thus polished words "possess no savour whatsoever unless they be made complete "by works.

"Now therefore there is one kind of permission which hideth "spiritual excellence in order that it may be revealed, as, for "example, that of Job concerning which God made known when "He said unto him (Job xl, 8ff.), 'Blame not My judgement, "'and think not that I have done these things unto thee for any "'other reason than that it might be known that thou art "'righteous. Thou wast known unto Me because I see secret "'things, but thou wast not revealed unto the children of men, "'because they thought that thou didst care exceedingly for "'riches that thou mightest make perfect My pleasure; it was for "'this reason that I brought upon thee the trial of stripping thee "'of thy riches so that I might shew them thy gratitude to- "'wards Me, and thy patient endurance.'

"And there is another kind of permission [which God "giveth] in order to drive out pride (*or* arrogance), as in the "case of Paul, for the blessed Paul was permitted by means "of distractions and a goad, and he fell into divers tribula- "tions, and he said, 'There hath been given to me a goad in "'my flesh, a messenger of Satan, (2 Corinthians xii, 7) to buffet "'me so that I may not be [unduly] exalted,' lest through the "superfluity of the revelations, and signs, and gratifications "[of the spirit], and prosperity and honours which were "found with him, he might become lax and fall into arro- "gance. And the paralytic was permitted because of sin, even "according to what our Redeemer said unto him, 'Behold, "'thou art whole; sin no more' (St. John v, 14). And Judas "was permitted because he held money (St. Matthew xxvii, "5) in greater esteem than life, and because of this he hanged "himself. And Esau (Genesis xxv, 32) was permitted, and he "fell into filthy desire because he honoured the dung of the "bowels more than the divine birthright. Therefore, because

Digitized by Google

"the blessed Paul understood all these things, did he say con-
"cerning men, 'Because they have not decided within them-
"'selves that they will know God, He hath delivered them
"'over unto an empty understanding so that they may work
"'that which is unseemly' (Romans i, 21-28). And concerning
"other men who think that the knowledge of God is in them,
"together with the corrupt mind which they possess, he said,
"'Because they have known God, and have not praised Him
"'as God, and given thanks unto Him, He hath delivered
"'them over unto the passions of disgrace.'"

Therefore from these things it is meet that we should know that it is impossible for a man to stumble and fall into filthy desire without the permission of the Providence of God.

Chapter liij. Of the Blessed man Solomon

NOW I went about in Antinoë of the Thebaïd for a period of four years, and I learned concerning the whole of the system of the religious houses which were there; for there dwelt by the side of the city about twelve hundred men, who worked with their hands, and who lived the life of spiritual excellence. Among these there was a number of solitary monks who shut themselves up in caves, and among them was one who was called Solomon; he was a chaste and humble man, and unto him was given the gift of patient endurance. He used to say that he had passed fifty years in the cave, during which time he had fed himself by means of his labour, and he could repeat the Scriptures by heart.

Chapter liv. Of Dorotheos the Priest

AND there was Dorotheos, a priest, who used to live in a cave, and he possessed more goodness than many men, and led a spiritual life of high excellence; now he had been held to be worthy of consecration to the priesthood, and he performed the offices thereof for the brethren who dwelt in the caves. Unto this blessed man Melania the Less, the kinswoman of Melania the Great, concerning whom we are about to speak later, sent five hundred darics and begged him to spend them on behalf of the brethren [who were there]; but he only took three of them, and then sent the remainder to the wandering monk Diocles, a man of knowledge and understanding, saying, "O our brother Diocles, thou art wiser than "I am; I am not equal [to spending these]"; and having taken them Diocles was able to spend them wisely on those whom he knew of a certainty to be in want.

Digitized by Google

Chapter lv. Of Diocles

THIS man Diocles was originally [one] of those who were greatly skilled in grammar, but afterwards he became learned in philosophy. And having arrived at the period of the twenty-eighth year of his life, he was called by the Grace of God, and he departed and removed himself from the house of instruction, and delivered himself over to the promise of Christ; and having dwelt in caves for the space of thirty-five years, he said unto us, "The mind which removeth itself "from the meditation of God falleth into lust." Now he used to say that lust was that of a savage, animal, and bestial character, for he said unto us, "The mind which falleth away from the meditation of God becometh either a devil or a beast"; and we asked him to explain this saying unto us, and he did so, and said, "The mind which maketh itself to be remote from the contem-"plation of God must, perforce, be delivered over either to the "devil of lust, who leadeth [it] into lasciviousness, or to the evil "devil of wrath, wherefrom are produced the animal passions." And he said, "The feeling of lasciviousness is a bestial thing, but "the feeling of wrath appertaineth to the devil." And making answer I said unto him, "How is it possible for the human mind to be "with God continually and uninterruptedly?" And he said, "The mind of that soul which liveth in the thought or deed of "the fear of God, no matter what it may be, is with God."

Chapter lvj. Of the Blessed Man Kapiton

NOW by the side of this man there used to dwell Kapiton, a man who had been formerly a thief, and he had lived in holes in the rocks for fifty years, [at a place] which was about four miles from Antinoë; he never went down from his cave, not even to the river Nile, for he used to say that he was unable to meet in the congregation of the children of men him that still fought with him, namely, his Adversary.

Chapter lvij. Of the Monk who fell

AND by the side of these blessed men I saw a man who also had made himself remote from the world, and he dwelt in holes in the rocks even as did they; now this man was mocked at by the devil of vainglory, and by the visions which he saw, and he was deluded (*or* snared) by things which appeared to approach him and then wandered away. And he was lacking in mind, even as it is written, "Being exalted in "his dreams he pastureth spirits and pursueth after a shadow"; now he was chaste in his body, perhaps owing to the length [of his years], or perhaps through vainglory, yet through the

Digitized by Google

matters of spiritual excellence he destroyed his understanding, and he was corrupted by empty and polluted glory, and because of this he departed from the straight road of the ascetic life.

Chapter lviij. Of the Blessed Man Ephraim, the Deacon of the Church of Edessa

A CERTAIN man among the holy Fathers saw in a dream the company of the holy angels who came down from heaven by the commandment of God, and one of them held in his hand a roll which was written on the inside and on the outside; and the angels said unto each other, "Who is fit to be entrusted with this thing?" Then some of them mentioned one man and others another, and others answered and said, "Verily these [whom ye mention] are holy "and righteous, but they are not sufficiently [so] to be en- "trusted with this thing." And having reckoned up many names of Saints, they finally said, "No man is fit to be en- "trusted with this thing except Ephraim"; and then they gave the roll to him. And when he had stood up in the morning, he heard that they were saying, "Behold, Ephraim teacheth, and "[his words] flow from his mouth like [water from] a fountain"; then the old man who had seen the vision knew within himself that the things which were proceeding from his lips were of the Holy Spirit.

Now therefore this Ephraim, who was [one] of those who had been held to be worthy of mention by the saints, travelled along the spiritual road nobly and straightly, turning neither to one side nor the other of the straight path; and he was held to be worthy of the gift of the knowledge which he possessed naturally, and subsequently he received the knowledge which enabled him to utter divine things, and perfect blessedness. Thus he lived throughout the period of a certain number of years a life of chastity, and stern asceticism, and contemplation, and he edified all those who thronged to visit him, each according to his peculiar needs; and finally he compelled himself to go forth from his cell for the following reason, namely, a mighty famine lay over the city of Edessa. For having compassion on the creatures of the human race which was perishing and being destroyed, he spake unto those who were heaping up grain in the store houses, for he saw that they were wholly without compassion, saying, "How long will ye refuse "to bring into your memories the lovingkindness of God? "How long will ye allow your wealth, which is corruptible, "to be the means of the accusation and condemnation of your "souls?" Then they took counsel, and said unto him, "There

Digitized by Google

"is no man whatsoever whom we can trust to relieve the "wants of those who are dying of hunger; for all the people "are crafty and they act in a lying fashion concerning affairs" [of this kind]. Then Ephraim said unto them, "What manner "of man do ye imagine that I am?" Now his character was held in the highest esteem by every man [in the city], and every man knew that he acted according to the truth and not falsehood. And the people said unto him, "O man, we know "that thou art God"; and he said unto them, "Put your trust "in me, then, and give me [the means of relieving] this dis- "tress, for behold, for your sakes, I will set myself apart to "become the keeper of a house for receiving strangers." And he took money, and he began to fence off in the streets places which were suitable for his purpose, and he provided with great care three hundred beds, some of which were intended for use in the burial of those who were dying, and others were intended for those who, it was thought, would live; and, in short, he brought in from the villages which were outside the city all those whom famine had stricken, and put them to bed, and every day he performed for them with the greatest possible solicitude the constant service of which they were in need, [paying for the same] with the money which came to him, and he rejoiced by means of those who supported him in the matter.

And it came to pass that, when that year of famine had been fulfilled, and there arrived after it a year of abundance, and every man departed to his house, inasmuch as he had nothing else to do he went into his cell; and after a period of one month he brought his life to a close, God having given him the opportunity whereby he might be crowned at the end of his life. Now he left behind him many books, and writings of various kinds, which were worthy of being preserved with the greatest care. It is said concerning him that when he was a youth he saw a dream, that is to say a vision, wherein a vine grew up out of his tongue, and it increased in size, and filled the whole of the space which was beneath the heavens, and was laden with grape clusters in rich abundance; and all the feathered fowl of the heavens came and ate of the food thereof, and all the time they were eating the grape-clusters were increasing both in numbers and in size.

Chapter lix. Of Innocent the Priest

CONCERNING the matters of the blessed priest Innocent, who [lived] in the Mount of Olives, I think that thou must have heard from many people, but thou mayest also learn from us not a few things, for we lived with him for a period of three years. Now therefore this man was exceed-

Digitized by Google

ingly simple, and he was [one] of the nobles of the palace in the kingdom of the Emperor Constantine; he withdrew himself from the partnership of marriage, but he had a son whose name was Paule, who served in the household [of the Emperor]; and this son was caught in a transgression with the daughter of a certain priest, and Innocent was exceedingly wroth with him. Then Innocent made entreaty unto God, saying, "O our "Lord, give thou unto him such a spirit that he will not be "able to find time to sin in the lust of the body," for he thought that it would be better and more excellent in every way for his son to be delivered over to a devil rather than to fornication. And this actually came to pass to the youth, and he liveth to this day in the Mount of Olives loaded with irons, and admonished by a devil. Now this man Innocent, the father of Paule, because he was of a most merciful disposition—though if I were to tell [the whole truth] I should say that he appeared to me to be lacking in sense—on very many occasions stole [things] and hid them from the brethren, and gave them unto those who were in want; but he was a simple man and had no wickedness in him; and he was held to be worthy of the gift [of the possession of power] over devils.

For a certain maiden, in whom was a devil, came unto him, and whilst we were looking at her the devil smote her, and threw her down upon the ground and made her body to writhe and twist about; and when I saw [this] I wished to dismiss that maiden in order that she might go to her mother, because, on account of the cruelty (*or* violence) of that devil, I thought that she could never be healed. And whilst I was pondering those things the old man Innocent came, and he saw her mother standing, and weeping, and tearing her face with her nails, and plucking out her hair, because of the great madness, and the gnashing of the teeth, and the contortions of her daughter. When, therefore, that blessed old man saw her, his mercy revealed itself because he was grieved on account of her tribulation, and he took the maiden, and went into his martyrium, which he himself had built, and wherein was preserved a blessed [relic] of Saint John the Baptist, and having prayed there and made supplication unto God from the third unto the ninth hour, he gave the maiden [back] to her mother, and she was healed on that day, and he drove away from her the devil and [his] struggles [with her]. Now the strugglings and contortions of the maiden were such that when she spat, she spat upon her side [instead of away from her]; to this extent was her body twisted.

And, again, a certain old woman lost a sheep, and she came to him weeping [about it], and he took her, and said unto her,

Digitized by Google

"Shew me the place where thou didst lose it"; and they came, therefore, to a place which was near the grave of Lazarus, where he stood up and prayed. Now certain boys had stolen the sheep and had already killed it. And Innocent having prayed, and the boys being unwilling to confess that the flesh of the sheep was buried in a vineyard, a raven suddenly appeared, though wherefrom no man knoweth, which had taken a piece of flesh from the carcass, and stood over the place where it was; and when the old man saw this he perceived that the sheep was buried there. Then those boys fell down and did homage to him, and they confessed that they had taken the sheep, and paid the price thereof to its mistress.

Chapter lx. Of the Blessed Elpidius

IN those caves which, in ancient times, certain men had hewn out of the rock in the valley of the river near Jericho, wherein those who had fled from before Joshua, the son of Nun, had gone up and hidden themselves, there dwelt Elpidius; now he was a Cappadocian, who had been converted in the monastery of Timothy the Chorepiskopos, and he was a wonderful man and was also held to be worthy of consecration to the priesthood. And he came and dwelt in one of these caves, and he shewed such patient persistence in his self-abnegation, that he surpassed and eclipsed many [thereby]; for he followed for five and twenty years his rule of life, and during that time he only ate food on the Sabbath day, and on the First Day of the week, and he dwelt like the chief and the king of the bees among the cells of the whole brotherhood. And he used to rise up continually during the night and pray; and I myself also dwelt with him. And he made that mountain to be so peaceful and to contain so many inhabitants that it resembled a city, and during the night season a man might see the various works, and the labours of all kinds which appertain to the ascetic life, being performed there. One night, when this man Elpidius was reciting the service, now we were with him, a scorpion stung him, and he crushed the insect, without either leaving the place where he was or being in any way moved as a man usually is when he is suffering from the sting of a scorpion. And one day as he was holding in his hand a vine branch, a certain brother took it away from him; and as he was sitting by the side of the mountain, he dug a hole and pushed the vine branch into it, like a man who is planting [vines]; and although it was not the time for planting, the vine branch sprouted, and grew very large, and spread its branches abroad until it covered the whole church. Now the name of that brother was Ænesius, a wonderful man.

Digitized by Google

Chapter xlj. Of the Blessed Man Eustathius

EUSTATHIUS was a brother of Elpidius whom [we have mentioned] above, and this man followed so strenuously after the acquisition of impassibility, and made his body so dry (i.e., emaciated) by the labours of vigilant prayer, that the [light of] the sun could be seen between his ribs. And of him the following story is told by the brethren who were continually with him, that is to say by his disciples: He never turned himself towards the west, because close by the side of the door of his cave was a mountain which, because of its mighty bulk, was very hard [to ascend]; and he never looked at the sun after the sixth hour of the day, because the door of his cell was hidden by the shadow of the mountain so long as the sun was declining towards its place of setting. And moreover he could never see those stars which appear in the western part of the sky, and for five and twenty years from the time when he entered the cave wherein he dwelt he never went down from the mountain.

Chapter lxij. Of the Blessed Man Sisinnius

NOW this holy man Elpidius had a certain disciple whose name was Sisinnius, who was a slave by birth, though a free man in the faith; by race he was a Cappadocian, and it is necessary that we should make known the fact that he was so, for the sake of the glorifying of Christ Who hath made us worthy to be accounted His kinsmen, and to be exalted to that true family, which is full of happiness, of the kingdom of heaven. Now therefore when this man Sisinnius had passed some time with Elpidius, and had struggled to lead the ascetic life strenuously for a period of seven years, he at length shut himself in a grave for three years, and he endured such privations therein that neither by day nor by night did he sit or lie down, and he never went out herefrom. And this man was held to be worthy of possessing the gift of authority over devils, and now that he hath come into his own country he hath been held to be worthy of the gift of the priesthood; and he hath made congregations of men and of women, which, according to a sure testimony, lead lives of purity and chastity. He hath trampled upon the lust which is in men, and he hath bridled the voluptuousness of the women, so that there hath been fulfilled that which is written, "In Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female" (Galatians iii, 28). And he was also a great lover of strangers and of voluntary poverty, which was a reproach unto those who were rich and miserly.

Digitized by Google

Chapter lxiij. Of the Blessed Gaddai (Gaddanus), the Palestinian

AND I saw a certain old man whose name was Gaddâi, who lived without a shelter all his days in the places which were by the side of the Jordan. On one occasion the Jews rose up against him in fierce hatred (*or* zeal) by the side of the Dead Sea, and they drew the sword against him, and one of them took up a weapon to smite him, when the following great and wonderful thing was wrought upon the man who dared to lift up a sword against the blessed man: the hand of the man who had drawn the sword withered immediately, and the sword itself fell upon the ground.

Chapter lxiv. Of the Blessed Man Elijah

AND there was in this place a solitary monk called Elijah who used to dwell in a cave, and he passed his life in performing the works of spiritual excellence, and was worthy of praise. One day, when a great many of the brethren thronged to him—now his [dwelling-place] was a cave—he lacked bread, and he made apologies [to us] because he was troubled on account of the insufficiency of the bread. Now therefore, when the brethren went into his cell they found three loaves of bread, and when twenty men had eaten and were satisfied, there still remained one loaf which, one said, satisfied him for five and twenty days.

Chapter lxv. Of Sabas, the Layman of Jericho

AND there was a certain layman from Jericho whose name was Sabas, and he had a wife, and this man loved the monks so much that during the night season he used to go round about in the desert, and pass by the cells of the solitary monks therein, and outside the cell and habitation of each one of them he would set down a bushel of dates and vegetables, which would be sufficient for his wants, for the monks who lived by the side of the Jordan did not eat bread, and thus this man Sabas supplied the wants of the monks. One day as he was carrying along a load [of food] for the usual needs of the monks, through the operation of the Evil One, who is the Adversary of the monks, a lion met him, which terrified him, and wished to make him to cease from his ministrations to those holy men, and schemed to prevent him from performing his benevolent intent for their comfort. And the lion having overtaken him about a mile from the place where the monks were, and having seized him by his hand in order to turn him aside from his business, He Who by the hand of

Digitized by Google

Daniel shut the mouth[s] of the lions, shut the mouth of this lion also (Daniel vi, 22; Hebrews xi, 33), and the beast did this lover of alms no harm whatsoever; and although the lion was exceedingly hungry he only took a very little of the things which Sabas was carrying for the old men, and then he departed. And it is manifest that He Who gave this man his life also satisfied the hunger of the lion.

Chapter lxvj. Of the Blessed Man Serapion of the Girdle

AND again there was a certain blessed man whose name was Serapion, who was called "Serapion of the "girdle," because during his whole life he neither put on nor was clothed with anything except the girdle wherewith he was girt about; and he led a life of the strictest self-denial and poverty. And though he was a wholly unlearned man he could repeat all the Scriptures by heart. And by reason of the greatness of his self-denial and the repetition of the Scriptures he was unable to live in a cell, because he could not make use of anything which belonged to [this] world; but he went round about at all seasons and taught the multitudes, and he sold himself voluntarily, and he preached, and taught, and turned many people unto God. And this form of self-denial was of his own choosing, and [it was by such means as this that he made] his preparation [for heaven]; now there are very many ways of leading a stern life of self-denial. And many of the venerable fathers relate concerning him that on one occasion he took a fellow monk, who sold him to some comic actors for twenty *dînârs* in a city of the heathen, and having received these *dînârs* he tied them up [in a bag] and sealed them, and kept them carefully; and then he became subject to and ministered in all humility to those actors who had bought him until he had taught them and made them Christians, and had freed them from following the business of the theatre. And he never ate anything except dry bread and water, and his mouth never once ceased from uttering [the words of] the Scriptures.

Now the man [who was the master of the actors] was the first to become converted and enlightened by the word of God, and the next was his wife, and finally their whole house was converted. During the first years after the actors had bought him, and when they did not know who he was, he used to wash their feet with his hands, and having taught them and baptized them he made them to be remote from their occupation in the theatre, and they led a God-fearing life in all righteousness; and they held him in reverence, and honoured him, and marvelled at his radiant life. Finally they said unto

Digitized by Google

him, "Come, O our brother, we will set thee free from this "servitude, even as thou hast set us free from the slavery of "heathenism." Then he answered and said unto them, "Since "God hath helped [me], and your souls have been set free and "they have life, I will tell you my story (*or* thing) and my con- "tending. I undertook this kind of work in order that your "souls might have life. By race I am an Egyptian, and a free "man [but] I am a monk [vowed] to self-denial and poverty, "and for the sake of our Lord I sold myself to you in order "that your souls might be set free from the impurity of this "world; since now our Lord hath worked through my meek- "ness, and your souls live, take your gold, and I will go to "another place, so that I may be able to benefit others also." And they begged and entreated him, saying, "Remain with "us, and thou shalt be unto us a father and a master, and a "director"; but he would not hearken unto their entreaty. And again they answered and said unto him, "Give the gold to the "poor, and let it be a pledge of life for us; and we entreat thee "to see us if it be only once a year."

Then, this man having gone round about came to Hellas, and stayed in Athens three days, and no man gave him a morsel of bread; now he carried nothing with him, neither purse, nor wallet, nor head-cloak, nor anything whatsoever. And when the fourth day had come, he waxed exceedingly hungry, and he went and stood up upon a certain high place where all the free men of the city were gathered together, and he began to clap his hands, and to cry out with a loud voice, saying, "O men of Athens, send [help]." And at [the sound of] his voice they all marvelled, and the free men and the soldiers ran to him, and said unto him, "What aileth thee? "Whence comest thou? What hath happened unto these?" Then he answered and said unto them, "By race I am an "Egyptian, and being a long way from my true country I have "fallen into the hands of three creditors; now two of these "have departed from me, having taken that which was theirs, "and now they have no debt against me about which to chide "me, but the third will not leave me."

And the philosophers made enquiries of him who these creditors were, and they said unto him, "Shew us who thy "creditors are, and who it is that is afflicting thee, and we will "entreat them [to desist]; shew us who they are, so that we "may help thee." And he answered and said unto them, "From my youth up the love of money, and fornication, and "the appetite of the belly have oppressed me; from the first "two of these, that is, the love of money and fornication, I "have been freed, and they no longer oppress me, but I am

Digitized by Google

"wholly unable to set myself free from the appetite of the "belly. Behold, it is now the fourth day since I have eaten "anything and the belly constraineth me, for it demandeth "that which is its usual debt, and unless this debt [be paid] I "shall not be able to live." Then certain of the philosophers thought that he had schemed this crafty device in order that he might gain some benefit, and one of them took a *dînâr* and gave it unto him, and having taken it he spent [part of] it in buying bread in their presence; and he took one [loaf of] bread, and straightway departed from the city, and did not come back to it again. Thus the philosophers knew that he was indeed a wonderful man, and they paid the price of the loaf of bread which he had taken, and received back the *dînâr*.

And having departed to another city he heard there concerning a certain other man, who was the chief of the whole city, and who was a Manichaean, with all his house, and who had several associates [in the city]. Then the monk, according to his former plan, sold himself to this Manichaean, and in two years he was able to turn this man and his wife [from their error], and to bring them into the Catholic Church; and after they had learned who he was, they never again regarded him as a slave, but they honoured him as a father, and as a master, and they ascribed praise unto God.

And on another occasion he determined to go to Rome, and he embarked in a ship which was going thither that he might go with them (i.e., with the sailors). Now when the sailors of the ship saw that he boldly embarked in the ship carrying nothing with him, neither bread, nor anything [else], nor provisions for the journey, they thought that one of their number must have taken his baggage and placed it in the ship, and because of this thought they received him unquestioningly. And having embarked, when the sailors had sailed from Alexandria [a distance of] about five hundred stadia, each one of those who were sitting in the ship began at the time of sunset to eat, and the sailors also ate in their presence; and they observed that the monk did not eat on the first day, and thought that [he did not do so] because of sea-sickness, and thus also was it on the second day, and on the third day, and on the fourth day. Now on the fifth day, whilst all those who were on the ship were eating their meal he sat in his place and was silent, and as they were looking at him they said, "Why dost thou not eat?" and he replied, "I have nothing [to eat]." Then they began to make enquiries and to cry out among themselves, "Who among you has taken "his things, or his provisions for the way?" And when they saw that no man had taken anything from him [they began to] dispute with him, and to say unto him, "O man, how is it that thou

Digitized by Google

"hast embarked on the ship without provisions and money? "Where wilt thou obtain the money to give us for thy pass-"age?" And he said unto them, "I have thought nothing what-"soever about it, [for] an Egyptian has no anxious care about "anything; but carry me back whence ye took me and cast me "out[if you wish]." Now even if he had given them one hundred *dînârs* they would not have been able to take him back [to Alexandria], and he therefore remained in the ship, and they fed him until he arrived in Rome. And having come to Rome he made enquiries and learned what monk or nun was there, and he found Rumnîn (*or* Dômnîn), the disciple of Evagrius, whose bed, after his death, cured every kind of sickness. And having seen him, and spoken with him he was greatly edified by him, for he was a man who was greatly skilled in the labours of the ascetic life, and in speech, and in knowledge, and he learned from him what monk, and nuns were in Rome, in order that he might see them.

[Here some editor of Palladius remarks, "In another manuscript the following is written":]

And the venerable fathers relate concerning him that he once heard that there was in the city of Rome a certain nun who led a life of the strictest seclusion, who had never seen a man, and who used to think concerning herself that she was perfect. Then this blessed man threw himself into a ship and came to Rome, and having learned where she lived he went and spake with the old woman who ministered unto her, and said unto her, "Get thee in and say unto the virgin, I desire to see "thee most eagerly, because God hath sent me unto thee"; and he waited two days and then saw her. And when he saw her he said unto her, "Sit thee down," and she said unto him, "I "will not sit down, but will depart." And he said unto her, "Whither goest thou?" and she said unto him, "To God." And he said unto her, "Art thou living or dead?" And she said unto him, "I believe, by God, that I am dead, for who "that liveth in the body is not able to depart [therefrom]?" And he said unto her, "If thou art dead, as thou sayest, do "thou that which I do"; and she said unto him, "Tell me "what can happen, and I will do it." And again he said unto her, "To one who is dead unto the world it is easy to do "everything except commit sin," and he further said unto her, "Come down, and get thee out of thine house"; then she said unto him, "I have not gone out of it for five and twenty years, why should I go out of it now?" And he said unto her, "If thou art indeed dead unto the world, and the world is dead "unto thee, it is the same thing unto thee whether thou goest "forth or dost not go forth; come, get thee out." And she went out.

Digitized by Google

And after she had gone forth, she followed him to a certain church, and he said unto her in the church, "If thou wishest "me to believe that thou art dead to the world and art not "alive, in order that thou mayest be pleasing unto the "children of men, do what I do, and then I will believe thee, "and I shall know that thou art a dead woman, even as thou "sayest." And she said unto him, "Tell me what it is meet "for me to do, and I will do it." Then he said unto her, "Cast "off thy garments and put [them] on thy head, and walk "through the midst of the city, and I will do likewise, and "will go in front of thee in this guise." And the nun said unto him, "I should offend many folk by such a remarkable act as "this, and then they would say, 'This woman hath gone "'mad, and hath a devil.'" And he said unto her, "What need "hast thou to consider [their words] even if they should say, "'She hath gone mad, and hath a devil?' For, according to "what thou thyself sayest, thou art a dead woman unto "them." And the nun said unto him, "If there be any other "thing [except this] tell me, for I cannot come to such a mea-"sure of disgrace as this." Then he said unto her, "Do not "imagine in thy mind that thou art more perfect than anyone "else, or that thou art dead to the world; for I am far more "dead to the world than thou art, and I can show thee that "I am indeed so, and that I can boldly do this thing without "[feeling] shame or disgrace." Then having broken her spirit and humbled her pride, he departed from her. And there were many things of the same kind which this same Serapion did in the world, for he despised both worldly shame and the glory which passeth away; he died at the age of sixty years, and was buried at a good old age, being adorned with all virtues.

Chapter lxvij. The Triumph of the Blessed Man Eulogius, who ministered unto the Arian, whose Body was destroyed for the sake of Christ

THE following story] was related unto me by Cronius, the priest of Nitria, [who said]:—When I was a young man I abhorred the monastery, and I fled from it, and from the head of the monastery who was my instructor, and having lost my way and gone round about, I came unto the Monastery of Mâr Anthony; now he used to dwell between the mountains of Babylon and Herakleia, in a parched desert which led to the Red Sea, about thirty miles from the river [Nile], and I was there in that monastery wherein dwelt those disciples of his who buried him when he died, now their names were Macarius and Amatus, in a place which was called Espîr.

Digitized by Google

And I remained there for five days, so that I might be able to see the blessed Anthony, for they used to say that he was in the habit of coming to this monastery from the Inner Desert once every five, or ten, or twenty days, according as God directed and brought him, to give help unto the souls who thronged into his monastery, and who awaited him there, in order that they might be relieved by him. And the brethren also were assembled there and waited for him also, each one of them having his own individual matter [to lay before him].

Now among them was a certain man from Alexandria, whose name was Eulogius, and with him was another man, an Arian, whose body was destroyed (i.e., he was a leper), and they had come because of this matter. And this man Eulogius was a scholastic, and he was the most educated of all the learned men [of this time], but the love of the living God had suddenly come into his mind, and he made himself to be remote from the world, and he distributed all the money which he had among the poor, and he left himself only a small sum which was just sufficient for his bodily needs, for he was unable to work or to enter into a monastery with many monks in it, and besides this lassitude was contending with him, and he sought a little companionship.

Now [he went forth] seeking to buy something which he wanted in the city, and he found in the market a certain man who was an Arian, and whose whole body was destroyed; he had neither hands nor feet, but his tongue was sharp, and he employed it unsparingly upon every man whom he met. And when Eulogius had seen him, and looked at him, he lifted up his eyes and his mind towards God, and he prayed and made this covenant between himself and God, saying, "O our Lord "Jesus Christ, in Thy Name, O my Lord, I will take this man, "who is sick in his body, and I will relieve [his wants] all the "days of my life, so that through him my soul may live before "Thee; but I beseech Thee to give me power to endure in my "ministrations to him." And having prayed, he drew nigh unto the man, and said unto him, "I beseech thee, O man, to let "me take thee unto my house and to relieve thy wants." And the sick man said unto him, "Why not?" Then Eulogius said unto him, "I will therefore bring an ass, and carry thee off," and he promised him [saying], "I . . . . . "; and he went and brought an ass and carried him to the place where he lived, and he took care of him with the greatest diligence. And for a period of fifteen years Eulogius relieved his wants with the greatest and most careful attention, and he even washed him with his own hands, and he did everything he could to alleviate the affliction of his sickness.

Digitized by Google

Now after fifteen years a devil began to stir in that Arian, and he began to revile Eulogius, and to offer resistance to him, and he cursed him and hurled after him insults and abuse, saying, "O thou runaway [slave], who hast eaten thy lord, "thou hast stolen the riches of other folk and art spending "them upon me, and thou thinkest to have life through me! "Cast me out into the street, for I wish to eat flesh." And Eulogius brought him flesh, and again he cried out, and said, "Thou wilt not persuade me [to remain here] by these means; "I wish to go forth into the street, and I desire to see the "world. By Jupiter, carry me out and cast me where thou "didst find me. If I only had hands I would strangle myself." Now [he spake] thus through the madness of the devil which was with him. Then Eulogius rose up and went to the neighbouring monks and said unto them, "What shall I do? for "this deformed man hath brought me to despair. I would set "him free, only I have given [my] right hand in covenant to "God, and I am afraid [to do so]; but on the other hand, if I "do not cast him out he will bring upon me bad nights and "bitter days. What to do with him I know not." And they said unto him, "[Anthony] the Great is still alive, go to him; take "the man with thee in a ship, and go thou up to him, and "carry the man to his monastery, and wait there until he "cometh from the desert and then tell him thy business. And "whatsoever word he shall say unto thee thou shalt perform, "for God shall speak unto thee through him." Then Eulogius was persuaded by them, and he placed the man in a small boat, and he carried him to the monastery wherein were the disciples of Anthony.

And it came to pass that on the very day after Eulogius had arrived there that great man came from the inner desert to his disciples in the late evening, and he was clothed in [his] skin cloak. Now whensoever he came to his monastery he was in the habit of calling out to his disciple Macarius, and saying unto him, "O brother Macarius, have any brethren come this "day from anywhere?" And Macarius would say, "Yea." Then Anthony would say, "Are they Egyptians or Jerusalem-"ites?" Now he had given Macarius this sign:—"When thou "seest brethren who are simple and innocent say they are "Egyptians; but when thou seest brethren who are venerable "and are skilled in speaking, say they are Jerusalemites." Therefore according to his custom Anthony asked Macarius, "Are "they Egyptian brethren or Jerusalemites?" and Macarius said, "They are neither Egyptians nor Jerusalemites." Now when Macarius would answer, "They are Egyptians," Anthony would say unto him, "Cook them a mess of lentils that they

Digitized by Google

"may eat, and then dismiss them, and let them go in peace"; and he would say a prayer on their behalf, and would straightway send them away. And when Macarius would answer, "They are Jerusalemites," Anthony would sit down the whole night, and would converse with them to the benefit of their lives.

And on that night he sat down, and called unto them all, and he discoursed without any man having told him the name of one of them, and it was dark and the night had come; and suddenly he cried out three times, thus, "Eulogius, Eulogius, Eulogius." And Eulogius the scholastic answered him never a word, because he thought that Anthony was calling some other person, and again Anthony cried out to him, "Unto thee I speak, O Eulogius, "who hast come from Alexandria." Then Eulogius said unto him, "Master, what commandest thou [me to do? Tell me], I beseech thee." And Anthony said unto him, "Wherefore hast "thou come?" And Eulogius answered and said unto him, "Let "Him that hath revealed unto thee my name declare unto thee "for what purpose I have come." Then Anthony said unto him, "I know why thou hast come, nevertheless declare [it] before "the brethren in order that they may hear." And Eulogius an-"swered and said unto him, "I found this Arian in the street (*or* "market), and I gave the right hand to God (i. e., made a covenant "with God), that I would minister unto him, [that] I might live "because of him, and he because of me. And behold I have "ministered unto him for the last fifteen years, and now, after "all these years he stirreth [himself] up against me, and caus-"eth me tribulation, and I have had it in my mind to cast him "out; therefore I have come unto thy holiness so that thou "mayest advise me what I should do, and that thou mayest "pray on my behalf, for I am greatly oppressed and am in sore "straits." Then Anthony said unto him angrily and in a hard voice, "If thou sendest him away, He who created him will not "send him away; if thou dost cast him out, God, Who is better "and more excellent than thou, will gather him [to Himself];" and when Eulogius heard these words he set a bridle on his mouth and was silent.

And having left Eulogius [Anthony] came to chastise the Arian with his tongue, and he cried out and said unto him, "O thou "deformed Arian, thou art worthy neither of heaven nor of earth. "Wilt thou not cease to contend against God? Knowest thou not "that he who ministereth unto thee is Christ? How canst thou "dare to utter these words against our Lord? Was it not for "Christ's sake that Eulogius gave himself to thy service?" Then having made the man sorrowful, he ceased from Eulogius and the Arian, and spake unto all the brethren who were there, unto

Digitized by Google

every man according to his business. And he called unto Eulogius and the Arian and said unto them, "Turn ye not unto any [other] "place, but depart and separate not yourselves from one another, "and return ye to the cell wherein ye have lived so long a time, "for behold God will send upon you [your] end. And behold, this "trial hath come upon you because the end of both of you is nigh, "and because ye are esteemed worthy of crowns. Therefore do "not ye act in a contrary manner, and let not the angel come after "you and not find you in your place[s], [lest ye be deprived of "your crowns];" so the two of them departed and came to their cell. And in less than forty days Eulogius died, and in less than three days afterwards the Arian died. Now this Chronius, who related unto us the narrative of this matter, tarried for a time in the monasteries which were in the Thebaïd, and he came down to the monasteries which were in Alexandria; and it happened that the brethren were gathered together commemorating the death of Eulogius after forty days, and the death of the Arian after three days. And when Chronius heard he marvelled, and he took down a Book of the Gospels, and set [it] down among the brotherhood, and then related what had happened; and he took an oath and said, "In all this affair I was the interpreter for Mâr Anthony be- "cause he did not know Greek; but I know both languages, [and "I acted interpreter for both sides, turning Greek into Egyptian "for Eulogius, and Egyptian into Greek for Anthony.]"

Here endeth the First Book of the Histories of the Holy Fathers which were compiled by Palladius

Digitized by Google

Here beginneth the Second Book of the [Histories of] the Fathers [and] Monks which were also compiled by Palladius

Chapter j. The Triumph of the Blessed Man Mark the Mourner

MACARIUS the priest told us the following story:—"At the time when I was administering the Holy Offer-"ing I took good heed unto Mark the mourner, and I "never gave it to him, but an angel did so from the altar; I saw, "however, the palm of the hand of the angel who gave it unto "him." Now this Mark was a young man, and he could repeat by heart the New and the Old Testaments; he was meek beyond measure, and both in body and in thought he was purer than many.

Chapter ij. The History of Mar Paulus (Paule) the Prince of Monks and Anchorite

CONCERNING Abbâ Paulus there were questions among the monks and anchorites who were living in the land of Egypt, and they asked who were the first monks who lived in the desert. And some of them remembered the saints of olden time, and said, "It hath been proved that the first to dwell in the "desert were Saint Elijah the Prophet, and John the Baptist, "and it is manifest that Elijah was immeasurably superior in "ascetic excellence to the [other] monks, and, moreover, John was "proclaimed in the womb to be a prophet before he was born." Now there were many who contradicted this opinion and who asserted with firmness that Mâr Anthony was the first and the prince of them all, and also of the order [of monks]; but if we wish to learn the whole truth we shall discover that it was not Mâr Anthony who was the first [monk] that dwelt in the desert, but the blessed man Mâr Paulus. For I myself have seen the disciples of Mâr Anthony who buried him, and they it was who related unto us the history of the man Paulus the anchorite, the Theban, who was indeed the first [monk to live] in the desert; therefore we believe that it was not the blessed man [Anthony] who was the first to do this, as some men say, but Paulus, and for this reason I wish to narrate briefly the history of Paulus the anchorite, and how he began and how he ended his [career] in the days of Decius and Valerianus the persecutors, and [how] Cornelius made an end of the strife of his testimony for the sake of the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ in Rome.

Now this blessed man Paulus dwelt with his sister, who was the wife of a certain man; and their parents died and left

Digitized by Google

them great riches when the blessed man Paulus was sixteen years of age. And he had been educated in the learning of the Greeks and the Egyptians, and he was meek of soul, and he loved God thoroughly. And when the persecution of the Christians waxed strong, he remained continually in one place, and he took care of himself at all seasons (*or* continually). Now the avarice which constraineth the race of the children of men to commit evil deeds did not cease from him, for his sister's husband, instead of hiding him, endeavoured most strenuously to give him up [to the persecutors], and he neither had pity upon the tears of his wife nor did he fear the judgement of God; and he desisted not from this iniquitous conduct, but continued in his envy and sought always to give him up because he was a Christian. And the wise young man, having comprehended his guile and knowing that he was lying in wait for him, took to flight secretly, and he went to a certain high mountain which he found to be not what he desired, and he changed his place [of abode] on account of the violence (*or* necessity) of the persecution; but as he was living there, little by little he found out in the mountain a rock, wherein was a large cave, which was shut in with a stone, and having lifted up the stone he found within great repose, and he looked inside with great desire. And he discovered that the cave was clean, and that the dust of the ground also was fair, and he loved the place and dwelt there, and he gave thanks unto God Who had given it unto him for a dwelling-place; and he lived in that mountain all the days of his life, and his food and his raiment were made of the palm trees which were in the mountain. Now in order that no man may say, "How is this possible?" I take God and His holy angels to witness that we have seen many monks [living] in this fashion, and that they have brought their lives to an end in this way, and have not been afraid of Satan.

I must not, however, neglect the history of the blessed man Paulus. This holy man lived a heavenly life upon the earth in love to our Lord for one hundred and thirteen years; and Mâr Anthony, who was ninety years old at the time, was living in another desert. And Mâr Anthony on one occasion told me the following: "I once thought within myself that there was no "man living beyond me in the desert, and on the night where- "in I pondered upon these things in my mind, it was revealed "unto me from God [by one] who said unto me, 'Beyond "'thee [in the desert] there is a man who is more excellent "'than thou art, and it is meet that thou shouldst [go and] "'see him with all diligence, and with great joy.'" And when the morning had come, the blessed old man Mâr Anthony took the palm branch whereon he leaned his weight, and he began

Digitized by Google

to walk in the desert as his mind directed, because he did not know the way; and when it was noon, although the heat of the sun was fierce and burning, the blessed old man did not turn aside from the way, but he said, "I believe that God will "not withdraw [His] hands from me, but will shew me His "servant concerning whom He hath sent me a revelation."

And as he was thinking thus about him he suddenly saw a man who possessed two natures, one half of him being that of a man, and the other half being that of a horse; now the poets call this being a "centaur." Then the blessed Anthony called unto him and said, "I, a man of God, say unto thee, 'Where "'dost thou dwell here?'" And the creature returned him an answer in a barbarous language with words of impurity, and his mouth was full of fear; so the old man went on his journey seeking out the way. And as Anthony was marvelling [at this thing] the animal passed in front of him as if [it were going] to a broad field, and [Anthony knew that] it was Satan who had taken the form of the creature in order that he might terrify the blessed man, and he wondered at the similitude of the form which he had seen in the animal. And having passed on a little way further he saw another animal, which was smaller in stature than the first one, and he was standing on a rock, and he had horns upon his head and on his forehead; and when the blessed Anthony saw him he put on the helmet of faith and [took the] shield of righteousness, and he asked him, "Who art thou whom I see here?" And the creature answered and said unto him, "I am a mortal man and one of these who "are in the desert, whom the heathen call 'satyrs,' and whom "because of their error concerning them they worship as a "god"; and the beast having spoken these words the old man Anthony went on his way, and his tears were flowing and they ran down upon the ground, but he rejoiced because of the glory of Christ, and because of the destruction of Satan, and he wondered within himself how he had been able to understand the words of the animal. Then he smote the ground with his staff and said, "Woe be to Alexandria! Woe be to "the city of the heathen, wherein are gathered together all "the devils of all creation!"

And Anthony went on his journey thinking anxiously [how] he could attain to the end thereof, and he wished to find the servant of God; and whilst he was meditating what he should do and where he should go, he observed on the flat surface of the desert the footprints of an animal which had passed over the spot that very day. Then he meditated within himself, saying, "It is impossible for our Lord to forsake me"; and he journeyed on his way during the night with his prayers in his

Digitized by Google

mouth continually. And when the morning had come he saw a huge hyena, running with all its might up to the top of a mountain, and he followed in its footsteps, and having ascended the mountain he came nigh unto a cave, and saw the hyena going into it; and he looked into the cave and saw perfect love, that is to say, Mâr Paule, the old man. Then he cast away from him all fear and doubtful thoughts, and looking into the cave he saw that there was much light therein, and he approached the door of the cave, and knocked thereat with a small stone, but as soon as the blessed man Paule heard the sound of the knocking he rolled the stone [down] quickly and closed the entrance of the cave. Then Anthony fell upon his face before the door of the cave and besought him to let him come in, and said, "I am alone"; [and the blessed man Paule answered and said, "Why hast thou come?"] And Anthony said, "I know that I am not worthy to see thee, but since thou "receivest wild beasts why dost thou hold the children of men "in abhorrence? I have sought and have found [thee], and I "knocked with confidence; open thou then the door unto me. "And if this may not be I shall die here, and when thou seest "my dead body do thou bury it." And when with these words Anthony had taken up his position there the blessed man Paule answered from within and said unto him, "No man who is angry "cometh [in here], and no man entreateth [for admission] and "maketh accusations"; then he spake unto him words of gladness, and he opened unto him the door, and they met and embraced each other and kissed each other with holy kisses, and each man told his fellow his name.

Then after these things the blessed man Paule made Mâr Anthony sit by his side, and he said unto him, "Why didst "thou cast upon thyself all this tribulation, and the great "labour of seeking to see an old man whose body is altogether "withered and emaciated? After a short time thou wilt see "that I have become dust; but love overcometh all things. "Tell me now what is the present condition of the race of the "children of men, and whether they are still building houses "in the ancient cities, and whether there are still kings in the "world, and whether the governors of the world are still in "subjection to the error of devils." And having said these things unto Anthony the two of them looked and they saw a raven sitting on the branch of a tree, and straightway it stood up with great quietness upon the branch, and it had in its beak a whole loaf of bread which it came and laid down between them, whilst both men were looking on; and when the bird had departed they both marvelled. And the blessed Paule said unto Mâr Anthony, "Truly our Lord is merciful

Digitized by Google

"and pitiful in that He sendeth us a meal [in this way]. For "behold, for fully sixty years I have been in the habit of re- "ceiving from this bird half a loaf of bread [daily], but at thy "coming, behold, our Lord hath sent unto us a double por- "tion of food because we are His servants." Then having given thanks unto God, both men sat down at the table, and they disputed with each other who should first break the bread, and whilst they were thus disputing the night came on; thereupon the two men took the bread and spread out their hands, and brake the loaf in the Name of our Lord, and ate it, and having eaten they stood up the whole night in prayer.

Now when the morning had come Paule said unto Anthony, "Thou must know, O my brother Anthony, that I have been "living in the desert for a long time past, and that it was our "Lord Himself who revealed unto me what manner of man "thou art; but, because the time of my rest hath come, and "because that which I have been seeking, that is to say, that "I should depart and be with our Lord, is about to overtake "me [I could not go to see thee]. And now that my time hath "come to an end, and, as I believe, a crown of righteousness "hath been laid up for me, thou hast been sent by our Lord "that thou mayest bury my body in the ground." Now whilst the blessed man Paule was saying these things Mâr Anthony was weeping with many tears and heaving sighs, and he made supplication unto him, and said, "O my beloved one, leave "thou me not here, but take me with thee whither thou goest." And the blessed Paule answered and said unto him, "It is not "meet that thou shouldst seek thine own [advantage], but "that of thy neighbours, and therefore, O my beloved, I "beseech thee, if it be not a thing which is too hard for thee, "to go quickly to thy monastery, and to bring hither to me "the cloak which Mâr Athanasius the Bishop gave thee." Now he did not speak thus because he had need of any apparel, but because he wished to depart from his body whilst Mâr Anthony was absent.

And when Anthony heard concerning the Bishop and concerning his cloak, he marvelled within himself, and having looked upon the blessed Paule in our Lord Jesus, and bowed down before him, he prayed and set forth to go on his journey, and he approached and kissed him on his eyes and on his hands, and he made haste and went forth to depart to his monastery. And having made the journey and arrived at this monastery, his two disciples, who had been seeking him for a long time, met him, and they said unto him, "O "father, where hast thou been these days?" And he answered and said unto them, "Woe be unto me! woe be unto me a

Digitized by Google

"sinner! For the name of 'Christian' which I bear is only a "borrowed thing. This day have I seen Elijah and John in the "desert, for verily I have seen Paule in Paradise, and he was "holding converse with them"; and Mâr Anthony smote with his hand upon his breast, and he took the cloak and went from his disciples, who besought him to reveal unto them the whole matter. And he said unto them, "There is a time to be "silent, and a time to speak"; so he departed and went forth on his way without taking any provision whatsoever with him. And he made haste to come to the place where the blessed man Paule was, for he desired earnestly to see him [again], and he was afraid lest whilst he was yet afar off Paule might deliver himself up unto our Lord. And he journeyed on his way the first day, but on the second day, at the time of the ninth hour, he saw along the road, in the air, a company of angels, and a multitude of the Prophets and of the Apostles, and Abbâ Paule, who was shining with light like the sun, was in their midst, and he went up with them into heaven. And immediately he saw them he fell upon his face on the ground, and he sighed and wept, and cried out, and said, "O fearer "of God, why hast thou left me thus? And why didst thou not "receive my salutation together with all [the toil of] this "journey which I have made as swiftly as a bird?"

And Mâr Anthony went on his way and arrived at the cave, and he saw Abbâ Paule kneeling upon his knees, with his face gazing into heaven and his hands spread out; and seeing him thus Mâr Anthony thought within himself, and said, "Perhaps "he is alive"; and he prayed fervently, and the blessed Paule also stood up and prayed with him. And when some time had elapsed, and he heard neither the sound[s] nor the sighs which are customary in prayer, he knew that it was only the body of Abbâ Paule which prayed; and he bowed down before God, in Whom everything liveth, and he placed the body in the middle of the cloak, and wrapped it in it, and he took it upon his shoulders; and though he sang Psalms, according to the custom of the monks, the blessed Anthony was greatly grieved because he had not remembered to bring with him a spade or some other instrument wherewith to dig a grave for the body. Then he meditated within himself and said, "What shall "I do? If I go to my monastery and bring a spade I cannot pos-"sibly return here in less than four days"; and he said, "O "Jesus Christ, let me also die with Thy beloved servant Paule."

Now as he was saying these things, behold, two lions came running along together, and when he saw them his whole body smoked with fear; and when he had lifted up his mind to God and had looked at them again, they appeared to be doves fly-

Digitized by Google

ing through the air. And the lions drew nigh and stood near the body of the blessed Paule, and they wagged their tails at the blessed Anthony, and they crouched down before him in perfect tameness, and they rubbed their teeth together and purred so loudly that the blessed man knew that they wished to be blessed, and to be helped, and that they desired [to know] concerning the departure of the blessed Paule. And after they had acted thus, the lions began to dig [a grave], and they threw up the earth with their paws, and they made the hole in the ground deep enough, and wide enough, and long enough, according to the measure of the body; and they lowered their ears and their tails, and bowed down their heads before Abbâ Anthony, and they licked his hands and his feet, and he knew that they wished to be blessed. Then he gave thanks for the glory of God because that even the wild and savage beasts knew how to [help] the good and chosen men of God, and he spake thus:—"O Lord God, without Whose command not one "leaf falleth to the ground, and against Whose Will not one "bird droppeth into the snare, do Thou bless all of us." And he brought his hand nigh unto the lions, and commanded them to depart; and when the two lions had gone away Anthony took the body and buried it in the customary way. Then, after one day, he took the tunic of Abbâ Paule, which was made of palm leaves sewn together, like a true inheritance and a thing which brought privilege, and departed to his monastery. And when he had arrived there he related unto the monks the whole matter in due order; and on the feast of unleavened bread and at Pentecost Saint Anthony used to put on the tunic of the blessed and holy man Paule, and he would pray with it upon him.

And I, Hieronymus the sinner, entreat all those who read this book to pray for me. [In the text here comes the following note by some editor of Palladius:]

Concerning these histories of Paule, and of the company of Mark (?), and of Macarius, there are some who say that they were compiled by Hieronymus because his name occurs at the end of them.

Here endeth the History of Mar Paule, the holy Man, the Firstborn of all the Desert Monks

Chapter iij. The Triumph of a young Man who was an Alexandrian

THERE was a certain young man in Alexandria, who, immediately the law of nature began to work in him, and to make him to possess the knowledge which distinguisheth good from evil, endeavoured by every means in

Digitized by Google

his power to make himself wholly a stranger unto things which are evil, and to cleave unto those which are good. And having been trained for a long time, and having made himself proficient in the things which befit monks, even though he still lived and went about in the city, he at a certain time thought within himself, and said, "Since there is no good reason whatsoever which compelleth me forcibly to remain in the city any longer it is not right that I should do so," and he was at all times reminding himself of the word which was spoken by our Lord to the rich man, "If thou wishest to be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast and give [it] to the poor, and take thy cross and come after Me" (St. Matthew xix, 21). And the young man said, "The word of our Lord is true, but it is impossible for a man to acquire that perfection of which He spake whilst he is living among men."

When then he had made himself ready to perform in very deed this great thought, he began to journey along the road which leadeth to one of the deserts of Alexandria, where large numbers of monks used to dwell, and he offered up prayer unto God that He would prepare a way for him, and would direct him unto a man who would be able to help him [to attain] his object, and would lead him to the end which he desired. And he decided within himself, and said, "This shall be unto me a sign that the Lord hath prepared His way before me:—The door whereat I shall knock, and wherefrom shall go forth one who liveth there, and shall receive me in peace, and shall urge me to go in to him, and shall receive me in the love which monks have for strangers, that shall be the place, and that shall be the man whom the Lord hath prepared for the fulfilment of my thoughts concerning spiritual excellence." And he said, "Unto the man who hath been prepared by the Lord it is meet for me to be in subjection as unto Christ, and I must hearken unto his command willingly and unhesitatingly as unto that of Christ." Now as he was praying with these words, and with others which were like unto them, and was thinking deeply, he arrived in the desert into which he had set his face to go. And having gone in among the monasteries, he found himself by the dispensation of God before the door of a habitation wherein a certain old man dwelt; and when, according to his expectation, he had drawn nigh, and had knocked at the door which was in front of him, there came forth therefrom straightway the old man who dwelt inside, and opened the door to him; and when he saw the young man who was standing there he saluted him gladly, when as yet he had asked him nothing whatsoever, and entreated him urgently to come inside. And this actually took place.

Digitized by Google

Now after he had gone in and had, according to custom, prayed, and sat down, the young man compared the things which had taken place with those which he had written down in his mind, and he waited for a right issue to all [the rest]. Then, being full of gladness, the old man urged him repeatedly to partake of food, but the young man answered and said unto him, "My lord, I beseech thy holiness to permit me first of all "to speak openly, and to make known to thy fatherly nature "the reason of my coming, and if through the working of God "thou wilt make thyself the perfecter of my desire, and of "my thoughts, whatsoever thy holiness and thy meekness "shall command me [to do] I will perform strenuously." Now when the old man had heard these things, he answered and said unto him, "Thou hast full power to say everything which "thou wishest, joyfully and fearlessly, as unto thy father who, "according to his power, in great love, is ready to fulfil thy "desire by the help of God." Then, after these words, which the old man spake in simplicity (now none of the thoughts of the young man had entered into his mind), the young man made clearly manifest before the old man the matters which he had marked out and decided upon in his mind from the beginning of his actions in the city even until that very hour.

And when the old man had heard all these things he was greatly moved and disturbed, because he remembered his own former acts and life, and because he was held in contempt by his conscience by reason of the conditions and circumstances under which he was then living, and because that by reason of these he was unable to promise to fulfil the works of which he had [then] no knowledge whatsoever, [and he was afraid] and excused himself from the task. And when he considered his own feebleness, and the greatness of the matter concerned, and the strenuousness and readiness of the young man, and the many other reasons which he called to mind, he was ashamed to reveal to the young man the true reason for his refusal, yet nevertheless, because of it, he said that he was unable to act [for him]; but the young man dismissed his objections and made an end of them, and he shewed [him] that they all were insufficient to drive him away from the old man, and to do away the fervent desire and aim which were in his mind. Then the old man felt compelled to make plainly manifest before him the true reason for his refusal and to shew him that it was not a mere matter of a report of words, but one which could be seen by the actual sight of the eyes. And wishing to fulfil his intention [of shewing] that the true reason was not a mere excuse, or one which was fabricated like those which he had previously given, and that it was indeed a true

Digitized by Google

one, and one which would proclaim concerning itself openly, he took the young man by the hand, and led him into a certain chamber wherein dwelt the wife of that old man with her two children, and he said unto him, "God hath sent thee hither "for my shame, and for the condemnation of mine old age. "Behold, this is my wife whom Satan and not God hath given "unto me, and behold, these are the children of shame whom "I have had by her, and they are the fruits of a contemptible "and damnable union."

Now when the young man saw and heard these things, because the foundation of his building was laid upon the rock of truth, he was neither moved nor disturbed, and he was not offended with the old man, and he did not hold him in any contempt whatsoever. And after these things the young man answered and said unto the old man, "My lord, I entreat thy holiness to confirm that "which I am about to say unto thee. Let me have with thee, even "as with a real father, a wholly perfect understanding, such as "it is right for children to have with their fathers and with their "brethren, which shall be free, by the help of God, from all "stumbling-blocks; and let me have the same understanding "with this woman, as with a real mother, and with thy children "as with beloved brethren." Thus the old man was overcome by means of all these words by a gracious defeat, and though he wished by the urging of his own mind to give the young man permission to live with him as a disciple, and to fulfil his desire according to the bent of his mind, he was driven thereto far more by the power of the excellence of the young man himself. And when these things had taken place they gave thanks to God, and then they occupied themselves, each one with the service and work which were requisite for their habitation, day by day with the help of God, and the young man excelled in works towards the old man, according to his promise, in humility, and in great obedience, and the spiritual excellence of his mind was greatly revealed.

One day the old man said unto the young man, "My son, know- "est thou that thou and I are building this house with weariness "and abundant toil, and that we have not sufficient reeds [to "make] the roof, and that the winter hath drawn nigh? Now, "in order that our labour may not be in vain, behold, I see that "there are reeds in the habitation of the monk who is our neigh- "bour, and since he is not there that we may borrow from him, "and supply our need, do thou go down and take up from there "a bundle, and bring [it hither], so that we may finish the roof, "and may rejoice through his forethought." And when the bro- ther heard this, he made ready quickly to fulfil the command of the old man, and having gone down and brought that which was

Digitized by Google

necessary for them, they completed their work. Then the old man said unto that brother, "Tell me truly, O brother, what didst "thou think in thy mind about that which I said unto thee, that "is to say, that thou shouldst go down, and shouldst bring "reeds as it were by theft, and without the knowledge and dur- "ing the absence of their owner?" And that brother said [unto him], "As I have already told thee, everything that thou shalt "say unto me I shall receive as if it came from the mouth of "Christ, and shall perform it in faith unhesitatingly. I said within "myself, 'Christ said unto me, Thou shalt not steal, but now it "'is He Who hath just said unto me, Steal; I have nothing to "'do with the matter, and it is Christ unto Whom I must render "'obedience.'" And when the old man had heard these words he marvelled at the wisdom and at the integrity of his obedience; and wishing to make him to rejoice in his hope, he said unto him, "My son, thou must know that I had made up my mind that we "must tell the owner of the reeds [what I had done], and must "give him whatever price he might require, [when] I sent thee "down to bring up that which belonged to him, and I did not "do so with the abominable intention of stealing [from him]."

And after a certain time, during which the two men had lived together a correct life which was full of peace and profit, the old man thought within himself, saying, "It is a great iniquity on my "part, and it meriteth a severe penalty, that I who have grown old "in sins, and who am still in the mire of fornication, should dwell "with this brother who is perfect in spiritual excellence; for it is "not seemly that darkness should live with light. But I will leave "this abode in his hands, and I will take away this stumbling- "block which Satan hath set in my way, and these fruits of "shame which have come to me from her, and I will go to the "world and unto those whom I resemble, whose works are like "unto mine own."

And when he had meditated with these and suchlike thoughts, and had made them known unto the woman who dwelt with him, he sent to the village which was nigh unto them, and brought from thence an animal to take away that which he needed from the monastery, so that he might lead away his wife and his children, and he might go and live in one of the villages round about them. And when the animal had come, and the old man had loaded him with whatsoever they needed, and he, and his wife, and his children began to go forth, he said unto that brother, "My son, we "are not able to dwell in a monastery because our sins are "many, and because we are not worthy so to do; for it is great "wickedness for us to dwell under the cloak of falsehood among "monks, whilst our deeds are more evil than those of the folk "who are in the world. But do thou remain in this dwelling, O

Digitized by Google

"my son, and the God Whom thou hast loved, and Whom thou "hast made plans to please in everything, shall be unto thee a "father, and a fellow monk; and do thou pray on my behalf that "the Lord may visit me." And when that brother had heard these words, he answered and said unto the old man with love and great humility, "O my father, I have made a covenant with "the Lord that I will not be separated from thee except by "death, and inasmuch as my dwelling with thee hath been unto "me source of great benefit, there is nothing which can remove "me and take me away from thee; but wheresoever thou goest "I will go; and wheresoever thou dwellest I will dwell with thee."

Then after all these things the old man came to himself, and he sighed greatly, saying, "Verily, this is a matter which can only "have come from God, the Merciful, Who desireth not the death "of a sinner, but that he may turn to Him and live, and He it is "Who hath remembered my former works, and hath not left me "to perish utterly, but hath sent this young man unto me that "He might again turn me unto Him." Then the old man found himself able by means of words, which were full of strong entreaty, to persuade the woman to take her daughter with her, and to go and dwell in one of the abodes of women which existed in the villages round about them. And this actually came to pass. And after the old man had remained there with his son, and with that excellent disciple, he began to remember his former life, and to renew the habits thereof, and he excelled greatly in the cultivation of all kinds of spiritual excellences, and he gave thanks unto God unceasingly, that by means of the young man He had held him worthy of the end of peace. And he was always saying, "Truly obedience for the sake of God not only greatly helpeth "those who possess it, but it greatly gratifieth God also, and it "is found by others to be the cause of life, and it tormenteth "Satan sorely; on the other hand, disobedience worketh that "which is contrary to all these things." So after a long time that old man died in peace, being worthy of the great measure [of reward] of his fathers, and he departed from the world, and left behind him as upright heirs of his spiritual excellences and of his monastery his spiritual son, and the son who was his according to the body and the spirit; may our Lord through their prayers make us worthy of their spiritual excellence and their inheritance! Amen and Amen.

Digitized by Google

Chapter iv. The Triumph of a certain Old Man who was in Scete

THERE was a certain old man who used to live in the desert which is called Scete, and he had a disciple who lived with him; now this [latter] brother was adorned with the spiritual excellences of every kind which befit those who are in subjection to old men, and he was exceedingly conspicuous for his obedience, which was the greatest of all his virtues. And he was sent to the village continually by the old man to sell their work, and to bring back whatsoever was needed for their habitation, and that brother, without any compulsion whatsoever, performed every command which the old man gave him with zeal and diligence. Now when the enemy of righteousness, the Foe of the human race, and especially of the orders of the monks, that is to say, Satan, the opponent of all virtues and the hater of the upright life of the children of men, saw that this brother was overcoming and bringing to naught all his crafty designs by the might of his simple obedience, which was full of discretion, he made a plan to lay two snares for him in the path of his spiritual excellence, even as it is said concerning him in the Psalm, as it were by the mouth of those who cultivate spiritual excellence, and who walk in the way of righteousness, "In the way of my "steps have they hidden snares for me" (Psalm cxlii, 3). Now the two snares were these:—The first consisted in making that brother to pursue fornication, and the second was in making him to fall into disobedience; and the Enemy, in his cunning, expected that the brother would not only be caught by one of these, and so become involved in both, but also that deliverance from the one would be found to be the occasion for his falling into the other, for he saw that he was being sent continually to Egypt by his master [on the business] of the work of their hands and of the matter of their need.

And one day, when that brother was carrying on his shoulders something which he wished to sell, and was going about in the market of the village according to his wont, it happened that owing to the sight of a woman, who was a virgin, and who was continually coming in his way, and who bought from him some of the wares which he carried, the war of fornication rose up against him suddenly by the operation of the Evil One. Now when this thing had thus come to pass the evil cunning of the Devil did not depart from that discreet brother, but he meditated within himself and said, "Both matters are exceed-"ingly difficult for me. Peradventure, if through some reason "such as this which the Enemy hath prepared for me, I reject

Digitized by Google

"the command of the old man, and do not go up [to him], I "shall always be in the habit [of thinking] that I have treated "the command of the old man with contempt; and if I do go "up [to him] I shall be oppressed for a very long time with "the war of fornication."

And when that brother had passed much time in tribulation, and in such thoughts as these, and in doubts of mind, and still did not know which course of action to choose and which to reject, he drew nigh unto a certain old man who dwelt close by them, and who was great and skilled in all [such matters], and made known his business unto him, and spake unto him thus: "Father, what shall I do, for the war of fornication hath "risen up against me? My father sendeth me always to the "village for that which we need, and every time I go to the "village I am vexed with thoughts about fornication, through "which I am thrown into a strife, and I know not what to do; "if I obey my father, and go to the village, the war which is "stirred up against me will become fiercer, and if I remain "here and do not go I shall be a disobedient [disciple]. I be- "seech thee to give me the advice which shall be beneficial for "me, and pray thou on my behalf, for I am greatly vexed." And when the old man had heard these words, he answered and said unto him, "My son, if I were thou, I should, with "God's help, obey my father, [and should overcome the war "of fornication]." Then that brother said unto him, "I beseech "thee, O my lord, to perform an act of grace, and teach "thou me the object of this conquest, and help me with thy "prayers." Then the old man said unto him, "Know, O my "brother, that Satan is not so anxious to cast thee into forni- "cation as he is to dismiss thee from obedience, and to make "thee disobedient and rebellious, and he plotteth always with "exceedingly great care to make thee thus; for Satan himself "hath been acquainted with disobedience from the beginning, "and he knoweth that it is the cause of every kind of condem- "nation and of wickedness to those who possess it. And, O "my son, let it be certain to thee that, if he vanquish thee by "means of it, thou wilt be, as it were, stripped henceforth of "the help of the power of obedience, and of thy father's pray- "ers, whensoever he casteth thee into the passion of fornica- "tion, and he will be able to drag thee down into passions of "all kinds easily. But if thou dost vanquish him first of all in "the matter of obedience, and dost thyself abide therein un- "doubtingly, and dost believe in the prayers of thy father, God "will make thee to prosper in every strife with a crown of "righteousness, and He will give thee victory in every war "with the Calumniator. For he, who for the sake of God acteth

Digitized by Google

"in obedience to his father, also acteth obediently unto God; "now obedience unto God is the victory over all passions. Go "therefore, O my son, and obey thy father faithfully and un- "hesitatingly, and when the war cometh upon thee say thus: "'O God of my father, help me!'"

Now when the Adversary saw that that brother was armed with the wise and powerful words of the old man as with an impregnable coat of mail, and had prepared himself strenuously for the contest, he changed the method of attack which he had formerly employed, and instead of vexing that brother with thoughts about the woman as he had done at first, he left him, since he was prepared and was sufficiently strong to stand up against him, and went to the feeble woman who lacked both discernment and help—for it hath been his custom always to run to the weak and sluggish side of disciples, and to overcome the strenuous by means of it—and as he overcame Adam by means of Eve, and as he overcame other [saints] by means of other things, even so did he act towards this marvellous brother who, through this cunning, gained condemnation and shame, even as did Job, and Joseph, and others.

Now therefore when this brother according to custom had taken his work, and had readily gone up to Egypt, and had arrived at the village wherein he was wont to sell it, Satan stirred up that woman to go forth to meet him as it were by chance, and having seen that brother and being inflamed through the operation of Satan with the fire of love for him, she drew nigh unto him by means of some crafty device, and took him and brought him into her house, with the excuse that she was going to buy something from him; and after they had gone in, and she had shut the door upon them, she began to throw herself upon him. Then that brother, with faith wherein there was no doubt, cried out with a loud voice and said, "O "God of my father, help me!" And immediately, by the agency of God, he found himself upon the road to Scete, and by the Divine help the Calumniator was put to shame, and the war of fornication ceased from that brother. And when he had come to the old man with whom he lived, and he had narrated to him the whole matter and what had happened, they gave thanks to God and glorified Him Who had hearkened unto the voice of His servants and had redeemed them out of the hand of their enemies, and had saved them from the snares of the Calumniator. May our Lord hide us beneath the wings of His mercifulness and [save] us from all the evil workings of the Calumniator! Amen.

Digitized by Google

Chapter v. The Triumph of the Disciple of another Old Man who dwelt alone in a Cell

ONE of the aged men said: I have heard from certain holy men that there have been youths who have led and guided old men to life, and they told me the following story: There was a certain old man who used to plait mats of palm leaves by day and sell them in the village [in the night], and get drunk on the money which he received for the same. At length there came a certain brother who took up his abode with him, and he also worked at the plaiting of mats by day, and the old man took his work also and sold it, and got drunk with the money which he received for the work of both, and he would bring home at eventide a little bread for that brother; and though the old man did thus for a period of three years the brother said nothing to him about it. And after these things the brother said within himself, "Behold, I am naked, "and I only eat my bread by forcing myself to do so; I will "therefore arise and depart from this place." But again he thought within himself, saying, "Whither have I to go? I will "stay here a little longer, for I can live unto God just as well "as if I were in a monastery where many monks are." And straightway the angel of the Lord appeared and said unto him, "Depart thou not unto any [other] place, for to-morrow we "are coming unto thee." Then that brother made supplication unto the old man and entreated him, saying, "I beseech thee, "O my father, not to go forth this day to any place whatso-"ever, for the angels are coming to receive my soul." When now the hour had arrived for the old man to go out and sell [the work] according to his wont, he said unto the brother, "My son, they will not come to-day, for they have delayed "too long"; but the brother said, "Yea, my father, indeed "they will come"; and whilst he was talking to the old man he died. And when the old man saw what had happened he wept and sighed deeply, and said, "Woe is me! Woe is me, O my "son! I have lived in faith for many years, but thou hast "gained life for thyself through a short period of patient en-"durance!" and from that day forward the old man led a life of sobriety and became a chosen monk.

Chapter vj. The Triumph of the Disciple of an Old Man in the Desert

THERE was a certain desert monk who was very anxious to find a quiet place which would be suitable for him to dwell in; and there was there a certain old man who had a cell nigh unto him, and he entreated him, saying,

Digitized by Google

"Come, take up thine abode here until thou canst find a cell "[suitable for thee,]" and he went [there]. Now the brethren used to come unto him as unto a stranger, and they brought him food in order that they might be helped [by so doing], and he rejoiced in them and gave them relief. Then the old man began to envy him, and to heap abuse on him, saying, "Be- "hold, how many are the years wherein I have lived here in "the strictest abstinence, and yet no man came unto me; yet "unto this deceiver who hath only passed a few days here "many come!" And this old man said unto his disciple, "Go "and say unto him, 'Depart from that place, for I have need "'both of the place and of the cell.'" And his disciple went and said unto him, "My father, speak some words and pray "thou for me because I am greatly vexed by my stomach"; then he came to his master and said unto him, "He said "unto me, 'I see a cell and I am going forth.'"

And after two days the old man sent his disciple unto him again, and he said unto him, "If thou hast not departed I will "come myself and drive thee out with a stick." And the disciple came to the monk and said unto him, "My father hath "heard that thou art sick and he is greatly grieved, and he "hath sent me to visit thee"; and the monk said unto him, "Through thy prayers [all is] well." And the disciple came and said to his master, "I have spoken to him, and he said "unto me, 'Wait until the first day of the week, and I will, by "'the Will of God, go forth.'" And when the first day of the week had come the monk had not departed, and the old man took a stick and was going forth to beat him, and to drive him out; but his disciple said unto him, "Let me go first, lest "there be there some stranger who will be offended at thine "act." And having gone before his master the disciple said unto the monk, "Behold, my father hath come to entreat thee "[to leave] and to take thee to his cell"; and when the monk heard of the old man's love he made haste to go out to meet him, and he expressed his sorrow afar off, and said, "Be not "vexed, O my lord and father, for I was coming to thy holi- "ness; forgive me for the sake of Jesus." And God saw the work of that disciple, and He opened the mind of the old man, and he threw away his stick and ran to salute the monk; and having drawn nigh unto him he gave him the salutation of peace, and took him into his cell. Now the stranger had heard nothing whatsoever of the words which had been said by the old man. Then the old man said unto his disciple, "Peradven- "ture thou didst say unto the monk that which I said unto "thee?" And the disciple said unto him, "Nay, father, I did "not"; and the old man rejoiced greatly, and he brought him

Digitized by Google

in to the stranger and treated him kindly. And the old man knew that what had taken place in him had been caused by the working of Satan, and he fell down before his disciple and said, "Henceforward thou shalt be my father, and I will be thy "disciple, for through thy good works, after God, thou hast "helped the souls of two [men]."

Chapter vij. The Triumph of Peter, the Disciple of one of the Old Men

THERE was a certain old man who had an excellent disciple, and on a certain occasion the old man by reason of his hasty temper drove him away, and turned him outside the door, and his apparel with him; and the brother sat down outside the door and waited patiently, and when the old man opened the door he found him sitting outside. Then the old man repented, saying, "O Peter, the meek-"ness of thy longsuffering nature hath vanquished my hasty "temper; henceforward thou shalt be my old man and father, "and I will be thy servant and disciple. By thy good work "thou hast made (*or* fashioned) mine old age."

Chapter viij. The Triumph of a Disciple of one of the Old Men

ON a certain occasion the disciple of a great sage (i.e., old man) had a war of fornication, and when the old man saw that his brother was vexed and oppressed in his mind, he said to him, "Dost thou wish me to entreat God "to make the war less fierce?" And the brother said, "Father, "I perceive that, although I toil and am afflicted, I am yet "able to see the fruit which I possess within my soul through "this strife, [therefore pray not for this thing]; but entreat "God especially in thy prayer to give me strength to endure." His father said unto him, "This day I know that thou hast "surpassed me therein."

Chapter ix. Of Aurelius [Adolius?]

I USED to know a man in Jerusalem whose name was Aurelius [Adolius?], and by race (*or* origin) he came from the city of Tarsus, and when this man arrived in Jerusalem, he walked wholly in the path wherein are no stumblings and wherein not many have walked. Now he laid down for himself ascetic rules of life of new kinds, and [these were so severe] that the devils were afraid of him, and they were unable to stand up before him, and by reason of the greatness of his toil he might have been thought to be a shadow, for he would pass the whole weeks of the Forty Days in fasting, and he would spend the other days in constant vigils. Now the

Digitized by Google

greatest of all his acts of asceticism was this. Whilst the brethren were gathered together each evening in the house of prayer, he would go up to the highest peak of the Mount of Olives, to the place where our Lord was lifted up, and as he stood there upon his feet he would recite the whole Office, and whether rain, or snow, or sleet fell he would never leave his place; and when he had finished the Office according to [his] custom, he would take a hammer and beat [a board], and rouse up those that slept, and having gone round to the doors of all [the monks] he would gather them together to the places for prayer, and in each place he would recite the Office with them; and he would also stand up in the midst of companies [of monks], and would recite the Office. In the daytime he would go to his cell, and in very truth on several occasions his brethren had to strip off [his clothes] from him because they were wet through, and to put others on him; and he would rest until the third hour of the day, and then he would come to the service [in the church and stay] until the evening. Such was the manner in which Aurelius lived, and in this way he brought his life to an end; and he was buried at Jerusalem.

Chapter x. Of Abba Moses the Indian, [a Captain] of Thieves

NOW there was a certain man whose name was Moses, who was by race an Indian (i.e., an Ethiopian), and his flesh (i.e., skin) was black, and he was the slave of a man in high authority, and because of his evil deeds and thefts his master drove him out of his house; now it is said that he even went so far as [to commit] murder. Now I am compelled to mention his wickedness in order that I may shew forth the beauty of his repentance, and people say concerning him that he was even the captain of a band of seventy thieves. And the following thing used to be related about him, and he is said to have committed it during the period wherein he passed his time in stealing.

He had as an enemy a certain shepherd, against whom he remembered certain evil things, and he went to steal [sheep] from his flock. And the shepherd was told by a certain man [who said], "Moses hath crossed the Nile by swimming, and "he holdeth a sword in his hand, and his clothes are placed "on his head; and he hath crossed the river by swimming"; and the shepherd covered himself over with sand, and hid from him. And when Moses had come and did not find the shepherd, he chose out two fine rams from among the sheep and slew them, and he tied them [together] with a rope, and swam

Digitized by Google

across the river again [with them]; and having come to a small village he skinned the rams and ate the best portions of them, and he sold the remainder for wine, and drank, and after these things he went back to his companions. One day, whilst he was associated with them in doing hateful things, his senses came back to him in the morning season, and he repented of his evil acts, and he rose up and fled to a monastery, and from that time he drew nigh unto works of repentance so closely that the devil who had made him sin from his youth up, and [who would have continued] to make him sin, would stand before him in visible form and would look upon him. Thus he came to the knowledge of our Lord Christ.

And about him they tell the story that thieves once came unto him and went into his cell, because they did not know who he was, and he tied them all together with cords and lifted them up on his shoulders like a bag of chopped straw, and brought them to the church to the brethren, and said unto them, "Since I have not the power to do evil unto any man, "what do ye command me to do to those who rose up against "me to slay me?" Now at that time Moses had been fasting for seven days, and he had eaten nothing. And after he had done this he informed the thieves, saying, "I indeed am Moses "who was formerly the captain of [a band of] thieves"; and having heard [this] they praised and glorified God, and when they saw [the sincerity of] his repentance they also removed themselves from their evil deeds, and said within themselves, "Let "us also draw nigh unto repentance, so that we may become "worthy of the forgiveness of sins, even as he also is worthy."

And whilst fasting often, and during the time of prayer and silent contemplation, that devil of error, who bringeth back to the remembrance of the mind the wickedness of former habits, would come to him, and tempt him to such a degree that, even as he himself hath told us, it wanted exceedingly little to make him fall from his covenant. And having come to the old man Isidore the great, who had arrived from Scete, Moses told him concerning the war of his body; and the old man said unto him, "Be not distressed, for these are the beginning of the "birth pangs, and they come upon thee seeking what they are "accustomed [to receive], even as a dog which [cometh] con-"tinually to the cook, and if a man give him nothing he will "not go there again. And thus also it is with thee, for if thou "wilt continue in fasting, and in prayer, and in silent contem-"plation, the devil will straightway fall into despair and will "flee from thee."

And from that time he was exceedingly constant in his work of spiritual excellence. He ate nothing whatsoever except ten

Digitized by Google

ounces of dry bread [daily] when he was doing work, and he would recite from beginning to end fifty prayers during the day; but the more he dried up his body, the more he was vexed and consumed by dreams. And again he went to one of the old men, and said unto him, "What shall I do? For thoughts of "lust which arise from [my] former habits attack me;" and the old man said unto him, "These lead thee into error be- "cause thou hast not turned away thy heart from the simili- "tudes of them, but give thy heart to watching and careful "prayer, and thou wilt be free from them." Now when he had heard this direction he went to his cell, and made a covenant with God that he would neither sleep during the whole night nor bend his knees, and he dwelt in his cell for seven years, and remained standing the whole of each night with his eyes open, and he never closed his eyelids. And after this he set himself other ascetic labours, for he would go out during the nights and visit the cells of the old men, and take their water-skins and fill them with water, because they lived a long way from the water, that is to say, some two miles, some four miles, and others five miles. One night he went to fill the [water skins with] water, according to his wont, and as soon as he had bent down over the spring, a devil smote him a blow across his loins as with a stick, and then departed leaving him half dead, and Moses understood who had done this thing to him. And on the following day one of the brethren came to fill [the water skins with] water, and he saw the blessed man lying there, and he drew nigh to him and asked him, "What hath "happened unto thee?" And when Moses had told him the story, the brother went and informed Rabbâ Isidore, the priest of the church of Scete, who sent brethren immediately and they took him up and brought him to the church; and he was ill for a long time, and he never thoroughly recovered from his illness, and he never again enjoyed the health of body which he had possessed formerly.

And Abbâ Isidore said unto him, "Rest thyself, O Moses, "and fret not thyself against the devils, and seek not to make "attacks upon them; there is moderation in everything, even "in the works of ascetic life." Then Moses said unto him, "I "believe in God, in Whom I have placed my hope, that being "armed against the devils I must not cease [to wage war with "them] until they depart from me." And Abbâ Isidore said unto him, "In the Name of Jesus Christ, from this time for- "ward the devils shall cease from thee. Draw nigh then, and "participate in the Holy Mysteries, and thou shalt be free "from all impurity both of the flesh and of the spirit, for thou "must not boast within thyself, and say, 'I have overcome the

Digitized by Google

"'devils,' for it was for thy benefit that they have waxed "strong against thee." So Moses went back again to his cell. And after two months Abbâ Isidore came to him, and asked him [concerning himself], and Moses said unto him, "I never "see now anything which is hateful to me." Now he was also held to be worthy of the gift of Divine Grace, and he could chase away the devils from many folk who were vexed therewith, and as flies take to flight before us so did the devils depart from before him. Such were the ascetic labours of the blessed man Moses, who was himself vexed with great matters. And he also became a priest, and he left behind him seventy disciples who were men of worth. When he was a thief he had [as followers] seventy men who were thieves, and these now became his disciples, and they were perfect in the fear of God.

Chapter xj. Of Abba Pior

AND there was an Egyptian youth whose name was Pîôr, and he was a holy man; and when he departed from the house of his parents he made a covenant with God with the zeal of excellence that he would never see again any of his kinsfolk. And after fifty years had passed, the sister of this blessed man, who was very old and grey, heard that he was alive, and she greatly desired to see him; now she was unable to come to him to the desert, and she besought the Bishop, who was in that country, to write to the fathers who lived in the desert [telling] them to urge him, and to send him to see his sister. Then when the blessed man saw the pressure which came from them to make him go, he took with him certain of the brethren, and set out to go on the journey, and [having arrived] he sent and informed his sister's household, saying, "Behold, Pîôr thy brother hath come, and he "standeth outside." Now when his sister heard his voice, she went forth in great haste, and when Pîôr heard the sound of the door, and knew that the aged woman his sister was coming forth to see him, he shut his eyes tightly, and said, "So and "so, I am thy brother; look at me as far as thou canst do so"; and having seen him she was relieved (*or* gratified) in her mind, and gave thanks unto God, but she was unable to persuade him to enter into her house. And he made a prayer by the side of the door with his eyes closed tightly, and departed to the desert.

And he also wrought the following wonderful thing: In the place where he lived he dug a hole in the ground, and found water which was bitter [in taste], but until the day wherein he died he endured the bitter taste of the water, in order that he might make known that which he suffered patiently for the sake of God. Now after his death many of the monks wished

Digitized by Google

to abide in that place, but they were not able to do so, even for one year, chiefly because of the terrible nature of the country and the barrenness thereof.

Chapter xij. Of Abba Moses the Libyan

THERE was also another old man whose name was Moses, who came from the country of the Libyans; he was exceedingly meek and compassionate, and through this was held to be worthy of the gift of healing. And this old man himself related unto us the following story, and said: When I was a young man and dwelt in the monastery, we dug out a large cistern which was twenty cubits wide, and eighty men were digging it out, and we set seventy men to build [walls round it]; and they dug down according to their knowledge, and they passed the place where they expected [to find water], and went down even one cubit more, but they did not find water, and being greatly distressed at this we wished to abandon the well and go away. But when Abbâ Pîôr came from the desert at the season of noon, now he was an old man and was covered in his head-cloak, he saluted us, and said unto us, "Why hath your spirit lessened, O ye of little faith? "For I observe that your spirit hath diminished since yesterday "because ye have not found water." Then he went down by a ladder to the bottom of the well, and made a prayer with the men, and having prayed he took up an iron tool and drove it into the earth three times, saying, "O Lord God of the "holy Fathers, make not the weariness [of these men] to be "in vain, but send them water in abundance"; and straightway the waters sprang up in such quantity that they all were wetted, and having prayed a second time he went forth and departed. And when they urged him to remain with them and eat he would not be persuaded to do so, but said unto them, "The matter concerning which I was sent hath come to pass, "and to eat I was not sent."

Chapter xiij. Of a certain distinguished Wandering Monk

The copyist adds the note: "We have found [the story of] "this wandering monk and recluse following [that of] the "recluse John of Lycus."

THERE was a certain distinguished wandering monk who (as have heard from the famous monks who dwelt by the side of the country of Antinoë) lived a life of great sanctity in the mountains, and many folks were helped by him both by word and deed. And the Enemy had envy of him, even as he hath of every [good] man, and he cast into his mind thoughts which appeared to be humble, saying, "It

Digitized by Google

"is not seemly for thee to be ministered unto and treated "with honour by others, for thou shouldst minister unto thy- "self. Go therefore to the city and sell thy plaited baskets thy- "self, and buy whatsoever thou hast need of, and lay no "burden upon any man." Now the crafty one counselled him in this wise because he was envious of the assistance which [he obtained from the silent contemplation and constant [prayer], and because he kept God in his mind, and he was laying nets for him, and was trying to snare him by every means in his power. And the monk, being convinced as it were by [a counsellor of] good, for he was not greatly skilled [in the knowledge] of the cunning and of the abundant wickedness of him that was lurking in ambush, went down from the mountain, and the brethren marvelled, because he was a wandering monk, who was well known and famous; and thus in a short time, through want of care and also through converse with women, he was caught in the toils and fell.

And he came to the river [Nile] in a desolate place (now there was with him the Enemy who had cast him down and who rejoiced because of his fall, and because many folk would be made to offend through hearing thereof); and because he had greatly grieved the Spirit of God, and the Angels, and the holy Fathers of the same class as himself, having become unlike any of those who in the cities and everywhere else had overcome [Satan]; and because he had forgotten that great might was nigh unto him [that fighteth] against the Enemy, and who truly hath his hope in the Lord, because, I say, he forgot that this help existed, he fell into error, and knew not how he was to be healed, and wished to throw himself into the river flood and die. And moreover, although his body was brought exceedingly low, through the suffering of his soul, it would have been in vain had not at length the mercy of God helped him not to die (which would have afforded perfect joy to the Enemy), [and it urged him] to depart again with weeping and bitter suffering of heart, and, as was meet, to make supplication to the compassion of God. And thus, having returned to his place and blocked up the window of his cell, he wept, as was right, after the manner of one who weepeth in a suitable manner over a dead person, and he reduced his body to emaciation by means of his fasting, and vigil, and grief, for the expectation of his repentance had not as yet come to him.

And on several occasions, when the brethren came to comfort him, and knocked at his door, because he had no excuse to make he would say, "Pray ye for me, O my brethren, for "I have made a covenant to live a life of silent contemplation "all my days, having everything of which I have need." Then

Digitized by Google

they would go away having no hope whatsoever for him; now he was a monk who was very precious in their sight. And from Pentecost, when the brethren were in the habit of relaxing their severe rules of life, and when they ate freely—now because of his fall that monk did not act thus—onwards, throughout the whole year until the feast of unleavened bread, he prayed with tears, and he vexed sorely the life of his flesh, and was crucified with Christ. But on the eve of the [day of] the Resurrection, at the rejoicing of the holy First Day of the week, he took a new lamp, and trimmed it ready for lighting, and he set it in a new vessel likewise, and covered it over, and being unable to stand up in prayer, he said, "O Thou Merci-"ful One, Who desirest that the Barbarians and all the people "who are without God should have knowledge of Thee, and "should turn to Thee, and Who alone art the true Physician "of souls, have mercy upon me, for I know that I have made "Thee wroth not a little. I have obeyed the Enemy even to "my death and, behold, I am a dead man. O Thou Who didst "teach the children of men who were not merciful to shew "mercy to each other, O have mercy upon me! For unto Thee "nothing is impossible, even though I be brought down as "as low as the dust in Sheol. But Thou art the Lord of Thy "hosts, and Thou art He Who is good unto those whom "Thou hast fashioned, and Thou art He who shall raise up "the dead bodies [of those who] have no being, and Who "shall make them to have being in the Day of Resurrection; "answer Thou me because my heart and my body are sick, for "I am overcome by the fear of Thee and am ready to perish, "and I cannot live any longer. And, because as yet I have no "confidence in [my] repentance, a twofold destruction have "I in my despair. Show compassion upon me, O Merciful "One, and kindle this lamp by Thy light, so that I by means "thereof may receive the encouragement of Thy mercy, and "may pass the remainder of my life which Thou wilt bestow "upon me in the way which shall please Thee, and may never "again as long as I live be unmindful of the fear of Thy "Commandments."

And he said these things with tears on his face, and he rose up to see if the lamp had been lighted, and he uncovered it, and saw that there was no light in it. Then he fell upon his face as he had done before, and he besought the Lord frequently, saying, "O Lord, Thou knowest that the strife hath taken "place and that it is ended, and Thou wilt not require especi-"ally that I should be disgraced by crying out with the wick-"ed, and that I should suffer torture for ever. Have mercy "then upon me, and I will confess Thy goodness; I have been

Digitized by Google

"ashamed before the righteous angels, and if it were not that "it would cause scandal, I would make my confession to the "children of men. Therefore have compassion upon me, for "from this time forward I will teach others that their hearts "must not be outside Thy fear, even for a moment; and now "I make supplication unto Thy goodness, O make me to live, "and I entreat Thee [so to do], for I am about to die." And the monk prayed in this manner three times, and then he was heard by God, for when he went back the fourth time [to see if the lamp had been lighted] he found it burning brightly; and he was strengthened with hope, and rejoiced, and wept abundantly, and he marvelled at Divine Grace, and he made prayer to the Lord about this also, saying, "Thou didst shew com- "passion upon the life of this world of him that is unworthy, and "especially by the great and new sign [which Thou hast given]; "yea, Lord, Thou dost always shew Thy compassion upon the "miserable soul, and dost spare it." And the monk continued [to give] simple thanks [until] the day dawned, and he rejoiced in the Lord, and forgot the food of the body; and he tended the light of the lamp every day, and poured oil therein, and he trimmed it from above, and kept it covered so that it should not be extinguished. And thus that man became like one who had risen in the resurrection of the righteous, and like the chaste man, and like the humble man in the Spirit of God [who obeyeth] readily, and [who giveth] gladly unto the Lord gratitude and thanks. And when he was about to yield up unto the Lord the soul which had been graciously given to him, he related the story gladly unto the brethren who happened to be there, that it might cause them fear, and he said, "Let that "lamp be placed in [my] grave in commemoration of [my] re- "pentance." And we, who heard concerning the grace of God, have written down these things in order that men may be watchful in the Lord.

Chapter xiv. The History of the Blessed Evagrius, the Solitary and Strenuous Monk

IT is not meet that we should veil the history of this holy man in silence, for we must set it down plainly in writing, both for the help and edification of those who shall come across it, and for the glory of that God Whose wont is to change bitterness to sweetness; we shall, therefore, make clear the history of the blessed man from the beginning, and tell how he journeyed step by step to the goal of spiritual excellence, and how he was carried onwards to the ascetic life, and how he arrived at purity of heart, and how he departed from this world at the age of fifty-four years.

Digitized by Google

Now this blessed man came from Pontus, where his family lived, and where his father held the office of visitor; and the blessed man Basil, Bishop of Caesarea, appointed him to be a reader. And after the death of the blessed man Basil, Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzus, seeing his perspicacity, and his great skill in the Divine Books, and that he was free from passions, and was adorned with virtues, brought him nigh to the grade of the priesthood, and he went up to the synod which was held at Constantinople with the blessed man Gregory, who loved him greatly. And when the blessed man Nectarius, Bishop of of Constantinople, met him, he was drawn to love him, because he saw that he was a man of strong character, and he attached him to himself. Now Evagrius was beloved by all men, and he was held in honour by all men, and for this reason Satan was envious of him, and he disturbed his understanding through the vision of his mind, which he set in a blaze through the love of a certain woman; and this woman was the wife of one of the noblemen of the city, according to what he himself related unto us. And when, by the will of God, he was set free from these thoughts, the woman herself began to love Evagrius; now she was a great lady of high degree.

Then Evagrius, setting before his eyes the reproach of fornication, prayed unto God with labour that, in His Grace, He might bring this matter to naught, and that he might extinguish the mad lust of that woman; to chide her himself the blessed man was not able, because he was bridled by the large numbers of gifts [which he had received] from her. And his prayer having been heard, when as yet he had not had union with her sinfully, an angel appeared unto him in the form of a soldier of the prefect, who seized him, and cast him into prison, and who loaded his neck and his hands with chains, but who did not inform Evagrius for what reason he had to bear this ill-treatment; and the thought sprang up in his mind which said, "Perhaps that woman's husband has laid an accusation "against me before the judge." Then Evagrius found himself in great agony of mind, because he saw that other men, who had been committed to prison for offences similar to his own, were condemned to judgement before his eyes, and the angel changed his form, and appeared unto him in the guise of one of his friends, and he began to say unto him, when he saw that he was loaded with chains and had been placed with the malefactors, "What is this which hath happened unto thee, O "brother?"

And Evagrius made answer unto him, saying, "My brother, "in truth I know not. I think that perhaps some prince of the "city hath laid [an accusation] against me before the judge,

Digitized by Google

"because of some vain jealousy (*or* envy) which hath burst into "flame in him, and I am afraid lest, through a gift of much "money, the judge may issue a decree of death against me." And the angel said unto him, "If thou wilt receive the words "of thy friend I counsel thee not to remain in this city"; and the blessed Evagrius said unto him, "Thinkest thou that thou "wilt see me in this city if God will deliver me from this trial? "Thou mightest as well think that I am enduring these evils "righteously!" Then the angel said unto him, "Swear unto "me that thou wilt depart [from the city], and wilt have a care "for thy soul, and I will deliver thee from these trials"; and Evagrius took an oath unto him by the Book of the Gospel, [saying], "I will not tarry here more than the one day which "will be necessary for me to put my things in the ship."

And when Evagrius woke up from his sleep, he thought within himself and said, "Although the words of the oaths "have been uttered in a dream, it is right that I should fulfil "that which I have promised"; so he put his things in a ship and departed to Jerusalem, where the blessed woman Melania received him gladly; now Melania had come from the city of Rome. And, because Satan had made the heart of Evagrius as hard as that of Pharaoh, he failed to call to mind that which he had promised to do, and he went back to his former habits and returned to his pride, and was arrayed in filthy garments. But God, because He is in the habit of bringing to naught on our behalf things of evil, kindled the fire of a great fever in Evagrius, and He cast him into a sickness which lasted for six months, and none of the physicians was able to bring healing unto him. Then the blessed woman Melania said unto him, "My son, thy long illness pleaseth me not; tell me, then, con-"cerning it, for peradventure there is something hidden in thy "mind; thy illness is not like unto that of every [other] man." Then Evagrius confessed unto her the whole matter. And Melania said unto him, "Promise me truthfully that from "this time onward thou wilt take care of thyself in a habita-"tion of monks, and that thou wilt work unto God; and how-"ever great a sinner I may be, I will pray for thee, and relief "shall be given unto thy tribulation." Then he promised [to do] that which she required at his hands, and before a few days had passed by the blessed man was healed, and he rose up [from his bed], and from that day his whole mind was changed.

And he departed and went to the mountain which is in Egypt and which is called Nethrâ (i.e., Nitria), and dwelt there for two years, and in the third year he departed into the inner desert, and dwelt there fourteen years in the place which

Digitized by Google

is called "The Cells"; and he lived upon one pound [of bread] a day, and a box of oil [every] three months. He had been a man great in pomp and he had made great his body, and had been ministered unto by slaves, yet he laid down a rule that he should pray in the course of [each] day one hundred prayers. He lived by the labour of his hands, and he only accepted the bare price of his daily food [for] all the work he did; and his work was to write books. Before, however, the fifteen years had passed by, he had cleansed his heart, and was held to be worthy of the grace of God, and wisdom and understanding were given to him, and he knew the power of spirits. He composed three volumes, and taught us [therein] the cunning of devils and the snares [laid by the] thoughts.

And the blessed man Evagrius himself related unto us that the devil of fornication [once] made an attack upon him, and that he stood up naked the whole night long in the desert (now it was the season of winter), until his flesh was quite shrivelled and dried up. And the devil of blasphemy [on another occasion] made an attack upon him, and according to what he told us, he passed forty days under the open sky in winter until his flesh became like that of the beasts of the desert. And he also told us that once three devils came to him in the daytime, in the form of three members of a religious body, and they began to discuss the faith with him; one of these declared himself to be an Arian, the second said that he was a Eunomian (i.e., a follower of Eunomius, Bishop of Cyzicus, A.D. 360-364), and the third confessed himself to be of the sect of Apollinarius (Bishop of Laodicea; he died about A.D. 390); but by the Divine Grace which was with him he drove them away, having put them to shame.

And again he told [us] that one day he lost the key of his cell, but he made the sign of the Cross over the door and then put in his hand and opened it, having called Christ to his help. He was beaten with innumerable stripes by the devils, and he learned by experience very much concerning their cunning. He made known unto one of his disciples by prophecy that which should happen unto him after [a period of] eighteen years, and what he said actually came to pass. And he said, "From the "time when I entered the desert I have never washed, and I "have never eaten any vegetable, or any fruit, or any grapes." At the end of his life, however, that is to say, in the sixteenth year wherein he departed from the world, he ate compulsorily food which was cooked by fire, and he was obliged to do this because of a weakness of the stomach which had overtaken him, and he was compelled to take food which had been cooked because of this.

Digitized by Google

Chapter xv. The History of Malchus the Solitary Monk

ABOUT three miles from Antioch in Syria there is a certain village which is called Mârônîâ, and in this village was an old monk whose name was Malchus, and he was a wonderful and a holy man. Now at that time I had travelled far away from the house of my fathers, and I went to Evagrius the priest, where I heard concerning the holy man Malchus, and I desired greatly to see him and to be blessed by him; so I went to him, and he received me gladly, and began to tell me about the habits of life and the works of the monks, and how it is right to fear the Lord, and having rejoiced greatly in the pious words of his doctrine, I besought him to confirm me especially in such things. Then he said unto me, "My son, I will relate unto you concerning the temptations "which, in proportion to my presumption and thoughtlessness, "have come upon me, in order that they may help you, and "also concerning the compassionate grace of the Lord God "Who took me out of and redeemed me from them, and Who "permitted them to come upon me for the correction of many "who should learn of me, and should not become disobedient "to the exhortation of their spiritual fathers, because disobe- "dience is the cause of death."

Then having said these things he began to narrate to me his history, and he said:—I was born in the village which is called Nisibis, and I was the only child of my parents, who, because I was the only child they ever expected to have, were proud of me; and when I had arrived at manhood's estate they were anxious to marry me to a wife, but when I spake against their [wish], saying, "It is right for me to become a monk and to serve the "Lord," and they heard of it, they were exceedingly wroth with me. Now my father urged me to marry and threatened me with penalties if I did not, and my mother was always inciting and counselling me to do so. And seeing that their minds were most firmly set upon this, which would become unto me an impediment to my confession of the faith before God, I forsook them, and treated with contempt all the riches of this world, and took with me only a very small sum of money, which was just sufficient for the expenses of my journey; now I wished to go to the monasteries of the East. And because at that time the Greeks had determined to make war upon the Persians, I changed my intention, and made up my mind to go to the west; and whilst I was pondering this matter I learned that between Keneshrîn and Aleppo there was a monastery which was situated in a peaceful spot, so I gave up my former intention, and went thither, and

Digitized by Google

I asked them [to receive me], and I remained with them, and I wrestled with all their ascetic habits and rules of chastity according to their godly ways of life, and I made good progress therein in the Lord.

And having remained in that monastery for a certain number of years, and having lived blamelessly the life of spiritual excellence, all the brethren rejoiced at the growth of my asceticism; but because the Calumniator, that jealous and envious being, could not endure [this], he cast into my mind thoughts [which were apparently] correct ones, saying, "Since thy father is dead, "return to thy house, and comfort thy mother so long as she is "alive, and after her death sell thy possessions, and give some of "the price thereof to the poor; and the remainder keep, and with it "build a monastery, and thou thyself shalt become a father and "governor of monks. And to tell the truth to thee, my son, the Calumniator cast within me the passion of avarice, saying, "Keep some of the money for thine old age." And when the war which was caused by these thoughts had been [waged] against me daily for some time, I felt obliged to reveal this sickness of my soul to the spiritual father, who, when the holy father had heard thereof, said unto me, "My son, hearken not to thy feelings, for this is a "snare of Satan who, by means of this cunning device, hath put "many monks backward in their course, even as a dog goeth "back to his vomit, and hath cast them down and hath made "them lose their inheritance, and who, though continually set-"ting before them the hope of that which is good, hath neverthe-"less brought them down into Sheol. For having raised Adam "to a height of error which resembled this, he brought him down "to the bottom of Sheol; and our Lord commandeth him that "hath laid his hand upon the plough not to turn back."

Now when by means of such testimonies which he brought from the Holy Scriptures he was not able to persuade me [to stay], he thereupon fell down before me and wished to swear by the Lord that I would not forsake him. And whilst that merciful and pious father was saying these things for my deliverance, the Enemy was placing in my heart the words, "The father acteth not thus "because he would shew compassion on thee, but he wisheth "that the whole community of the brethren may be glorified [by "thy staying here]"; and by saying words of this kind to me, that evil adviser made me to gain a victory of wickedness, and he made me to come forth out of the monastery. And still clinging unto me, as unto one who was lost, the father said unto me, "My "son, I see that thou art consumed by love of money; the sheep "which goeth forth from his flock without his shepherd straight-"way becometh a prey unto wolves"; and when he had spoken these words unto me I left him.

Digitized by Google

Then I went from Aleppo to Edessa by the king's highway, and being afraid of the soldiers (i.e., bands of marauding robbers), who had already taken up their abode in the countries round about, I remained in Edessa, hoping to find company for the journey, for so great as this was my watchful fear. And when we had gathered together a company of men and women, [whose] names were seventy in number, and had therefore set out on the road, suddenly a band of Arab soldiers swooped down upon us, and carried us all away; then I called to mind the exhortation of the holy father, and I said to myself, "O my soul, such are "the great riches which I went forth to inherit! O wretched "man that I am, such are the promises of the Enemy, the "deceiver and destroyer of souls! Inherit [thy wealth] then, "O wretched one, and make thyself happy therewith." And as I was saying these things to myself, one of the Arabs took me and a certain woman, and set the two of us on one camel, and having travelled a short distance in the desert, because we were afraid lest we should fall from the camel, we were compelled to hold tightly to each other; and not only did this shame come upon mine unconvinceable mind, but I was also obliged to eat with her. And the Arab gave us milk and camel's flesh, and he carried us to his tent, and he commanded me to do homage to his wife and to bow down before her, and he said, "This is thy mistress." Now through these things I, the chaste man and monk, was becoming acquainted with the form of the nakedness of these people, according to the reward which my passion of avarice merited; and the Arab ordered me to gird myself about with woollen garments and to shepherd the sheep and this [occupation] became unto me a source of consolation for the tribulations which surrounded me, because after a few days I was released from the evil faces of my masters and companions. But this alone did not bring me consolation, for I remembered that Abel, and the Patriarch Jacob and his sons, and the holy man Moses, and king David were shepherds of sheep, and I rejoiced in the desert, and I pastured the sheep, and prayed, and sang the Psalms which I learned in the monastery. And I used to eat cheese made of goats' milk, and I drank milk, and I gave praise to God, that I had obtained such a [light] penalty for my disobedience; and remembering that the Apostle said, "Ser- "vants, be submissive to your masters, not only to the good, but "also to the wicked" (Colossians iii, 22; Ephesians vi, 5), I took care of my master's sheep with the utmost diligence. Now in all these things I kept in mind always the envy of the Calumniator, which hateth that which is good.

And when my master saw that I was acting rightly towards him, he wished to reward me well therefore, and he wanted to

Digitized by Google

marry me to that woman who had been taken captive with me; and when I spake against his proposal, saying, "I am a monk, and I "cannot do this, besides this woman hath a husband who was "taken captive with us, and who hath passed into other ownership," his wrath went up, and he drew his sword, and he set his gaze upon me, and would have killed me, had it not been that I ran and took hold of his wife's hand. And having married me to the woman, he brought me into a cave with her. When, therefore, I knew that this was indeed the captor of my soul, I cried aloud, and wept, and said, "Woe unto me the sinner! What hath happened unto me? For having grown old in the life of virginity, "a terrible evil now cometh upon me, and I must, forsooth, become the husband of a wife! Where now is my mother? And "where are the possessions and riches of my fathers? For because I was not persuaded to [perform] the obedience of the "servants of God, and because I separated myself [therefrom], "and because I forsook the Lord I must endure things of this "kind! Now what wilt thou do, O my wretched soul? For if "thou dost conquer by patient endurance, by the Grace of God "thou wilt be held worthy of help, but if thou art lax severe punishment is laid up for thee. Fight then mightily against sin, and turn "the sword against thyself, that there may be kept for thee the testimony of chastity; hold in contempt the fire of time, that thou "mayest flee from the fire of eternity, and conquer thou sin in the "desert, that thou mayest be a persecuted and chosen witness."

Then I took the sword in my hands, and saluted that woman, saying, "Mayest thou remain in peace, O wretched woman, "and acquire for thyself rather a martyr than a husband, for "because I would not marry a wife I fled from and forsook "my parents." Now when the woman saw the sword which was shining in the darkness, she fell down before my feet and said unto me, "I will make thee swear by Jesus Christ, the "Lord of praise, that thou wilt not kill thyself for my sake; "and if thou wishest to do this turn the sword against me. "Why shouldst thou wish to kill thyself so that thou mayest "not take me to wife? Knowest thou that I am far more anxious "than thou art to preserve my chastity unto Christ, and must "guard it not only against thee, but also against my lawful "husband, for even if he were to come I would keep myself "chaste. This is what this captivity wherein I am teacheth me, "for this affliction should teach us to take refuge in the Lord. "Take me then to thyself as a companion of thy chastity, and "let us love each other in spiritual love, so that when our "masters see us they may think that our intercourse is carnal. "Now God, Who knoweth hearts, recognizeth spiritual brotherhood, and we can easily persuade these people when they see

Digitized by Google

"us together in this wise that we love each other." Then whilst marvelling at the understanding of the woman, I received her good advice gladly in Christ, and henceforward I loved her as a spiritual helpmeet, and as a pure and chaste helper. I never saw her body naked, and I never approached her couch, for I was afraid lest, having been victorious in the time of war, I might receive a severe wound through the arrows of the Enemy in the time of peace. In this wise then our masters left us for a long time, and they were not afraid that we were preparing to run away from them, for it happened on several occasions, sometimes for a whole month together, that I was alone [with the woman] in the desert. And my master used to come, and when he saw that I was taking good care of his sheep, he would go back [to his place] rejoicing.

And it came to pass one day when, according to my custom, I was sitting in the desert, that I began to meditate upon the peaceful life of the brethren who were in the monastery, and I saw also the face of our holy father as if it had been an image; and I thought of his perfect and abundant love for me, and how anxious he was in every way that I should not be separated from him, and how I would not be persuaded [to stay with him] by the Divine revelation, and how he bore witness beforehand concerning the things which would happen to me—Whilst, then, I say, I was pondering upon these things in my mind, and was greatly afflicted thereby, I saw an ants' nest, and I saw multitudes of these insects working with the greatest diligence and care in their various ways, and I saw how they were all making their way into the nest through a narrow entrance, without impeding each other. Some of them were bringing seeds for their winter food; and others were bringing loads which were larger than their bodies; and others were carrying on their backs those which had been wounded; and others were expelling from the nest those which had settled themselves inside, and they were cutting them up into small pieces, lest being drenched in the winter they should have to return to the grass, and should die of hunger and be destroyed; and others were carrying dust, so that when the winter rains fell with violence they might be able to block up the entrance to their nest firmly. Now this sight was in my opinion worthy to wonder at, because everything which these small creatures did was done in perfect order, and I spent the whole of the day in watching them, and so enjoyed some relaxation from my afflictions, and I said, "Well did Solomon counsel us to be like "these creatures, for he [wished to] stir up our lazy and slug-"gish understandings in this wise [to perform] with a ready "mind the things which befit our redemption."

Digitized by Google

Whilst then, I say, I was pondering upon these things in my mind, and was greatly afflicted thereby, I began to have sorrow concerning myself, because my lazy and sluggish mind lacked the great sense of order and arrangement which the ants possessed, and also the faculty of not being disturbed by thoughts of laziness, which the brethren possessed in common with the ants, and also because the Calumniator had hunted me down like a child, and had set me in captivity, and had hurled me into such [great] temptations. And I thought of those who were offering their souls with all their hearts to Christ, and who were being guided on their way in all the monasteries by submission and spiritual grace, through the righteous redemption of our Redeemer, and who were anxious to preserve their souls blameless, and who were labouring diligently and without any hindrance and with all their strength to do their work, and to minister unto one another; and who were not saying about any possession which was theirs, "It is mine," and who had everything in common; and who carried out perfectly the manner of life, which is described in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts iv, 32), according to which no man said about any possession that it was his, and everything was in common; and who, though possessing nothing, yet possessed everything; and who enjoyed sufficiently that which they had for their [daily] needs, with all fear or with all praise, and glorified Him Who richly provided them with everything.

And having made my heart sad and low with such thoughts for many days, I went to that woman, who seeing how greatly my countenance was changed, entreated to be allowed to learn the cause thereof; and having confessed to her that it was because I had remembered the regular life of the brethren, and that I wished to escape and return to the monastery out of which the Enemy had made me to come, she advised me and besought me to take her [with me] and to place her also in a nunnery. And having together decided upon this plan, we wept and entreated our Lord to help us to carry out what we had determined and to deliver us from that wicked people. Now therefore, having firm hope in God's assistance, we took thought for our return, and I slew two large goats which I had with me, and made their skins into water bottles; and having loaded their flesh upon our shoulders, I took the woman, and we departed. And we travelled the whole night long, and came to an exceedingly great and wide river, and I blew up the water bottles, and I gave one to the woman and kept the other myself, and we laid hold upon them with our hands, and sitting astride of the skins we paddled with our feet, and crossed over the river. Then, seeing that we should

Digitized by Google

have to cross a desert wherein there was no water, we drank abundantly of the water of the river, and rose up from that place and went on our way quickly; and we were turning round continually [to look] behind us because of our horrible expectation that there would be men pursuing us, and that even if we could escape from them we should fall [into the hands of] wicked men like unto them.

Now because of our fear lest this should happen, and because of the heat of the sun, we were obliged to travel by night, and urged by this great fear, and also by our great anxiety, we were looking behind us ceaselessly. And after [travelling for] five days, we turned round suddenly, and saw our master and one of his companions, riding upon camels, and holding drawn swords in their hands, and pursuing after us; and by reason of our fear the sun appeared to us to become dark. And whilst we were in this terrible state of fright, and did not know where to escape, through the Providence of Christ, the Hope of the hopeless, and the Help of the helpless, we peered about in that place and found a frightful cave in the ground, wherein had gathered all the numerous kinds of snakes which are found in the desert, serpents, and asps, and vipers, and scorpions, which had gone therein because of the burning heat of the sun. Into this cave we tottered, and we hid ourselves in a corner, on the left hand side thereof, and we said, "If our "Lord help us this cave shall be unto us a house of deliverance; but if He leave us to the sinners it will be our grave."

Now when our master and his companion following in our footprints had pursued us to the cave, they alighted from their camels, and stood by the mouth thereof, and when we saw our master, such great fear laid hold upon us that we were unable to move our tongue to utter a word; for owing to the greatness of our fear we were already [as] dead men, before the sword-stroke fell upon us. And when our master stood outside the cave and called to us, we were unable to speak to him because of our fear. And he took hold of the camels, and commanded his companion to go in and bring us out, whilst he stood [outside] waiting for us with his sword drawn, so that he might by means thereof quell his brutal madness. Now when the young man had gone into the cave for a distance of five paces he stood [still], and because he had come in from the outside, his eyes had become dazzled by the light of the sun, and he could not see. Now we being quite near him could see him standing [there], but because he was unable to see us he began to terrify us with [his] voice, saying, "Come out, O "ye wicked slaves who deserve death, wherefore do ye delay? "Behold, your master is outside expecting you." And as he

Digitized by Google

was saying these words, we saw a lioness rise up on the right hand side of the cave, and she sprang upon him, and whilst he was yet speaking, she seized him by the throat and strangled him forthwith, and then dragged him in and laid him on her lair, for she had a male cub; and when we saw our enemy lying [there] before our eyes, we glorified God with great joy. Now his master, not knowing what had happened, and thinking that the young man had been overcome by us, and being unable to contain himself for rage, ran forward, holding his drawn sword in his hand, and, standing at the mouth of the cave, cried out in his wrath to the young man, saying, "Quick, "quick, bring forth these [slaves] to me that they may die an "evil death." And whilst he was speaking, the lioness sprang upon him suddenly, and ripped him up, and threw him headlong on the ground.

And we marvelled at all these unspeakable and inexplicable wonders of the Lord, and we gave thanks to Him, and we rejoiced in the glory of Him Who in this tribulation had risen up, and by Whose command the wild beast had destroyed our enemies. Now when the lioness turned back and passed from one side to the other of the cave where we were, we thought that she would destroy us, but, because of the wonderful thing which had been wrought, we [continued] to praise the Lord, and we said, "Since the Lord hath delivered us from those "wicked men He can, if He willeth, hand us over to the lions; "but nevertheless let us praise Him and give thanks unto Him." Now whilst we were thus thinking in our minds, the lioness took up the cub in her mouth, and departed from the cave, and left the place to us; but after she had gone, because of the state of fear in which we were, we remained the whole of that day in the cave.

And in the morning we went forth and found the camels that were still laden with provisions which our master had brought for himself and his slave; and we ate and drank therefrom, and for all these things we gave thanks unto the Lord, Who had delivered us from our enemies. And we rode upon the camels, and having crossed that desert in ten days, we arrived at a Greek camp, and we drew nigh to the Tribune who was in command of it, and related unto him everything which had happened unto us; then he sent us on to Sabinus, who was at that time Duke of Mesopotamia, and he likewise learned all our affairs and took the camels and gave us their price, and he dismissed us to depart to our country in peace. Now before our return it happened that my spiritual father fell asleep. And the woman who had been [my] helper, and who had given [me] excellent advice, and had counselled good actions, I placed in

Digitized by Google

an abode of virgins, and I returned to my own monastery and to my spiritual brethren, where at the beginning the Lord directed me. And I related unto that blessed brotherhood the story of all the things which had happened to me, and I confessed that it was because I had not hearkened unto the admonition of that holy father that the Lord left me so that all these trials might come upon me; and He did this for the correction of many.

Now therefere, O my son, all these trials, which came upon me because of my disobedience, and which I have narrated before thee, are [intended] for the edification and the protection of thy soul; get thou possession of them, because, by the help of God, patient endurance and implicit obedience will deliver a man from all temptations. Obedience to the commandments of God is everlasting life, and the patient endurance which is perfect produceth everlasting life in us; for "he who endureth "unto the end shall live" (St. Matthew x, 22). These things did the old man Mark [Malchus] himself relate unto me whilst I was a young man, and on account of the law of brotherly love I have written them down because they befit the chaste life of holy old men, and tend to [their] edification and admonition; do ye then relate them unto those who are young, so that they may learn that those who have drawn nigh to the venerable estate of pure chastity, and who have preserved the same for Christ's sake even unto the end, and who are protected by His power, shall overcome all the temptations of the Enemy. And neither captivity, nor the sword, nor any temptation, shall be able to overthrow those who have preserved in all purity and holiness the temple of Christ without spot and blemish, even unto death, and they shall become holy temples, and the Spirit of God shall dwell in them, and notwithstanding all the words of the Calumniator, He shall bestow victory upon them, for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter xvj. Of two of the Fathers who went naked

ABBÂ Macarius, the Egyptian, once came from Scete to the mountain of Nitria to the Offering of Abbâ Pambô, and the fathers said unto him, "Speak with the "brethren, O father." And he said, "I am not yet a monk, but "I have seen monks. For once when I was sitting in my cell "at Scete my thoughts said unto me, 'Go forth, get thee gone "'into the desert, and consider intently what thou wilt see "'there'; and I remained five years in struggling with my "thought, and trying it, lest it might be from Satan. And "since the thought continued with me, I rose up and jour-"neyed into the inner desert, and I found there a fountain of

Digitized by Google

"water with an island in the middle of it, and the beasts of "the desert used to drink therefrom, and I saw in the midst "of the beasts two naked men; then fear took up its abode in "my limbs, and I thought that they were perhaps spirits. Now "when they saw that I was afraid they spoke unto me and "said, 'Fear not, we also are men.' And I said unto them, "'Whence are ye? And how have ye come to this desert?' "And they said unto me, 'We were once in a large monastery, "'and the desire of both of us was the same, and we went forth "'and came here, where we have been for forty years. One of "'us is an Egyptian and the other is a Libyan.' And they also "questioned me, saying, 'What news is there in the world? "'Do the waters of the river come as usual? And is the world "'flourishing?' And I said unto them, 'Yes,' and I also asked "them, 'How can I become a monk?' And they said, 'Except "'a man make himself to be remote from everything which is "'in this world he cannot be a monk.' And I said unto them, "'I am feeble and I am not able to do as ye do'; and they said "unto me, 'If thou canst not [do as we do] sit in thy cell, and "'weep for thy sins.' And I asked them, 'When it is winter "'are ye not frozen? And in the season of the heat are not "'your bodies consumed?' And they answered me, saying, "'God in His Providence hath made us to be so that in the "'winter we do not freeze and in the summer we are not "'burnt up.' And it was because of this that I said, 'I am not "'yet a monk, but I have seen monks.' Permit me [to be silent]."

Chapter xvj[a]. Of a certain Old Man who went naked

AND they used to speak of a certain solitary monk who went out unto the desert carrying his apparel on his shoulder, and having gone a journey of three days, he climbed a rock, and saw below him an old man who was grazing like the beasts, and he came down secretly and gave chase to him. And the old man was naked, and his soul had diminished to such a degree that he could not bear the smell of men, and he was able to remove himself from them and to make his escape by flight. And having taken to flight that brother pursued him, and he cried out to him and said, "I am "following after thee; for God's sake wait for me." Then the old man answered and said unto him, "And I, for God's sake "also, am fleeing from thee"; and finally, casting away from him the garment which was on his shoulder, he pursued him with all his might. Now as soon as the old man saw that he had cast away his garments he waited for him, and when the brother came up with him the old man said, "As thou didst "cast away from thee the things of the world I waited for

Digitized by Google

"thee." Then that brother entreated him, saying, "Speak to "me a word [of advice] that I may be redeemed thereby"; and the old man said unto him, "Flee from the children of "men, and keep silence, and thou shalt live."

Chapter xvij. Of a certain Naked Old Man who fed with the Beasts

AND a certain brother came to the monks who lived in that spot wherein there were twelve wells of water, and seventy palm trees, where Moses and the people [of Israel] encamped when they went forth from Egypt, and that brother told them the following story, saying:—I once had it in my mind to go into the inner desert and see if there was any man living therein, and I went a journey of four days and four nights, and found a certain cave; and having approached it I looked inside it and saw a man sitting therein, and I knocked at the door according to the custom of the monks, so that he might come out to me, and I might salute him, but he never moved, for he was dead. Now I did not hesitate or draw back, but I went in and laid my hand upon his shoulders, and he crumbled into dust and became nothing at all; and in wonderment I came out of that place and journeyed on again in the desert.

And I saw another cave by the side of which were traces of men, and I plucked up courage, and drew nigh to it, and though I knocked no man answered me; then I went inside and found no man, and I rose up [and came] outside, and said within myself, "The holy man will soon come here." Now when it was the season of evening, I saw a number of beasts, which are called "buffaloes," and the servant of God was in their midst, naked; and his hair had been made into a covering for his shame. And when he saw me he stood up in prayer, for he thought that I was a spirit, and he was greatly vexed by an evil spirit, as he subsequently told me; and I understood this matter, and said unto him, "I am a man, O holy one. Look at my footprints, and "touch me, for I am flesh and blood." And after he had prayed, and I had answered "Amen," he looked at me and took heart, and brought me into his cave, and asked me, "Why didst thou "come here?" Then I said unto him, "That I might be blessed "by the servants of God have I come into this desert, and He "hath not deprived me of my desire"; and I also asked him, "How didst thou come here? and how dost thou live?" And he began to speak unto me thus:—I was once in a monastery, where my work was [to weave] linen, and the thought came to me that I would leave it and dwell by myself, and [my mind said], "Thou wilt be able to live in seclusion, and to entertain strangers "with the results of thy labour, and thy wages will be more than

Digitized by Google

"enough for thee"; and I agreed with my thoughts, and I carried them into effect. So I built me an habitation, and took up my abode therein, and men used to come to me and carry away my work. Now whilst I was doing thus, and was giving my work for the benefit of strangers and the poor, Satan, the Enemy, with his wonted envy cast his arrows at me, and instead of the reward of my labours wherewith I expected to be rewarded, he flattered me by causing a certain virgin to come to me, with the excuse that she wished to buy the labour of my hands, and I gave her that which she wanted. And he stirred her up, moreover, and with one excuse or the other she was always coming to me; and when she had been accustomed to come, and had acquired freedom of speech with me, she began to come near me, and she would take hold of my hands, and laugh, and she was so bold as to eat with me; and subsequently we conceived and brought forth iniquity. And having lived with her in this fallen condition for six months I thought in my mind that whether it was to-day, or to-morrow, or at some future time, however far off that time might be, I should be delivered over to everlasting torment. The man who taketh out [of her house] the wife of another man, and seduceth her, is delivered over to the punishment of the Law; how much greater then will be the punishment of the man who hath seduced a woman who hath been betrothed to Christ? Then straightway I determined to come to this desert, and leaving everything I had behind me I went forth secretly, and I came and found this cave, and this fountain, and this palm which is in front of it, which produceth twelve clusters of dates each year, and thus yieldeth each month that which is sufficient for me for the whole month. Now after some time the hair of my body grew long, and my clothes wore out, and my hair covered my bodily shame; I have now been here for thirty years, and the air (*or* climate) always supplieth me in moderation with what is necessary.

And I questioned him further, saying, "Was thy mind disturbed about anything during the first years of thy life here?" And he said unto me, "I was greatly afflicted at first, and I used "to throw myself upon the ground by reason of pain in my liver, "and I could not stand up to say my prayers, but was obliged to "make my supplications unto God lying on the ground. Now "whilst I was in this tribulation I saw a man who came, and "stood by my side, and said unto me, 'What is thy pain?' And at "these words I gained a little strength, and I said unto him, "'My liver troubleth me and causeth me pain'; and he said to "me, 'Shew me where the place is.' And having shewn him, "he spread out his fingers and his hands, and slit up my body "as with a sword and he took my liver and shewed me the sore on "it; then he removed the pain, and having made the place whole

Digitized by Google

"again, he said unto me, 'Behold, thou art healed. Serve thou "'Christ, thy Lord, as is meet for Him'; and I have been healed "since that, and have lived here without any pain. Then I en- "treated him to permit me to live in the first cave, wherein I had "seen the dead monk, and he said unto me, 'Thou art not able to "endure the attack of the devils'; and knowing that what he had "said unto me was right, I entreated him to pray for me and "to dismiss me." I have narrated this story unto you, O my brethren, so that we may be zealous in the spiritual life and its works of excellence, and may attain to everlasting life; may our Lord in His grace and goodness make us worthy to receive it!

Chapter xviij. Of another Holy Man

A CERTAIN old man, who was held worthy to be the Bishop of a city in Egypt, told the following story (which he tried to make one think he had heard from another man, but he himself had actually done the things which he described), and he said:—Once there came to me the thought that I would go into the inner desert which is over against Usa (Οὔση), that I might see if I could find therein [any] holy men who worshipped Christ, and taking with me food and water for four days I set out on my journey; and after four days my food came to an end, and I wondered what I should do [for more], and I plucked up courage and committed myself to God. Then I went on for another four days, when I became so weak that I could not stand up any longer, because through hunger and exhaustion I had no strength in me; and I became sick in spirit and threw myself on the ground. And a certain man came and drew his finger across my lips, and forthwith I became so strong that I thought that neither fatigue nor hunger had ever drawn nigh me; and as soon as I perceived the strength which had come to me I rose up again and continued my journey for four days more. Then once more I became weary, and stretched out my hands to heaven, and behold, that man who had given me strength before, drew nigh to my lips and made me strong, and I continued my journey in the desert after this for seven days more, when I found a booth, with a palm tree and water by the side of it; and there was standing [there] a man, the hair of whose head was quite white, and he had made clothing for himself, and his face was awesome [to look upon]. Now on seeing me he stood up in prayer, and when he had prayed and I had answered "Amen," he knew that I was a man. Then he took hold of my hands and questioned me, and said, "How didst thou come "hither? Doth everything in the world still exist? Are the "Christians being persecuted?" And I said unto him, "By the

Digitized by Google

"help of your prayers, for in truth ye serve God, I have tra-
"velled and come into this desert; and, by the power of Christ,
"the persecution of the Christians is at an end." And in turn I said unto him, "Father, tell me how thou didst come hither." And with sighs and tears he began to say unto me: "I was a
"bishop, and during the period of the persecution many suf-
"ferings came upon me, but finally, because I could bear the
"tribulations no longer, I sacrificed [unto idols]. And having
"come to my senses I recognized the wickedness which I had
"committed, and I made myself come to this desert that I
"might die here. And I have passed forty-nine years here in
"making supplication to God for my folly, and in entreating
"Him to forgive me the sin which I sinned; now God gave me
"life from this palm tree, but I did not receive any encourage-
"ment to hope for the forgiveness of my sins until the comple-
"tion of forty-eight years."

And after he had said these things to me, he rose up suddenly and went outside the booth and stood up for many hours in prayer; and when he had finished his prayer he came to me, and as I looked upon his face fear and wonder fell upon me, for it was a face as of fire. And seeing that I was afraid he said unto me, "Fear not, for the Lord hath sent thee to me
"that thou mayest bury my body," and as soon as he had finished speaking, he stretched out his hands and his feet and died. Then I took the garment which I had on me [and tore it in two], and in one half of it I rolled him up and laid him in it in the earth, and the other half formed my apparel. Now as soon as I had buried him the palm tree dried up, and the booth fell down. Then I made many entreaties unto God, and I prayed unto Him to leave me the palm tree, so that I might pass the rest of my life there, but as this did not take place, I perceived that it was not the will of God that I should remain here; so I prayed, and returned to the habitation of the children of men. And behold, that man who had given me strength before came again to me and gave me courage, and thus I arrived and came to the brethren; and having related unto them these things I encouraged them not to be in despair about their souls, but [to feel] that in patient endurance they would find our Lord.

Chapter xix. Of a certain solitary Monk who used to feed on Grass by the Jordan

A CERTAIN monk was feeding on grass by the Jordan, and at noontide he went into a cave to rest, and he found there a lion which began to roar; and he said to the lion, "What vexeth thee? There is room enough here both

Digitized by Google

"for thee and for me, and if thou dost not wish [for a com-
"panion], get up and go out;" and because the lion could not bear [him], he rose up, and went out.

Chapter xx. Of a certain Holy Virgin

ONCE certain of the great sages of Scete were travelling along a road in the desert when they heard a sound, like the groan of a sick person, [rise up] from the ground; and they searched, and found a path which led into a cave, and when they had descended into it they discovered [there] a certain holy virgin. Then they said unto her, "O mother, when "didst thou come here? And who ministereth unto thee?" For they saw nothing in the cave except the holy woman herself who was lying on the earth. And she said unto them, "Behold, "I have passed eight and thirty years in this cave, and I have "satisfied my wants with grass, for I labour for Christ. And "I have never seen a man except this day, and God hath sent "you to me this day to bury my body"; and having said these words, she died. And when the fathers saw [this], they glorified God, and they buried her body, and prayed, and departed from the place.

Chapter xxi. Of the two Young Men who were with Macarius

ABBÂ BYTINIUS said:—The disciple of Macarius once told me the following story, and said:—Abbâ Macarius once said to me whilst I was living in Scete:—Two young men, who are strangers, have gone down there, and one of them hath a few hairs as a beard, and the other hath the beginning of a beard. And these young men came and said unto me, "Where is the cell of Abbâ Macarius?" And I said unto them, "What seek ye with him?" And they said, "We have "heard of his life and deeds, and we have come to see him." And I said unto them, "I am he"; and they offered me repentance, and said unto me, "We wish to abide here." Now, seeing that they were proud because of [their] riches, I said unto them, "Ye will not be able to dwell here"; and the elder of them said unto me, "If we are unable to dwell here, we will "go to another place." Then I said to myself, "Why should "I be an occasion of stumbling to them, for the labour itself "will make them flee?" And I said unto them, "Come, make "ye a cell for yourselves if ye can"; and they replied to me, "Only shew us how to do it, and we will do it." So I gave them an axe, and a tool for digging up the ground, and a sack of bread and salt, and I shewed them a rock wherefrom they might [hew] stone, and I said to them, "Hew your stone from "here, and then bring wood from the forest and roof over [the

Digitized by Google

"place], and then take up your abode." Now I thought that they would straightway take to flight, but they said unto me, "What is your work here?" And I said unto them, "The "weaving of palm leaves," and I plucked some leaves from the palms in the grove, and shewed them how to begin to work to plait baskets, and I said unto them, "Give them to the guar- "dians, and they will give you bread." And from that hour I left them, and everything which I had said unto them they performed with great persistence and diligence, and they remained there for three years and never came to me; and I continued to debate in my thoughts, saying, "What kind of work "is theirs that they never come in to me to ask me for any- "thing? The people that are afar off come to me, but these "who are close by do not come to me, and they have gone no- "where else, except to the church to receive the Offering when "they have leisure."

Then I prayed to God and fasted for a whole week that He might shew me their work, and straightway I rose up and went to them that I might see how they were; and when I had knocked, they opened the door to me, and they saluted me, and then held their peace; and I prayed, and sat down. Then the elder of the men motioned to the younger, who went outside, and sat down, and he plaited ropes, and said nothing; and at the season of the ninth hour he knocked at the door, and the younger man came and made a sign to him, and he went forth and cooked a little food. And he made another sign to him, and he prepared a table with three bread cakes upon it, and then stood by in silence. Then I said, "Arise, let us eat"; and they drew nigh and we ate, and one of them brought an earthenware pitcher of water, and we drank. And when the evening had come, they spake to me, and said, "Art thou go- "ing away?" and I said, "No, I am going to pass the night "here." Then they laid down a palm-leaf mat for me on one side [of their cell], and they threw themselves down upon the bare earth on the other side of the cell by themselves. And when I had prayed to God to inform me concerning their toil, the roof was opened, and the place became as light as it was in the daytime, but they did not see that light. Then, thinking that I was asleep, the elder man smote the younger, and they rose up, and girded up their loins, and spread out their hands to heaven; and I saw them, but they did not know that I could see them. And I saw the devils hovering about over the young man like flies, and some of them wished to settle on his eyes, and some on his mouth, and behold, the angel of the Lord was going round him, and was driving away from him the devils with a sword of fire; now the devils did not dare to

Digitized by Google

approach the elder man. And about the time of morning the two men threw themselves on the ground and I made myself to appear like one who had just woke up from sleep, and they likewise feigned to have only then become awake. And the elder man spake unto me these words only: "Dost thou wish us to "recite twelve Psalms only?" And I said unto him, "Yes," and the younger man recited five Psalms out of [each of the] six *Pethgâmâ*, and one *Hûlâlâ;* and at every *Pethgâmâ* a lamp of fire came forth from his mouth, and went up into heaven; and similarly, when the elder man stood up and recited the Psalms there went forth from his mouth as it were a rope of fire, which ascended into heaven. Now I could only recite the Psalms little by little. And I came forth and said unto them, "Pray "ye for me"; but they excused themselves, and were silent. And I learned that the elder man was perfect, but that the Enemy still waged war against the younger man. And after a few days the elder man died, and three days later the other man died also; and whensoever the fathers came to Abbâ Macarius he used to take them to the cell of those brethren, and say unto them, "Behold ye the martyrium of these little strangers."

Chapter xxij. Of Abba Bessarion

THE disciples of Abbâ Bessarion used to relate the story of his life and deeds in the following words:— The mode of life of the old man was that of the bird of the heavens, and of the things which are in the waters, and of the creeping things of the earth, and he passed the whole period of his life in peace, and in tranquillity; for no anxiety [as to the condition] of his cell was ever present with him; and his soul was never occupied with the desire to live in certain places; and he never ministered during the whole course of his career to the satisfying of himself with food; and he never gathered together or laid up for himself possessions in clothes or books; but he was free from care about everything which concerned the body, and he rejoiced in the hope of the good things which were to come; and he was firm and immovable in the foundation of his faith; and he followed the ascetic life strenuously. He wandered hither and thither like one possessed, in the season of frost [he went] naked, and he was consumed with heat under the fierce rays of the sun, and at one time he lived among the rocks and at another in the desert. And if it fell out and happened that he came to districts which were settled, or to a place where a congregation of monks passed their whole lives together in the fulfilment of the rules of monasticism, he would take his seat contentedly outside the door of the monastery.

Digitized by Google

Now on one occasion, having arrived at a certain monastery, he sat down outside the door, and he wept and wailed aloud after the manner of one who had been saved from a storm [at sea]; and when one of the brethren had gone forth, he found him [sitting there] like any ordinary poor man or beggar, and having drawn nigh unto him compassionately he said unto him, "Wherefore weepest thou, O man? If thou hast need of "any of the necessaries of life, so far as in my power lieth, I "will give it unto thee. Rise up, then, and get thee inside the "monastery, and comfort thyself with the blessed companion-"ship of the table with us." Then the blessed Bessarion made answer unto him, and said, "Until I find the possessions of "my house which I have lost, and the numerous goods of "the house of my fathers which I have lost in sundry and "divers ways, I cannot live under a roof. For pirates fell "upon me at sea, and a storm rose up against me, and I have "been shorn of my riches, and from being a man of high "degree I have become the object of contempt." Now that brother was astonished at these words, and was grieved thereat, and he went in and brought out some bread, and gave it unto him, saying, "Father, take this, and the other things "which thou hast mentioned, that is to say, country, and "family, and riches, God shall restore unto thee." But Abbâ Bessarion cried out the more, and with louder cries, and lifted up his voice and said, "I know not if I shall be able to find "that which I have lost, and that which I seek, for as far as "I can see they will be removed from me still farther. And I "am afflicted daily, and am brought nigh unto death by "reason of the violent storm of wickednesses innumerable "which surround me, and I endure them and [rest] upon hope "that, peradventure, I may be worthy of mercy in the day of "judgement."

Chapter xxiij. Of the wonderful things which Abba Bessarion wrought

ABBÂ SHÂÔL (*or* Dulas), the disciple of Abbâ Bessarion, used to say:—We came once to the bank of a lake and I was athirst, and I said unto Abbâ Bessarion, "I am thirsty." And the old man prayed, and said unto me, "Take water from the lake, and drink," and I went, and drank, and I found the water to be sweet; and I drew therefrom and filled all the water vessels which I had with me, for I thought that peradventure I should be thirsty again when I continued my journey. Then the old man seeing me do this, said, "Why fillest thou [these vessels with] water?" And I said unto him, "Forgive me, father, but I did so lest,

Digitized by Google

"peradventure, as we continue our journey, I may become "thirsty again"; and he said to me, "May God forgive thee, "for here, and there, and everywhere, God directeth us."

And on another occasion he was travelling along a road, and he came to the river Chrysoroan, and there was nothing wherewith it might be crossed, and he stretched out his hands, and prayed, and crossed over to the other side. Now I was astonished, and I offered unto him repentance, and said, "Father, when thou wast passing over the river how far up "thy legs didst thou feel the water?" And he said unto me, "As far as my ankles I felt the water, but all the rest of it was solid beneath my feet."

And on another occasion we were journeying to a certain great sage, and the sun was nigh to set, and the old man prayed, and said, "I beseech Thee, O Lord, to let the sun "abide in his place until I come to Thy servant"; and it was so.

And on another occasion I came to him in his cell that I might speak with him, and I found him standing up in prayer, with his hands stretched out to heaven, and he remained standing up in this position for four days and four nights; and afterwards he called me, and said unto me, "Come, my son," and we went forth and set out on the road. And being athirst I said unto him, "My Father, I am athirst." Then he removed himself from me about the distance of a stone's throw, and prayed and came to me, and he brought with him his garment filled with water from the air, and I drank, and we travelled on our road until we came to Lycus, to Abbâ John. And after each had saluted the other, he prayed, and sat down, and he discoursed concerning the vision which he had seen, and Abbâ Bessarion said, "A decree of judgement hath gone "forth from the Lord, that all the temples of the idols be "blotted out"; and this actually came to pass, for at that time they were all uprooted.

And there was in Egypt a certain man who had a son that was a paralytic, and he took him on his shoulders, and brought him to Abbâ Bessarion and left him by the door of his cell weeping, and he departed and went to a place some distance off. Now the old man heard the sound of the weeping of the young man, and he looked out, and seeing him, said unto him, "Who art thou "that art here?" And the young man said, "My father brought "me here and then went away, and I weep." Then the old man said unto him, "Rise up, hasten after him, and overtake him"; and straightway the young man was made whole, and he went to his father, who took him and departed.

And on another occasion there came to the church a man who had a devil, and prayer was made on his behalf in the

Digitized by Google

church, but the devil did not go forth, for he was difficult [to cast out]; and the clergy said, "What shall we do about this "devil, for no man can cast him out except Abbâ Bessarion? "Let us entreat him concerning the man, and even though he "cometh not to the church, let us act thus. Behold, the old "man cometh to the church early in the morning before every-"one else. Let us make the sick man to occupy the seat "wherein the old man sitteth usually, and when he cometh in, "let us stand up in prayer, and say unto him, 'O father, make "'to rise up this man also'"; and they did so. And when the old man came [into the church] in the morning, they rose up in prayer, and said unto him, "Father, make to rise up that brother"; and Abbâ Bessarion went and struck him with his fist, and said, "Rise up and get thee forth"; and straightway that devil went forth from the man, and he was made whole immediately.

Chapter xxiv. The History of a Holy Man who [possessed] Nine Virtues

THE fathers used to say concerning a certain brother who lived in a large monastery that, having contended mightily, and having been helped by God, he had made himself master of nine virtues, and that he was exceedingly desirous of making them ten, but that in spite of many contendings he was unable [to do so]. Then the Enemy, according to his custom, cast his arrows at him, and both by day and by night he vexed him and troubled him in order that he might depart from the monastery wherein he was, and he advised him, saying, "In another monastery thou wilt be able to com-"plete the ten [virtues]." Now the brother, not understanding the cunning of the Evil One, was led by his thoughts, which seemed to incite him to [further] spiritual excellence, and he departed and went to another monastery with the expectation that he would find that which he sought. And having been received into the monastery to which he had gone, after a very short time, through the contending of the Calumniator, he lost one virtue. And once again the Calumniator cast into his mind the thought that he would depart from that monastery, although he remembered his promise, and said, "Thou hast not "only not found that which thou didst seek, but thou hast also "lost that which thou hadst." Then the brother, being sad and sorry about that which had happened unto him, departed and went to another monastery, with the expectation that he would be able to acquire the virtue which he had lost, and also that he would be able to add another thereto. And whilst the brother was working and contending to acquire that virtue

Digitized by Google

which he had lost and that which he had coveted, the Calumniator, through his wicked craftiness, made him lose another, and he did the same thing to him on several occasions; and he made him to go out from one monastery, and brought him into another so often that the brother at length lost four virtues.

And the brother wandered about hither and thither in a state of great agitation, and coming to a certain monastery he rested himself, and leaned against the door thereof, in dejection of spirit, and he cried over himself, and wept because of what had happened unto him. Then, having rested a little, he determined to go into that monastery in order to be received into it. And he told himself of all the things which had happened unto him, and all the trials which had attacked him in the monasteries wherein he had been; and he passed judgement upon his soul and said, "Art thou able to bear all the [trials] "which are in this monastery?" And his soul made answer, saying, "I place my trust in the mercy of our Lord that He "will give strength to my weakness, and that I shall endure "[them]." Then, having decided these things in his thoughts, the brother wrote them all down on a piece of paper, and placed them in his girdle, and he strengthened his thoughts to go into the monastery that he might be received therein.

Now after he had been received, and had lived in the monastery for a short time, he began to have freedom of speech with the brethren, and with the archimandrite, and temptations also began to assail him; then he took out the written paper which was placed in his girdle, and read it, and felt relieved, and this he continued to do whensoever temptation assailed him. And the brethren marvelled because he was not perturbed when they were, for on several occasions, when the brethren of that monastery were in a state of excitement, he had not permitted himself to be agitated with them in the smallest degree, and they wished to know the reason of this. And one day when the monks were agitated and disturbed by a quarrel which was so serious that the matter nearly came to murder, that brother took the paper, and looked at it, and as he was reading it one of the brethren watched him. And when the tumult was over, and the brethren saw that he was not agitated, they marvelled, and said, "What is the meaning of this "thing? And why is not that brother as excited as we are?" Then the brother who had watched the monk [read his paper] revealed to them the matter, saying, "He hath something in "his girdle, and on account of it he remaineth undisturbed"; and the brethren enquired into the matter, and they found that it was even as the brother had said.

Then they approached the archimandrite, and said unto him,

Digitized by Google

"If thou dost not expel this brother, we will not remain here, "and we will go forth, because he is a sorcerer, and behold, his "sorceries are in his girdle"; and the archimandrite promised to expel him. Now the archimandrite delayed the expulsion of that brother, and one night, whilst he was asleep, the archimandrite went to him and took the paper from his girdle, and he read it and rejoiced with a great joy; and having read the paper he put it [back] into the girdle of the brother, who knew not what had been done, and no other man knew. And after a short time the brethren, through the agency of Satan, were greatly disturbed by a very serious quarrel, and that brother was in no wise agitated; and when they saw that he was not disturbed at all and that he was wholly tranquil, they rose up against the archimandrite, saying, "If thou dost not expel "this brother we will all depart forthwith." Then the archimandrite called the brother and said unto him, "What is this "that thy brethren are saying against thee? They are bring-"ing an accusation against thee." And the brother expressed regret, saying, "Yes, father, all [their words] are true; but "permit me to repent." And the archimandrite said unto him, "But they say that thou art a sorcerer"; and the brother said, "Yes, I am even as they say, but I beseech thy piety, O father, "that thou wilt allow me to repent here." Then the archimandrite said unto him, "But they say that thy sorceries are in "thy girdle." And the brother, being unwilling that his spiritual excellence should be revealed, fell upon his face before the archimandrite and took hold of his feet, and made supplication to him, and wept with groans and sighs, saying, "Ex-"pose me not, O father, but forgive me for this once only, "and I will repent with all my soul." Then the archimandrite, who knew that great advantage would accrue to the whole brotherhood, would not be persuaded by him, but he commanded that his girdle should be loosened, and he himself took it and brought out therefrom the paper; and he then ordered that all the brethren should be gathered together, and that the paper should be read in a prominent place, so that all of them might hear. And after the paper had been read the brethren repented, and fell upon their faces before that brother, and they entreated him, saying, "Forgive us, father, for we have "sinned against thee." Thus that brother benefited the whole brotherhood, and they regarded him as a father.

Digitized by Google

Chapter xxv. Of the Blessed Woman Maria

THERE was a certain worldly man who wished to become a monk, and he had a little daughter who besought him to take her with him to the monastery; now she was a maiden, and he entreated her, saying, "If thou "wishest to become a nun let me take thee to a house for "virgins," but she said to him, "I cannot be separated from "thee." And her father, being much distressed about her because she wept by night and by day and begged that she might not be separated from him, made up his mind to take her with him, and he changed her name that it might not be known that she was a maiden. Now her name had been "Mârîâ," but her father gave her the name of "Maryânâ" as if she had been a boy; then he committed the matter to God, and took her and went into a monastery without anyone perceiving that Maryânâ was a girl, and after several years Maryânâ's father died performing the excellent works of the monastic life. Now the archimandrite saw that Maryânâ was working [hard], and was excelling in spiritual excellence, and he rejoiced in him, not knowing that he was not a boy, and he commanded that he should not be sent out on the highways [to beg] because he was a child; and the brethren were envious against Maryânâ because he did not go out on the highways with them.

And when the archimandrite saw that the brethren were envious against Maryânâ because he did not go out on the highways as they did, he called to Maryânâ and said unto him, "Since the brethren are envious against thee because thou "dost not perform the work on the high roads as do they, I "command thee to do so"; then Maryânâ fell down before the archimandrite and said unto him, "Whatsoever thou com-"mandest me to do I will do gladly, O father." Now the brethren of the monastery wherein lived Maryânâ, whensoever they went out on the high roads, visited a certain believer, in order to rest a little and to refresh themselves, and since Maryânâ was sent out, even according to what had been ordered by the archimandrite, the believing man whom the brethen visited saw him, (for he knew all the brethren of the monastery because he used to go to their monastery continually); and the believing man saw Maryânâ at the season of evening, and he took him and brought him to his house, so that he might rest there for the night. And the believing man had a daughter, and on the night wherein Maryânâ stayed with him a certain man seduced her, and he who had fallen upon her and seduced her commanded her, saying, "If "thy father saith unto thee, Who is he that hath seduced

Digitized by Google

"thee? say thou unto him, It was Maryânâ the monk." And as soon as Maryânâ had departed from them, the father of the maiden knew that his daughter had been seduced, and he asked her, saying, "Who hath seduced thee?" And she said unto him, "Maryânâ, the monk, is he who hath seduced me." Then the father of the maiden rose up straightway, and went to the monastery, and with tears he spake before the archimandrite and the whole brotherhood, and said, "What offence "have I committed against you that ye should seduce my "daughter?" Now when the archimandrite heard this he was greatly moved, and he said to him, "What sayest thou? Who "hath seduced thy daughter? Tell me who he is that I may "expel him from the monastery forthwith"; and the man said unto him, "It is Maryânâ who hath seduced my daughter." Then the archimandrite commanded that Maryânâ should be called so that he might go forth from the monastery, but having been sought for throughout all the building Maryânâ could not be found, and then they knew that he was out on a journey for the monastery; and the archimandrite said unto the father of the maiden, "There is nothing further which I can do ex- "cept this: when Maryânâ returneth from the highway I will "not allow him to enter the monastery," and he gave orders to all the brethren of the monastery, saying, "When Maryânâ "returns he is not to be allowed to enter the monastery."

And when Maryânâ came back from the road they would not allow him to enter the monastery, and he wept at the door thereof and said, "What is my offence that I am not per- "mitted to enter the monastery?" Then the doorkeeper said to him, "[Thou art not permitted to enter] because thou hast "seduced the daughter of the believing man whom the monks "visit"; and Maryânâ entreated the doorkeeper, saying, "For "the Lord's sake go in and persuade the archimandrite to "permit me to enter the monastery, and whatsoever he order- "eth me to do because of my fall I will do." So the doorkeeper went in and told the archimandrite everything which Maryânâ had said, and the archimandrite said to him, "Go and "tell Maryânâ, [saying], 'Because thou hast done this thing "'thou shalt never see my face again; get thee gone to what- "'soever place thou pleasest.'" When Maryânâ heard these things he was greatly afflicted, and he sat by the door of the monastery night and day, and wept because of what had happened to him; and he besought those who went in and those who came out to entreat the archimandrite on his behalf, and although very many folk did so, and begged him to let Maryânâ come into the monastery, the archimandrite would not be persuaded [to do so].

Digitized by Google

And after that maiden, through whom Maryânâ had been trodden in the dust, had given birth to her child, her father took the boy to whom his daughter had given birth, and brought it to Maryânâ, and said unto him, "Behold, here is "thy son, take him and rear him"; and Maryânâ took the child, saying, "Glory be to God Who can endure and bear "with sinners like myself." And each day he took the child and went up the mountain to the goats of the monastery, and suckled him with goats' milk, and when the child was suckled Maryânâ returned to the door of the monastery; now he never left the door of the monastery except when he went to give the child milk, and he besought those who went in and those who came out, with tears, to unite with him in making supplication to God to forgive him his sin. And he sat by the door of the monastery for four years, and tears were never absent from his eyes, neither by night nor by day, and every one who heard the sound of his weeping was grieved for his sake. Now after Maryânâ had suffered affliction by the door of the monastery for four years and had shewn the child to every man, saying, "Pray ye for me, for I fell into fornication, and this child "is the result thereof," God moved the mind of the archimandrite to bring Maryânâ into the monastery, for His mercy was revealed upon him, and He commanded the archimandrite to bring Maryânâ in.

And as soon as Maryânâ heard that they were going to bring him into the monastery from the man who told him about it beforehand, he rose up straightway, and fell down before the Lord, and said, "Glory be to Thee, O Lord, Who "hath not been unmindful of such a [great] sinner as I am! "I give thanks unto Thee for all the goodness which thou hast "shewn unto me. What have I to give unto Thee in return "therefor? For Thou hast brought me into the monastery, by "the door of which I had decided in my mind that I must die." And as soon as those who had been sent to bring Maryânâ into the monastery had done so, Maryânâ fell down before the archimandrite, and before the whole brotherhood of the monastery, now he was carrying the child and was weeping, and sighing, and groaning, and he said unto them, "Forgive ye "me, O masters and fathers, for I have angered God with "[my] evil works, and you I have afflicted greatly; but pray "for me, that God may forgive me the fall wherewith I fell."

And after many years Maryânâ, having prevailed mightily in the great labours of spiritual excellence, delivered his soul to our Lord, and none of the brethren had ever seen him laugh or smile; on the contrary, he mourned all the days of his life. And when he was dead, the brethren drew nigh to anoint

Digitized by Google

him with oil, according to the custom, and then they saw that Maryânâ was a woman. Then the brethren ran quickly and called the man who had made the accusation against Maryânâ, and when he had come and seen her, great wonder laid hold upon him, and he besought God to forgive him the great sin and wrong which he had done to Maryânâ; and all those who heard and saw this glorified God that His saints fight so bravely for His Name's sake.

Chapter xxvj. The History of a certain Sage and of the watching of the Mind

THERE was a certain old man who lived in his cell and performed mighty ascetic works, and who, whensoever the brethren of the Cells were gathered together for the vigil of the First Day of the week, would come to the general assembly, and would act in such a way as to make the brethren despise him, and indeed they regarded him as a man who had gone out of his senses, although he did everything with discretion. Now God, the Good and Compassionate, did not wish the labours of the old man to be hidden, but He revealed and made known some of them for the benefit of the community, and He sent angels, who were in the forms of rich and honourable men, to the priest of the Cells, and they came and saluted him; and when the priest saw them, he ran forward to meet them, for he thought that they who appeared to him were great and wealthy men, and he rose up immediately and saluted them. And after they had sat down and had held some converse with the old man, they besought him, saying, "O father, we beg of thee to allow us to go round the Cells "that we may be blessed by the Fathers"; and he accepted their petition, and permitted them to do whatsoever they wished, and they asked him to send to them one of the brethren. Then the priest called one of the brethren, and commanded him to go with them, and beckoning him aside he said unto him secretly, "Take heed lest thou take them to the "cell of that [mad] old man, for when they see that he hath "lost his reason they will be sorry they have met him." And when they had come out to go to the Cells, the honourable men fell down before the priest of the Cells, and said unto him, "O Father, give our brother orders to take us to see all the "fathers," and the priest said unto them, "I have commanded "him to take you to them all." And having gone to the fathers of the Cells, and visited them, they returned to the priest in his cell, and he said unto them, "Are ye gratified "now that ye have seen the fathers?" And they said unto him, "O father, we are gratified, but we are sorry about one thing,

Digitized by Google

"that is to say, because thou didst command the brother "who went with us that we should not see all the fathers." Then the priest called the brother who had gone with them, and said in their presence, "Did I not tell thee to take the "brethren to all the cells?" And the brother said, "Yea, "father, thou didst tell me to do so, and I took them to all the "cells, and they have seen all the brethren." Then the honourable men said to the priest, "Forgive us, father, but there are "some of the fathers whom we have not seen, and we are "greatly grieved thereat; but say a prayer on our behalf "so that we may depart."

And after the priest had prayed over them, and they had departed from him, he called the brother who had gone with them, and said unto him, "How did these men know what I "ordered thee [to do]? Didst thou, perchance, reveal it unto "them?" And the brother made repentance, and said, "Forgive "me, father, but I did not reveal [thy orders] unto them." Then the priest knew that the matter was from God, and he rose up straightway and went to that old man whom he thought to be out of his mind, and he fell down on his face before him, and laid hold upon his feet, and besought him to reveal unto him his ascetic works and labours; and he swore to the old man that he would not rise up from the ground, and would not let go his hold upon him until he had done so, saying to the old man likewise, "That I should come to thee "and that thou shouldst reveal thy labours unto me, are "matters from God." Now the old man was unwilling to reveal his works, because he did not wish to be held in honour because of them, nevertheless he was compelled to do so because the priest had told him that the matter was from God, and he promised the priest to reveal unto him one thing; and when the priest heard the promise of the old man, he rose up from the ground, and seeing the old man in a gentle and tranquil frame of mind, he marvelled, because he had never before seen him as he was at that moment. Then the old man said unto the priest, "Depart, O father, I did not know that "I did even one good thing, but of such things which I have "the following is one:—I have by my side two baskets, one on "my right hand, and one on my left; for every good thought "which springeth up in my mind I take a pebble and throw it "into the basket which is on my right hand; and for every "hateful thought which riseth in me, I also take a pebble and "throw it into the basket which is on my left hand, and this I "do every day. And when the time for the evening meal hath "arrived, I take out the pebbles, and count them, and if the "number of those which are in the basket of good thoughts

Digitized by Google

"on my right hand do not exceed those in the basket of evil "thoughts on my left hand, I do not take any supper that "evening; and if they do exceed, then I eat, and rejoice, for "sometimes it happeneth that several days pass without my "eating at all, because the pebbles of the good deeds do not "exceed in number the pebbles of the bad ones. And when-"soever an abominable thought cometh to me, I pass judgement "on myself, and say, 'Take heed, for thou wilt not eat to-"'day!'" And having heard these things the priest praised God, the Lord of the universe, and he marvelled how the old man could perform such works of righteousness and yet keep them hidden from every man.

Chapter xxvij. Of two Brothers who dwelt in a Persian Monastery

A CERTAIN history, which is full of pain and profit, O my beloved, came to me by chance, that is to say, through conversation and speech with the brethren, and I have thought much about it, and have determined that it is right for me to narrate it, and to set it down in writing, so that many from the reading of the same may acquire spiritual profit, and may watch against enmity, and may not have bitter hatred of one another for any reason whatsoever, and that each [of us] may be at peace with the other, and so that each [of us] may forgive the other any cause for murmuring or anger, and may remember the words of our Lord, and God, and Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

There were two brethren who dwelt in one abode in a certain Persian monastery, and it happened that one of them had cause for dispute with the other, and they separated, each from the other, the one leaving the monastery altogether, and the other remaining in the abode wherein they had lived hitherto. And it came to pass that he who remained behind was seized, and bound, and shut up in prison, for [giving] testimony concerning our Lord, and he was brought before the judge, and was questioned by him once, twice, and a third time, and he bore severe stripes and did not deny Christ, and he was again fast bound in the prison house. Now when his companion heard [this] he repented in his soul, and he thought, "It is right "that I should go and be reconciled with my brother, for per-"haps through this testimony which he persisteth in giving, he "may depart from the world and go away, each of us keeping "wrath against the other, and through this we both shall suffer no "small loss, and probably I more than he." And when the brother had meditated thus, he came to the prison and enquired for his companion who was imprisoned there, and he went into his presence and fell down at his feet, and besought and entreated

Digitized by Google

him to be reconciled to him; but the brother who was in fetters would not be persuaded to do this, and continued in his wrathful condition, and when the brother saw this he left him and departed in sorrow.

And on the following day the judge commanded and they brought in before him the man who was bound and in prison, and he asked him if he would be persuaded to deny his God and to worship the sun, and he would not agree to do either; and the judge gave orders that he was to be laid out and beaten, and to be smitten with rods, and when they had laid him out, and the strokes were being laid on by two [men] at a time, he denied Christ. Now when the judge saw this, he commanded the men to stop beating him, and he called him to him, and asked him, saying, "What aileth thee? I caused thee to bear "severe stripes on three previous occasions, and thou wast "neither overcome nor didst play the coward's part, and "yet now, whilst they are coming near thee, thou dost deny "[thy God]." And the brother said, "I have acted thus because "I have sinned and treated with contempt the command- "ments of the Lord my God, Who commanded us to forgive "each his offences. I had once a brother in our Lord, and we lived "together in one monastery, and it happened that some cause "for anger rose up between us, and we separated from each "other in enmity. Yesterday he came to me in prison, and fell "down before me and begged for peace from me, and I would "not consent to be reconciled unto him, and therefore the good- "ness of God was cut off from me, and He did not help me this "day as He hath always done before, and I denied [Him]. Dur- "ing the stripes which I received formerly I used to see Him spread "out about a hand's breadth above me, and He did not permit "me to suffer, but to-day He forsook me, and at a small amount "of pain I was terrified and I denied [Him]." Now when the judge had heard these things from him, he commanded that his fetters should be loosed from off him, and that he should be dismissed; and the brother, feeling disgrace and shame at the fall which had come upon him, went forth from the presence of the judge, and directed his way straight to his companion, and he fell down on his face at his feet, and wept and cried out bitterly, and entreated for mercy and peace; and when his companion looked upon him, he also suffered great grief, and he received him, and they were reconciled, and he prayed for him, and though the thing was bitter to him, they separated one from the other.

Then the brother who had denied his God straightway returned to the door of the judge, and he began to cry out and to curse the king, so that they might again bring him before the judge for examination; but the judge did not wish to say

Digitized by Google

anything to him. And when the brother saw this, he departed from thence, and through penitence and grief for what had happened to him, and also through the pain and anguish of his soul, he threw himself, body and soul, into a fire temple; and he began to cast dust and everything else which came to his hands on the fire; and he cursed the king mightily, saying, "God will receive those who have been tripped up and have "fallen, if they repent and turn unto Him." And he departed from thence also, and he wandered about and went hither and thither, and he threw stones at every magian or pagan whom he met, and he never ceased from reviling the king; and he never ceased or kept silent concerning the compassion of our Lord, which is laid out for those who repent, and he cried out, saying, "Verily, there is no god except our Lord Jesus Christ, "although I, through my sins, and my negligence of His mercy, "have denied Him." Now when the judge heard these things, he feared lest he would suffer a penalty and be condemned to death as one who had heard the king reviled, and had been neglectful; and straightway he sent forth a decree concerning him, and ordered that his head should be cut off quickly with the sword. And when they had seized the monk, and had taken him outside the city, he cried out with a loud voice, and said, "Blessed art Thou, O our Lord Jesus Christ, for ten thousand "times ten thousand sins are too few for Thy mercy to forgive "in one hour"; and having said this they made him kneel down, and he was smitten by the sword and received mercy. Glory be to the Power Who maketh strong His saints to do His Will, and may we have mercy shewn unto us through their prayers, for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter xxviij. The History of a certain Virgin who grew old in the works of the Fear of God

IT was related by a certain old man who said:—There was a virgin who was far advanced in years, and who had grown old in the fear of God, and having been asked by me to tell me the reason why she left the world, she began, with sighs, to speak to me as follows:—Great and marvellous things have happened unto me. When I was a young girl I had a father, who was a pleasant man, and who was modest in his disposition; now he was a delicate man in health, and he was always suffering from some kind of sickness, and he lived entirely to himself, and never interfered in the affairs of other people, and it was with the greatest difficulty that he could be induced to see the people of his village. When he was in good health he devoted his attention unceasingly to the care of his estate, and he occupied himself at all seasons with the cultivation of

Digitized by Google

his fields; but finally he was obliged to pass many long days of his life laid out on a bed of sickness, and he was so quiet that those who were not acquainted with him would have thought that he was deaf. And I had a mother, who, in all her ways and manners, was the opposite of my father, and she used to do things which were beyond her capacity; her words to every one were many, and she poured out her speech uselessly to every one, and she talked so much that every one imagined that her body was composed wholly of tongues. Moreover, she had quarrels with her neighbours continually, and she was always in a state of drunkenness, and she drank shamelessly at all times with wanton folk, and she managed the affairs of her house badly, after the manner of a harlot; and at length, though the house was well furnished with goods of every kind, it was with the greatest difficulty that the people could find enough to supply our wants. She was very lax in the care for the things which my father required in his illness, but she displayed the utmost attention in providing for her own body in a disgraceful manner, and the people of the village at length fled before her shameless appearance. No illness ever came upon her, and she had never been ill in the whole course of her life, from the day she was born, and she was healthy in body until her death.

When therefore, I, a wretched girl, had lived for some time in such circumstances as these, it happened that, after struggling against a long illness, that is to say, my father was obliged to pass every day of his life in the infirmity of sickness, at length he departed from the world. Now at the very moment of his death the weather changed, and the rain poured down in torrents, and lightnings and thunders were tearing through the air, and disturbing it violently, and it was impossible to tell whether it was day or whether it was night; for this reason my father lay dead on his bier for three days, for the weather did not permit him to be buried. And, moreover, it made the people of the village to shake their heads, and they wondered, and said, "Perhaps great wickednesses were committed by this "man secretly, and he may have been found to be such an "enemy of God that even the earth will not permit his burial"; but, in order that his body might not go wholly to corruption, even though the weather was gloomy and threatening, and the rain had not ceased, by some means or other we carried him [to the grave], and laid him therein. Now my mother, as one who had found great relief, forthwith fulfilled unreproved her wanton lusts to the utmost, and she straightway turned my father's house into an abode of harlots, and she lived there in such a state of luxury and lascivious pleasure that soon of all the goods in it only a mere remnant was left, and that

Digitized by Google

remnant she left to me when I was very young. Then with difficulty came death to my mother, and in my opinion, he was afraid to approach her, for great worms grew in her, and with much trouble she was buried, the weather by its serenity, and the sun by his splendour helping [in the work].

Now after the death of my mother, and whilst I was still a little girl, I left the world. During the period when I was a young woman the lusts of the body were stirred up within me, and they goaded me severely, and I used to rise up in the evening (*or* night) that I might lie down again and find a little relief from the disturbance of my mind. And a struggle went on in my thoughts, for I wondered what manner of life I should choose for myself, and how I should end the days of my life, and whether they would be passed in quietness and happiness, and fair chastity, even as they were during my father's lifetime. Then my thoughts spake unto me thus:—

"Behold, in this world thy father did not enjoy any happiness "whatsoever, but he passed all his life in sickness and wretch-"edness, and he departed from this world of trouble under "the same circumstances, and even the earth was unwilling "to receive his body; are [men] to receive such a life as this "from (?) God, and why did my father deserve such treat-"ment? On the other hand, supposing I chose to lead a life "like that of my mother, will that be any better to deliver my "body over to fornication, and lasciviousness, and the gratifi-"cation of [my] lusts? For, behold, my mother left no kind of "abominable wickedness which she did not commit, and she "destroyed her whole life with her depravity, and yet she de-"parted from this world having enjoyed health and prosperity "every day [of her life]! What then? Is it not then right for "me to live even as she lived? For it is better that I should "believe with mine own eyes, and that they should see for "themselves the variety and the ending of such matters, for "there is nothing better than to understand thoroughly what-"soever we see openly before our eyes."

And I, the wretched girl, vainly imagined that such thoughts were the thoughts of truth, and for this reason I determined to prepare myself to live even as my mother had lived. Now when the night had overtaken me, and immediately sleep had fallen upon me after thinking thoughts of this kind, a certain man, of huge stature, stood up above me; and his appearance was frightful, and his form made me tremble and terrified me, and his face was hard, and in a stern voice he asked me, saying, "Tell me, so and so, what are these "thoughts which are in thy heart?" And, because I was terri-fied by his appearance and form, I scarcely dared to look upon

Digitized by Google

him, and in a voice which was sterner than before, he commanded me to reveal to him the things which I had settled in my own mind to do. And being stupefied with fear I forgot all my thoughts and I said unto him, "My lord, I know not what "thou sayest," and having thus denied that I knew, he reminded me of everything which I had thought out in my mind, one after the other. Therefore, having rebuked myself, I turned and begged and entreated him that I might be held worthy of forgiveness, and I related unto him the reason for such thoughts. Then he straightway said unto me, "I am about to "shew thee both thy father and thy mother, and the [different] "manner of life which they lead, and the things which each "doeth, and thou shalt choose which life thou wilt lead." And he took me by my hands, and drew me away, and carried me to an exceedingly great plain, wherein there were many paradises, and thick trees heavily laden with fruits, which for appearance and beauty surpassed description. Now when I had entered into that plain, my father met me, and embraced me, and kissed me, and he held converse with me and called me "my daughter," and whilst I was in his embrace I besought him that I might remain with him, but he said unto me, "At present it is impossible, but if thou desirest to walk "chastely in my footsteps thou shalt come hither after no "great time."

And as I remained and was making my supplication unto him, he who had brought me to this place drew me on, and I was lifted up in his hands, and he said unto me, "Come and "see thy mother also in the fire which is blazing fiercely, so "that thou mayest know how to choose what is good, and "towards which manner of life it will be useful and beneficial "for thee to incline." Then he showed me a fiery furnace which was burning fiercely, and every kind of thing of cruel wrath surrounded the furnace, and I heard proceeding therefrom the sound of weeping and of gnashing of teeth. And having looked down into the furnace I saw my mother sunk in fire up to her neck, and she was weeping and gnashing her teeth, and she was being consumed in the fire, and she was being gnawed by a multitude of worms; and when she saw me she cried out with tears in a loud voice and, addressing me with the words, "My daughter," she said, "woe is me, "O my daughter, for these things have come upon me be"cause of my evil deeds, and because I held to be madness "the things which were said unto me concerning chastity, "and the punishments which were declared to fall upon those "who committed fornication and adultery. And, behold, in "return for my lascivious pleasure I have to suffer torture,

Digitized by Google

"because I did not think that vengeance was laid up there-
"for! And, behold, in return for a little pleasure and the
"momentary gratification of my desire, what everlasting
"punishment I have to endure, and what penalty is there
"which I am not compelled to pay? And consider, moreover,
"that in return for the short-lived happiness which I, O
"wretched woman, enjoyed, I have to pay a prolonged
"penalty. And because I despised God what evil wages I have
"to receive! All these things have overtaken me because I be-
"haved rebelliously, but, behold, now is the time for helping
"me, O my daughter. Remember now with what anxious care
"and attention thy bringing up was carried out, and the
"helpful things which I brought thee, and to speak briefly,
"all the good things which I did for thee. Have mercy upon
"the woman who burneth in the fire. Have mercy upon the
"woman who hath been cast into such tortures as these.
"Have pity upon me, O my daughter, and stretch out thy hand,
"and lift me up out of this place." Now I excused myself from doing this on account of him that stood by my side, and again she wept and cried out to me, saying, "O my daughter, help
"me. O my daughter, have pity upon me, and come to me.
"Neglect not thy mother who gnasheth her teeth [in pain], and
"treat not with indifference her who suffereth torment in
"Gehenna."

Now as, after the nature of a human being, I felt pain because of her tears and her mournful voice, I began to cry out loudly, and to sigh and moan bitterly, and then all those who were sleeping in our house awoke, and when they had risen up, they questioned me and I told them the reason of the outcry and disturbance, and I narrated unto them everything which had appeared unto me. These are the things through which, by the rich mercy of God, I chose to follow the life and works of my father, and I was persuaded to be governed, and through Divine Providence I am confirmed in my belief that such punishments are laid up for those who desire to live an evil life.

Such are the things which we heard from the virgin who is worthy of blessing, and from them we may know what delights, according to the things which appeared unto her in the revelation, are laid up for those who wish to live in a state of spiritual excellence, and what punishments are prepared for those who choose to live a wicked and wanton life. And because of these things it is meet that we should strive to the utmost to live a life of virtue, and to excel therein, so that, by the help of God, we may through our life and deeds merit the happiness [of heaven]. Amen.

Digitized by Google

Chapter xxix. Of Stephana, a Man who fell into filthy Wantonness

THERE was a certain man in Scete whose name was Stephânâ, who had dwelt in the desert for twenty-nine years; his apparel was made of palm leaves, and he lived in such a strict state of self-denial, and persisted to such a degree in ascetic abstinence that he never had the least inclination for the meats which are usually desired, and which are pleasant to the taste; and he greatly condemned those who, because of sickness, either ate cooked food or drank cream. Now the gift of healing had been given to him to such a degree that he could cast out devils by a word. And it came to pass that on one occasion a man in whom was an unclean spirit came to Scete, and he wished to be healed, and when the monk saw that he was vexed sorely by the devil he made a prayer and healed him. But at length this monk was rejected by Divine Providence because of his immeasurable arrogance and haughtiness, for he imagined himself to be more excellent in his life and works than the other fathers; first of all he separated himself from the brotherhood, and then he went and became archimandrite in one of the Alexandrian monasteries, "For," he said in his pride, "am I to be in subjection to Ma-"carius? And are not my life and works better than his?" And this man arrived at such a state of madness that he went to Alexandria, and gave himself up to gluttony, and drunkenness, and to the eating of more flesh than rational beings are wont to eat, and finally he fell and settled down into the pit of the lust for women; and he was always going about in the houses of harlots, and in the taverns of ill-fame, and he hung closely to the whores, and gratified his lusts in a filthy manner without shame, and he became a laughing-stock to all who knew him. But the spirit went forth to those who knew him, saying, "The law was not made for the perfect," and he himself said, "I do not act [thus] because of passion and fornication, "neither do I do anything which is abominable, for it is not "a sin to go with women, for male and female were created "by God."

And it fell out that one day I and the blessed man Evagrius went to Alexandria on some business which called us thither. And we had with us four brethren; and as we were passing through the city market that monk met us accidentally, and he was talking with a harlot about his filthy lust; and when the blessed Evagrius saw him, he wept, and fell down at his feet and made obeisance unto him, but the man did not incline his head in the smallest degree, and with infinite arrogance and

Digitized by Google

haughtiness he made answer to him, saying, "What do hypo-
"crites and deceivers seek here?" Then the blessed Evagrius entreated him to go with us to the place where we were lodging, but he did not by any means wish to go; and when, with the greatest difficulty, he had been persuaded to go with us, so soon as we had entered in and prayed, the blessed Evagrius fell upon his neck and kissed him, and with tears said unto him, "Verily, O my beloved, from all that divine service of "angels thou hast been brought down to this depth of wicked-
"ness; and thou hast turned thyself from converse with God "to converse with harlots; and instead of the life and service "of angels thou hast chosen the life of devils! But I beseech "and entreat thee not to cut off the hope of thy redemption, "but arise, and come with us to the desert, for by my hands "God the Merciful is able to restore thee to thy former grade." Now his understanding had been so blinded by Satan that he did not know how to listen to what was said unto him, nor did he know what he answered. And he said unto Evagrius, "Up to the present I have certainly been wandering about, "but now I have found the path of truth," and he began to make a mock of the fathers, and to say, "Ye certainly wander "about [i.e., err], and ye dwell in the desert under a false "character, for the sake of men, and not for the sake of God, "and ye are to the spectators as idols whom men decorate, "and to whom they pay worship"; and thus, being full of the pride and boasting of Satan, he spurned the fathers and went forth and departed, and the blessed Evagrius and the brethren wept and groaned over him greatly.

Then that man carried off a certain virgin, who was an orphan and a nun living by herself, with a foul design to his monastery, and though he did this with the excuse that he was going to help her by means of alms of which she was in need, it was in reality that he might fulfil his wanton desire. And having lived with her in this degraded state for about two years, at length there came to him thieves by night, who first tied him with cords, and then smote him with hard and cruel blows, until he brought out whatsoever he had in his dwelling and laid it before them; and last of all they shut him up with the woman with whom he used to work out his wantonness in a house wherein there was straw, and, both of them being bound with cords, the thieves set fire to the house, and thus the two were consumed, and they died a bitter death. And in them was fulfilled that which was spoken by the teacher of the Gentiles, who said, "Because they did not decide with-
"in themselves to know God, God delivered them over to the "knowledge of vanity, that they might disgrace their bodies

Digitized by Google

"therewith, and they received the reward which befitted their "error in their own persons (Romans i, 28); that is to say, "the burning of the fire which is here is a pledge of that fire "which tormenteth all the wicked." Now the things which happened to Stephânâ took place because he separated himself from the brotherhood, and because he was [unduly] exalted in his mind, and because he imagined that he was perfect.

Chapter xxx. Of Eucarpus

AND there was also in the desert a certain man whose name was Eucarpus, who had passed eighteen years shut up in his cell; and the food which was necessary for his wants was brought by others. He had lived in seclusion for fifteen years, and he never spoke to any man [during that period] except when he was in need of something. He used to write upon paper [what he wished to say], and would give it to those who ministered unto him, and he also did thus when any man asked him a question or spoke to him; his food consisted of vegetables soaked in water, and pounded garden herbs, and he carried out his rule of life with infinite labour. Finally, however, the devils made him a laughing-stock also, because of the vain opinion which he had concerning himself. First of all he separated himself from mingling with the brethren and conversing with them, and next he ceased to meditate on the Holy Scriptures, and he did nothing except pray continually; for he was proud and haughty in his mind, and he thought that he was perfect, and that on account of the purity of his heart, forsooth, he was always seeing God in his mind, for he that tempteth tempted him also, even as he had tempted the blessed man Job. And one night Satan appeared unto him in the form of an angel of light, and said unto him, "I am Christ"; and when Eucarpus saw him, he thought that the appearance was a real person, and he fell down, and worshipped him, and said unto him, "Master, what commandest "thou thy servant [to do]?" And he who had appeared unto him said unto him, "Since thou hast excelled many in thy "works, and hast kept all my commandments, I desire greatly "to make my abode with thee; but since thou art perfect, it "is not necessary for thee to shut thyself up, and it is no "longer right that thou shouldst live in seclusion, but thou "must teach all the brethren not to destroy their souls with "the reading of the Scriptures and the reciting of the Psalms. "And they must not labour in the toil of the body, and they "must not vex their souls with fasting, and hunger, and "thirst, but they must labour with the labour of the soul, for "by these means they shall be able speedily to be lifted up to

Digitized by Google

"the highest grade, and they must always look at me with "their minds, and I will shew them my glory. And as for thee, "since thou hast raised thyself above all the monks by thy "works, behold, I make thee this day a chief and a governor "over all the monks who dwell in Scete. For Macarius is not "of as much use as a governor as thou art." Then Eucarpus was more lifted up in his mind than before, and he was far more proud, and he believed truly the error of the Crafty One, and his understanding was taken away from him, and he was smitten in his mind immediately he had worshipped the Calumniator.

Now on another day there was a congregation in the church, and Satan appeared unto Eucarpus a second time, and said unto him, "Go thou this day, for all the brethren are gathered "together, and teach them everything which I commanded "thee yesterday in the night season." Then Eucarpus opened the door of the house wherein he secluded himself, and departed to go to the church; and it happened that Abbâ John was sitting by the side of the church, and the brethren were round about him, and were asking him about their thoughts. And when Eucarpus came, and saw John with the brethren surrounding him, he was filled with envy of him, and he answered and said unto John with haughtiness and wicked wrath, "Why dost thou adorn thyself and dost sit down, like a whore, "who wisheth to multiply her friends? Or, who commanded "thee to be a corrector of others, seeing that it is I who am "the governor of the monastery?" Now when the brethren heard [these words], they were greatly moved, and said unto him, "And who made thee a governor in Scete?" And Eucarpus said unto them, "Yesterday in the night I was made "governor by Christ, therefore turn ye to me, and I will teach "you the way, whereby ye shall easily ascend to the high grade "of the vision of glory; and moreover, go not ye astray after "the writings of Evagrius, neither hearken ye unto the words "of John, for ye have wandered far enough into error already."

Then he began to revile the fathers, and he called Macarius a "painted idol" whom those who err worship, for he knoweth not how to lead the brethren on the path towards heavenly things; and Evagrius he called "a hewer of words" who hath led the brethren into error by following his writings, and hath made them to cease from spiritual service. And the devils made a mock of Eucarpus until they were able to lift him up and to dash him down upon the earth, but all these things which fell upon him took place because he condemned the brethren, and because through his pride and arrogance he held them in contempt, and because he did not desire to meditate upon the

Digitized by Google

Holy Scriptures, and on the doctrine of the fathers. And finally, when the fathers saw that he was smitten in mind, they threw iron fetters on him and bound him therewith, and he lived with them upon him; and the holy fathers offered up prayer on his behalf for eleven whole months, and then his mind returned to him, and he was so thoroughly cured of his pride that he perceived his weakness, and recognized his disease whereby he had been made a mock of by the devils. And in him was fulfilled that which was said, "Old blains (*or* wounds) are "cured by burnings," and, "Thou who didst exalt thyself to "heaven shalt be brought down even unto Sheol" (Isaiah xiv, 13-15). Now Eucarpus lived after he had been cured of his arrogance one year and one month; and the fathers commanded that he should minister unto the sick, and that he should wash the feet of strangers, and thus he died.

Chapter xxxj. Of a certain famous Deacon who dwelt in a Coenobium in Egypt

A CERTAIN brother asked an old man and said unto him, "If it should happen that a man fell into tempta-"tion, by the permission of God, for the benefit of his "soul, what is it right for those to do who are made to stum-"ble by the same temptation?" The old man answered and said unto him, "If he repent in very truth, and with all his "heart, and make confession unto God in his repentance, [say-"ing,] 'I have been rightly humbled,' and shall say unto God, "'It is good for me that I have been humbled, so that I might "'learn Thy commandments,' God is able to heal the con-"sciences of those who have already offended Him." And the old man spake and narrated the following:

There was a certain deacon in a coenobium in Egypt, and a rich man, who had been driven out and had departed from the presence of a governor who had dominion over him, came with his household to that coenobium; and the deacon stumbled and fell into adultery with the wife of one of those who were with him, and he became a laughing-stock unto every man. And he went to a certain man who was his friend, and revealed unto him the matter, and he said unto him, "Let no man know where I am"; for he hid himself in a secret part of the cell of him that loved him, and he said unto him, "Here bury thou me during my lifetime"; and having gone down into the darkness of that hidden place he repented unto God in very truth. And after a certain time, the river, which was nigh unto the place in the region wherein the deacon had hidden himself, did not rise according to its wont, and the people of the country having prayed

Digitized by Google

and made supplication it was revealed unto one of the saints that, "Unless that deacon who is hidden among us come "forth, the waters will not rise." So they went and brought him out from the place where he was hidden, and when he had come, and had made a prayer, straightway the river rose, and those who had been formerly offended by him were now edified the more, and they profited through him greatly and glorified God.

Chapter xxxij. Of a certain excellent Bishop who fell into Fornication, and the People having walked upon him he was forgiven

THERE was a certain bishop in one of the cities, who through the working of the Calumniator fell into fornication; and one day when the congregation was in the church, although no one knew of the Bishop's sin, he voluntarily confessed it before all the assembly, and said, "I have fallen into "fornication." Then he took off the vestments which were on him, and laid them upon the altar, and said, "I cannot, hence-"forward, be your Bishop." And all the people cried out with tears, saying, "Let this sin be upon us; only remain thou in "thine episcopate." And he answered and said unto them, "If "ye wish me to remain in my episcopate, do ye that which I "shall say unto you"; and he commanded, and all the doors of the church were shut with the exception of one, and he threw himself down upon his face, and said, "The man who "goeth out from the church without walking upon me shall "have no portion with God"; and they did according to his word, and when the last man had gone out, a voice was heard which said, "Because of his great humility I have forgiven "him his sin."

Chapter xxxiij. Of a certain Brother who was a Neighbour of Abba Poemen

WHEN Abbâ Poemen came into the countries of Egypt to dwell there, it happened that he took up his abode by the side of a brother who had a wife, and though the old man knew of this he did not rebuke him. And when the time had come for the woman to bring forth, and this was known to the old man, he cried out to a younger brother, and said unto him, "Arise, take this jar of wine and carry [it] to "our neighbour, for he will have need thereof this day." Now the matter was not known to that brother, but he did as the old man commanded him. And the brother [who had a wife] groaned and repented in his mind, and after a few days he dismissed the woman, and gave her whatsoever he happened to

Digitized by Google

have by him; then he came to Abbâ Poemen, and said unto him, "Behold from this day onwards I repent, O father, but I "entreat thee to pray to God on my behalf so that He may re- "ceive my repentance." And Abbâ Poeman said unto him, "If "thou repentest with all thy heart, I believe that God will bestow "forgiveness upon thee; and do not despair of thy redemption." And the brother went and built for himself a place of retreat, and he made therein an entrance through which he used to come to visit the old man; and he would go to Abbâ Poemen thereby, and the old man would reveal unto him the way of God, and thus he profited spiritually. And the brother laboured in fasting, and in prayer, and he wept and sighed, and grieved sorely for his sin; and [at length] it was revealed unto the old man on behalf of the brother that God had accepted his repentance.

Chapter xxxiv. Of a certain Brother who denied [Christ] because of the Daughter of a Heathen Priest

ONCE a certain brother was engaged in a war against fornication, and he happened to pass through a village in Egypt where he saw the daughter of a heathen priest, and he loved her, and he said to her father, "Give her to me "to wife." And the priest answered and said unto him, "I "cannot give her to thee before learning from the god [his "will in the matter]"; and he went to his devil, and said unto him, "Behold, a certain monk wisheth to take my daughter "to wife; shall I give her to him or not?" And the devil made him answer, saying, "Seek out and enquire if he will deny his "God, and his baptism, and the vows which he made before "entering the monastic life." And having gone to the brother the priest told him that he would accept him [as his daughter's husband] if he would deny both these things (*sic*), and the priest also said unto him, "Wilt thou deny the baptism where- "with thou wast baptized?" And the brother answered and said, "Yea, I will"; and straightway he saw the Spirit of God go forth from his mouth in the form of a dove, and ascend into heaven. Then the priest went to the devil and told him what the brother had said, "Behold, he hath promised to deny all "three things"; and the devil answered and said unto him, "Thou shalt not give [him] thy daughter, for his God hath not "departed from him, for He is still helping him, and will "accept him if he repenteth." And the priest came and said to that brother, "I cannot give her to thee, for thy God is with "thee, and He will not leave thee, but will help thee." Now when the brother heard this he said within himself, "So God keepeth "such great grace as this for thee, and will still help thee!"

Digitized by Google

Then that brother, having come back to his senses, made strong his mind, and fortified his will, and went forth to a certain old man in the desert, and related the matter unto him. And the old man answered and said unto him, "Sit thou down "here with me in [this] cave, and fast for three weeks, only "eating once every two days, and I will make supplication "on thy behalf unto God." And the old man laboured with the brother, and he made entreaty and supplication unto God, saying, "I beseech Thee, O Lord God, to grant me the soul "of this brother, and to accept his repentance." And when the first week was fulfilled, the old man came to the brother, and asked him, saying, "Hast thou seen anything?" and the brother answered and said, "Yes, I have seen a dove fly- "ing about in the heights of heaven, and standing before my "head," and the old man said unto him, "Take heed to thy- self, and pray unto God with groans and sighs"; and the fol- lowing week he came again to the brother, and asked him the same question, saying, "Hast thou seen anything?" And the brother made answer, saying, "I saw a dove which came and "drew near to my head," and the old man admonished him, saying, "Rouse up and pray unto God with abundant suppli- "cation." And when the third week was fulfilled the old man came to the brother and said unto him, "What hast thou "seen?" And he answered and said unto him, "I saw a dove "which came and stood upon my head, and I stretched out my "hand and took hold of it, but it fled away and entered into "my mouth." Then the old man gave thanks unto God, and said unto the brother, "God hath accepted thy repentance; "henceforward watch thyself and take heed to thyself." And the brother answered and said, "Behold, from this day on- "wards I shall live with thee, O father, even to the day of "my death."

Chapter xxxv. Of a certain Old Man in Scete

THERE was a certain old man in Scete who, having become very sick indeed, was ministered to by the brethren, and he thought in his mind that they were tired of him, and he said, "I will go to Egypt, so that the "brethren may not have to labour on my account." And Abbâ Moses said unto him, "Thou shalt not go, for if thou goest, "thou wilt fall into fornication"; and the old man was grieved and said, "My body hath long been dead, and sayest thou "these things unto me?" So he went up to Egypt, and men heard about him, and they brought many offerings unto him, and a certain believing virgin came in faith to minister unto him. And after a time, when the old man had been healed, the

Digitized by Google

young woman lay with him, and she conceived, and folk asked her, saying, "Whence hadst thou that which thou hast "conceived?" And she said unto them, "From the old man," and they believed her not. Now when the old man heard that they would not believe her, he said, "Yea, I have done this "thing; but protect ye for me the child which shall be born." And when the child had been born and was weaned, there was a congregation in Scete, and the old man went down carrying the child on his shoulder, and he went into the church before all the people; and when they saw him they all wept. Then the old man said unto the brethren, "Observe ye, O my brethren, "this is the child of disobedience; take heed, then, unto your-"selves, for I have committed this act in my old age, and pray "ye for me"; and the old man went to his cell, and dismissed the things wherewith he hath lived, and returned to his former deeds, and after a time he arrived [once more] at his old measure of ascetic excellence.

Chapter xxxvj. Of the harlot whom Serapion converted

ABBÂ SERAPION once came and passed through a certain village in Egypt, and he saw a harlot standing in his cell, and the old man said unto her, "Remain "here until the evening, for I wish to come with thee, and to "pass this night with thee"; and the harlot said, "It is well, "O father." Then she made ready, and prepared her bed, and she awaited the old man with that which he required. Now when it was evening, Abbâ Serapion came, but he brought nothing with him, and he went into her cell, and said unto her, "Is thy bed ready?" And she said unto him, "Yea, "father"; and they shut themselves in. Then the old man answered and said unto her, "Wait a little, because I must "perform a certain thing which is a law unto us." And he began to recite the Book of the Psalms of David from the beginning, and with every Psalm he offered up a prayer on her behalf, and he made supplication before God that she might repent and live, and God hearkened unto him. And the harlot stood up in fear by the side of the old man and prayed also, and when Abbâ Serapion had finished all the Psalms she fell down upon the ground, and he began to repeat many verses from the [books of the] Apostles. When he had finished his service, God having opened the heart of that woman, she knew that Abbâ Serapion had not come unto her for the purposes of sin, but that he might redeem her, and she fell on her face before him, and said unto him, "Perform an act of grace "for me, O father, and take me to any place whatsoever wherein

Digitized by Google

"I can please God." And he took her to an abode of nuns and placed her therein and he said to the mistress of the convent, "Take this sister, O mother, and lay not upon her the rules "and the yoke like the [other] sisters, but whatsoever she "requireth that give her; and in proportion as she findeth "rest let her submit to be led." And when the woman had dwelt in the nunnery for a few days, she said, "I am a sinful "woman, and I wish to eat only in the evening"; and after a few days more she said, "Many sins lie to my charge, and I "therefore beg that I may eat once every four days," and she did so; and after a few days more she besought the mistress of the nunnery, saying, "Do an act of grace for me. Since I "have made God exceedingly angry, take me into a cell and "wall it up, and through a small opening therein give me a "little bread and work for my hands [to do]." And the abbess of the nunnery hearkened unto her, and did thus, and in this wise that woman pleased God all the days of her life.

Chapter xxxvij. Of the harlot whom a Subdeacon drove out of the Church

A CERTAIN old man said: There was a harlot who was so beautiful and so rich that all princes flocked unto her. One day she went into the church and desired to pass inside the gates, but a subdeacon who was standing at the door would not allow her to do so, and he said, "Thou art "not allowed to enter into the house of God, because thou art "an unclean woman." Now whilst they were striving together, the Bishop heard the sound of the noise, and he went out to see [what was the matter]. And the harlot said unto him, "He "would not permit me to go into the church," and the Bishop said to her, "Thou art not permitted [to do so] because thou "art unclean." Then having repented within herself, she said, "I will never play the whore again." And the Bishop said unto her, "If thou wilt strip thyself of all thy possessions, I "shall know of a certainty that thou dost repent"; then she brought her possessions, and the Bishop took them, and divided them in the fear of God among the needy. And the woman went into the church, and wept and said, "If it hath "happened to me thus in this world, what would have hap-"pened to me in the next?" And she repented, and became a chosen vessel.

Digitized by Google

Chapter xxxviij. Of Abba Apollo who was in Scete

THEY say concerning Abbâ Apollo, who lived in Scete, that he was originally a rude and brutish herdsman, and that he [once] saw in the fields a woman who was with child, and that, through the operation of the devil, he said, "I wish to know the condition of the child which is in "the womb of this woman," and that he ripped her open and saw the child in her belly; then straightway he repented, and he purged his heart, and having repented he went to Scete, and revealed unto the fathers what he had done. And when he heard them singing the Psalms, and saying, "The days of "our years are threescore years and ten, and with difficulty "[we come] to fourscore years" (Psalm xc, 10), he said to the old men, "I am forty years old this day, and I have never yet "made a prayer; and now, if I live for forty years more, I will "never rest, nor cease, nor refrain from praying to God continu- "ally that He may forgive me my sins." And from that time onwards he did even as he had said, for he never toiled with the work of his hands, but he was always supplicating God, and saying, "I, O my Lord, like a man, have sinned, and do Thou, "like God, forgive me"; and he prayed this prayer both by night and by day instead of reciting Psalms. And a certain brother who used to dwell with him once heard him say in his prayer, now as he spake he wept, and groaned from the bottom of his heart, and sighed in grief of heart, "O my Lord, I have "vexed Thee, have pity upon me, and forgive me so that I may "enjoy a little rest." Then a voice came to him, which said, "Thy sins have been forgiven thee, and also the murder of the "woman; but the murder of the child is not yet forgiven thee." And one of the old men said, "The murder of the child also "was forgiven to him, but God left him to work because this "would prove beneficial to his soul."

Chapter xxxix. Of Cosmas who was in Mount Sinai

A CERTAIN brother asked an old man, and said unto him, "How is it that Satan bringeth temptations "upon holy men?" And the old man said, "I have "heard that there was a holy man whose name was Cosmas, who used to dwell in Mount Sinai. And behold, a certain man went to the tabernacle (*or* tent) of a husbandman, and finding his daughter by herself, he lay with her, and then said to her, When thy father cometh say unto him, "Abbâ Cosmas, the monk, hath lain with me"; and when her father came, she told him [thus]. Then he took his sword, and came against the old man, and when he had knocked at the door, and the old man

Digitized by Google

had gone forth, he lifted up his sword to slay him, but his hand withered straightway; and he went to the church and told the people there what the old man had done. And the fathers sent after him and brought him there, and having upbraided him, and beaten him with many stripes they wished to drive him out of the monastery; but he entreated them, saying, "Allow "me [to stay] here that I may repent, for God's sake," and they separated him [from the brotherhood] for three years, and they laid down the command that no man was to go to him. And he passed three years in coming [to the church] Sunday by Sunday, and in repenting, and he besought [the fathers] always to pray for him, and at length the devil entered into him that had committed the act of which the old man had been accused, and, being urged by him, he said, "I committed "the act." Then all the people were gathered together, and they went to the old man and expressed their penitence, and said unto him, "Forgive us, O father"; and he said unto them, "I have indeed forgiven you, but it is impossible for me to re- "main with you henceforth, because I have not found in any "one of you discretion sufficient to make him to sympathize "with me." And so he departed from them. Behold, how temptations come upon holy men!

Chapter xi. Of Abba Macarius who was accused of committing Fornication

ABBA MACARIUS used to tell a story about himself, and to say that when he was a boy he dwelt in a certain cell in Egypt, and that the people came and made him the priest in the village, and that as he did not wish to receive [the office of priest] he fled to another place, and took up his abode in a cell which was not very far from the habitations of man. And a certain young man who feared God used to come and take away the work of the hands of the blessed man, and to minister unto him. And it came to pass that, as a result of temptation, a certain virgin in the village fell into iniquity (?), and conceived a child, and the folk said unto her, "By whom art thou with child?" And she said, "By that monk who liveth in the desert"; and they went out, and brought him into their village, and smote him sorely, and they hung round his neck black pots, and the ears (handles) of empty pans, and they made him to go round about through the markets of their village, and they mocked at him and buffeted him, and said, "This is the monk who hath seduced our "daughter! Let him be hanged! Let him be hanged!" And they beat him [nearly] to death.

Then came one of the old men of the village and said unto

Digitized by Google

them], "How long will ye go on beating this monk who is a "stranger?" and the man who ministered unto him came after him, and he was ashamed and pained because of his disgrace; and the people fastened their gaze upon him, and said, "Behold the monk concerning whom thou didst bear witness "and say that he was a 'holy man.'" "Consider what he hath "done," said the parents of the young woman, "and unless "he giveth us a surety who will provide for her food we will "not release him." Then he said unto the man who ministered unto him, "Give a pledge on my behalf, saying, 'I will pro-"'vide for that'"; and he gave a pledge for him, and then the monk went to his cell and gave him all the palm-leaf mats thereof, and said to him, "Sell these and give [the money] to "my wife that she may eat." For Macarius said in his mind, "Behold, thou hast found for thyself a wife, and it is necessary "for thee to work little or much that thou mayest feed her"; so he worked by night and by day, and sent [the proceeds of his toil] to her.

And it came to pass that, when the time for the woman to bring forth her child arrived, she suffered very severely for many days, and [although] she was in great tribulation she did not give birth to the child; and when her parents saw this they said unto her, "What is this which hath happened unto "thee?" Then the woman, by reason of her pains and sufferings, said, "This has happened because I told a lie and falsely "accused a monk who never touched me"; now it was such and such a youth who had done this thing to her. And when the man who ministered unto Macarius learned this, he came to him with gladness, and he rejoiced and said unto him, "The virgin was not able to bring forth until she confessed "and said, 'The monk never touched me, and what I have said "'about him is a falsehood,' and behold, all the village is "preparing to come to thee with repentance so that thou "mayest forgive them." And Macarius, in order that he might not be troubled by them, rose up straightway, and fled, and departed to the place wherein he had his abode at that time, and this is the reason why he came to Scete; and he said, "I hate the love of praise of young men who toil, and who "have no reward, because they expect the adulation of the "children of men." Then another well-known old man said unto him, "And it is not greatly acceptable unto me, but it is "better that they should work for praise rather than they "should despise [it], for it always constraineth those who "love praise to lead lives of abstinence, and to keep vigil, and "to live in nakedness for the sake of vainglory, and to bear "afflictions for the sake of praise." Then after these things the

Digitized by Google

Grace of God came to them and spake, saying, "Wherefore "do ye not toil for My sake? And why do ye toil for the sake "of children of men?" And they were convinced that they must not expect the praise of men but that of God, and when the brethren heard [this] they said, "Verily the matter is "indeed thus."

Chapter xlj. Of a certain Old Man who in his simplicity said that Melchisedek was the Son of God

AND Abbâ Daniel told a story of another old man who used to live in the lower countries of Egypt, and who said in his simplicity that Melchisedek was the Son of God. Now, when this became known unto the blessed man Theophilus, the Archbishop of Alexandria, he sent a message that [the monks] should bring the old man to him, and when he saw him, he perceived that he was a seer of visions, and that everything which he had asked God for He gave him, and that he spake these words in his simplicity. And the Archbishop dealt with him wisely in the following manner, saying, "Father, en- "treat thou God [for me], because my thoughts tell me that "Melchisedek was the Son of God." And he said to him likewise, "It cannot be thus, for the high priest of God was a "man. And now, because I had doubts in my mind concerning "this, I sent for thee that thou mightest make supplication "unto God that He may reveal to thee the matter." Then, because the old man had confidence in his labours, he spake unto him boldly, saying, "Wait three days, and I will enquire of "God, and then I shall be able to inform thee who Melchise- "dek was." So the old man departed, and came [again] after three days, and said unto the blessed Archbishop Theophilus, "Melchisedek was a man"; and the Archbishop said unto him, "How knowest thou, father?" And the old man said, "God "showed me all the Patriarchs, one by one, and they passed "before me one after the other, from Adam to Melchisedek, "and an angel said to me, 'This is Melchisedek'; know then "that of a truth the matter is as it hath appeared unto me." And the old man departed, and he himself proclaimed that Melchisedek was a man, and the blessed Theophilus rejoiced greatly.

Chapter xlij. Of Abba Macarius the Egyptian, the Disciple of Mar Anthony

ABBÂ Macarius used to dwell by himself in the desert, and there was below him another desert wherein many dwelt; and the old man was himself watching the road one day, and saw Satan travelling on it in the form of a man,

Digitized by Google

and he came along with the intention of passing him; and he was arrayed in a garment, which was full of holes, and various fruits were hanging about him. And the old man Macarius said unto him, "Whither goest thou?" And he said, "I am going to "visit the brethren, and to make them mindful [of their work]." And the old man said to him, "For what purpose are the vari- "ous fruits which are on thee required?" And Satan answered and said, "I am carrying them to the brethren for food." And the old man said, "All these?" And Satan said, "Yea. For if "one pleaseth not a brother, I hand him over another; and if "that pleaseth him not, I give him another, and one or other "of these must certainly please him." And having said these things Satan went on his way.

Then the old man continued to watch the road until Satan came along to return, and when he saw him, he said unto him, "Hast thou been successful?" And Satan said, "Whence am I to obtain help?" And the old man said, "For what purpose?" Then Satan said, "They have all forsaken me, and have re- "belled against me, and not one of them will allow himself to "be overpersuaded by me." And the old man said, "Hast thou "not then one friend left there?" And Satan said to him, "Yea, "I have one brother, but one only who will be persuaded by me, "although whensoever he seeth me he turneth away his face "as from that of an adversary." The old man saith to him, "What is the name of this brother?" And Satan saith, "Theo- "pemptus"; and having said these things he departed and went on his way.

Then Abbâ Macarius rose up and went down to the lower desert, and the brethren heard [of his coming], and they brought palm leaves, and went out to meet him, and every monk prepared and made ready his abode, thinking that he would come and dwell there; but the old man [only] asked for the brother whose name was Theopemptus, and he received him joyfully. Now when the brethren began to speak among themselves, the old man said unto him, "What hast thou to say, O my brother, "and how are thine own affairs?" And Theopemptus said to him, "At the present moment matters are well with me," for he was ashamed to speak. The old man said unto him, "Be- "hold, I have now lived a life of stern asceticism for many "years, and I am held in honour by every man, nevertheless, "even though I am an old man, the spirit of fornication dis- "turbeth me." And Theopemptus answered and said, "Believe "me, father, [it disturbeth] me also"; and the old man, like one who was vexed by many thoughts, made a reason for talking, and at length he led the brother to confess the matter. And afterwards he said unto him, "How long dost thou fast?" And

Digitized by Google

the brother said unto Macarius, "Until the ninth hour." And the old man saith, "Fast until the evening, and continue to do "so, and thou shalt repeat passages from the Book of the "Gospels, and from the other Scriptures. If a thought riseth "in thy mind let not thy mind look downwards, but always "upwards, and the Lord shall help thee." Thus having made the brother reveal his thoughts, and having given him encouragement, he departed to go to his own desert, and he travelled along the road and watched according to his custom.

And he saw the devil again, and said unto him, "Whither "goest thou?" And he answered and said unto him, "I go to "remind the brethren [of their work]." And having departed and come back again, the holy man said unto him, "How are "the brethren?" and the devil said, "They are in evil case." And the old man said, "Why?" and the devil said, "Because "they are all [like] savage animals, and they are rebellious. "But the worst thing of all is that even the one brother who "used to be obedient to me hath turned, through what cause "I know not, and he will not be in any way persuaded by me, "and he is the most savage of them all against me; I have on "this account taken an oath that I will never again go to that "place, at least, only after a very long time."

Now this Abbâ Macarius was marvellous in his life and deeds. Once as he was travelling along in the inner desert, he looked, and, behold, there was an old man coming towards him, and he was arrayed in apparel which was very old, and over his whole body there were hung very many things which were like unto pots, each one being provided with rings, and he was covering them over as it were with a covering. And he drove his staff into the ground, and though he was as timid and as terrified as a fugitive slave, he pretended to be bold, and stood up like a brave man, and spake to the blessed Macarius, face to face, saying, "What dost thou in this wilder-"ness, and why art thou wandering hither and thither herein?" And the blessed Macarius answered and said unto him, "I wish "to find God, for I am fleeing from error. But who art thou, "O old man? Tell me, for I observe that thy raiment is very "different from that of the children of men. Tell me, now, "what are these things which thou hast upon thee?" Then the old man, though unwilling, confessed and said, "I am he "whom thou callest by the name of 'Calumniator,' and these "things which thou seest upon me are those wherewith I draw "towards myself the children of men, and with each one of these, "according as it befitteth and is suitable for a man, I take care "to fulfil the work of error; and by means of their lusts, as with "wings, I make to turn backwards those who are obedient unto

Digitized by Google

"me, and I have great happiness in those who, through my "crafts and wiles, stumble and fall."

And when the blessed Macarius had heard these things, he plucked up courage, and said unto Satan, "By Christ, Who "caused thee to make a mockery of the holy angels, explain "to me, one by one, each and all of the things which thou "carriest, for by this thou shalt be revealed, so that a man "may see the insidiousness of thy arts and wiles, and may "learn thy hidden snares, and may recognize the multitude "of the burning arrows of thine error, and may flee from the "performance of thy will." Then the Calumniator answered and said, "I must reveal unto thee my craftiness, even though "I be unwilling so to do, for it is impossible for me to hide "from thee any of the things which thou seest; learn thou the "use (*or* reason) of each pot. If I find a man who meditateth "continually on the Law of God, I pour out upon him from "the pot which is on my head dizziness and headache, and "I restrain him [from this work] thereby. On the man who "hath chosen to watch by means of [the recital of] prayers "and psalms I pour out from the pot which is on my eyelids "a disposition to sleep, and I lead and drive him along by "main force into slumber. These which thou seest that I have "on my ears are prepared for disobedience and the transgres- "sion of the Commandments, and by their means I trap those "who wish to lead a good life to disobey the word of truth. "From those which hang from my nose I sprinkle on the "young the sweet smell of happiness, and lead them into for- "nication. From those which are on my mouth I throw out "flowers (?), and I incite the ascetic by means of blandish- "ments, and I make to sin those who live a life of abstinence "and self-denial by means of such dainty meats and foods ac- "cording to my desire; and by means of those which are on "my mouth I also draw many into the utterance of calumnies, "and into filthy talk, and to speak briefly, in each one of these "pots is the seed which is most useful for increasing the fruits "which are worthy of me, and which may be gathered from "the labours of the husbandmen who labour in my vineyard. "And from the pots which are hung about my neck I pour out "pride, and I enclose with my nets those who are haughty in "their minds; and so by means of all these I possess in the "world multitudes of subjects who love the things which are "mine, that is to say, worldly praise and wealth, which are "the things that, by those who are remote from God, are be- "lieved to be good things in the world.

"And the pots which thou seest hanging from my breasts "are full of my imaginings, and with some of these I water

Digitized by Google

"the hearts of the children of men, and by means of the drunk-
"enness of the passions I dissipate and destroy the mind which
"feareth God; and through my error I confound the memory
"of those men who wish to meditate upon and to think about
"the things which concern the world to come. And those which
"hang upon my body are full of want of feeling and percep-
"tion, and by their means I prepare those who are without
"understanding to live in a savage and animal manner a life
"which is characterized by various kinds of brutish habits.
"And in the pots which I carry below my body will be found
"all things which are useful and suitable for union with women
"in fornication, and for filthy wantonness. Those which are on
"my hands are useful in the committal of murders, and by their
"means, as by hands, is carried out and performed the work
"of those who are subject unto me voluntarily. And the pots
"which thou seest hanging from my neck and back have in
"them the thick darkness of my temptations, wherewith I am
"able to vanquish those who are so bold as to contend against
"me; and I lay ambushes behind me, and I rush out to over-
"throw those who depend upon and who boast in their own
"strength. And the pots which thou seest hanging on my
"loins and thighs, and which are arranged downwards to my
"feet, are full of the snares and nets which I pour out, and
"with which I make crooked and confound the ways of those
"who wish to journey in the narrow path of the fear of God;
"and I impede thereby the goings of those who cultivate asce-
"tic excellence, and I make them to journey on my way which
"is easy to travel. For I take my seat between the two ways
"of life and death, and whilst I confound and lead astray
"those who wish to journey in the way of life, I lead and
"help on their way those who are travelling on the road of
"death, and I strengthen them also, and I make them valiant
"so that they may go forward easily in my paths. And when
"they are bowed down and labour under my yoke I sow evil
"and abominable vices among them like thorns and brambles,
"and having gathered in from seed of this kind the fruit of
"such crops which they believe to be pleasant, they deny the
"way of truth, because evil men are taken in the snares of the
"filthiness of abominable things. But thou, O Macarius, hast
"never once inclined thyself to obey me, so that by thine obedi-
"ence I might be able to find even a little consolation; but thou
"burnest me up wholly by means of the mighty armour of
"the humility which thou bearest, and for this reason I haste
"to depart to mine own subjects. For thou possessest a good
"Lord, and thou hast mighty companions, who tranquilly and
"happily serve God, and who protect thee as a beloved son."

Digitized by Google

And when the chosen athlete had heard these things, he made the sign of the Cross over himself, and said, "Blessed "be God, Who hath made those who have put their hopes in "Him to make thee a mockery and a laughing-stock, and Who "hath preserved me wholly and completely from thy error, so "that whilst turning aside from the same I was able to advance "in the good fight; and having fought and conquered I shall "receive a crown from the good Lord Whom I possess. Flee "then, and get thee afar off, O thou who art envious of the "things which are good, for Christ will make an end of thee, "so that thou mayest not dare to attack any of those who "worship Him. For sufficient for thee are those whom thou "hast drawn unto thyself by flattery, through thy evil wiles "and their own sluggish will, and made to travel on the flat, "wide road of destruction. Thou shalt not then dare to draw "nigh unto those who of their own will have elected to travel "in the narrow, and straight, and troubled, and vexatious way "of life, but have fear, and depart from those who dwell in "waste places and in deserts." Now when the blessed man had said these things, straightway the Calumniator disappeared, and the holy man Macarius bowed the knee, and prayed, saying, "Glory be unto Thee, O Christ, Thou Who "art the Refuge of those who are overtaken by storms, Thou "Who art the straight way of those who err, Thou who art "the Redeemer of those who flee unto Thee for refuge, now, "always, and for ever and ever! Amen."

Chapter xliij. Of Abba Mark the Less, the Disciple of Abba Sylvanus

THEY used to say concerning Abbâ Sylvanus that he wished to depart to Syria, and his disciple Mark said unto him, "Not only do I not wish thee to depart from "this place, O father, but I will not permit thee to go [now]; "wait then here for three days more"; and on the third day Mark died in peace.

Chapter xliv. Of Abba Paule the Simple, the Disciple of Mar Anthony

THE blessed man, Paule the Simple, the disciple of the holy man Anthony, used to relate to the fathers the following matter:—I once went to a certain monastery that I might visit the brethren for profit spiritually, and after some conversation on the matter, and the customary talk, they went into the holy church that they might form a congregation as usual, and perform the service of the Holy Mysteries. And the blessed Paule looked at and scrutinized carefully each one

Digitized by Google

of them, so that he might see in what frame of mind he was going, for he had the gift, which had been given unto him by God, of looking into the soul of every man, and of knowing what his soul was like, even as we have the power of looking upon the faces of each other. And he saw that every man was going in with a glorious aspect of soul, and with face full of light, and that the angel of each man was rejoicing in him, with the exception of one whose face was sick and afflicted, and whose whole body was in darkness, and devils had hold upon each of his hands, and they were lifting him up and dragging him towards them, and they had put a ring in his nose; and he saw also that the holy angel of this man was a long way from him, and that he followed after him sadly and sorrowfully.

And when the blessed Paule saw these things he wept, and smote himself upon the breast many times, and he sat down before the church, and he cried unceasingly for the man who had appeared unto him in this state. Now those who saw the old man became greatly astonished suddenly, and especially at his swift change [from happiness] to weeping and tears, and they asked him, and entreated him, and begged him to tell them what he had seen, for they thought that, though blaming them, he would do so, and they besought him also, with one voice, to go into the congregation with them. But Paule drove them away from him, and he would not let himself be persuaded to do this, so he sat down outside the church and held his peace, and he cried aloud and groaned loudly concerning that which had appeared to him.

And after a short time, when the service was ended, and all the fathers were coming out, Paule scrutinized carefully each one of them, so that he might see in what manner would come out those whom he had seen go in, and whether it would be with the same countenance as that wherewith they had gone in, or otherwise. And he saw again that man whom he had seen go in, and whose body before he had entered into the church was in darkness, and behold, he came forth from the church with his face full of light, and his body was white, and the devils followed him at a great distance, and his guardian angel was quite close to him, and walked with him; and he was glad and rejoiced greatly over that man. Then the holy man Paule leaped up, and stood there glad and rejoicing, and he cried out and blessed God, saying, "Hail to the overflowing "mercy of God! Hail to the immeasurable goodness! Hail to "His rich treasuries! Hail to His pleasure, which is beyond "measure!" And he ran up and stood upon a lofty platform, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Come ye, and see

Digitized by Google

"how awful are the works of God, and how greatly they are "worthy of admiration! Come ye, and see Him Who wisheth "that all the children of men should live, and should turn to "the knowledge of the truth! Come, let us kneel and worship "Him, and say, 'Thou art He Who alone is able to forgive "'sins.'" Therefore all the fathers ran diligently so that they might hear what he was saying. And when they had all gathered together, the holy man Paule related unto them the things which he had seen both when they went into the church, and when each one of them came out; and they entreated that brother [to tell them] what was the reason of that complete change, and of the gladness which God bestowed upon him [so] quickly.

And the man, being afraid lest he might be rebuked by the blessed Paule, related the following things concerning himself before them all, and without any concealment whatsoever, and said, "I am a sinful man, and for a long time past, even unto "the present day, I lived in fornication. When I went into "the church, I heard the [Book of] the Prophet Isaiah read, "that is to say, I heard God speaking through him, and say-"ing, Wash, and be clean, and remove your evil deeds from "before Mine eyes. Hate the things which are evil, and learn "to do good, seek out judgement, and pass [righteous] sen-"tences upon those who are afflicted. And if your sins be red "like crimson, they shall become white as snow. And if ye are "willing to hearken unto Me, ye shall eat of the good things "of the earth."

"Now when I had heard read [these] words from the "Prophet, that is to say, had heard God Who was speaking "by him, I forthwith repented in my soul sincerely, and sighing "in my heart I said unto God, Thou art the God Who didst "come into the world to make sinners to live, do Thou then "make manifest in me the things which Thou hast promised "in Thy Prophet, and fulfil them in me, even though I be "unworthy of the same, for I am a sinner. For behold, I "promise, and I enter into a covenant with Thee, and I "will thrust this promise down into my soul, and will acknow-"ledge [it], that from now and henceforth I will never commit "such wickedness as this, but I will keep myself remote from "all iniquity, and I will serve Thee from this day onwards with "a clean conscience. Therefore, O Master, from this day, "and from this hour, accept me, for I am penitent; and I will "make supplication unto Thee, and will remove myself forth-"with from all sin. Therefore with such promises and cove-"nants as these I came forth from the church, and I determined "in my soul that I would never again do anything which

Digitized by Google

"would injure [my] fear of Him"; and when all the fathers heard [this], they all cried out with a loud voice, and said unto God, "O Lord, how great are Thy works! Thou hast "created all of them in wisdom."

Now therefore, O Christians, since we know from the Holy Scriptures and from divine revelations how great is the grace which God dispenseth to those who truly run to Him for refuge, and who blot out their former sins by means of repentance, and also how, according to His promise, He rewardeth with good things, and doth neither take vengeance according to what is just, nor bring upon men a punishment for their former sins, let us not be in despair of our lives. For, even as He promised by the hand of Isaiah the Prophet, He will make clean those who have toiled in sin, and will make them bright and white like clean wool and snow, and will make them to be happy with the blessings of heaven. And moreover, God asserteth with oaths by the hand of the Prophet Ezekiel that He doth not desire their destruction, for He saith, "As I live, saith the "Lord, I do not desire the death of a sinner, but that he "should turn from his evil way and live" (Ezekiel xxxiii, 11).

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Rule of Pachomius at Tabenna

Chapter j. By the might of our Lord Jesus Christ we begin to write the "Asketikon," that is to say, the history of the Monks of Tabenna, who were followers of Abba Pachomius

IN my opinion, the things which I am now about to write are able to assist [us] greatly if we indeed follow after them, and they will, moreover, make the hearer more vigilant in respect of the contemplation of the things which have been said. And if we were to excuse ourselves through negligence from writing them down this act would bring danger upon him that made such an excuse, and therefore, although we can only advance from the beginning but a very little way with the living word, we will declare a few of the earlier things.

It was a custom with the God-loving brother, the holy man Abbâ Pachomius, to gather together the brethren every evening in a duly appointed place in the monastery that they might hear his doctrine, and once when they were all assembled according to their wont in order to hear Rabbâ, he commanded Theodore, a man who had lived in the monastery for twenty years, to speak to the brethren, and straightway he spake unto them concerning the things which were to be employed as helpers, but made no mention of not stumbling. And some of the aged sages who saw what had taken place did not wish to listen to him, and they said within themselves, "What he is "teaching us is for novices, and we [need not] listen unto "him," and they left the congregation of the brethren and departing from that place went to their cells.

And when the brethren had been dismissed from the hearing [of the sermon] Rabbâ sent and called those who had departed and who did not wish to hear Theodore, and when they had come into the presence of the holy man he asked them, "Why "did ye leave us and depart to your cells?" And they said, "Because thou hast made a young man our teacher, and al- "though all the old men were standing [there], and other "brethren who were much older [than he], thou didst com- "mand a young man to speak unto us." Now when Rabbâ had heard these things he groaned, and said, "Do ye know "by what means wickedness first began to take hold in the "world?" And they said unto him, "What were they?" And he answered and said unto them, "By pride, and it began "when that bright star which used to shine (*or* rise) in the "morning fell [from heaven] (Isaiah xiv, 12), and was dashed "in pieces on the earth. Or, have ye never heard that which

Digitized by Google

"is written, 'The man who is haughty in heart is an abomin-
"'able thing before the Lord?' (Proverbs xvi, 5.) For whoso-
"ever exalteth himself shall be abased, but he that abaseth
"himself shall be exalted (St. Matthew, xxiii, 12). Therefore de-
"liver ye yourselves from your false superiority, for do ye not
"know that the mother of the beginning of wickednesses is
"pride? Ye did not only leave Theodore and depart from him,
"but ye fled and departed from the Word of God, [and] ye fell
"away from the Holy Spirit. O ye truly wretched men, who
"deserve sorrow of every kind, how is it that ye cannot under-
"stand that it was Satan who was working in you, and that,
"because of this, ye made yourselves to be remote from God?
"Oh, what a great and wonderful thing it is that God humbled
"Himself, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, and
"put on his body and dwelt in him, and became obedient even
"unto death for our sakes! And yet we who are by nature low
"puff ourselves up with pride! He Who is high above all
"things, and exceeding great, turned from the ordinary course
"[of His greatness] and in humility fashioned the world, al-
"though He was able to destroy everything which existeth by
"a glance! And yet we who are nothing make ourselves proud,
"being ignorant that in thus doing we are sinking ourselves
"into the depths of the earth! Do ye not observe that I stand
"and incline my ear to the teaching [of Theodore]? Verily I
"say unto you, that I have been greatly helped by him. For I
"did not ask him to address you because I thought lightly of
"him, but because I expected to be helped myself by his words;
"how very much more, then, is it right that ye should hearken
"unto his words with a ready mind and absolute humility?
"Verily I, who am your father in the Lord, am as one who
"knoweth not his right hand from his left, and therefore I
"listen unto him with all my soul. Therefore before God I say
"unto you that, if ye shew great repentance for this folly which
"ye have committed, and if ye weep and mourn for yourselves
"because thereof in such wise that ye be edified thereby, that
"which hath happened shall be forgiven you, and if not, then
"ye will go to perdition."

Chapter ij. Of Sylvanus the Actor

ONCE there was a man among the brethren whose name was Sylvanus, who for a period of twenty years had worn the garb of a monk; now he was originally an actor, and at the beginning of his life as a monk he was exceedingly anxious about his soul, but after a short time had elapsed he began to be so negligent about his redemption, that he wanted to make merry and to enjoy himself, and besides

Digitized by Google

this he used to sing fearlessly among the brethren snatches of the lewd and ribald songs which he used to hear in the theatre. Then Abbâ Pachomius, the holy man, called this brother before the brethren, and commanded him to strip off the garb of a monk, and having received such apparel as was worn in the world, to go forth from among the brethren and from the monastery. And that brother fell down at the feet of Pachomius and entreated him, saying, "O father, if thou wilt for-"give me this once, and wilt not cast me forth, thou hast it "from me that from this time forward I will repent of those "things wherein I have hitherto shown negligence, in such a "manner that thou shalt be able to see the change which "hath taken place in my soul."

And the holy man answered and said unto him, "Dost thou "know how much I have borne from thee, and how many "times I have admonished thee, and how many times I have "beaten thee? I am a man who hath no wish to stretch out "my hands in a matter of this kind, because when, of neces-"sity, I was obliged to act thus in respect of thee, [my] soul "suffered far more by the mention of association with passion "than thou didst, although the stripes were laid upon thee. I "beat thee for the sake of thy salvation in God, so that by that "means I might be able to correct thee of thy folly; but since, "even though I admonished thee, thou didst not change [thy "course of life], and didst not follow after spiritual excellence, "even though I entreated thee so to do, and since even when "beaten thou wast not afraid, how is it possible for me to for-"give thee any more?"

But when Sylvanus multiplied his entreaties, and begged for his forgiveness long and earnestly, and promised that he would amend his life henceforward, Rabbâ demanded a surety from him that after he was forgiven he would no more continue his evil behaviour; and when the venerable man Petronius had made himself a surety for him concerning the things which Sylvanus had promised the blessed man forgave him. Then Sylvanus, having been held worthy of forgiveness, contended with all his soul, and to such good purpose, that he became the pattern of all excellence of the fear of God, both among all the younger and all the elder brethren. Now the virtue which surpassed all the other virtues which he possessed was that of absolute humility, and tears flowed from his eyes so unceasingly that even when he was eating with the brethren he was not able to restrain his weeping, and his tears were mingled with his food. And when the brethren told him that he should not behave thus before the face of strangers (i.e., visitors), or before any people, he took an oath, saying, "I have sought

Digitized by Google

"many times to restrain [my] tears for this reason, but I have "never been able [to do so]." Then the brethren said, "Is it not "possible for him that repenteth to seek to be alone? And "would it not be better for him to act thus when he was pray- "ing with the brethren than when he was eating at the table "with them? And is it not possible for the soul to weep con- "tinually with tears other than those which are visible?" [Then turning to him, they said,] "We wish to know what thou hast "to say on the matter. For thou art so overwhelmed with [thy] "tears that many of us who see thee in this state are ashamed "to eat and take our fill."

Then Sylvanus said unto those who had asked him [those questions], "Do ye not wish me to weep when I see holy men "waiting upon me, men, the dust of whose feet I am unworthy "[to sweep away]? Is it not proper that I should weep over "myself? I weep then, O my brethren, because a man from the "theatre is ministered unto by such holy men as these, and I "am afraid lest I be smitten even as were Dathan and Abiram. "And I weep especially because, being in ignorance, I cared "so little at the beginning about the redemption (*or* salvation) "of my soul, that I came in danger of being expelled by the "brethren from the monastery, and I was obliged to give "surety [for my better behaviour], and to take awful oaths that "I would never again treat my life with contempt. For this "reason I am not ashamed [to weep], and I have turned away "from such things; for I know my sins and that if I was ob- "liged to deliver up my soul I should find no happiness [in "heaven]."

And as this man strove nobly in this manner Rabbâ himself bore testimony before all the brethren, and spake thus: "Be- "hold, I bear testimony before God that, from the time when "this monastery came into existence, among all the brethren "who have lived with me therein, there hath been none who "hath resembled completely the example [which I have con- "ceived in my mind] with the exception of one." Now when the brethren heard these things some of them thought that the one man of whom he spake was Theodore, and others thought he was Petronius, and others thought he was Arsenius, and at length Theodore asked the holy man of which monk he had spoken when he said this thing; but Rabbâ did not wish to say. But because Theodore and the other great fathers continued to entreat him [to tell them], for they wished to learn who he was, Rabbâ answered and said, "If I knew that vainglory "would come to him of whom I am about to speak, and that "he would be greatly praised, I would not shew [you] who he "is; but, because I know that the more he is praised, the

Digitized by Google

"more humble he will become, and the more he will think "scorn of himself, and because [I wish] you to emulate his "example, I will, before you all, fearlessly ascribe blessing to "him. Thou, O Theodore, and all those, who like thee, strive "in the fight, have bound the Calumniator with fetters like a "kid of the goats, and have placed him under your feet, and "daily ye trample upon him as ye trample upon dust; but if "ye are the least unmindful of yourselves, the Calumniator, "who hath been cast under your feet, will rise up again, and "will set himself against you like an armed man. But this "young man Sylvanus, who but a short time since was about "to be expelled from the monastery, hath, by his strenuous-"ness, so completely subjugated the Calumniator, and slain "him, that he will never again be able to approach him, for he "hath vanquished him utterly by his exceedingly great humility. "Ye have humbled yourselves as if ye possessed works of "righteousness, and the addition which ye would make to "your spiritual excellence is reduced, for ye rely upon the "things which have already been performed by you; but this "young man, however much he striveth, never sheweth him-"self to the gaze [of his fellows], and he thinketh with all his "mind and soul that he is a useless and contemptible being. "And tears are always nigh unto him because he is always be-"littling himself, and because he saith that he is unworthy of "the things which are visible. Ye, in your knowledge, and in "your patient endurance, and in your strivings against the "Calumniator, which cannot be measured, are better than he "is, but he hath surpassed you in humility, because he, in this "manner, cutteth off for the Calumniator nothing but humi-"lity, and the power of action which ariseth from the whole "soul." Now therefore when Sylvanus had striven in this manner for eight years, he completed his fight, and laid down his life in such wise that his servant, a mighty man of God, testified concerning his departure, and said that an endless throng of holy angels, with great rejoicing and singing, received his soul as a choice sacrifice, and that they offered it up unto God like the marvellous incense which is found among the children of men.

Chapter liij. Of a certain Sinner who died

AND it came to pass once that Abbâ Pachomius went to another monastery to visit the brethren who were there, and as he was on his journey he met the funeral of a certain brother of the monastery who was dead, and [the monks] were going to the funeral and were singing as they went; and there were also among them the parents of the man

Digitized by Google

who had died. Now the brethren saw from a distance the holy man coming towards them, and they set down the bier upon the ground so that he might come and pray over him. And when the blessed man had come, and had said a prayer, he commanded the brethren not to sing any more psalms and hymns over him; and he also commanded them to bring the garments of him that had died, and they brought them, and in the presence of them all he ordered the men to burn them; then, when they had been burned he commanded that the dead body should be taken and buried without any further singing. Then the brethren, and the parents, and kinsfolk of him that was dead threw themselves down at his feet and entreated him to permit them to sing over him, but he remained unmoved; and the parents of the dead man said unto Abbâ Pachomius, "What hast thou done, O father? This is a new thing, and "thou art sending away our son in an unlawful fashion. It be- "fitteth not thy holiness to display such a want of compassion "unto this dead man, and moreover, this savage cruelty is "like to bring about sorrow. Even an enemy who seeth the "dead body of his adversary knoweth how to shew pity many "times over, although his disposition be unutterable and im- "movable. We have seen a new sight with you, O Christians, "the like of which hath never been seen, even among the bar- "barians. Through this want of compassion [on thy part] "thou hast made to cling to the family [of the dead man] "a disgrace which shall never be blotted out. Would that we "had never seen thee this day! For then our house, which "hath ever possessed an untarnished name, would not have "inherited disgrace. Would that our poor son had never come "into thy savage hands! For then he would not have bequeath- "ed unto us this everlasting sorrow. We beseech thee now, "since thou hast caused even his clothes to be burned, to allow "a Psalm to be said over him."

Then Abbâ Pachomius answered and said unto them, "O "my brethren, in very truth I have more compassion upon him "that lieth here than ye have, and because, like a father, I am "shewing exceedingly great care on his behalf, I have com- "manded these things to be done. Ye would take care of the "body which is visible, but I strive for his soul [which is in- "visible]; for if ye sing Psalms over him he will receive the "greater torments, and a reckoning will be demanded from "him because of the Psalms which have been sung, for he "departeth not with the power of the Psalms upon him. If "then ye wish to make an addition to his everlasting suffer- "ings, sing Psalms; but I tell you, of a truth, that if ye do "indeed sing Psalms over him, he will certainly suffer more

Digitized by Google

"pain because of them, and he will curse you. And because I "know what will benefit his soul I take no care for his dead "body whatsoever; for if I permit ye to sing Psalms, I shall "be found to be in the sight of God as one who [striveth to] "please the children of men, because for the sake of gratify- "ing men I have treated with contempt that which will benefit "the soul which is about to be punished in judgement. For be- "cause God is a fountain of grace He seeketh excuses upon "which He can lay hold in order to pour out upon us the "abundant streams of His grace; if then, we, who have been "held to be worthy by God to become acquainted with the art "of divine healing, do not apply the binding up which is suit- "able to the wound, we shall, like those who despise [God], "hear that which is written, 'Those who despised [God] saw, "'and marvelled at the wonderful thing, and were destroyed.' "For this reason then, that is to say, that we may lighten his "punishment, I entreat you to bury the dead man without any "singing of Psalms; for the good God knoweth that in return "for this slight which hath come upon him, we are giving him "rest and are calling him to life. Had he listened unto me on "the several occasions on which I admonished him, he would "never have come to this pass."

And when the blessed man had said these things they carried him to the mountain without the singing of Psalms, and he was buried. And the holy man passed several days in that monastery in admonishing and teaching each one of the brethren the fear of God, and the way to strive rightly against the Calumniator, and against his arts, and wiles, and guile, and how in a short time, by the might of the Lord, we shall be able to bring to naught beforehand the things which are cared for by him.

Chapter iv. Of the Funeral of a certain Holy Man who died

NOW whilst Abbâ Pachomius was still there he heard that a certain brother from the monastery of Bêth Râyâ was sick, [and it was said to him], "He wisheth to "see thee and to be blessed by thee before he dieth." And when the man of God heard these things he rose up, and departed on the journey, but when he was about two miles from the monastery, the holy man heard a holy voice in the air, and he lifted up his eyes and saw the soul of the sick brother with the holy angels, singing hymns, and being borne aloft to a blessed and divine life; now the brethren who were accompanying him neither heard nor saw anything. And when the holy man had stood there and gazed for a long time towards

Digitized by Google

the East, they said unto him, "Why standest thou [here], O "father? Let us hurry on so that we may reach him whilst he "is still alive." And he said unto them, "We shall not reach "him there, for I have just seen him ascending to everlasting "life; depart ye then, O my children, to your monastery." And when those brethren entreated him [to tell them] in what [form] he had seen the soul of the brother who had died, he said unto them, "In a certain form"; and when they had heard this they departed to their monastery. And they [enquired], and ascertained exactly from the brethren who were in the monastery, concerning the hour whereof Rabbâ had spoken to them, and then they recognized that the things which had been said unto them about the brother who had died were true.

Chapter v. Of the things which Abba Pachomius heard said in the Air by the Devils as he was journeying in the Desert to his Monastery

NOW when the holy old man was journeying to his monastery, and was by the side of the desert which is called "Ammon," certain legions of devils rose up against him, and thronged him, both on his right hand and on his left, and others ran in front of him, saying, "Behold the blessed man of God"; and they acted in this wise because they were plotting to sow the seeds of vainglory in him. Now he knew the evil character of their cunning, and as they cried out these things he cried out to God, and made confession of his sins; then, having brought to naught the evil cunning of these wicked devils, he answered and said unto them, "Ye "are not able to persuade me to [indulge in] vainglory. O ye "wicked ones, well do I know mine iniquities, and well do I "know that it is right for me to weep concerning them con-"tinually, and concerning the punishment which is for ever. I "have no need of fluent words and cunning error from you, "for your work is the destruction of souls. I am not to be "carried away therefore by your praisings, for I know well "your cunning minds, O evil ones." And though the holy man Pachomius spake these words unto them, their audacious acts did not cease, for they clung round and about the blessed man until he drew nigh unto his monastery.

Chapter vj. Of the things which Abba Pachomius did when he arrived at his Monastery

AND when the brethren went forth to meet the holy man and to salute him, a certain young man also went out with them to salute Abbâ Pachomius, and he began to make a complaint to him, saying, "Verily, O father, from the "time when thou didst depart to visit the brethren until this

Digitized by Google

"present they have not cooked either vegetables or crushed "peas"; and the old man answered and said unto him readily and pleasantly, "My son, grieve not, for from this time forward "I will make them to cook these things for thee." And having gone round about through the monastery Abbâ Pachomius went to the place where the food was [kept], and he found him that did the cooking plaiting a mat of palm leaves, and he said unto him, "How long is it since thou hast cooked vegetables "for the brethren?" and he answered, "Two months." And Rabbâ said unto him, "Hast thou acted thus in spite of the "command and ordinances of the holy fathers which enjoin "that vegetables shall be cooked for the brethren every "Saturday and every Sunday?" And the cook answered and said unto him, "Truly, O father, I wanted to cook some "vegetables on each of these days, but because I saw that "when they were cooked they were not eaten (for all the "brethren, so to speak, were restraining themselves, and "were not eating cooked food), except by the young men who "usually ate them, and when I saw that when they were "not eaten they were thrown away, [I cooked] no more so "that all the expense and all the trouble might be avoided. "Now we pour into the cooked food of the brethren forty boxes "of oil daily. And when I saw that the food was not eaten I "did not cook it, for I did not consider it to be right that we "should throw away and waste such costly things. And more-"over, because I could not sit idle I began to plait a mat "with the brethren, for I thought that one man would be suffi-"cient in the kitchen to prepare the less important meals for "brethren, that is to say, chopped garlic, and mountain herbs "[mixed with] vinegar and olive oil, and herbs from the garden."

And when the holy man had heard these things he said unto the cook, "How many mats have ye made? Ye who "belong to the kitchen must have been continually at this "work"; and the cook said, "Five hundred." And Abbâ Pachomius said unto him, "Bring them here, for I wish to count "them"; and having brought the mats he ordered them to be thrown into the fire. Then, when they had all been consumed, Abbâ Pachomius said unto them, "Why have ye forsaken the "ordinance which hath been given unto you for the govern-"ment of the brethren through [your] Satanic minds? I have "destroyed pitilessly the labour of your hands, and have "burned it in the fire, so that ye may learn what it is for a man "to treat lightly the laws of the fathers, which have been "given for the benefit of souls. How great is the help which "ye have removed from the brethren through your not having "cooked food for them! Have ye forgotten that a man hath

Digitized by Google

"power over a desire for food, and that he who restraineth "himself from such and such a food, for God's sake, shall "obtain from God wages which are not small? while he who "hath not received authority, and who denieth himself by "force or necessity will seek for wages in return for this in "vain? And do ye not know that, if cooked meat be placed "upon the table, and the brethren eat it not because they re- "strain themselves therefrom for God's sake, they shall receive "abundant wages? But if cooked meats be not given unto "them, because they have not seen them abstinence and self- "denial can never be reckoned unto them. For the sake of "eighty boxes of oil, for such is the excuse [which ye have "made], ye have cut off all the preparation of all the brethren; "I would rather that all the world should be wasted than that "one small spiritual virtue should be cut off from [their] soul[s]. "I therefore truly wish to have food in abundance cooked "daily and set before the brethren, so that in practising ab- "stinence every day, and in restraining themselves from "partaking of what hath been given to them, they may make "an addition daily to their spiritual excellence. For if a man "should happen to fall sick, and did not desire to go to the "hospital, if he should come to the common table in order to "partake of the vegetables which are usually given to the "brethren, and should not find any there, what would happen "to me? Would not a brother be offended in not finding at "the common table that of which he was in need? And do ye "not know that young men especially [cannot] continue in "spiritual excellence unless they enjoy some small gratifica- "tion or a little consolation from their food?"

Chapter vij. Of the Revelation which Abba Pachomius received from God concerning certain Heretics who happened to visit him

AND it came to pass that when the old man had said these things to the brethren, the doorkeeper came to him, and said, "Certain travellers, who are men of "importance, have come hither, and they wish to meet thee"; and he said, "Call them hither," and when they had entered into the monastery he saluted them with the brethren. And after they had seen all the brotherhood, and had gone round about among all the cells of the brethren they wanted to hold converse with him by themselves. Now when they had taken their seats in a secluded chamber, there came unto the old man a strong smell of uncleanness, but he knew not whence came such uncleanness, though he thought that it must arise from them because he was speaking with them face to face;

Digitized by Google

and he was not able to learn the cause of the same by the supplication which [he made] to God, for he perceived that their speech was fruitful [of thought], and that their minds were familiar with the Scriptures, but he was not acquainted with their intellectual uncleanness. Then, after he had spoken unto them many things out of the Divine Books, and the season of the ninth hour had drawn nigh meanwhile, they rose up that they might come to their own place, and Rabbâ entreated them to partake of some food there, but they did not accept [his petition, saying,] that they were in duty bound to arrive home before sunset; so they prayed, and they saluted us, and then they departed

And Rabbâ, in order to learn the cause of the uncleanness of those men, went into his cell, and prayed to God, and he knew straightway that it was the doctrine of wickedness which arose from their souls that sent forth such an unclean smell. Thereupon he went forth from his cell immediately and pursued those men, and having overtaken them, he said unto them, "I beg of you to allow me to ask you one question"; and they said unto him, "Speak." And he said unto them, "Do ye call "that which is written in the works of Origen heresy?" And when they had heard this question they denied and said that they did not. Then the holy man said unto them, "Behold, I "take you to witness before God, that every man who readeth "and accepteth the work of Origen, shall certainly arrive in "the fire of Sheol, and his inheritance shall be everlasting "darkness. That which I know from God I have made you to "be witnesses of, and I am therefore not to be condemned by "God on this account, and ye yourselves know about it. "Behold, I have made you to hear the truth. And if ye believe "me, and if ye wish truly to gratify God, take all the "writings of Origen and cast them into the fire; and never "seek to read them again." And when Abbâ Pachomius had said these things he left them.

Chapter viij. Of the Revelation which he received about the Settlement of the Brethren

AND when Abbâ Pachomius had gone into the monastery, he found the brethren gathered together for prayer, and he drew nigh unto them, and said all the prayers; but when the brethren went forth to eat he remained in that chamber by himself, in order that he might recite to the end therein the prayers of the congregation according to custom. And he shut the door and prayed unto God that he might have information about the settlements which were to come subsequently to the brethren. Then having prolonged

Digitized by Google

[his] prayer from the tenth hour until the time when the brethren beat [the boards to summon the brethren] to the service of the night, for he was praying until midnight, there suddenly appeared unto him a vision which made known to him concerning the settlements of the brethren subsequently, and shewed him that they would live rightly in Christ, and the increase which was about to take place in the religious houses. And he saw a congregation of brethren which was endless, and the men were making their way along a deep and gloomy valley, and many of them came with the intention of going up out of that valley, but were unable to do so, and many of them met each other face to face, but because of the great density of the darkness, they did not recognize each other; and many fell down through exhaustion, and others were crying out with the doleful voice of lamentation. Now a very few of them, with the greatest difficulty, and with much toil, were able to go up out of that valley, and immediately they had done so the light met them; and when they had come to the light, they gave thanks unto God mightily. Then did the blessed man know the things which were going to happen to the brethren in later times, and the absolute supineness which was to exist in those times, and the blindness of error, and the removal of the shepherds which was about to happen to them, and he knew that the wicked were to have dominion over the good, whom they were to vanquish through their great numbers, and that those who were to come afterwards would be mere imitations of monks. Now we set down in writing the memorial of these things lest the wicked shall be governors over the brethren, and those who are without knowledge shall have authority over the monasteries, and shall strive for the mastery, and the good shall be persecuted by the wicked, and they shall not have freedom of speech in the monasteries, and the divine things which have been said shall be turned to the things of men.

Now therefore, when the blessed man knew these things, he cried out to God with tears, and said, "O Lord God, Who "dost maintain the universe, if it is indeed to be thus why "didst Thou permit these monasteries to come into being? "And if in those times those who are to be governors over the "brethren be wicked men, what is to become of those who are "to be governed by them? For when the blind leadeth the "blind both fall into the ditch. I have toiled absolutely in vain! "Remember, O Lord, my works, and those of these brethren, "who submit to be governed with all their souls. Remember that "Thou didst promise me, saying, 'Until the end of the world I "'will allow this spiritual seed to exist.' Thou knowest, O my "Lord, that from the time when I put on the garb of the

Digitized by Google

"monks, I have never satisfied myself with whatsoever "groweth upon the earth, not even with water."

Chapter ix. Another Revelation on this matter which [brought] Consolation

AND it came to pass that when he had said these things, Abbâ Pachomius heard a voice saying, "Thou "boastest thyself, O Pachomius. Thou art a man. "Ask mercy for thyself, because everything standeth by com- "passion." Now when the blessed man heard these things, he straightway threw himself on his face upon the ground, and he asked God for mercy, saying, "O Lord, Who dost sustain "the universe, send Thy mercies to me, and take Thou them "never away from me, for I know that without Thy mercy "nothing can possibly exist." And having said these words straightway there stood by his side two angels of God, and there was with them a Young Man, Who had a face which is unspeakable, and an appearance which cannot be described, and on His head was a crown of thorns. Then the angels made Pachomius to stand up, and they said unto him, "Because thou hast asked God to send thee His mercy, be- "hold, this is His mercy, the Lord of glory, Jesus Christ, the "Only One, His Son, Whom He sent into the world, and "Whom ye crucified; and ye set a crown of thorns upon His "head." And Pachomius said unto the Young Man, "I entreat "Thee, O my Lord, and Thy holy nature, [to remember] that "I did not crucify Thee." Then the Young Man relaxed His face a little in a smile, and said unto him, "I know that thou "didst not crucify Me, but thy fathers did; be of good "courage, however, for the root of thy seed shall never come "to an end, and thy seed shall be preserved upon the earth "even unto the end of the world. And the seeds which shall "burst into life in those times, through the abundance of "darkness shall be found to be more excellent than those of "this present time, and they shall be more completely subject "to rule; for at this present, because thou art unto them as a "light which is before the eyes, they lead lives of great excel- "lence and according to rule, and they lean upon thy light. "But those who shall come after them, and who shall live in "a region of darkness, if with a good intent and from the "mind voluntarily they run towards the truth, even though no "man directeth them, they shall from out of the darkness draw "nigh unto the truth; verily, I say unto thee, that they shall "be free and shall be with those who now lead a blameless "life of the highest character, and they shall be held to be "worthy of forgiveness."

Digitized by Google

Then having said these things straightway the Young Man went [up into] the heavens, and the heavens were opened, and the air shone so brightly that it is impossible for us to describe with human words the splendour of that light. And when Rabbâ had marvelled at the things which he had heard, straightway they beat [the board to summon] the brethren to the service of the night.

Chapter x. Of the Words of Doctrine which Abba Pachomius spake to the Brethren when they were gathered together

NOW when the brethren had come to the congregation of the night, and the service for the night also was ended, they sat down to hearken unto his words; and he opened his mouth, and said unto them, "O my brethren, so "long as ye have breath in your bodies strive for your redemp- "tion; and before there cometh the hour wherein we shall have "to weep for our souls let us cultivate spiritual excellence with "a ready mind. And I say unto you that, if ye knew what good "things were in heaven, and the glory which is laid up for the "saints, and how those who have fallen are punished by God, "and the tortures which are laid up for those who have been "neglectful, and especially for those who having known the "truth have not, as was right, guided themselves thereby, in- "stead of inheriting the blessedness which is reserved for the "saints, [ye would do so]. Flee ye then from the punishments "which are in [these] tortures! And consider the graves, and "consider the resurrection of the children of men, who are "nothing! Why then doth man, who is dust, vaunt himself "with vainglory? Why then doth he, who is altogether "stinkingness, exalt himself? Let us weep for ourselves whilst "we still have the time, so that when our departure cometh "nigh we may not be found asking God for more time wherein "to repent. A wretched thing is that soul, and greatly to be "blamed, which hath left the world, but which had not dedi- "cated itself to God, and which had not lived worthily of its "promise. Let us not then, O my brethren, allow this world, "which is a small and a contemptible thing, and which resem- "bleth a fleeting shadow, to steal away from us blessed and "immortal life.

"Verily I fear lest your fathers in the flesh, who lived in the "world, and who were carried away by the anxious cares and "afflictions of the world, and who imagined about you that ye "were nigh unto the Lord, whereby ye received a pledge that "ye would enter into a life of blessedness, will be more worthy "than ye are of assistance in the world which is to come. And

Digitized by Google

"at that time they will be found condemning you, and saying "that which is written, 'How hath he disgraced you, and put "'you greatly to shame: the fire hath blazed out upon you, and "'your branches have been destroyed, and therefore have ye "'become a thing of spoil (*or* prey), over which the lions roar "'and send out their voices.' Therefore, O my beloved, be ye "like unto those who are good, and let the crown of your head "be exalted. The cities which are towards the south, how are "they to be taken? There is none who will open unto you. "For the sinner shall be carried off because he seeth not the "glory of the Lord. Behold, ye have heard. Therefore, O my "brethren, let us strive with all our souls, and let us set death "before our eyes, and fasten our gaze upon the terrible tor-"tures [of Sheol], so that by means of them the mind may ar-"rive at the understanding, which beareth away the soul from "care; and when it weepeth [the mind] maketh it to be a spec-"tator, and with earthly things it enricheth it without wan-"dering to God. And not this only, for when it doeth these "things in humility, it persuadeth it to action which is free "from every kind of worldly mind, and to contempt instead of "vainglory.

"Let the soul then, O my brethren, practise philosophy each "day in respect of this solid body [of ours], and when we come "to our beds in the evening let it say unto each one of the "members of the body, 'O legs, how much power have ye to "'stand up, and to move yourselves before ye die and become "'things without motion? Will ye not stand up with good will "'for your Lord?' And let it say unto the other members, 'O "'hands, there cometh an hour when ye shall be dissolved and "'motionless, and when ye shall never be clasped in each other "'again, and when ye shall not have any movement whatso-"'ever; why then before ye fall into that hour and are cut off "'do ye not stretch yourselves out to the Lord?' And unto the "whole body shall the soul speak thus: 'O body, before we are "'separated and are removed far away from each other, and "'before I descend into Sheol, and receive everlasting fetters "'under darkness, and before thou art changed into the primal "'matter of which thou art made, and art cast out upon the "'earth to become filthiness and corruption, and to decay, "'rise up boldly to worship the Lord without dislike, and take "'my intelligence, by means of tears, and make known to thy "'lordship thy free will servitude; and bear me on that with a "'good will I may give thanks unto God before thou art "'crushed under the weight of other things, and dost seek to "'lie down, and to take thy rest, and dost condemn me to "'everlasting torment. For there are times when that heavy

Digitized by Google

"'sleep is about to confuse thee. And if thou wilt hearken "'unto me, we shall enjoy happiness together in the inheri- "'tance of blessing, but if thou wilt not hearken unto me, "'then woe is me that I have ever been fettered by thee, for "'on thy account I, the wretched thing, shall be condemned.'

"Now, if ye act thus daily, and if ye consecrate yourselves, "verily ye shall become real temples of God, and since God "dwelleth in you the cunning and wiles of Satan shall not be "able to do you injury; for instead of having a myriad of "teachers, the word of God shall dwell in you, and it shall "teach you more [than they], and it shall make you exceed- "ingly wise by its own knowledge; and it is unable to speak "all the things which belong to human speech, but these the "Spirit, holy, and divine, and pure, and spotless shall teach "you, even as the Apostle saith (Romans viii, 26), 'For we "'know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the "'Spirit itself prayeth for us with groanings which cannot be "'uttered,' etc. And there are many other helpful things which "it would be possible for us to say unto you by God's grace, "yet because our mind doth not urge us to these same things "we must direct our discourse to other matters."

Chapter xj. Of how, not even in the time of Famine, was Abba Pachomius induced to take Wheat for nothing for the use of his Monastery

WHEN a famine took place in the days of Pachomius, and the brethren had no wheat, that is to say, when, so to speak, no wheat could be found in all Egypt, the holy old man sent to call one of the brethren that he might go round about in the cities and villages and seek for wheat to buy; and he gave him a sum of money for the purchase of the wheat, that is to say, one hundred *dînârs*. And having gone round about in very many places, the man who had been entrusted with this work came to a city which is called Armûtîn, and by the Providence of God he found there a certain governor of the state, who was an exceedingly reverent man and a fearer of God, and who had heard of the rule of the holy man Pachomius and of the brethren; now this governor was in charge of the wheat which belonged to the community, and the brother approached him, and entreated him to sell him wheat to the value of one hundred *dînârs*. Then the governor said unto him, "Of a truth, O my brother, if I had wheat of "my own, or even some [belonging to] my own children, I "would take it and give it to you, for I have heard concern- "ing your godly and spiritual rule of life; but hearken unto "what I am going to say unto thee. The wheat which hath

Digitized by Google

"been placed under my charge belongeth to the community, "and as it will not be required this year by the prefect, if thou "wishest to take it I have the power over the wheat of the "community, and I will keep it back until the time cometh for "it to be laid up in the granary; and if thou knowest that thou "wilt be able to return it by that time, take as much of it as "thou wishest."

Then the brother said unto him, "I do not wish thee to act "thus for me, for I am unable to return so large a quantity as "that which I wish to take; but if thou wilt sell me wheat to "the value of one hundred *dînârs*, at the price which thou "wishest [good and well], but if thou art not in any way able "to keep back the wheat which belongeth to the community "until the time [for storing it] in the granary, thou actest "rightly [in refusing me]." And the governor said unto him, "Yea, I have power to keep back the wheat, and not only "wheat to the value of one hundred *dînârs* but, if thou wishest, "another like quantity. If thou wilt take the wheat thou wilt "do me an act of grace, only pray for me." And when the brother said, "We have only this amount of money," the governor hearkened, and said, "Have no care about this matter, "for whensoever ye are able to bring me the price of the "wheat do so, at the rate of [thirteen] *ardebs* a *dînâr*, and in "no other place in Egypt wilt thou obtain more than five *ardebs* "a *dînâr*." And the brother journeyed by water to the monastery with great joy [bringing the wheat with him].

And when Rabbâ heard that a boat full of wheat was about to arrive, and the manner in which it had been bought, he sent immediately to the boat and said, "Ye shall not bring one grain "of the wheat into the monastery, neither shall he who hath "bought the wheat come into my presence until he hath re-"turned it to its place; he who hath acted thus hath committed "great wickedness. And not only this hath he done, but he "hath also taken wheat to the value of one hundred *darics* "more than [the hundred *dînârs* which I gave him], and I "never ordered him to do this; but in carrying out his own "desires he wished to have a superabundance, and having be-"come inflamed by love of gain he hath brought us into sub-"jection and laid us under condemnation. And moreover, he "did not approach the generosity of the seller of the wheat "satisfactorily, for he acted in a greedy manner, and he hath "brought more wheat than he needed, and on his own respon-"sibility he undertook to pay back that which we could never "return. And not this only, for supposing that from some human "cause an accident had happened, and the boat had sunk in "the river, what could we have done [to make good the loss]?

Digitized by Google

"Should we not all have become slaves? Therefore let him sell "all the wheat which he hath brought to the laity who are in "this district at the rate at which he hath taken it from him "that entrusted it to him, that is to say, at thirteen *ardebs* a "*dînâr*, and after he hath sold them, let him take the gold and "carry it to him that gave him credit. And with the one hun-"dred *dînârs* which are mine, let him buy wheat at the rate at "which it is sold everywhere and bring it [to me]." And the brother did even as Rabbâ said unto him, and he brought the wheat which he bought at a rate of five and a half *ardebs* a *dînâr*. And from that time Rabbâ did not allow that brother to go outside the monastery on business for the brethren, and having made him to remain inside he appointed other brethren to render service of the kind.

Chapter xij. Of how when the Work of the Brethren was sold Rabba was unwilling even that they should accept the full Price of the same

AND that same brother [who hath been mentioned above] took away from the shoemaker to sell a large number of shoes (*or* sandals) and other kinds of objects, and having received as their price a larger sum of money than the shoemaker had mentioned brought to him the *oboli;* and when the shoemaker had received the *oboli*, he reckoned up the price of the leather and of the labour of his hands, and the value of the work of the days wherein he had made the various kinds of [leather] objects, and found that it amounted to fifty *oboli,* whilst the money [which he had received] was three times that amount. Then straightway the shoemaker went to Rabbâ, and said unto him, "Verily, O father, this "brother will never prosper by such acts as these, for he still "hath in him a worldly mind." And when Rabbâ said, "What "is this matter in which he hath behaved so badly?" the shoemaker answered and said, "I gave him sandals and other "kinds of [leather] things to sell, and I said unto him, 'Their "'prices are so much,' but he hath sold them for a great deal "more, and he hath brought unto me a price which is three "times as large as that which I mentioned to him." When Rabbâ had heard these things, he called the brother and said unto him, "Why hast thou done thus?" And the brother said unto him, "Father, I told to the people who bought the san-"dals and the other things the price which this shoemaker "told me to take, but they said to me, 'Brother, if these things "'had been stolen they would be worth a far higher price than "'what thou askest'; and I, feeling ashamed, said to them, "'They have not been stolen, and I have been commanded to

Digitized by Google

"'sell them at the price which I have named; but whatsoever "'ye wish to give [me] for them, that give'; and they gave me "what it pleased them to give me, and I never counted the "*oboli* which were given unto me by them." When Rabbâ had heard [these things] he said, "Thou hast sinned greatly in "loving excess, but run quickly, and give back the excess in "price to those who gave it to thee, and come and repent be-"cause of this offence, and sit in the monastery and perform "the work of thy hands, for it is not good that thou, O my "son, shouldst do again work of this kind"; and the brother did even as the old man had said unto him. Then Rabbâ appointed the holy man Zakkai, a good man, who overcame all the praises of the children of men by the manifestation of good deeds, and he administered all the affairs of the monastery.

Chapter xiij. Of a certain ascetic Brother who was in the Monastery, and who desired a crown of Martyrdom unseasonably

AND there was also [there] among those who were very famous a certain brother who cultivated the ascetic life by himself, and when he heard of the divine rule of our holy Father Pachomius he entreated him to receive him in the monastery; and when Rabbâ had received him, and he had passed a little [time] with the brethren, he desired greatly to bear witness (i.e., to become a martyr), although the world was in a state of peace, and the Church was flourishing and was, by the grace of God, at peace, and the blessed Constantine, who had put on Christ, was at that time reigning. And this brother was continually entreating the blessed man Pachomius, and saying, "Pray for me, O father, "that I may become a martyr"; but Rabbâ admonished him that he should not permit this thought to enter his mind again, and said unto him, "Brother, endure the strife of the monks "mightily and blamelessly, and make straight thy life in the "way which will please Christ, and thou shalt have com-"panionship with the martyrs in heaven."

As, however, the brother made his desire for this thing stronger each day, and he was wearying the holy man therewith, Rabbâ, wishing to drive away this kind of desire from him, said unto him, "I will pray [for thee], but if thou seekest "for this thing thou wilt be vanquished. And put armour on "thy soul, lest, when the hour cometh wherein thou hast to "bear witness, thou shalt deny Christ. Verily thou wilt cer-"tainly commit sin, because of thine own will thou drawest "nigh unto temptation, although our Lord Jesus commanded "us, saying, 'Pray that ye fall not into temptation'" (St. Mat-

Digitized by Google

thew xxvi, 41; St. Mark xiv, 38; St. Luke xxii, 40, 46). And having said these things unto him, he admonished him to take good heed unto himself, and not to meditate upon martyrdom.

And it came to pass that two years later certain of the brethren were sent by Rabbâ to a village which was further to the south to collect wreaths [to make] mats for the monastery; now this village was nigh unto the barbarians who are called "Blemmyes." And whilst the brethren were there, and were on an island where there were large numbers of reeds, the blessed man Pachomius sent the brother who was wishing to suffer martyrdom to carry a little money to them for their expenses, and he commanded him to take good heed to himself. And he said unto him, "The words which are written, "'Behold, now is the acceptable time (2 Corinthians vi, 2) "'behold, now is the day of redemption,' have a mystical sig- "nification [for thee], and ye shall not commit an offence "against any man, so that there may be no blemish in our "ministration"; so the brother took an ass to carry the money and departed to the brethren.

Now when he had arrived at the place which is opposite the desert, the barbarians came down [to the river] to draw water, and they came upon the brother, and made him to come down from off the ass, and they bound his hands, and took the ass and that which was thereon, and they led him up to a neighbouring mountain where there were other barbarians. Now when the barbarians saw that they came with an ass, they began to make a mock of him, and to say, "O monk, "come and worship our gods," and they slew some beasts, and poured out libations to their gods, and they brought the monk and urged the monk to pour out libations with them. And when he did not want to do this they rose up in wrath and came towards him with their drawn swords in their hands in a threatening manner, and said, "If he be unwilling to sacrifice "to our gods and to pour out libations to them, we will kill "him." Then seeing the drawn swords and the savage disposition of the people, straightway the brother took wine and poured out a libation to their gods, and because he was afraid of dying the death of the body he slew his immortal soul by denying God, the Lord of all; now when he had done these things the Blemmyes sent him away.

Then having descended from the mountain, when he had come to himself he knew his iniquity, that is to say, the wickedness which he had committed, and he rent his garments, and having beaten himself upon his face severely he came to the monastery; and the blessed man knew what had happened to him, and he went forth to meet him in sore affliction.

Digitized by Google

And when the brother saw that he was coming to him, he threw himself on his face upon the ground, and shedding tears cried out and said, "I have sinned against God and against "thee, O father, and I would neither listen to thy promise nor "to thine admonition, and had I but hearkened unto thee, "I should not have had to bear what I have suffered." And having said these words, Rabbâ said unto him, "Rise up, O "wretched man, thou hast snatched thyself away from the "good things which were awaiting thee, for in very truth "there was laid up for thee a crown which thou hast cast "away from thee; thou wast ready to be reckoned with the "holy martyrs, but thou hast cut thyself off from their blessed "companionship. Our Lord Jesus Christ was near with His "holy angels, and He wished to lay the crown upon thy head. "Through thy momentary turning back thou hast refused (*or* "denied) this, and in being afraid of that death which thou "wast about to endure, a death which thou didst not seek, "thou hast fallen away from God and destroyed thine ever-"lasting life. Where are the words which [thou didst speak] "before this [happened]? Where is thy desire for martyrdom?" And the brother said, "I have sinned in all these [respects], "O father, and I am no longer able to lift up my face to hea-"ven. I am lost, O father, I have no position wherefrom I may "contemplate what I shall do, O father, I never expected that "the matter would happen thus."

Then having said these words with tears, Rabbâ spake unto him, saying, "Thou, O wretched man, hast made thyself al-"together an alien to the Lord, but the Lord is good, and He "never keepeth His anger for a testimony, for He is a lover "of mercy, and He is able to sink our sins in the depths of "the sea. As far as are the heavens from the earth so far hath "He put away our iniquity and sins. For He desireth not the "death of the sinner, but his repentance, and He wisheth not "that a man who hath fallen should remain in his fallen con-"dition, but that he should rise up; and He desireth not that he "who hath turned back should keep afar off from Him, but that "he should return quickly to Him. Therefore despair not, for "there is still a hope of [thy] redemption. For it is said, 'If "'thou cuttest down a tree it shall renew itself' (Job xiv, 7). If "then thou wishest to obey me in everything which I shall say "unto thee, thou shalt obtain forgiveness from God." And with tears the brother said, "From this time forward I will obey "thee in everything, O father." Then Rabbâ commanded him to seclude himself in a cell alone, and never to hold con-verse with any man until death, and to eat one meal daily, of bread and salt only, and to drink water only for the whole

Digitized by Google

period of his life, and to plait two palm-leaf mats daily, and to keep vigil as long as possible, and never to cease from crying. So that his brother departed, even as the blessed man had commanded him, and he carried out everything which he had told him to do. And he held converse with no man except Rabbâ and Theodore, and with a few of the other great sages; and he passed ten years in striving in this manner, and died in the grace of the Lord, and Rabbâ bore witness nobly concerning his tranquil state.

Chapter xiv. Of the Phantom which they saw by Night when they were going through the Monastery

AND it came to pass once when Rabbâ, and Theodore whom he loved, were walking through the monastery by night, that they saw suddenly a great phantom, which was full of the deepest deceit; now that which appeared was in the form of a woman, and its beauty was of so indescribable a character that no man was able to tell the beauty, or the form, or the appearance, which belonged to that phantom, and even Theodore, who looked at that phantom, was exceedingly perturbed, and his face changed colour. And when the blessed man saw that he was afraid, he said unto him, "Be of good cheer in the Lord, O Theodore, and fear not," and the holy man, having said these things unto him, commanded him to pray with him, that the phantom which was striking wonder into them might be driven away. And as they were praying the phantom came nearer and nearer and took a solid form, and when it, and the company of devils which ran before it, drew nigh, for their prayer did not drive it back, it came forward and said unto them, "Why do ye labour in "vain? Ye are unable at this present to do anything whatso-"ever against me, for I have received power from God, Who "sustaineth the universe, to tempt whomsoever I please; and "I have abundance of time in which to do this, for this I have "asked from God."

Then Pachomius asked her, saying, "Whence comest thou? "And whom dost thou wish to tempt?" And the phantom answered and said, "I am the daughter of the Calumniator, "whose great power cannot be described, and unto me the "whole company of the devils is subject. It was I who brought "down the holy stars to the earth, and it was I who snatched "Judas from the Apostolic power. I have received authority "[*or* power] to make war against thee, O Pachomius, for I am "not able to endure the reproach of the devils, and no man "hath made me as weak as thou. Thou hast made me to be "trampled under foot by youths, and by old men, and by

Digitized by Google

"young men, and thou hast gathered together against me a "congregation such as thou hast, and hast set for them [as] a "wall which shall never fall the fear of God, so that my mini- "sters are not able to approach with boldness and freedom "unto anyone of you. Now all these things have happened "unto me because of the Word of God Who was made man, "for it is He Who hath given you power to trample upon all "our might, and to hold us in derision."

And when the holy man Pachomius asked her, "Hast thou "come to tempt me alone according to what thou sayest?" she said unto him, "I have come to tempt thee, and all those "who are like thee." Pachomius said unto her, "So then thou "wilt tempt Theodore also?" And she said, "I have received "power over thee, and over Theodore, but I am never able "to come nigh unto thee." And when Pachomius had said unto her, "Why?" she said unto them, "If I were to make "war with you [two], you would have an occasion for help "and not for injury, and especially would it be so in thy case, "O Pachomius, who with the eyes of thy body art worthy to "be a spectator of the glory of God; but ye will not live for "ever for those for whom at present ye make yourselves a wall "through your prayers, and whom ye help; and the time will "come after your death when I shall have dominion over "those whom thou now protectest against me, for ye have "made me to be trodden under foot by this multitude of "monks."

Then Rabbâ said unto her, "How knowest thou that those "who shall come after us will not serve the Lord more truly "than do we, and that they will not be able to confirm and "strengthen those who come after us in the fear of God more "than do we?" And the phantom said unto him, "I do know "this." And Rabbâ said unto her, "Thou liest by thy wicked "head, because thou hast no knowledge whatsoever before- "hand of the things which are going to take place, for unto "God alone belongeth fore-knowledge; thou art then the chief "of falsehood." And the phantom answered and said unto him, "True, I have no knowledge whatsoever of anything by [the "faculty] of fore-knowledge, even as thou sayest, for it be- "longeth to God alone to know what is going to happen before- "hand, but I told thee that I had knowledge because [I judged] "by analogy." And the blessed man said unto her, "How canst "thou judge by analogy?" And she said unto him, "By the "things which have already taken place I am able to judge of "what will take place in the future." Then Rabbâ said unto her, "How?" And she said unto him, "I know that the beginning "of every matter is in love and knowledge, and it receiveth

Digitized by Google

"confirmation from the things which are provided, and espe-
"cially through the divine care and the calling of heaven, and
"by the Will of God it becometh confirmed by wonderful
"things and signs, and it is confirmed also by various powers
"which are exercised therein; but when that beginning waxeth
"old and becometh grey, it falleth away from growth, and
"when growth hath fallen away [i.e., ceased], it perisheth
"of old age, or languisheth through sickness, or decayeth
"through neglect."

And afterwards Rabbâ asked her, saying, "Why hast thou
"come, according as thou sayest, to tempt these great [saints]
"and not all the brethren? If it be as thou sayest, the des-
"truction of souls resteth with thee to work, and thou sur-
"passest in power all the devils, and thou must have all this
"power so that thou mightest be able to strive against men
"like these." And the phantom answered and said unto him,
"I have already told thee that when the strength of the Sus-
"tainer of creation, the Redeemer Christ, appeared upon the
"earth, we were brought so low that, like a sparrow, we were
"mocked and laughed at by men such as these who are clothed
"with the Spirit, and who seek to learn the Lord; but al-
"though we have become feeble through Him, we do not
"cease to work as much as we possibly can [against you], and
"we never cease from opposing you by every means in our
"power. And we sow the seed of our wickedness near the soul
"of him that striveth with us, and this we do especially when
"we see that he receiveth [it], and if we see that he really
"permitteth us to embrace him, then do we inflame him with
"fierce lusts, and we encompass him like mighty ones and
"cruel devils, whom it is exceedingly difficult to defeat. But
"if he is not willing to receive our seed, and will not, through
"his faith in God, and the watchfulness of his mind, accept
"with pleasure the things which are offered unto him by us,
"we dissolve away even as smoke is dissipated in the air.
"This is the reason why I am not permitted to wage war
"with all the monks, and I do not do so because all possess
"not perfection. For if it were permitted to me to wage war
"against them all, I should be enabled to lead astray many
"of those who lean upon thee."

And the blessed man said unto her, "Fie upon your wicked-
"ness which never sleepeth! Ye will never cease to stir your-
"selves up against the race of the children of men until the
"divine and unpolluted grace of God descendeth from heaven
"and destroyeth you." Then, having said these things, Rabbâ
commanded the phantom to depart unto the place whither it
had been commanded to go, and never again to approach with

Digitized by Google

her feet his monastery. And when the morning was come, he cried out unto all the great brethren, and related unto them all the things which he had seen and heard from the destroying devils, and unto the other brethren who were living in the other great monasteries he sent letters, and informed them, in the fear of God, by means of these concerning the vision [which he had seen].

Chapter xv. Of the Gift of Tongues which Pachomius received

AND it came to pass that, when the blessed Pachomius was visiting the brethren in their cells, and was correcting the thoughts of each of them, he was obliged to visit a certain Roman, who was a nobleman of high rank, and who knew the Greek language very well. Now therefore, having come to this great man, so that he might exhort him with words which would be beneficial to him, and might learn the motions of his heart, the blessed man spake unto him in the Egyptian tongue, but the brother did not know what the blessed man said. And because the blessed man did not know how to speak Greek, Rabbâ was obliged to call some brother who would be able to interpret to each of them the things which were said by the other. Now when the brother came to interpret, the Greek did not wish to declare to Rabbâ through others the defects of his heart, and he spoke unto him thus, "After "God, I wish thee, and thee alone, to know the wickednesses "of my heart, and I do not desire to declare them unto thee "through others, for I do not wish that any man except thee "should hear them." And when Rabbâ heard these words he commanded the brother who had come to interpret to depart, and because Rabbâ was unable to speak to the Greek brother the words which he wished to say to him about help and redemption, for he knew nothing whatsoever of the Greek language, he made a sign to him with his hand to remain until he came [back] to him. Then Rabbâ left him, and went to pray by himself, and he stretched out his hands towards heaven, and prayed to God, saying, "O Lord, Thou Mighty One, Who "sustainest the universe, if I am not able to benefit the child-"ren of men whom Thou dost send unto me from the ends "of the earth, because I am not acquainted with their lan-"guages, what need is there for them to come? But if Thou "wishest them to be saved here through me, give me, O Lord, "Thou Star of all creation, the power to know their languages "so that I may be able to set their souls in the straight way." And when he had prayed for more than three hours and had entreated God to grant him this knowledge, suddenly there

Digitized by Google

was sent from heaven into his right hand something which was like unto a letter written on paper, and when he had read it, he learned immediately how to speak all tongues, and he sent up praise to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. And he came with great joy to that brother, and began to talk to him both Greek and Latin with such fluency that when the brother heard him, he saith that Rabbâ's skill in speaking [Greek] surpassed that of all the learned men [of the day]. Then Rabbâ corrected him, as was right, and appointed to him the penance which was suitable to his defects, and he committed him to the Lord, and went forth from him.

Chapter xv. Of a certain Holy Man whose name was Yawnan (i.e. Jonah), who was the Gardener of one of the Monasteries, and of the wonderful thing which Rabba Pachomius wrought in his Monastery

AND it came to pass on the morrow that the blessed man departed to visit the other monasteries, and he arrived at the monastery which is called "Demeskenyânôs," and entered therein; now there was in that monastery a fine, large fig-tree, which one of the youths was in the habit of climbing up secretly, and he plucked the fruit thereof, and ate it. And when Rabbâ had gone in, and had drawn near that fig-tree, he saw an unclean spirit sitting in it, and he knew straightway that it was the devil of the love of the belly; and the holy man, knowing that it was he who led astray the youths, called to the gardener, and said unto him, "Brother, "cut down this fig-tree, for it is a stumbling-block to those "who possess not a well-established mind, and it is not a "seemly thing for this tree to be in the middle of the monastery." Now when the gardener, who was called Yâwnân, heard these words, he was sorely grieved, for he had passed eighty-five years in the monastery, and he had lived therein a pure and honourable life, and by himself he had cared for all the fruit [trees] therein, and he had planted all the trees that were in the monastery [garden]. Now, until the day of his death he never tasted any of the fruit whatsoever, though all the brethren, and the strangers, and those who dwelt round about them used to eat their fill in the fruit season. And this brother dressed in this fashion: he joined three skins [of goats] together to form a covering for his body, and these were sufficient [clothing] for him; he did not lay down for himself one kind of bed in the winter season, and another in the time of summer. What rest of the body was he knew not, because of the press of his labours, for, with a ready mind, he toiled always; he never ate any cooked food whatsoever, neither did he partake of lentiles, or of any other food [of

Digitized by Google

the same kind], but he lived all the years of his life on plantains only, which he ate with vinegar. And the brethren used to declare positively about him, and say, that he did not even know where the hospital was, and that still less did he know what the sick folk ate.

And besides all these things, he never, so far as we have heard concerning him, lay upon his back until the day of his death, but he worked all day long in the garden, and towards sunset he used to take his food and go into his cell, and sitting upon a chair which he had in the midst thereof, he would plait ropes until [the time for the recital of] the service of the night, and in this way it might happen that he was able to snatch a little sleep through the absolute need of his corporeal nature, and that he slept whilst he was plaiting the ropes which were in his hands. Now he did not plait these ropes by the light of a lamp, but whilst he was sitting in darkness and reciting the Scriptures. And he had only one garment of linen, which he used to put on when he was about to partake of the Holy and Divine Mysteries of Christ, and immediately [he had done this] he would take it off and lay it aside, so that he might keep it clean, and it lasted him for eighty-five years. And that blessed old man performed very many other works which deserve praise, but we have not set them down in the book of this history, lest our discourse might become either too long or too full for those faithful ones who believe, and we should cause those who read it to become weary.

Now we found out concerning this man of whom we have written these things when he was dead, and he died in an unusual manner, that is to say, he was sitting upon a chair and plaiting ropes, according to his custom, and the ropes were found in his hands when he was dead. And this blessed man did not die suddenly, and so lose any portion of the happiness which was due to his health, but he fell ill, like all other men, and he would not be persuaded to go into the hospital, because he did not wish to be ministered to by any man, as are other sick folk; and he did not want to eat any of the meat which the brethren who were sick were wont to eat. And he would not lie upon his back even when he was sick, and he would not permit anyone to place a cushion for him when he was sitting up, or anything whatsoever which was a little soft, and was able to afford him relief. And no man was standing by him when he died, and he went to his rest grasping his rope-work [in his hands]. It was, moreover, a wonderful thing to hear how they buried him; for it was impossible to stretch out his legs, because they had become [stiff] like logs of wood, and it was impossible to make one hand lie by the side of his body.

Digitized by Google

It was impossible to strip off him the skin garment wherewith he was clothed, and we were therefore obliged to roll him up in cloth like a bundle and to bury him in that state.

To this man came the blessed Pachomius, and told him to cut down this fig-tree, and when Yâwnân heard this, he said unto Rabbâ, "Nay, O father, for we are accustomed to gather "a large crop of fruit from this fig-tree for the brethren"; now although Rabbâ was greatly grieved because of this matter he did not wish to urge the old gardener any further, and he was the more grieved because he knew that Yâwnân lived a great and marvellous life, and that he was held to be wonderful by many, and by great and small alike. And it came to pass on the day following that the fig-tree was found to have become withered so completely that not one soft leaf or fruit was found upon it. Now when the blessed man saw these things, he was greatly grieved, not for the sake of the fig-tree, but because of his own disobedience, when Rabbâ told him to cut down the fig-tree, and he did not act according to his word.

Chapter xvj. Of how Abba Pachomius would not keep Beautiful Buildings

THE blessed man Pachomius built an oratory in his monastery, and he made pillars [for it], and covered the faces thereof with tiles, and he furnished it beautifully, and he was exceedingly pleased with the work because he had built it well; and when he had come to himself he declared, through the agency of Satan, that the beauty of the oratory was a thing which would compel a man to admire it, and that the building thereof would be praised. Then suddenly he rose up, and took ropes, and fastened them round the pillars, and he made a prayer within himself, and commanded the brethren to help him, and they bowed their bodies, and the pillars and the whole construction fell [to the ground]; and he said to the brethren, "Take heed lest ye strive to ornament the work of "your hands overmuch, and take ye the greatest possible care "that the grace of God and His gift may be in the work of each "one of you, so that the mind may not stumble towards the "praises of cunning wickedness, and the Calumniator may not "obtain [his] prey."

Digitized by Google

Chapter xvij. Of how when on a certain occasion the heretics came to him he did not yield to them, and of how he let them receive an experience of him by the sign which they asked at his hand

AND it came to pass on a certain occasion that certain heretical monks, who were in the habit of wearing garments made of hair, and who had heard concerning the blessed Pachomius, rose up and came to his monastery; and they said unto certain monks of Rabbâ, "Our father hath sent "us to your Rabbâ with a message, saying, 'If thou art in "'truth a man of God, and if thou art confident that God will "'hearken unto you, come hither, and let us walk together "'across the river on our feet, so that every man may know "'which of us hath more freedom of speech before God than "'the other.'" And when the brethren informed Rabbâ concerning these things, he was exceedingly angry with them, and said unto them, "Why did ye undertake to listen to those who "have said these things? Know ye not that requests of this "kind are things which are foreign to God, and are wholly "alien to our rule? And besides this, they are not even things "which are thought well of by men who live in the world. For "what law of God teacheth us to do these things? And moreover, our Redeemer commandeth us to the contrary in the "Holy Gospel, saying, 'Let not thy left hand know what thy "'right hand doeth' (St. Matthew vi, 3). For thou [thinkest] of "something which is more wretched than the want of mind "[i.e., foolishness] in imagining that I should give up mourning for my sins, [*or* cease to think] how I may flee from everlasting punishment, or that, even if I were a boy in my "thoughts I could ever come to [make] such a demand as that."

And the brethren answered and said unto him, "How is it "then that this man, who is a heretic and alien to God, should "be so bold as to call upon thee to do this [thing]?" And Rabbâ answered and said unto them, "He is able to pass over "the river as one who travelleth over dry land through the "neglect of God, and the Calumniator helpeth him, so that "his wicked heresy may not be brought to naught, and so "that the faith of those who have gone astray may be more "finally established by means of works of audacity which "he performeth through him. Get ye out then, and say unto "those who have brought such a message as this: 'Thus saith "'the man of God, Pachomius, I devote all my strivings, and "'all my anxious care, not that I may pass over the river by "'walking on the waters thereof, but in trying to flee from the "'judgement of God, and to escape, by the might of the Lord,

Digitized by Google

"'from such Satanic wiles as these.'" Then having said these things to the brethren he strictly forbade them to think greatly of their integrity, and to lust after the sight [of him walking across the river on the water], and to go with those who pry into such matters as these; [and he said] "We must not volun-
"tarily follow after such matters as these, and we must not
"put God to the test by such questions, for concerning the
"knowledge of events before they happen He hath commanded
"us by His Holy Scriptures, saying, 'Thou shalt not tempt
"'the Lord thy God, saith the Lord'" (Deuteronomy vi, 16).

Chapter xviij. Of the Question which a certain Brother brought to him, and its Answer

RABBÂ was on one occasion asked by a certain brother, who said, "Why is it that, before the coming of that
"devil who vexeth us, we possess the understanding
"of the mind in a healthy state, and are able to make use of
"philosophy for the sake of self-denial, and humility, and the
"other virtues, but that when it cometh to us to make mani-
"fest in very deed the virtues of philosophy, that is to say,
"longsuffering in the hour of wrath, and the keeping of the
"temper in the season of anger, and a frame of mind from
"which vainglory is absent, and when there are praises
"[ascribed to us], and many other things which are akin
"thereto, the mind (*or* understanding) languisheth and
"becometh destroyed?"

And Rabbâ answered and said unto him, "It is because we
"are not perfectly skilled in the performance [of these things],
"and because we are not so thoroughly acquainted with all
"the mind and vague thoughts of the devils that we are able,
"through the power of the sight of the soul, to recognize in
"quiet contemplation the advent of him who causeth us
"vexation, and who watcheth that he may be able to gather
"together the outpouring of suchlike thoughts. Therefore,
"every day and every hour it is the portion of the soul to
"watch, and we must pour out upon it, like oil, the fear of
"God, that is to say, the efficacious performance of work, and
"the lamp which will enable us to see the things which are
"falling upon us in the healing of the mind. Whosoever then
"will not be strenuous [will come] to anger, and wrath, and
"ill-temper, and to each of the passions which lead us on to
"wickedness. And the soul will see, and will depart to that
"incorporeal country, and it will make the mind to hold in
"contempt the things which are wrought by the devils, and
"will compel it to trample under foot serpents and scorpions,
"and all the power of the Enemy."

Digitized by Google

Chapter xix. Of how unclean and contemptible in the sight of Rabba was the man who toiled with the Labour of his hands for the sake of Vainglory

ON one occasion when Rabbâ was sitting with a number of the other brethren in a certain place in the monastery, [he was told that] one of the monks in the monastery used to make two mats of plaited palm leaves daily and that day he placed them in front of his cell, opposite the place where Rabbâ was then sitting with the brethren. Now he did this because he was [unduly] exalted with the thought of vainglory, and he believed that he would be praised for such assiduity, because the rule [of the fathers] was that each monk should make one mat daily. And Rabbâ perceived that the monk did this for the purpose of making a display, and he understood the intention which was stirring in the man and moving him; and he sighed heavily and said unto the brethren who were sitting with him, "See ye this man who toileth from "morning to evening? He hath endowed Satan with all his "labour, and hath left nothing whatsoever of his work for the "comfort of his own soul. He hath toiled overmuch for the "praise of the children of men, and he hath not worn out his "body with all this work for the sake of God, and his soul is "empty of work through the pleasure of him that doeth it, for "he hath loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Then he called that brother, and rebuked him, and charged him to stand up behind the brethren when they were praying, and to hold the two mats, and to say to them, "O my brethren, "I beseech you to pray for my degraded soul, in order that "through your prayers God may shew abundant mercy to it, "for I have held these mats in greater honour than His king-"dom." And he also commanded that the man should stand up with the mats among the brethren when they were sitting at meat until they rose up from the table; and he commanded likewise that after this he should be confined to his cell for a period of five months, and should make two mats daily, and should eat bread and salt only, and that no man should visit him.

Chapter xx. Of a certain Monk who belonged to the Monastery

NOW before we bring this history to a close we are obliged to mention, in addition to those of whom we have already spoken, another holy monk who was thoroughly trained in the spiritual excellence of the brethren, so that we may narrate a few of the things which were

Digitized by Google

wrought by him for edification. This brother, of blessed memory, because he was afflicted in his body had a cell separate from the brethren; he lived upon bread and salt only, and he used to make one mat of plaited palm leaves each day, and it would happen often, when he was plaiting the ropes which were being used in making the mats, that his hands would become covered with blood, and they were so full of wounds caused by the reeds, that the very mats which he was making were wetted with blood. But although he suffered from such a weakness as this, he never turned away from the congregation of the brethren, and he never lay down to sleep in the daytime until the end of his life. And it was his habit every night before he lay down to sleep to repeat some portion of the Scriptures, and then he would go to sleep until they beat the board to summon the congregation to the service of the night.

Now on one occasion a certain brother went to him, and seeing that his hands were covered with blood through plaiting mats, he said unto him, "Why dost thou work and toil in this "manner, seeing that thou art so seriously ill? Thinkest thou "that thou wouldst not obtain permission not to work and to "be idle from God? God knoweth that thou art sick, and no "man who hath thy complaint hath ever worked. We feed and "take care of strangers and poor folk, and are we not in duty "bound to minister unto thy wants, thou who art one of us, "and art so holy a man, with all our soul and with the greatest "joy and gladness?" And the monk said unto him, "It is im-"possible for me not to work," and the brother replied, "If it "pleaseth thee to act thus, at least anoint thy hands with oil "at eventide, for thou wilt not become as weary as thou art "now, and thou wilt not become covered with blood." And the monk hearkened unto that brother, and anointed his hands with oil, even as he had told him to do, yet because they were tender they were grievously chafed, and cut, and torn by the sharp reeds (*or* palm-grass). Then Rabbâ himself went to visit him in his cell, and he said unto him, "Thinkest thou, O Theo-"dore, that the oil had any beneficial effect upon thee? Who "forced thee to work? Didst thou not place thy hope of being "healed rather upon the operation of the oil than upon God? "Peradventure was not thy God able to heal thee? Yet when "He saw that thou wast ordering help for thyself He left thee "[to fall into] this pain." Then the monk answered and said unto Rabbâ, "O father, I have sinned against God, and I give "thanks (*or* confess), and I entreat thee that God may forgive "me this sin."

And, according to what those fathers who were with him

Digitized by Google

said, he passed a full year in mourning for this act of folly; and he ate once every two days. And at the beginning of the period wherein this man began to gain strength considerably, Rabbâ was in the habit of sending him to every monastery that he might be both the foundation and the type of all the brethren, because he endured the cruel weakness of that disease with such patience.

Here endeth the History of the Followers of Pachomius, which is called in Greek the Asketikon of the Followers of Pachomius

Further remarks by the writer Palladius

NOW therefore, though I must here add a few remarks about my beloved brother, who hath lived with me from my youth up until this day, I will make an end to my discourse in the haven of silence. It is indeed a very long time since I first knew this man, who is worthy of blessings; and I never knew him either to eat or to fast with desire; and, in my opinion, he overcame also the lust for possessions, and especially the passion for empty praise, and that which was his own was sufficient for him. He never arrayed himself in fine and costly apparel, but being made contemptible he received [acts of] grace, and in return for God's true mercy he continued thus even unto death. And this man accepted the temptation of devils a thousand times when they rose up against him, and at length one day a certain devil pressed him, and said unto him, "Agree thou with me for one day only, and "commit sin only once, and any woman that thou shalt men- "tion in this world I will bring unto thee."

And on another occasion that devil strove with him for fourteen nights, even as he himself told me, and he used to kick him with his feet in the night-season, and say unto him, "Do "not worship Christ, and I will never come near thee again." And he answered and said unto him, "It is for this very rea- "son that I worship Him, and I confess Him and glorify Him "ten thousand times because thou art vexed thereby, and thou "reelest away and dost tremble before Him." In his coming in and going out he walked through one hundred and six cities (*or* provinces) several times, and in the greater number of them he tarried for some time. By the grace and mercy of Christ he never knew the temptation of a woman, not even in a dream, except in [his] warfare [against fornication]. I know that he received food from an angel thrice: One day he was in a parched desert, and had not upon him a morsel of bread, and he found three cakes of bread in his cloak. Another time, when he lacked

Digitized by Google

[food], an angel appeared unto him in a vision and said unto him, "Go and take wheat and oil from such and such a man"; and thereupon there came to him the man from whom the angel had commanded him to take [wheat and oil], and said unto him, "Art thou such and such a man?" and he said unto him, "Yea, "I am"; and the man said, "A certain One hath told thee to "take thirty bushels of wheat from me, and twelve boxes of "oil."

Now over a matter of this kind, for such was his nature, he would boast. And I know that on very many occasions he used to weep over people who were in straits and difficulties, and who were living in poverty, and he would give them whatsoever he possessed, with the exception of his body only, which he was unable to give. Now I have seen him very many times weeping over a man who had been caught in a snare, and had fallen into sin, but through his tears he made him to become penitent, and to repent of his sin. This brother swore unto me once, saying, "I made supplication unto God that I would never make my- "self pleasing unto any man, especially the rich folk of the "world, and the liars, lest they might give me whatsoever "I had need of."

Now it is sufficient for me that I have been held worthy to set down completely in writing, and to make mention of the man who, by the grace of God, was able to make perfect all these things. Behold the summary [of the contents] of the book hath been written above.

Here endeth the Second Part of the Histories of the Holy Fathers, which were compiled by the blessed Bishop Palladius, [and dedicated] to Lausus the Prefect. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, for ever! Amen.

Digitized by Google

The Histories of the Monks who lived in the Desert of Egypt, which were compiled by Saint Hieronymus

And moreover, in the might of and with confidence in Christ, we begin to write the Histories of the solitary Monks who lived in the Desert of Egypt, which were composed by the blessed Hieronymus [Died A.D. 420]

Chapter j. The Apology, and the reason for [writing] the Book, [which are addressed] to those who required [them] from him

BLESSED be God Who desireth the welfare of all the children of men, Who wisheth that they may live and come to the knowledge of the truth, Who hath led us also into Egypt, and hath shewed us the great and marvellous things which are worthy to be remembered at all times, and to be written down in a book, Who hath given us the Cause of our salvation and of every one who wisheth to be helped further, and Who hath given unto us a demonstration of the good life and the doctrine which is able to rouse up the soul to the excellent rule of the ascetic life. Now therefore, I am not worthy to begin this history, for inferior men are not capable of approaching the histories of great men, since they are unable to narrate them as they really are, and still less are they able to set them down in writing in a book, and they ought not to be so bold as to attempt to explain matters which are difficult in mean and halting words; and it must appear to be great presumption which will bring danger in its train, for incapable men to undertake such things, and to be so bold as to write in a book sublime histories. But inasmuch as I have been requested, earnestly and frequently, on several occasions, by the brotherhood of blessed men who had their habitation in the Mount of Olives, to write an account of the lives and deeds of the blessed men, and of the solitary dwellers who were in Egypt, according to what I myself have seen of their abundant love, and their patient endurance, and their vexatious toil for God's sake, I have then put my trust in their prayers, and have been so bold as to narrate the following history, and to set it down in writing, so that I myself may gain a fair and abundant reward, and so that those who hearken unto the same may be benefited [thereby], and may emulate such beautiful deeds, and may depart from the world in a state of perfection, and may enjoy peace and rest through

Digitized by Google

the excellent long-suffering of their toil. For in very truth I have observed and seen the treasure of Christ which is hidden under human garments, and I have not buried it for the advantage of many, but have brought it forward that it may be for the good of every one. And I am sure that for me to give this benefit to the blessed brethren will be noble merchandise for me, for they will pray for the redemption of my soul.

At the beginning of this book then I make [mention] first of all of the coming of our Redeemer Jesus Christ, by Whose doctrine the blessed and holy brethren who are in Egypt are led, for I have seen many fathers there who were living the lives of angels, and were fashioning their lives into the similitude of that of the Redeemer. And I have also seen others, who were young men, and who were like unto the Prophets; and they did work which was divine and marvellous, and they were men who were indeed servants of Christ, and they had no care of this earth and nothing belonging to time vexed their minds. Verily these men, although they appeared to be living upon earth, had their habitation in heaven; for some of them were not even conscious that it was the world [wherein they lived], and did not even know that there were wickednesses committed in the world. And verily [it was with them] even as it is written in the Psalm, "Great is the peace of those who "love Thy Law" (Psalm cxix, 165); and again it is written, "I will be to them a Father, and they shall be unto Me sons "and daughters, saith the Lord" (2 Corinthians vi, 18), the Stay of all creation.

And, moreover, many of them when they heard of what was spoken in the world [found it] to be strange unto them, and all the good things and all the cares of this world were forgotten by them; for a man saw them sown in the desert, and they were, like true sons, expecting their father Christ, and like husbandmen of the truth and honourable servants they waited for Christ their companion. They had care neither for houses, nor meats, nor raiment, for the coming of Christ their hope was the one thing for which their thoughts waited. Therefore, whensoever any of them lacked the things which were necessary, they sought neither city, nor village, nor brother, nor friend, nor parents, nor children, nor servants that the things which they lacked might be supplied by them, but their desire and their faith were sufficient for them, [and they only needed] to spread out their hand in supplication, and to offer up the confession of their lips to God, and immediately their prayers were ended everything [they needed] was found before them. Why is it necessary to speak at length concerning their faith in Christ, which was able to remove mountains? And, more-

Digitized by Google

over, many of them restrained fountains and streams of running water, and walked upon the floods of the river Nile, and destroyed serpents, and worked cures, and wonders, and mighty deeds, even like unto those of the holy Prophets, and the blessed Apostles, by the might of their Lord. And it is a well-known and evident thing to every inhabitant of that country that the world standeth through their prayers, and that through them the life of the children of men is held to be precious by God.

And I have also seen [in Egypt] a numerous nation of monks who could neither be defined nor counted, and among them were men of every sort and condition, and they lived both in the desert and in the villages, and no earthly king hath ever been able to gather together so great a number of men into his service; for there is neither village nor city in Egypt or in the Thebaïd which is not surrounded by monasteries as by walls, and many multitudes of people rest upon their prayers as they do upon God. Some of the monks live quite close [to the towns and villages] in caves and on the waste land, and many of them afar off, and they all in every place make manifest their labour in a marvellous manner as if theywere envious of each other. The object of the zeal of those who [live] afar off is that none of their fellows shall surpass them in the labours of the fear of God, and the greatest anxiety of those who [live] near is to vanquish by their life and deeds those who lived at a distance and are famous, even though the things of evil (*or* wickednesses) vex them from every place. Therefore, as one who hath obtained great benefit from them, and as one who hath examined carefully the labours of the life and deeds, whereby I have also obtained benefit, I now approach this history with the view of making the successful monks [more] zealous by the memorials which I hand on [to them], and for the edification and profit of those who are beginning to emulate strenuously their rules of life. First of all then, by the grace of God, I will write at the beginning of this history the narratives of the lives and deeds of the great and holy fathers, by whose hands our Lord hath wrought at this present time the same kind of things as he wrought by the hands of His Prophets and Apostles; for it is our Lord Himself, Who then, as now, worked, as He still worketh, everything in every man.

Digitized by Google

Chapter ij. The Triumphs of Mar John the Recluse, the Prophet of the Thebaïd who lived in Lycus

I SAW then on the borders of the city of Lycus, in the Thebaïd, the great and blessed man John, a man who was truly holy and excellent, and by his works it was known unto every man that he possessed the gift of prophecy. And he made known unto the believing Emperor Theodosius, before they took place, the things which God was about to do unto the children of men, and he revealed [to him] what manner of ending they would take, and the arrogance of the kings who would rise up against him, and how they would speedily be destroyed, and how the nations which would gather together to make war upon him would perish, [and his ability to read the future was] so [great] that even a general came to enquire of him, if he should be able to conquer the Kûshâyê peoples (i.e., the Nubians), who at that time had boldly invaded Syene, which is the beginning of the Thebaïd, and who had overrun the city and laid it waste. And the blessed John said unto him, "Thou shalt go up against them, and shalt overtake "them, and thou shalt conquer them, and shalt be victorious "[*or* triumphant] before the Emperor"; and these things were actually done. Now this blessed man possessed the power of prophecy to an extraordinary degree, according to what I have heard from the fathers who were constantly with him, and as the lives of these men were well known to the inhabitants of that country, and were carefully scrutinized by them, it is impossible to think that their stories about him were in any way hypocritical; on the contrary, their language was incapable of describing his honourable life and deeds.

There was a certain tribune who came to him, and who begged and entreated him to allow his wife to come to him, for she was exceedingly anxious to see him; she was about to go up [the river] to the district of Syene, and before she went up she wished to see him, that he might offer up prayer on her behalf, and bless her, and then send her away [on her journey]. And because the blessed man had taken a vow not to see women, and because he was ninety years of age, now he had been in a cave for forty years, and he had lived therein the whole time, and had never departed from it, and because he never allowed any man to come into his abode, he excused himself from seeing the noble lady; and he was in the habit of saluting folk through his window only, and of blessing those who came to him therefrom, and he spake with every man only concerning the care which it was necessary to take in the matter of the life and works of ascetic excellence. And, although

Digitized by Google

the tribune multiplied greatly his supplications and entreated him to allow his wife to come to him, now the dwelling of the blessed man was situated in the mountainous desert about five miles distant from the city, the holy man would not be persuaded to do so, but said, "This thing is impossible"; and he dismissed the tribune in grief and in sorrow. And the woman tormented her husband by day and by night, and she took an oath, saying, "I cannot go to any other place until I "have seen the holy prophet." And when the oaths of the woman were revealed to the blessed man by her husband, he discerned the faith of the woman, and said unto her husband, "I will appear unto her in a dream this night, but she must "never [try] in addition to see my face in the body"; and the tribune made known to his wife the words of the blessed man. And as she was lying in her bed at night she saw the prophet himself come to her, and he said unto her, "What have I to "do with thee, O woman? Why dost thou so eagerly desire "to see my face? Am I a prophet or a righteous man? I am "a sinner and a man of passions even as ye are, but behold, "I have prayed for thee and for thy husband, and for thy "dwelling, that even as ye have believed, so may it be unto "you. Therefore get ye gone in peace;" and having said these words he departed from her. And when the woman woke up she related to her husband the words of the prophet and described his form and appearance, and she offered her thanks to the prophet through her husband. Now when the holy man John saw that her husband had come, before he could speak he said unto him, "Behold, thy request is completed, for I have "seen thy wife, and I have fulfilled her petition, and thou must "never see my face again; but depart ye in peace."

Now the wife of another prefect was with child, and she was nigh unto [her time] for bringing forth; and her husband was away at a distance, and on the day in which the blessed man John met her husband she was afflicted, even unto death, with the pains of her bringing forth. And the holy man John gave the news to her husband, and said unto him, "If thou didst "only know the grace of God, for behold, a son hath been "born unto thee this day, thou wouldst praise God, for his "mother hath suffered in no small degree. Behold, thou shalt "go and shalt find the boy to be seven days old on thine arrival, "and thou shalt give him the name of John, and when he hath "grown up, and hath been instructed, and is seven years of age, "thou shalt send him to the solitary monks in the desert."

And the blessed John also made manifest wonderful things like these to stranger folk who used to come to him, and he very frequently made known to the people of the city who used

Digitized by Google

to come to him beforehand concerning their affairs, and showed them the things which were about to happen. And he told each one of them that which was done by him in secret, and he foretold concerning the rise of the river Nile, and the good crop which there would be as the result thereof, and described it unto them; and he declared and pointed out the time when the anger of God was about to come upon them, and rebuked those who were the cause of the same. Now the blessed man John did not himself work his cures openly, but he used to consecrate the oil and give [it] to those who were afflicted, and they were healed. Thus the wife of a certain nobleman had the light of her eyes taken away through the cataract which obstructed the light thereof, and she begged and entreated her husband to take her to him, and when he said unto her, "The blessed man hath never met a woman," she besought him to have a message sent to the holy man asking him to offer up a prayer on her behalf; and this the blessed man did, and he also sent her some oil over which he had said a blessing and made the sign of the Cross, and when she had smeared her eyes therewith three times, after three days she was able to see. Then she praised God the Lord of all, and openly gave thanks unto Him always.

And what shall we say about his other deeds? [Nothing]. We can only tell of the things which we saw with our own eyes. Now there were of us seven brethren who were strangers, and who went to him all together, and having given us the salutation of peace with his glorious face, and shown his gladness [at seeing us] to each one of us, we asked him before anything else to offer up a prayer on our behalf, for it is the custom with all our fathers in Egypt to do this. Then he asked me if there was, perchance, a man among us who was a priest or deacon, and although we said there was none such among us all, he well knew that there was one among us who was hiding his honourable rank. Now there was among us one who had received the hand of deaconship, but only one of the brethren, and he was with us, knew of this, and the deacon, by reason of his humility, prohibited him from making this known to anyone, "For," said he, "in comparison with these "holy men I am not worthy to be called even Christian; per- "mit me then not to make use of the honour of deaconship." Then the blessed man pointed out to us all with his hand the deacon, and said, "This brother is a deacon"; whereupon the deacon denied this repeatedly, thinking to lead us astray, but the blessed man grasped the hand of the deacon through the window, and kissed it, and begged him, rebuking him at the same time, saying, "Wrong not the grace of God, O my

Digitized by Google

"son, and lie not concerning the gift of Christ with the denial "of an alien; for falsehood, whether it be uttered concerning "a small matter or a great one, or something which is con- "venient, is still falsehood, and is not to be praised. For our "Redeemer said, 'All falsehood is of the Evil One'" (St. Matthew v, 33, 37; St. John viii, 44). And the deacon being thus rebuked accepted the reproof of the old man pleasantly.

And when we had prayed and made an end of our supplications, one of us became afflicted with shiverings and strong fever, and he begged the blessed John that he might be healed. Then the blessed man said unto him, "This sickness is for "thy benefit, because a diminution of faith hath come upon "thee," but he gave him some oil, and let him anoint himself therewith, and when the man had rubbed the oil upon his body, every evil thing which was inside him he cast forth through his mouth, and he was completely cured of his sickness, and departed on his own feet with us to the place where travellers rested.

Now the blessed man appears to have been about ninety years old, and his whole body was emaciated and frail as if by the severity of his rule of life, and no hair whatsoever remained upon his cheeks; and he ate nothing whatsover except dried vegetables (or fruits), and in the period of his old age he did this at sunset. In the early part of his career he suffered severely, because he would neither eat bread, nor anything which had been cooked by fire. And he commanded us, and we sat down with him, and we gave thanks unto God that we were esteemed worthy to see him; and he rejoiced [in us] as if we had been beloved children of his who were meeting their father after a long absence, and with a joyful countenance he held converse with us, saying, "Where do ye come from, my "sons, and from what country? Ye have come to a miserable "and wretched man." And when we told him [the name of] the country, and that we had come to him from Jerusalem for the benefit of our souls, and that that which we had received with our ears we might see with our own eyes, for the hearing of the ears is less trustworthy than the sight of the eyes, and frequently error maketh its way into what is heard by the ears, whilst the remembrance of what a man hath seen can never be blotted out from the heart, and the description of the same will be permanently fixed in the mind, the blessed man John anwered and said unto us, "What great thing did ye think "ye would see, O beloved sons, that ye have come all this "way, and have toiled all this great toil? Did ye desire to come "and see miserable and wretched men? We possess nothing "whatsoever which is worth looking or wondering at. There

Digitized by Google

"are, however, in every place men who are wonderful and who "are worthy of admiration, that is to say, men who are called "in the church the Prophets and Apostles of God, and of "these it is meet that we should emulate their example.

"But I marvel greatly at the indefatigable zeal which made "you treat the tribulations of the journey with contempt in "order that ye might come hither, for your welfare, to those "men who, because of their sluggishness, are unwilling to go "out of their caves. And I say that, although that which ye "have now done meriteth praise, ye must not allow th "thought to come into your minds that ye have fulfilled com- "pletely every duty, but ye must make yourselves to be like "unto your fathers in respect of the glorious rules of life by "which they were guided and the works which they did. For "although ye possess all the virtues, which is a difficult matter "to accomplish, ye must not even so be [over-] confident in "yourselves, for the men who have become puffed up with "pride, and who thought they had arrived at the stage of "[being worthy of] praise, have subsequently fallen from their "high estate. But examine yourselves carefully and see "whether your consciences are pure, so that purity may not "be driven out from your minds; and let not your thoughts "wander about at the season when ye stand up in prayer "before God, and let not any other thought enter into your "mind and turn it away from that glorious sight of God which "riseth upon the pure heart at the season of prayer, and which "enlighteneth and maketh the understanding to shine; and "let not the remembrance of evil thoughts disturb your minds. "And examine yourselves and see whether ye have truly made "a covenant with God, and whether ye have not, after the "manner of men, entered in that ye may attain the freedom "which is in Christ, and whether ye do not desire to possess "the vainglory of ascetic deeds, and whether ye do not, after "the manner of men who boast themselves before men, [pos- "sess only] the similitude of our ascetic deeds. And take heed "lest any passion whatsoever vex you, or any longing for "honour or glory from the children of men, or any deceitful "desire of priesthood, or of self-love. And do not think that "ye are righteous men only, but be ye diligent and zealous "in very truth that ye may neither be boastful nor unduly "exalted by applause.

"And let there not be any anxiety about family in the mind "of him that prayeth unto God in very truth, neither shall "there be to him any remembrance of the fair things which "have been done by him, nor love for other folk, nor any "memory whatsoever of the world, for if the man who holdeth

Digitized by Google

"converse with his Lord be reduced, or drawn aside, or led "away by any other mind [than this] his labour is emptiness. "Now this falling away happeneth to the mind of man after "man who doth not deny the world absolutely, and who "hunteth after the approbation of the children of men; for he "devoteth himself unto everything in multitudes of ways, "and his mind is divided among many kinds of thoughts, "both of the body and of the earth, and thereupon he is "obliged to strive against his own passions and is not able to "see God. It is therefore not seemly for a man to think that "he hath found knowledge with absolute certainty, [lest per-"adventure being unworthy of knowledge], and having only "acquired a small portion thereof, he imagine that he hath "found the whole of it, and so he devote himself wholly to "destruction. But it is right that we should always draw "nigh unto God with moderate ideas and in faith, so far "as it is possible to approach Him in the mind, and so far "as the children of men are able to attain unto Him. It is "right therefore that the mind of every man who loveth God "should be remote from all these things, for he who in truth "seeketh after God with all his heart will remove his mind far "away from every earthly thing, and he will direct the gaze "of his understanding towards God, for it is written, 'Turn "'ye and know that I, even I, am God' (Psalm xlvi, 10&8). He "therefore who is worthy of a little of the knowledge of God, "for man is not able to receive the whole of it, is able to "acquire the knowledge of many things, and to see those "mysteries which the knowledge of God will shew him. And "he will see the things which are about to happen beforehand, "and glorious revelations will be made known to him as [unto] "the saints, and he will do mighty works, and everything "which he asketh from God he shall receive."

And having said these things unto us, and many others which also concerned the rules of the life of ascetic excellence, he added the following:—"It is right that every one who is a "man of discernment should wait for his departure from this "world as if he were going to approach a life of happiness, "and that he should not set before his eyes the humiliation of "the body, and should not fill his belly with that which he "hath; for the thoughts of him that filleth himself full of "meats resemble those of men who are fed upon delicate meats. "But strive ye in your life and deeds to acquire the power of "enduring lusts and appetites patiently, and let no man seek "after the things which are fine, and those which are gratify-"ing to the body, but let him restrain himself in the short "time [which we have] here so that he may inherit rest and

Digitized by Google

"relaxation in the kingdom of God, for it is said, 'Through
"'abundant tribulation it is meet for us to enter into the king-
"'dom of God' (Acts xiv, 22). And in this manner also Paul
"the Apostle admonished us, and he spake that which he had
"learned from our Redeemer, Who said, 'How strait and nar-
"'row is the way which leadeth to life, and few there be who
"'find it (St. Matthew vii, 14); and how broad is the gate, and
"'wide the way which leadeth to destruction, and many there
"'be who travel upon it.' And let us not be in despair in this
"country, for in a very little while we shall depart unto the
"world of rest; and let not any man be [unduly] exalted
"through the fair deeds which he performeth, but let him be
"always in a state of penitence. And let him betake himself
"away far into the desert whensoever he feeleth within himself
"that he is becoming [unduly] exalted, for on several occasions
"the monastic dwelling which is nigh unto villages hath harm-
"ed those who were perfect. And he must do as did one unto
"whom this happened, who said in his Psalm (Psalm lv,
"6, 7), 'Behold, I fled away to a remote place, and I took up
"'mine abode in the whirlwind,' and I waited for God to de-
"liver me from littleness of soul, and from the spirit of the
"world. And this very thing hath happened unto many of our
"own brethren, and because of their pride they fell away from
"the mark which they had set for themselves.

"Now there was a certain brother who dwelt in a cave which
"was in the desert nigh unto Shainâ, and he followed the as-
"cetic life with the utmost strenuousness, and he used to pro-
"vide himself with bread day by day by the labour of his hands;
"and because he was constantly in prayer, and excelled greatly
"in praiseworthy actions, and had confidence in himself, and
"was proud of his fair life and deeds, the Tempter, having
"asked God for him as he asked Him for Job, shewed him
"the form of a beautiful woman who was wandering about in
"the desert in the evening. Now this woman, finding the door
"of the cave open, leaped up, and passed through the door,
"and fell upon the knees of the man, beseeching him to let
"her rest there because the night had overtaken her, and he,
"having compassion upon her, [did] what was not right, and
"received her into the cave, and he wished to learn from her
"how she had come to lose her way. Then she spake unto him,
"and sowed words of sin and of incitement to lust in his ears,
"and she prolonged her conversation with him so that by
"means of her lascivious flattery she might excite him to the
"hateful lust; and there being much speech between them,
"together with laughter and jesting, she led him astray little
"by little by means of much speaking until at length she took

Digitized by Google

"hold of his hand, and then of his beard, and then of his neck,
"and finally she made the valiant man her captive. Meanwhile
"as thoughts of these things were chasing each other through
"his mind, and he believed that the matter was in his own
"hands, he waited for the moment and the opportunity when
"he would be able to fulfil his lust; and having delivered him-
"self over to his wicked imagination, he strove diligently to
"work it out, and to be united to the woman like a man who
"hath lost his mind, and like a horse mad with desire, [and
"as he was about to fulfil his lust] the woman cried out several
"times, and suddenly escaped from out of his hands, and flew
"away like a shadow. Then straightway there was heard in
"the air the great shouts of laughter of the multitudes of
"devils who had overthrown him and made him to fall into
"error, and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Whoso-
"'ever exalteth himself shall be humbled; and as for thee,
"'O thou who didst exalt thyself unto the heavens, behold,
"'thou hast been brought down into the deepest depth.

"And it came to pass after these things that the man rose
"up in the morning having been clothed with grief the [whole]
"night, and he beat his breast and cried over himself the
"whole day through; and having given up all hope of his
"redemption, he did that which was unseemly and went back
"to the world again. For it is of the cunning of the Evil One
"that, having vanquished a man in the strife, he bringeth him
"to a senseless state of despair, and he is never able to stand
"up again. Therefore, O my sons, it helpeth us not to dwell
"in caves near to the villages, and the meeting with women
"is not beneficial to us, for we keep in our minds a remem-
"brance which cannot be blotted out from the mind, both of
"their words and appearance, and moreover it is not right
"that we should reduce ourselves to despair; for behold, very
"many men have been in despair about themselves, but the
"compassion of God hath not forsaken them.

"For there was a young man in a certain city who had com-
"mitted multitudes of sins and great wickednesses, with a
"most evil intent, yet at a sign from God he repented of his
"sins, and departed to the place of the tombs, where he wept
"over his former sins; and he cast himself upon the earth
"face downwards, and did not care to lift up his voice and to
"make mention of the Name of God in his mouth, or to make
"entreaty to Him, and he thought that he was not worthy to
"live, and before his death he shut himself up in the place of
"the tombs, groaning from the depth of his heart, because he
"had lost all hope of his life. Now when he had passed a whole
"week of days in this manner, those devils who had formerly

Digitized by Google

"injured his life rose up against him by night, and cried out,
"saying, 'Where is that corrupt and filthy man who, having
"'filled himself as full as he could with pollution and corrup-
"'tion, doth now unseasonably and suddenly appear to be
"'both chaste and good, and because he is not able to do so
"'he wisheth to become a Christian, and a man of well ordered
"'life? What then is the beautiful thing which thou expectest
"'to acquire now that thou hast sated thyself with every kind
"'of wickedness? Wilt thou not stand away from where thou
"'art, and come with us and [enjoy] the things which thou
"'usually hast? Behold, whores and tavern companions are
"'waiting for thee, wilt thou not then come and gratify thy
"'lust with us? Every hope for thee hath been extinguished,
"'and truly thy punishment shall arrive swiftly, and in this
"'manner thou wilt slay thyself. Why art thou terrified at
"'[the idea of] punishment, O wretched man? And why strivest
"'thou that it may not come upon thee swiftly?' And they said
"unto him very many other things, and cried out to him,
"'Thou art ours, for thou didst make a covenant with us.
"'Thou didst commit every kind of wickedness, and thou wast
"'worse than every one of us, and wouldst thou dare to flee
"'[from us]? Wilt thou not return us an answer, and wilt thou
"'not agree with us and go forth with us?'

"But the young man continued to weep steadily, and he
"neither inclined his ear to hearken unto them, nor made
"answer unto them. Then, when those devils had remained
"with him a long time and had done nothing [unto him], as
"they were speaking wicked and abominable devils laid hold
"upon him, and smote him with severe stripes, and tore to
"pieces his whole body, and entreated him most evilly, and
"then departed, leaving him with very little life in him. And
"the young man lay groaning in the same place where they
"had left him, for he was unable to turn round and depart to
"another place, and shortly afterwards, when he had re-
"gained a little of his breath, the members of his house and
"his relatives went forth in sorrow to seek him, and when
"they found him they learned from him the cause of the
"stripes, and they besought him to go with them to his house;
"but the young man did not yield to their frequent and ur-
"gent entreaties. And again, on another night, those devils
"made to come upon him stripes which were more numerous
"and more severe than the former ones, nevertheless he
"would not consent to depart from that district at the en-
"treaty of his relatives, but he said unto them, 'It is better
"for me to die [thus] than to live with the blemishes of this
"'world upon me.' On the third night, however, within a very

Digitized by Google

"little, through the multitudinous stripes of the devils, he de-
"parted from this temporary life, for they fell upon him without
"mercy, and they smote him with blows where the former
"blows had fallen, and they entreated him so evilly that he
"was obliged to fight for [his] breath. And when they saw that
"he would not yield to them, they left him for dead and de-
"parted from him, and they went away from him, crying out
"and saying, 'Thou hast conquered us, thou hast conquered
"'us, thou hast conquered us.' And afterwards nothing evil
"came upon him.

"And the pure young man continued to dwell in the grave
"and to lead a pure life gloriously, and he was so weighted
"with the fear of God in the wonderful and mighty deeds
"which he made manifest, that many folk marvelled at him,
"and desired greatly [to do as he did], for those who had
"entirely abandoned all hope of their souls devoted them-
"selves to the performance of his excellent rules of life. And
"in him was fulfilled that which is written, 'Whosoever hum-
"'bleth himself shall be exalted' (St. Luke xiv, 11). There-
"fore, O my sons, I beseech each and every one of you
"before all things to lead a life of humility, for that is the
"foundation of all the glorious virtues; but besides this, the
"dwelling in a remote desert place is exceedingly helpful to
"the performance of deeds of ascetic excellence.

"And there was also another solitary monk who dwelt in a
"place which was a long way off in the desert, and having led
"for many years a life of perfection with all credit, in the
"time of his old age he became tempted by devils; he had
"been a strenuous man and had loved the life of quiet con-
"templation all his days, and he excelled exceedingly in
"prayers, and in [singing] praises, and in multitudes of
"visions, and spiritual manifestations were revealed unto him
"with such scrupulous exactness, some in revelations and
"some in dreams, that finally he was able to walk in the foot-
"steps of incorporeal beings. And because he was not stab-
"lished in the earth, and took no care about his food, he
"sought not in the trees the things of which the body hath
"need, neither in the green herb, nor in the birds, nor in the
"animals of the desert, and he was full of trust in God. For
"from the time when he went forth from the habitation of
"men into the desert, he had no care whatsoever in his mind
"about that whereon he was to live and to support his body,
"but wholly forgetting all such things his whole love was ex-
"alted to God. And he awaited his call from Him and his
"departure from this world, and he enjoyed exceedingly the
"visions and the hope of that which was to come, and his

Digitized by Google

"body did not shrink by reason of length of years nor did his "soul decay, and he possessed a beautiful nature through his "chaste life. But God took care of him, and at certain well- "defined intervals, that is, once every two or three days, he "found bread upon his table; and whensoever he felt that "his body needed food, he would go into the cave and take "rest, and having refreshed himself, and bowed himself be- "fore God, he would return again to his praises, and say "'Amen' in his prayer and in his visions. And rejoicing in his "peace every day he added to the glory of his life and works, "and he waxed stronger daily in the hope of that which is to "come, like a man who was confident that he would depart "from this world in virtue, which actually took place within a "very short time from his fall, through the temptation that "subsequently came upon him.

"But why should we not tell the story of his sin whereto "his folly was exceedingly close? For, having become proud "in his mind, and thinking therein that he was better than "many men, and that he possessed some faculty for goodness "which was greater than that possessed by all other men, "and trusting in himself that this really was so, at no remote "time there was born in him first of all a degree of negligence "which was so small that it might be imagined that it was "not negligence, and then there burst into existence con- "tempt, which is a greater [sin] than negligence, and then "sluggishness made itself felt, and as a result of these things "he used to stand up in vigil and prayer in a listless fashion, "and the entreaty of his prayer became small, and his praises "of God were short, and his soul longed for pleasures, and "his mind inclined to terrestrial things, and his thoughts wan- "dered to hateful things, and in secret he meditated upon the "abominable things of lust. But, however, the constraint of "his former life and deeds was still with him as a protection, "and at eventide, after his usual prayer, he found upon his "table the bread which had been given to him by God, and he "ate and was refreshed. And because he did not cast away "his shortcomings, and did not consider that his negligence "injured his strenuousness in ascetic virtues, and increased "his zealousness in the performance of other things which "were hateful, and because he did not turn to the healing of "his wickednesses, and because it was a small matter in his "sight that he had fallen away entirely from the things which "were seemly, the evil lust of filthy fornication seized upon his "mind, and carried him away in his thoughts to the world.

"And having remained [thus] for one day, he turned to his "usual service of singing the Psalms, and he prayed, and

Digitized by Google

"praised God, and went into the cave, and he found therein "his bread which had been placed there at [the fixed] time, "but it was not as pure as it was usually, and it was some- "what dirty; and though he marvelled thereat, and was sad "about it, he ate the bread and was refreshed. And it came to "pass on the third night that there was added a threefold evil, "and he delivered over his wicked mind quickly to his guilty "thoughts; now it seemed in his consciousness as if there was "a woman close to him, and lying by his side, and as if he was "looking at her with his eyes, and as if he was actually per- "forming an act of union with her. Now on the third day he "went out to his occupation of prayer and praise, but his "thoughts were not clean, and his mind was wandering about "hither and thither, and he was moving the sight of the pu- "pils of his eyes in all directions, and the remembrance of his "lusts shortened his good work. And he went back in the even- "ing seeking for bread, and when he had gone into the cave he "found upon his table bread, part of which had been eaten "by the mice, and part had been gnawed by dogs, and the rest "was dry; then he groaned again and wept, but not sufficiently "to restrain him from his wickedness. And having eaten the "bread, which was not according to his taste, he endeavoured "to take some rest.

"Then again the evil thoughts stirred in him, and made war "upon his mind so that they might lead him along the road "and carry him to the world; and he rose up by night and went "forth from his cave to travel in the desert to Shainâ, and "whilst he was still far from the habitations of men, the day "overtook him, and the heat of the sun afflicted him, and he "looked round about him that, peradventure, he might see a "monastery wherein he might enter and rest himself. And he "saw a monastery, and went into it, and the chaste and believ- "ing brethren who regarded him as a true father received him; "and they washed his face and his feet, and when they had "prayed, and set forth a table, they entreated him lovingly "to partake of whatsoever they had, and when he had eaten "and was refreshed, they asked him to address to them a word "of help and to tell them how they might be able to escape "from the crafty snares of the Enemy, and to rise up and to "prevail like men over lascivious thoughts. Then that monk, "like a father who was admonishing his sons, commanded them "to persevere in the labours of ascetic life, even unto weariness, "as men who, after a short time, would depart to abundant de- "light; and having spoken unto them several other most ex- "cellent things he helped them greatly. And having made an "end of his admonitory discourse, he remembered himself a

Digitized by Google

"little, and thought within himself, saying, 'How is it that I
"'am able to rebuke others, and remain myself without re-
"'proof?' Then having understood his guiltiness, he ran back
"with all speed to the desert, and wept over himself, saying,
"'If it had not been that the Lord helped me my soul would have
"'been destroyed by misery, for I am within a very little of
"'[falling] into every kind of wickedness, and my life would
"'have been destroyed in the earth.' And it was fulfilled in him
"the saying, 'A man is helped by his brethren, even as a city is
"'helped by its fortress, and he is like a wall which shall never
"'fall.' And from that time onwards, for the whole period of
"his life, that monk mourned and wept because he was de-
"prived of his heavenly table, and he obtained his daily bread
"only by means of great toil. And he shut himself up in the cave,
"and [put on] sackcloth and ashes, and he humbled himself in
"prayer; and he neither rose up from earth nor ceased from
"groans and sighs, until he heard in a dream a sound of
"angels which came to him, [and said], 'God hath received
"'thy repentance, and hath had mercy upon thee. Therefore
"'take good heed that thou stumble not a second time into
"'sin. And the brethren whom thou didst admonish shall
"'come unto thee and console thee, and shall bring unto thee
"'a blessing [which] thou shalt receive from them, and ye
"'shall be refreshed and shall give thanks unto God always.'

"These things which I have narrated unto you, O my sons,
"[shew] that ye should acquire humbleness of mind before
"every other thing in your life and works, and in all matters
"which shall be unto you, whether they be small or whether
"they be great, for this is the first commandment of our
"Redeemer, Who said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for
"'theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (St. Matthew v, 3). Take
"good heed that ye be not confounded by the Devil when
"filthy visions rise upon you, and go not astray after devils
"when they shew you a lying vision. But if anyone come
"unto you, be it brother, or friend, or wife, or old man, or
"father, or teacher, or mother, or sister, or son, or daughter,
"first of all lift up your hands in prayer, and if it should
"happen that any lying vision of devils should come, it will
"depart quickly from before you. And moreover, if men or
"devils would lead you astray, and would incite you [to sin]
"by flattering you, be not persuaded by them, and be not
"lifted up in your minds. For in this way they have led even
"me astray on several occasions, and the devils would let me
"neither pray nor take my rest in the night season, and they
"used to show me lying visions the whole night long, and
"then in the morning they would laugh at me, and would bend

Digitized by Google

the knee before me, and say, 'Father, let us vex thee [by day]
"'in the same way as we did all night long,' and I would say
"unto them, 'Get ye gone from me, O ye workers of iniquity, for
"'ye shall not vex the servant of God.' Therefore, O my sons,
"after quietness, follow ye after and love peaceful meditation,
"and train yourselves at all times in the vision of excellence,
"and ye shall acquire in prayer to God the broadness of a
"pure mind. For he is a good and fair athlete of Christ,
"and a noble and strenuous man, who shall at all seasons
"train himself in labours, who shall do fair deeds con-
"tinually, who shall shew forth love for the brethren and for
"strangers, who shall perform love and mercy, who shall
"visit and relieve all those who are nigh unto him, who shall
"help the suffering and support the sick, and who shall bring
"his days to an end without stumbling. For if a man bring
"his days to an end without stumbling, even though he
"labour in and be held fast by the things of earth, he is a fair,
"and good, and noble soldier and workman, and worker and
"doer of the commandments.

"But the spectator of the mind who leaveth all these things
"for others to administer [or provide] is far better, and more
"excellent and greater than he, and he pursueth spiritual
"instead of corporeal things, and leaveth the transitory things
"of this world unto others; for he denieth himself, and for-
"getteth himself, and taketh up his cross and cleaveth unto
"Christ, and he embraceth the things of heaven continually,
"and he maketh his escape from everything [earthly], and
"draweth nigh unto God, and he will not allow himself to be
"drawn to turn behind him through any care whatsoever.
"And such a man as this is, through his godly works, and
"the praises which he offereth up continually before God, with
"God, and, being free and unfettered by any tie whatsoever,
"he standeth before God in security, and his mind is not
"drawn away by any other care. He who is in this condition
"holdeth converse with God continually, and offereth up to
"Him unceasingly praise and glorifying. But it is necessary
"[that those who seek after God should forsake] everything
"which is visible, and should turn themselves completely to-
"wards God, and should commit themselves to Him that He
"may protect their lives; for the man in whom God dwelleth
"doth not know even that the world existeth, since the whole
"of creation is an alien thing in his eyes, because he is crucified
"unto all the world, and it is accounted by him as nothing."

These then were the things which the blessed John related unto us (now he told us many others), and he held converse and talked with us for three days, and he healed our souls

Digitized by Google

until the season of the ninth hour; and when he gave us [his] blessing, he spake unto us also a word of prophecy, saying, "This day letters [recording] the victory of Theodosius the "Emperor have entered Alexandria, and these make known "that he hath slain [A.D. 394] Eugenius the tyrant, and the "death which the Christian Emperor Theodosius himself will "die." Now these things actually happened as he said. And having seen many other fathers, other brethren came and informed us that the life of the blessed John had come to an end in a most excellent and exemplary manner; for he commanded him (i.e., his disciple) that for three days no man should be allowed to go up to him, and he bowed his knees in prayer, and his career was crowned, and he went to our Lord, to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Here end the Triumphs of the Blessed Mar John

Chapter iij. The Triumphs of the holy Man Abba Hor

AND we saw also another wonderful man whose name was Abbâ Hôr, now he was the Abbâ of one thousand monks, and he had an angelic form and was about ninety years of age; his beard flowed down over his breast, and it was white and beautiful, and his countenance was so glorious that those that saw him were reproved by the sight thereof only. And this blessed man had for a very long time lived a life of the utmost austerity at a remote place in the desert, but subsequently he took certain monasteries in the desert which was near Shainâ, and gathered together a brotherhood, and he planted so many wild trees at that spot that they formed a dense wood in the wilderness. For the fathers who lived with him there said that before this man came there from the desert there was not even a shrub in the place; now he planted these trees in order to fill a want, and to prevent the brethren who were gathered together to him from being troubled by searching for wood. And in his prayer to God he took the same pains and strove that all the needs of the brethren might be supplied, so that they would only have to be anxious about their redemption, and that nothing which they used might be wanting for them, [so that they might have no excuse for negligence]. When formerly the blessed man lived in the desert of Dalgâw he used to eat roots and herbs, and to drink water when he was able, and he passed the whole time of his life in prayer and praise; but when he arrived at complete old age, an angel appeared unto him in a dream, in the desert, and said, "Thou shall become a great race, and "shalt be set in authority over a numerous people, and those "who shall be saved through thee shall be ten myriads [in

Digitized by Google

"number], and thou shalt be a governor in the new world, and "above every one else in the world thou shalt have life. And," said the angel unto him, "fear not, for thou shalt never be in "want of food, whensoever thou criest unto thy God, until the "day of thy departure from this world."

And having heard these things the blessed Abbâ Hôr journeyed on his way diligently and came to the desert which is nigh unto Shainâ, and first of all he lived there by himself in a little tabernacle (*or* booth), which he made, and he fed upon garden herbs soaked in vinegar, and on several occasions he ate only once a week. And because originally he had no knowledge of letters, when he rose up to go forth from the desert into Shainâ, the knowledge of the Holy Books was given unto him by Divine Grace so fully that he was able to repeat all the Scriptures by heart; and when he had come [to Shainâ] and a book was given unto him by the brethren to read, he read it forthwith as if he were a man who had been always acquainted with books. And there was added unto him also the gracious gift of being able to cast out devils, and many of them came to him by the constraint [of this gift], against their wills, and would shriek out through his acts. And he wrought so many other cures so often that from all sides there were gathered together unto him brethren who lived in monasteries, one thousand in number.

And when the man of God saw us, he rejoiced in us, and saluted us, and straightway he offered up a prayer; and he washed our feet with his own hands, and began to teach us, for he was exceedingly well acquainted with the Scriptures, even as a man who had received the gift from God, and he expounded to us many chapters of the Scriptures, and delivered to us the orthodox faith; moreover, he urged us to prayer, and to partake of the Mysteries. For it was the habit of all the great monks not to give food to their bodies until they had offered spiritual sustenance to their souls, that is to say, the participation in the Body and Blood of Christ. And having partaken of the Mysteries we gave thanks unto God, and he urged us [to come] to the table of food, and he called to our recollection the ascetic lives of noble men, and said, "I know a certain man in this desert who for three years past "hath not eaten anything which is of this earth, but an angel "cometh to him once in three days, and bringeth him heavenly "food and placeth it in his mouth, and this sufficeth him "instead of meat and drink. And I know that there came to "this man in a lying vision devils who were in the forms of "horses and chariots of fire and numerous horsemen, as if "they had come from a king, and they said unto him, 'Thou

Digitized by Google

"'hast become perfect in everything, O man, but now, bow "'down and worship me, and I will take thee up [to heaven] "'like Elijah.' Then the monk said in his mind, 'I worship "'the King and Redeemer every day, and if this creature were "'[a king] he would not ask me to worship him now.' And "when he had said unto him that which was in his mind, 'I "'have a King, and I worship Him always, and thou art not "'a king,' immediately the Devil removed himself and was no "more found." Now Abbâ Hôr told us these things because he wished to conceal his own rules and manner of life, and to tell us stories about those of other monks, but the fathers who were always with him told us that it was Abbâ Hôr himself who had seen these things.

Now this man was more glorious in his life than very many of the fathers. And because of the multitude of the monks who came to him he used to call the brethren who were with him, to come to make houses for the new comers each day; some of the brethren spread the mud, and others brought the bricks, and others cut down the wood, and when their building was finished, he would supply the needs of those who came. On one occasion a lying brother who had hidden his clothes came to him, but the blessed man rebuked him before every man, and brought his clothes into the light, so that as a result of this [exposure] no man might in future dare to tell a lie in his presence. Now the beauty of his life and deeds made him so glorious that he was able to gather together very many monks to him, and one saw the congregation of the monks with him in the church like a band of righteous men who were splendid in their garb, and they glorified God with praises continually.

Here end the Triumphs of Abba Hor

Chapter iv. The Triumphs of Abba Ammon

NOW we saw in Thebaïs another man whose name was Ammon, who was the Abbâ of three (*or* thirty) thousand monks; and they called these monks also "men of Tabenna." And they lived lives of the greatest austerity, and they used to put their head cloths over their faces, and they covered themselves when they ate, and they turned their looks towards the ground, so that one might not see the other; and they kept strict silence, so that they might think that they were in the desert, and they did these things in order that each might hide his works of ascetic excellence from his fellows. When they sat at table it was a mere matter of form, and they did so in such a way as to deceive each other, and to make each other say, "Behold, they are eating." Some of them only carried their hands to their mouths once or twice and took a

Digitized by Google

piece of bread, or an olive, or a portion of something else of all the food which was set before them, and it was unto them sufficient for a meal; and others ate in silence a piece of bread only, and endured [hunger] without touching any of the other dishes of food which were placed before them; and others only reached out their hands to the dishes of cooked food three times and ate. Now their souls were weaned from everything. And since we marvelled at all their glorious deeds we obtained benefit from them all.

Here end the Triumphs of Abba Ammon

Chapter v. The Triumphs of Abba Abban [Benus]

AND we saw another blessed man whose virtues were more abundant than those of all [other] men, and whose name was Abbân [Benus]; the brethren who were with him related that he had never sworn, or told a lie, or been angry with any man, or rebuked any man even by a word. He had passed his whole life in silent contemplation and in humility, and in his manner of life he was as one of the angels, and he clothed himself in the deepest humility. And when we had entreated him earnestly to address to us a word of exhortation, it was only with the greatest difficulty that he could be persuaded to say unto us a few words. On one occasion, when the labourers in the fields which were near the river begged him [to drive away] a certain hippopotamus which was doing them harm by his [great] strength, the blessed Abbâ Abbân [Benus] commanded the animal in a gentle voice, saying, "I "adjure thee to depart in the name of Jêsus Christ"; and the hippopotamus, as if driven away by an angel, never more appeared in that district.

Here end the Triumphs of Abba Abban [Benus]

Chapter vj. The History of the Lives and Acts of the Brethren who were in the City of Oxyrhyncus

AND we came also to Oxyrhyncus, a great city in Thebaïs, but we are not able to relate all the wonderful things which [we saw] therein; for the city is so full of the habitations of the brethren that the walls thereof are wellnigh thrust out with them, so many are the brethren! And there are so many other monasteries round about the walls, on the outside, that one would think that they were another city, and the sanctuaries of the city, and the temples which are therein, and all the spaces about them, are filled with the monks. And besides these there were thirteen churches in which the people assembled, for the city was exceedingly large. There was a place set apart for the monks to pray in each of the

Digitized by Google

monasteries, and one might think that the monks were not very much fewer in numbers than the ordinary inhabitants of the city, for they were so numerous that they even filled the [buildings at] the entrances to the city, and some of the monks lived in the towers by the side of the gates thereof. Now the people said that the monks who lived inside were five thousand in number, and that five thousand brethren lived round about it, and there was not an hour, either of the day or the night, wherein they were not performing the service of God. But there were also heretics in the city, and they were not of the heathen who dwelt therein. And all the inhabitants of the city were believers, and they would hearken to the Scriptures so readily that the Bishop was able to proclaim peace to the people even in the streets; and the officers and the princes of the city, who were lavish in their gifts to the congregations, used to place watchers at the gates and entrances thereof that if they saw any needy person or any stranger they might bring him to them, in order that they might supply his need from their gifts. And what shall we say concerning the fear of God which was in these men to such a degree that, when they saw us, who were strangers, passing through the streets, they drew nigh, like angels, unto us [and helped us]? And how can a man describe adequately the multitude of monks and the innumerable virgins who used to live there? Now we would make known that which we have learned from the holy Bishop who was there, namely, that he had under his authority ten thousand monks and twenty thousand virgins. I am wholly unable to express how great is the love of strangers and the affection which exist among these men and women, for our cloaks and the other portions of our apparel were wellnigh torn to rags by the force which each one of them, in the ardour of his love, displayed in dragging us to his home. And we saw there multitudes of fathers and of great monks who possessed gifts of divers kinds, for some had the gift of speaking, and some of doing works, and some of doing mighty deeds, and some of working signs.

Here endeth the History of the Monks in the City of Oxyrhyncus

Chapter vij. The Triumphs of Abba Theon

AND we also saw another blessed man, who lived at some distance from the city, at a place which faced the open desert, and his name was Theon; he was a holy man who had shut himself up in a small house by himself, and he had kept silence for thirty years, and because he had performed many mighty deeds he was held to be a prophet among

Digitized by Google

the people. For every day a multitude of sick folk went forth to him, and he would stretch out his hand through the window and lay it upon them, and would send them away healed. Now the countenance of the blessed man appeared to be like that of an angel, and his eyes sparkled, and he was filled with all the grace of God. A short time ago certain thieves came by night against the blessed man from a great distance, thinking that they would find a large quantity of gold with him, and they were prepared to kill him, but when he had said a prayer they found themselves fast bound with ropes before the door, [and they had to stay there] until the morning. And when the crowds of people came to him in the morning, they had it in their minds to commit the thieves to the flames, but the blessed man felt himself urged to speak a word unto the men, and he said, "Let these thieves depart in peace, for if ye do not let them, "the gracious gift of healing which I possess will depart from "me." Then the multitudes hearkened unto his words, for they did not dare to treat them lightly, and straightway the thieves went and took up their abode with the brethren [and] monks, and changed their former manner of life, because they truly repented of that which they had done in the past.

Now this man, through the gift which God had bestowed upon him, knew three languages, and he was able to read Greek, Latin, and Egyptian, a fact concerning the blessed man which we have learned from many folk; and when he knew that we were strangers he wrote down [the fact] in a book, and thanked God on our behalf. His food consisted of garden herbs, and they said that he used to go forth from his cell by night and mingle with the wild animals of the desert, and he gave them to drink of the water which he found. The footmarks which appeared by the side of his abode were those of buffaloes, and goats, and gazelle, in the sight of which he took great pleasure.

Here end the Triumphs of Abba Theon

Chapter viij. The Triumphs of Abba Elijah

AND we also saw another priest in the desert of Antinoë, the metropolis of the Thebaïd, whose name was Elijah; he was about one hundred and ten years old, and the monks used to say that the spirit of Elijah the Prophet rested upon him. Now this blessed man Elijah was famous in the desert, for he had lived therein for seventy years, and it is wholly impossible to find a word which would adequately describe the sterility and desolation of that desert, and of the mountain in which he lived. He never went down to Shainâ, but there was a narrow path along which a man could walk with the greatest difficulty and make his way to him [guided]

Digitized by Google

by the rough stones which were placed on both sides of the way; and his dwelling was under a rock in the cave. Now his appearance was terrible, for by reason of old age which had laid its hold upon him he trembled greatly; nevertheless he worked signs daily, and he never ceased to heal the sick. And the fathers told us concerning him that there was no man among them who could remember the time when he went up [to live] in the mountain. In his old age he used to eat three ounces of bread every evening, and three olives, but in his early manhood he partook of food only once a week, and subsisted thereon.

Here end the Triumphs of Abba Elijah

Chapter ix. The Triumph of the Blessed Apollo [and Ammon]

AND we saw also another priest, whose name was Apollo, who lived in the Thebaïd, on the borders of Hermopolis, whereunto our Redeemer went with Mary and Joseph, that there might be fulfilled the word of Isaiah (xix, i), who said, "Behold the Lord is mounted upon swift clouds and "shall go into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall tremble before "Him, and shall fall upon the earth." And we also saw there the house of idols wherein all the idols that were in it fell down upon their faces on the ground when our Redeemer went into that city. And we saw, moreover, that this man who dwelt in the desert was the Abbâ of five hundred monks who lived in the monasteries which stood around the base of the mountain, and that he was exceedingly well known throughout the land of Thebaïs; for he possessed the excellent virtues of the ascetic life, and God performed many great and mighty deeds through him, and very many signs took place by his hand. And this man Apollo, whose ascetic labours were so wonderful from his youth up, in the time of his old age was held to be worthy of an act of grace from God, for when he was eighty years of age he took possession of a great monastery containing five hundred marvellous men, who were also able to work miracles, and when he was fifteen years [older] (i.e., when he was ninety-five years of age), he departed from this world, having lived for forty years in the inner desert, where he led a perfectly spiritual life.

And towards the end he heard a voice like unto that of an angel, which said unto him, "Apollo, I am about to destroy "the wisdom of the wise men of Egypt by thy hands, and I "will remove the knowledge, which is not knowledge, of the "fools of the nations; and thou shalt destroy for Me with them "also the wise men of Babel (i.e., Babylon of Egypt), and "thou shalt wipe out all the service of devils. And now,

Digitized by Google

"get thee away quickly to the desert, to the region thereof "which is nigh unto the habitations of men, for thou shalt "beget for Me a holy people, who shall be exalted by [their] "good works." Then Apollo made answer, and said, "My "Lord, take Thou away from me pride, lest peradventure I "become [unduly] exalted over the brotherhood, and I lose all "the blessing thereof." And the [divine] voice spoke again unto him, and said, "Place thine hand upon thy neck, "and whatsoever thou layest hold upon, take it down and "bury it in the sand"; then he quickly laid his hand upon his neck, and laid hold upon a small Ethiopian, and he buried him in the sand, as the creature cried out and said, "I am the "spirit of pride." And again the voice came to him, and said, "Get thee gone, and whatsoever thou shalt ask from thy God "shall be given unto thee."

So the blessed man, having heard [this], straightway set out to come to Shainâ, in the time of Julian, the Emperor [and] tyrant. And at first he lived in the desert which was nigh unto Shainâ, in a small cave which he found there on the side (*or* base) of the mountain, and his occupation was as follows:—he offered up prayer unto God the whole day through, that is to say, he prayed one hundred times in the night, and as many times in the day, and he bowed his knees when he prayed. As concerning his food he took no care whatsoever, for that was given unto him by God, and it was brought into the desert by an angel; his apparel consisted of a short-sleeved garment which covered his body, and a small napkin which he wore on his head, and these remained upon him in the desert and never wore out. He lived in the desert which was nigh unto Shainâ in the power of the spirit, and he worked miracles, and performed many wonderful cures, the glory of which it is impossible for a man to describe, but we have heard thereof from the elders who were with him, and who were also perfect men, and from the heads and governors of the brotherhood. This man, then, was famous as a new prophet, and as an apostle who had appeared in our generation. And when his fame had travelled abroad on all sides, all the monks who lived scattered about in various places came unto him in a body as unto a true father, and they offered themselves to him as an offering. And the blessed man stirred up some of them to divine visions, and others to glorious deeds of spiritual excellence, but he first of all shewed them by actual examples the things which he was exhorting them to do by his words, and he incited them on several occasions to perform work of ascetic excellence. One Sunday after another he ate with them, but he tasted nothing but the herbs which grew of themselves in the

Digitized by Google

earth, and he ate neither bread, nor pulse, nor the fruit of trees, nor anything which had been prepared by fire.

Now in the reign of Julian, the blessed Apollo heard that a certain brother, who had been seized for military service, had been thrown into prison, and he took brethren, and went to visit him, and to comfort him; and having gone to him, he told that brother to endure the suffering, and to despise the tribulations which were surging in upon him, for the sake of the hope which is to come. Now that time was a season of strife, and the believing mind was sorely tried by the temptations which came upon it. And when he had strengthened the soul of the brother by such words as these, one of those who had been appointed by the Chiliarch to guard [him] came and said unto the Chiliarch, "The brethren wish to get that man out "[of the prison]." Now when the Chiliarch heard this, he rose up, and came in an evil fury, and shut the doors of the prison, and set seals [upon them], and appointed stricter guards, and thus confined the blessed man, and all the brethren who were with him, in the prison, saying, "These men also are useful "for military service," and then he departed to his house without listening to the petition they made to him. But in the middle of the night the angel of the Lord, who held a lamp in his hand, lit up with his light the whole prison-house so brightly that all the watchmen were astonished, and they entreated the brethren who were therein to go away from them, and the doors were opened before them; and they said, "It is "better for us to die for them, than to neglect the freedom "which hath been sent from God to men who have been im-"prisoned in an unseemly manner." And the Chiliarch and the noblemen who were with him came in the morning to the prison-house, and pressed the brethren to depart from the city, for his house had fallen down through an earthquake, and had buried the noble folk of his house; and when they heard this they went forth, and glorified God with a loud voice, and they departed to the desert with rejoicings.

Now all these brethren lived together after the example of the Apostles, and they possessed one mind and one soul, and the blessed man admonished them daily that they should excel in glorious works, and that they should drive away quickly and immediately to a distance, before they came, the evil crafts of the Calumniator which burst into the thoughts. For he said, "When the head of the serpent is bruised all his body dieth, "for our Lord commanded us to be watchful against the head "of the serpent, which is this:—We must not only take "care that filthy and corrupt thoughts do not come into our "minds, but we must blot out also the hateful appearances

Digitized by Google

"which are produced in our minds. Now, therefore, strive "eagerly and earnestly that ye may emulate each other in the "gloriousness of the ascetic works, so that no man may be "found to be in any way inferior to his neighbour in spiritual "excellence. And this is the sign that ye have approached the "glory of ascetic labours, if ye can keep your bodies from the "passions of the lusts; for the beginning of the gift of God is "when a man acquireth also the manifestation of the wonder-"ful [character] which is from God, lest peradventure he "become [unduly] exalted thereby, or be lifted up in his "thoughts, as if he were superior to his fellows, and lest he "become like a man who maketh it to appear that he is worthy "of all this grace; but if not, he will certainly forget that he "lacketh divine grace, and that it hath been snatched away "from his mind."

Now therefore this man possessed the precious treasure of great doctrine in his mind, which we also heard from him on another occasion, and his works were more excellent than his teaching; for every petition which he asked of God was granted unto him, and visions also appeared unto him; for on one occasion he saw that his brother, who was older than he, and who also brought his life to an end in the desert, possessed more spiritual works than himself. And he saw, as in a dream, that he had become a counterpart of the Apostles, and that God had made him to inherit glory, and he was begging and entreating Him to bring about his departure from the world speedily, so that he might rest with him in heaven, and that it was said unto him by our Redeemer, "It is necessary for "Apollo to live upon the earth a little longer, until many shall "become perfect through envy of his glorious deeds, for he is "prepared to be set over a great nation of monks, and of men "who cultivate righteousness, so that he may receive glory "proportionate to his labour."

Such were the things which he saw, and they came to pass in connexion with the congregation of monks who came to him, and who, through his abundant doctrine, and through his numerous ascetic habits, became aliens to the world. And a great monastery for brethren grew up about him in the mountain, and at length five hundred men came to live there together; they had their habitation in common, and they sat at meat at one table, and verily, they appeared to be as angels, and they were like unto workers who were ornamented with princely ornaments, and were arrayed in white apparel. Thus were fulfilled the words of the Scriptures which say, "The dry "desert shall rejoice, and the open plain shall leap for joy" (Isaiah xxxv, 1); and, again, "Shout, and cry out, O thou

Digitized by Google

"who hast never brought forth, for the children of the barren "woman are more numerous than those of her who hath had "a husband" (Isaiah liv, 1). And the word of the Prophet concerning the church among the Gentiles was fulfilled, and was completed also by the desert of Egypt, for the sons of God were more numerous there than in the land which had become settled and occupied by people. For in many of the cities of Egypt true congregations of monks increased even as they drew nigh to God in the desert thereof, and in proportion as the nation was at peace even so did the monks multiply in the desert of Egypt, and in them were fulfilled the words of the Apostle (Romans v, 20), who said, "Where sin increased there "also did grace abound."

Now at one time in Egypt the exceedingly abominable worship of idols was more common than among any other nation, for they worshipped dogs, and apes, and other things, and even garlic, and onions, and common garden herbs were considered to be gods, according to what we heard the holy man Apollo say, and he described the reason for the worship of idols which existed among the Egyptians, and said, "These "heathen, and the early inhabitants of the country worshipped "the bull because he was useful in ploughing the ground "wherefrom they obtained their food, and they worshipped the "waters of the Nile which irrigated their whole country, and "also the earth itself which yielded to them excellent crops, "and which is far more excellent than the soil of other coun- "tries. And they held in reverence their other polluted things, "that is to say, dogs, and apes, and all their abominable ani- "mals and vegetables, because they had been to them the cause "of redemption; now they had been brought to naught in "the time of Pharaoh, when he and those who were with him "were drowned whilst the children of Israel were pursued by "them. For they did not cleave unto Pharaoh in that day, but "each man among them made that which was his familiar "[spirit] his god, and said, 'This is my god, and through "'him I shall not perish with Pharaoh.'"

Such were the things which were in the discourse of Apollo, but it is meet that we should write down his deeds before his words. Once heathen peoples dwelt in the various places which were round about the blessed man, and the ten villages which were near him were very wicked, and they went astray in respect of the worship of idols. In one of these villages was a temple, and the idol which was in that village was very famous, and he was made of wood, and the priests danced before him, and carried him about in a procession from village to village, and then the people who were with him leaped and

Digitized by Google

danced about. And once, when they were performing their play on the bank of the river, the blessed Apollo, and a few brethren who were with him, happened to be passing through the district at that time, and, when from a distance he saw the crowd which had begun its devilish sports, he bowed the knee on the spot where he was, and prayed to the Redeemer of all, and straightway all the people became bound with cords, and he put all the heathen in such a state that they were unable to crawl away from where they were, and as they were not able to depart from that place, one by one became parched [with thirst], and was obliged to suffer under the fierce heat of the sun the whole day long, and they marvelled at what had happened to them. Then their priests said, "There is a certain Christian in your borders, "and it is he who hath done these things to them," now they were speaking of the blessed man Apollo, who, by means of his prayers had brought to naught their festival, "and it is "right that we should make entreaty unto him that we may "not come into tribulation."

And when the inhabitants of the country round about them heard [these things], they came at the sound of the uproar and asked them, saying, "What is this commotion which hath "suddenly come upon you? And what is the cause thereof?" And they said, "We do not know, but we have a suspicion, "we confess, of a certain man who is a Christian, and who "liveth on the side of the mountain, and it is right that we "should make entreaty to him." Then the inhabitants bore testimony, saying, "Yea, this blessed man did pass through "this country," and the priests begged them that they would help them at once; and, wishing [to know] whether they were able to move the idol from his place, they brought oxen to draw him along, but the idol and the oxen became like unto beings who had been fixed there a long time. Now when there was not a (successful) issue to their undertaking on any side whatsoever, and no [help could be obtained] by entreating the people round about them, the priests of the idol sent to the holy man, saying that, if they were delivered from that place, they would turn aside from all their error. And when all these things had been told to the blessed man by a message, that servant of God came down quickly, and prayed over them, and released them from that restraint; and straightway they all followed him, and they believed in the Redeemer, the Lord of all, Who doeth wonderful things, and they straightway delivered the idol over to burn in the fire, and they became converted, and were baptized, and were added to the number of the sons of the Church, and many of them live to this very day in the habitation of the monastery. Thereupon the report of

Digitized by Google

this old man went forth quickly into every place, and so many people believed on the Lord through him that in those borders henceforward no man gave himself the name of "heathen."

And after a short time two villages quarrelled and fought over certain fields, and as soon as the blessed man heard thereof he went down to them quickly, that he might sow peace between them; now the men who were on one side would not be persuaded by his words, but they disputed them for the reason that they were relying, forsooth, upon a certain mighty man, who was a captain of a band of thieves, and he stood up on their behalf in the struggle. And when the holy Apollo saw this man disputing fiercely, he said unto him, "If thou wilt be "persuaded by me, O my beloved, I will beseech our Lord to "forgive thee thy sins"; and when the man heard these words, without any hesitation whatsoever he threw his weapons away from him, and fell at the knees of the holy man, and he turned his partisans back into their houses. And when there was peace between them, and every man had departed to his place this famous captain of thieves clung to the blessed man, and entreated him and openly demanded from him [the fulfilment of] his promise; and the holy man took him with him to the desert, and entreated him, and admonished him to be patient and said unto him, "God is able to grant thee this thing."

And when it was night the two men saw in a dream that they were standing before the throne in heaven, and the two men also saw that the angels and the righteous men were worshipping God; and when they also knelt down on their knees, and bowed down on their faces before Christ, the voice of God came to them, saying, "What connexion hath light "with darkness? Or what portion hath the believer with the "unbeliever? (2 Corinthians vi, 14, 15.) Why then doth this "murderer stand with this righteous man, seeing that he is "not worthy of this sight? But, O man, get thee gone, for "behold, this little one among thy sons who hath taken refuge "in thee shall be saved because of thee." Now they saw and also heard many other things which the mouth must not dare to utter nor the ear to hear. And when they woke up they related the dream to those [who were with them], and those who heard how exceedingly glorious were the stories of these men [marvelled] that two men were able to relate one and the same dream. Now the captain of thieves remained in the monastery with the monks, and led therein a life of ascetic excellence until his departure from the world; and from being a wolf he had turned into a simple lamb; and in him was fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah (xi, 6, 7), who said, "The wolf

Digitized by Google

"and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat "chopped straw like the ox."

And we saw also there Ethiopians who lived with the monks, and they excelled to such a degree in the ascetic life that in them were fulfilled the words which are said in the Book, "Kûsh (Ethiopia) shall deliver the hand unto God" (Psalm lxviii, 31).

And on another occasion when [the heathen] were arming against the Christians because of [a dispute concerning] the boundaries of certain territories, the blessed Apollo came to make peace between them. Now a certain chief of the force of the heathen was boasting and saying, "There can never be "peace until death," and the blessed man said unto him, "According to thy word even so let it be, for no man on "either side shall die except thyself; and the earth shall not "be thy grave, but the bellies of wild beasts." And it came to pass that the man died, and in the morning his body was found, having been torn to pieces by vultures and hyenas; and when the conclusion of the matter was known they gave thanks, and believed in Christ, saying, "This man is certainly a "prophet."

Now the dwelling-place of the blessed Apollo was formerly in a cave, with five brethren who had been converted by him in the desert before he left the wilderness. And when the Easter Festival came, and they had performed the service of God in the cave, they made ready to eat whatsoever food they had; now their food consisted of a small quantity of dried bread and pickled vegetables. And the blessed Apollo said unto them, "O my sons, if we are believers and true servants "of Christ, each one of us, let us entreat God to give us what- "soever He willeth to eat"; and they devoted their whole petition to this object, despising themselves as men who were unworthy of this gracious gift. And when the blessed man had prayed with a joyful countenance, and had made an end of his prayer, and they had all said, "Amen," they found there in the night certain men standing by the door of the cave, and the men were strangers, whom no man knew, and they said concerning themselves that they had come from a far country. And they had brought with them from that country many things of which the brethren had never heard, and which existed not in the land of Egypt, that is to say, various kinds of fruits from Paradise; grapes, and pomegranates, and figs, and nuts, and almonds, which at that period did not exist [in Egypt], and honey in the comb, and a box of milk (*or* butter), and dates of huge size, and ten loaves of bread which were still hot; and the men who had brought these things gave them

Digitized by Google

unto them under the pretence that they had been sent by a great and rich and honourable man, and then they returned to their own country with the greatest haste and diligence. Then the holy men partook of what had been sent to them, and the food was sufficient [to last them] until Pentecost. And whilst they were wondering and saying, "Verily, these "have been sent unto us by God," one of the monks who were with him entreated the blessed Apollo that he might offer up a prayer for him to be worthy of the gracious gift, and having offered up a prayer on his behalf, the graces of humility, and of graciousness (*or* happiness), and of patient endurance, were bestowed upon him to such a degree that many marvelled at the excellence of the humility which he possessed. And the fathers related to us stories of the wonderful and mighty works which he performed, and many brethren testified concerning the miracles [which he wrought].

And a short time afterwards there was a great famine in the district of Thebaïs, and when the peoples of the country who were dwelling in that place heard that the monks who were with the blessed man were living without labour, they gathered themselves together, and came to him with their wives and children, and asked him for alms and for food, and he, like a man who did not fear that peradventure food would be wanting for himself and those who were with him, gave unto all those who had come to him that which was sufficient for each one of them from day to day. And when three baskets full of bread were all that remained, and the famine was still severe, he commanded and they brought these baskets into the midst [of them, and he found that] they would only suffice for one day's food for the monks and those who were with them; and in the presence of all the crowds, who were listening, and the whole brotherhood of monks, he said with a loud voice, "Is not the hand of the Lord able to increase [these]? "For thus saith the Holy Spirit, 'Bread shall not be wanting "'in these baskets until we all eat new bread.'" And all those who were near him said, "In very truth the bread was suffi- "cient to feed them for four months." And he was in the habit of doing thus from time to time in respect of oil and wheat, until Satan came and said unto him, "Peradventure, "thou art Elijah, or another of the Prophets, or one of the "Apostles that thou darest to act thus?" Then the blessed man said to him, "And why should I not act thus? Were not "the holy Prophets and the blessed Apostles men? And have "not [the Fathers] handed down [to us] the tradition that "they used to do such things? Or, is our Lord akin to them "at one time and remote from them at another? Therefore, at

Digitized by Google

"all times God is able to do things like unto these, and there "is nothing which is difficult for Him. If then God is good, "why art thou, O corrupt one, evil?"

Why now should I not describe the things which we saw with our own eyes? Now at the time when the five hundred brethren were about to refresh themselves the baskets came in full, and when the brethren had eaten and were filled from them, by the blessing of the blessed man they went forth still being full.

And it is right that we should describe another miracle which we saw there and marvelled at. Now when we three brethren went to visit the blessed Apollo, and the brethren saw us from where he was, they recognized us by the descriptions which they had heard from him of our journey, and they met us with gladness and sang songs of praise, for such is the custom with all the brethren. And having bowed down with their faces to the ground, they rose up, and gave us the salutation of peace, and said to their companions, "Behold, the brethren of whom our "Abbâ spake unto us three days ago have come to us," for he had said, "Behold, after three days three brethren will come "to you from Jerusalem." And some of the brethren were going before us, rejoicing and singing Psalms, and some followed behind answering them, until we arrived at the place where the blessed man was; and when our father Apollo heard the sound of their singing, he also came forth to meet us, according to the custom of the brethren, and when he saw us, he was the first to bow low to the ground, and he stretched out his hand, and rose up, and kissed us, and he led us in, and prayed, and washed our feet with his own hands, and pressed us to rest ourselves and to partake of food, for it was his custom to do this to all the brethren who came to visit him.

Now the brethren who were with him did not approach their food straightway, but they first of all partook of the Eucharist of Christ together; and they used to do this daily at the season of prayer at the ninth hour, and afterwards they ate their meal; whilst they were sitting at meat they learned his commandments until the time for sleep, and afterwards some of them would go forth into the desert and repeat the Scriptures by heart, the whole night long, whilst others would take their meal with him and would glorify God until the morning. And we ourselves saw that such men began to sing the Psalms and hymns of praise in the evening, and that they continued to sing them until the day broke. Now many of them used to come down at the time of the ninth hour and receive the Eucharist, and then return to their places, and the spiritual food alone would be sufficient for them till the ninth hour on the

Digitized by Google

day following; even thus did they, and many of them would continue to do thus, and remain without [ordinary] food for several days at a time, even from one Sunday to another. And we observed their joy in the desert, with which nothing on the earth, and no bodily delight, can be compared, for there was among them no man who was sorry or afflicted with grief, and if any man was found to be in affliction, our father Apollo knew the cause thereof, and was able to make known to him the secret thoughts of his mind. And he would say unto such an one, "It is not seemly for us to be afflicted at our redemption, "for we are those who are about to inherit the kingdom of "heaven; but let the Jews weep, and let the men of iniquity "be in mourning, and let the righteous rejoice. For they have "their happiness in earthly things, and they cultivate the "things of earth, and why should not we, who are worthy of "the blessed hope, rejoice always, even according to the en- "couraging words of the blessed Apostle Paul, who said unto "us, 'Rejoice in our Lord always, and pray at all seasons, and "in everything give thanks" (1 Thessalonians v, 16-18).

And what shall a man say concerning the grace which dwelt in the words of the blessed Apollo, and concerning his other glorious qualities, about which, because of their great number, we keep silence, and concerning which we have heard from others? Now he discussed many things concerning strenuousness in ascetic deeds together with us, and exhorted us how to receive the brethren, and he told us that when the brethren came to visit us it was seemly to bow low before them, "Not," he said, "that we bow down before them, but before the God "Who is in them. [When] thou seest thy brother, thou seest "Christ. The custom of urging the brethren from time to time "to come in and rest and refresh themselves we have derived "from Abraham, and also from Lot, who pressed the angels "[to stay with him]. And if it be possible it is fitting that the "monks should partake of the Mysteries of Christ each day, "and whosoever shall make himself to be remote from them "shall remove himself from God; and whosoever shall do this "shall receive our Redeemer always. For the voice of our "Life-giver saith thus, 'He who eateth My Body, and drink- "'eth My Blood, remaineth in Me and I in him,' and it is very "helpful to monks to remember the Passion of our Redeemer at "all times, because by the remembrance thereof which we thus "keep we become worthy of the forgiveness of our sins always. "Therefore it is right that we should always make ourselves "worthy to receive the holy Mysteries of our Redeemer.

"Let then no man remit the well-known fasts which have "been ordained unless it be for some cause [which] worketh

Digitized by Google

"tribulation. We keep the fast on the fourth day of the week "because on that day the Jews plotted to betray our Lord, "and also on the eve of the Sabbath because on that day He "was crucified, and he who remitteth these becometh one of "the betrayers and a Jew; but if thy brother cometh to thee "during a period of fasting, and is in need of refreshment, "although the time be unseasonable, set before him thy table "[and let him eat] by himself, and if he wisheth not this, "constrain him not, for this is an universal tradition [of hospi- "tality]." And the blessed man blamed severely those who wore woven stuffs and dressed their hair in such a way that they would be seen by children of men to be fasting, and he called them seekers after the vainglory of men, for monks should humble their bodies by fasting and abstinence, and should work the things which are good in secret; and those who do not these things shew themselves only unto the multitude.

And what shall one say concerning all the teachings of the blessed man, which resembled his life and deeds, and which it is impossible for a man to write down, or even to mention in a fitting manner? On several occasions we conversed together the whole Sabbath, and when he was escorting us [on our way back] he said to us, "May ye have peace one with one another, "and let no man separate himself from his companion on the "way." Then he said to the brethren who were with him, "Who among you is willing of his own accord to go and escort "[these] brethren on the way to the other fathers?" And, with but very few exceptions, all the brethren sought anxiously to go with us and to escort us on our way; but the holy man Apollo selected three of them, men who were mighty in their ascetic labours, and understanding in their speech. Now they had been instructed in the languages of the Greeks, and the Romans, and the Egyptians, and, sending them with us, he commanded them not to leave us until we had seen all the fathers whom we wished to see, and had rejoiced in holding converse with them. Now it would have been impossible for a man to see all the fathers, even in the whole period of his life. Then he blessed us, and sent us away, saying, "May the Lord "bless thee out of Zion, and may ye see the prosperity of Jeru- "salem all the days of your life" (Psalm cxxviii, 5).

And as we were journeying along our way through the desert, at the season of noon, we suddenly saw the marks of a monster serpent which had been lying like a log of wood on the sand, and we were afraid, but the brethren who were with us bade us be of good courage, saying, "Fear ye not, but "come and see us slay him by faith For we have slain with "our own hands many snakes, and asps, and vipers, so that

Digitized by Google

"there may be fulfilled that which is written, 'I have given to "'you power to trample under foot serpents and scorpions, and "'all the power of the Enemy'" (St. Luke x, 19). Now we, because of our terror, begged the brethren that we might go straight on our journey, and might not follow the trail of the serpent, but one of them left us, and went forth and wandered about tracking the creature by the marks which it had left behind it, until at length he stood over its hole, and he besought us to go and see it, and the brethren who were with us encouraged us so to do, and we went there feeling afraid. Then a certain brother came to meet us, and led us to the monastery, and he said to us, "Ye are not able to resist the attack of the "serpent, for he is fifteen cubits long, and, moreover, I have "never seen a serpent larger than this one"; and conformably to his words we remained in our places. And the brother [who had found the serpent's hole] went and begged that brother to let us go and slay the serpent, and blamed us because of our little faith, but he turned him back, and then took all of us into his monastery, and made us rest therein, and he related to me the following story:—

In the times which are past a certain holy man, whose name was Ammon, used to dwell in this monastery, and he it was who converted me, and the thieves used to vex him, for they stole his apparel and his food, and by reason of their vexatious attacks he went forth and departed into the desert; and he brought two great serpents and commanded them to guard the door of his abode, and when the thieves came according to their custom, they saw the serpents and marvelled, and, by reason of their fear, they fell down on their faces upon the ground. Then, having gone forth and seen the thieves, the blessed man spake unto them, and reviled them, saying, "Observe how much worse ye are than the serpents! These "creatures are, for God's sake, obedient to our command, but "ye are neither afraid of God, nor do ye hold His servants in "reverence"; and he took them into his dwelling, and fed them, and admonished them, and told [them] that they ought to change their mode of life. And straightway they repented and took up their habitation in a monastery, and they excelled more than many in spiritual works, until at length they also were able to work miracles.

Now on another occasion the inhabitants of that country came to the blessed Ammon, and made complaints to him about another serpent, and they entreated him to destroy it off their land because it used to slay their sheep and cattle; but he, as one who was not able to help them, dismissed them, and they went away in sorrow. And in the morning he rose up, and went

Digitized by Google

to the place over which that serpent used to pass, and he knelt down there in prayer; now when the serpent came to pass by there, according to his wont, and saw the blessed man, he blew upon him, and hissed, and darted forward to strike him three times. Then the blessed man said unto him boldly, "May "Christ, the Son of God, Who is about to destroy the great "serpent, destroy thee also"; and immediately that he had uttered the word, the serpent burst asunder, and all his gall and blood came forth. And when the inhabitants of the country came and saw the serpent, they marvelled, and at the command of the blessed man, because of the stench, they heaped up the sand upon the serpent, but without the word of Abbâ Ammon they would not have approached the reptile, even though he was dead.

And on one occasion, whilst a certain youth was pasturing sheep, it happened that he saw that serpent, and he was smitten with wonder, and threw himself down in the field without saying a word; and his kinsfolk went forth to seek him, and they found him at eventide in a wretched and terror-stricken state, and they brought him to the blessed Ammon, and told him that they did not know the cause of his condition, and were ignorant of what had happened unto him; and the blessed man prayed, and anointed him with oil, and the boy was healed, and related what had happened to him, and for this reason especially the blessed man was constrained to destroy that serpent.

Here end the Triumphs of the Blessed Apollo and Ammon

Chapter X. The Triumphs of Abba Apellen

AND we saw also another Abbâ whose name was Apellen, and he had persevered in the sternest and most austere ascetic labours with the brethren who were by his side, from his youth up; and on several occasions he carried fire in his bosom, and stirred up the brethren to give a manifestation also of the miracles [which] they could [work], and he said unto them, "If ye are, in very truth, servants of God, "make manifest forthwith glorious miracles." And whensoever he was by himself in the desert, and the desire to eat honey rose up in him, straightway he would find a honeycomb on a rock, and he used to say, "Get thee gone from me, O evil "desire, for it is written, 'Ye shall walk in the spirit, and ye "'shall not perform the lust of the flesh" (Galatians v, 16); and then he would leave the honeycomb [on the rock] and depart. And again, when he had fasted for three weeks in the desert, and he found some fruit which had been blown down,

Digitized by Google

he answered and said, "I will neither taste nor touch it, lest "I make to offend my brother, that is to say, myself. For it is "written that 'man liveth not by bread alone'" (St. Matthew iv, 4). Then he fasted another week also, and he slept a little, and an angel came unto him in a dream, and said unto him, "Rise up, and take as much as thou canst, and eat [it]." Then he rose up, and looked round about him, and he saw a fountain of water, and roots, which were exceedingly to be desired, were growing round it; and when he had drunk [some] water, and had eaten [some] green herbs, he said, "There is nothing "so sweet and pleasant as this anywhere." Now he found in that country a little cave, and he dwelt therein for a few days without any food, and when he began to feel an hungered, he knelt down, and prayed, and straightway he found his food placed by his side, that is to say, hot bread, and olives, and fruits of various kinds.

And from time to time he used to visit the brethren who lived near him in the desert, and he admonished them frequently. On one occasion he was very anxious to go to his own desert, and to carry there such things as were necessary for him of the blessings (i.e., gifts) which the brethren had given him, and as he was going along the way he saw some goats feeding and he said unto them, "In the Name of Jesus Christ, "let one of you carry this load"; and straightway one of them came, and he placed his hands upon [its back], and bowed himself, and sat upon it, and he arrived at his cave in one day.

On another occasion the blessed man spread out his bread in the sun, and the wild animals came according to their custom to the fountain of water [where it was], and any animal which approached the bread died.

And on another occasion he went to certain monks on the first day of the week, and he saw that they were ceasing to perform the service of the Holy Mysteries, and he blamed them, saying, "Why do ye not perform your service?" And they said unto him, "Because no priest hath come unto us from over the river"; and he said unto them, "I will go after him, "and call him." Then they made answer unto him, saying, "It is impossible for any man to cross over the river, both on "account of its depth, and because of the crocodiles which "destroy human beings"; but he went a little distance and came to the place where the river was usually crossed, and he seated himself fearlessly upon the back of a crocodile, and passed over [to the other side]. And having gone and found the priest, he entreated him not to neglect the brethren, and when the priest saw that Apellen was dressed in old and ragged garments, he marvelled at his humility, and at the

Digitized by Google

poorness of his apparel; and he clung to him, and followed him to the cave. Now when they came [to the river] and found no boat to take them over, the blessed man Apellen cried out with a loud voice to that crocodile, which straightway heard him and came to him, and it made ready its back before the holy man to sit upon; and the blessed man entreated the priest to sit with him and pass over to the other side, but when the priest saw the crocodile, he was afraid, and he returned to his own place. And the brethren, who were dwelling in the mountain on the other side of the river, feared when they saw the blessed man sitting in the water on the back of the crocodile; and as soon as he had crossed over on to dry land, and had come up [out of the water], he slew the crocodile, saying, "Death is better for thee than punishment for the souls which thou hast already slain, and wouldst slay"; and the animal died straightway.

And Apellen remained with the brethren three days, and he sat and taught them the commandments, and the thoughts which one of them had secretly he made clear and plain before them, saying, "This man is vexed by lust, and this man by "love of vainglory, and this by evil dislike, and this by pride, "and this by arrogance, and this by envy, and this by boast-"ing, and this by anger, and this by greediness, and this by "avarice; and this man is humble, and this man is straight, "and these men are praiseworthy and good, and these are bad "and rebellious." And he admonished [them] and shewed forth [these things], and when the brethren heard them they marvelled, for in very truth it was even as [he had said].

And he also said, "Prepare for us a meal of garden herbs, "for many brethren are coming to us," and when they had prepared them, the brethren came, and they saluted each other; and one of them entreated him to let him be with him in the desert, and the blessed man said unto him, "Thou art "not able to endure the temptations of devils," and at length the brother said, "I can bear everything." Then having received him Abbâ Apellen commanded him to dwell in a cave by the side of him. But the devils came by night and sought to strangle him. Now first of all they troubled him sorely with filthy thoughts, and that brother fled, and departed from the cave. And when he had shewn all these things to the blessed Apellen, the Abbâ set out and made for him an abode at a distance, and he commanded them to there live without fear.

And on a certain occasion when they were in the cave they lacked bread, and an angel in the form of a brother brought them food, and once, when ten of the brethren had been seek-

Digitized by Google

ing him by another way, and had found him after they had been fasting for seven days, he commanded them to come in and to rest and refresh themselves in his cave; and when they reminded him about the food, he said unto them, "God is able to prepare for us food in the wilderness," and immediately an angel of God in the form of a beautiful youth stood and knocked at the door whilst they were praying; and they opened the door, and [found there] a youth carrying a large basket wherein were bread and olives, and they took it from him, and ate therefrom, and gave thanks unto God, and the youth removed himself from them. These and many other wonderful things were performed by the blessed Apellen.

Here end the Triumphs of Apellen

Chapter xj. The Triumphs of another Apollo, and of John, the dweller in the Desert

AND we also saw another holy man in the region of 'Or (*or* Akûr, i.e., Acre), whose name was also Apollo, who was a righteous man; his handicraft was originally that of a blacksmith, but he had been converted to the way of truth, and he laboured afterwards in the service of the brethren, and supplied their needs. And on one occasion Satan came unto him in the form of a woman, who appeared to be anxious to work in the service of the brethren, and the blessed man happened at the time to be working at his trade, and he took up the red-hot iron and thrust it into the woman's face, and burned it so severely that she shrieked out, and the brethren who were in the chambers heard her cries. And from that time forward the blessed man was able to hold red-hot iron in his hands without being hurt. And this man also received us, and gave us refreshment, and he related unto us the histories of the men who had lived with him in that country, and of those who still lived there, and said :—

There is in this desert one of our brethren whose name is John, who is now exceedingly old, and whose works of ascetic excellence are superior to those of all the other monks in the country. No man can find him at once, because he wandereth about from place to place in the desert. During the early period [of his life] he stood for three whole years praying, and he never sat down or went to sleep, but he was in the habit of snatching a little sleep as he stood. A certain priest used to bring him the Offering (i.e., sacramental bread) from Sunday to Sunday, and besides that he ate nothing. And one day the devil stood up in the form of a priest, and was exceedingly anxious to bring him a woman, but as soon as the blessed John had recognized him, he said unto him, "Out upon thee, O thou

Digitized by Google

"who art full of guile, thou father of all falsehood, thou enemy "of all righteousness! Wilt thou never cease to lead astray "the souls of Christians? And dost thou dare to trample under- "foot even the Holy Mysteries?" Then the Devil said unto him, "A very little more, and I should have been master over "thee in thy fall, for thus have I led many a man astray, and "I have driven him out of his mind and made him mad, but "when many holy men made supplication to God on his behalf "in their prayers, he came back to his senses." And having said these things unto him the Devil departed from him. Now the legs of the blessed man burst open because of standing over much upon them, and a discharge of water and pus ran from them; but the angel [of the Lord] drew nigh unto him and said, "The Lord shall be thy meat and the Holy Spirit thy drink, "and thou mayest be certain that this spiritual food shall suf- "fice for thee." And having healed his wounds he made him to pass from that place. Then the blessed man went about in the desert and fed himself upon roots, and he used to come Sunday by Sunday to his place and partake of the Holy [Offering].

Now a certain man who was paralysed wished to go to him and be healed, and immediately his legs touched the back of the ass which he was going to ride, through his faith only they were healed, before the holy man had offered up even a prayer on his behalf. On one occasion the holy man John begged the priest who ministered unto him to bring him a few palm leaves, as it were for pleasure, and he brought them to him, and the blessed man plaited them together; and the priest took some of the plaits and made a girth of them for his ass. Now there was a certain paralytic who wished to go to the blessed man and be healed, and he entreated the priest to carry him to him; and the priest took him and set him upon the ass, and immediately his legs touched the back of the ass which he was going to ride and the girth which the blessed man John had plaited, through his faith only they were healed, before the holy man had offered up even a prayer on his behalf. (Such is the story as told in another manuscript.) On another occasion he sent a gift (*or* blessing) to those who were ill, and immediately they had tasted it they were healed of their sicknesses.

And on another occasion it was revealed to him that some of the brethren of his monasteries were not upright in their lives and works; and he wrote an epistle to them all, and accused the elders of being negligent, and the brethren of running after adulation, and it was known that this really was so. And he wrote also to the fathers who were neglectful, and who held lightly the salvation of the brethren who were with them, and he told the others to amend their lives, and to make their

Digitized by Google

deeds better, and he revealed [to them] also how that a reward (*or* penalty) was laid up for both groups of them. And he called the others to perfection in the spiritual life and its works, and he reminded them that they must neglect the things which are visible, and follow after those which are invisible. "For it is "time that we shewed forth the manner of our life and the "works thereof, and it is meet that we should not pass the "whole period of our lives [as] children and youths, but we "must draw nigh unto the perfection of knowledge, and take "up our stand upon the majesty of [its] glory." These and many other things did our father, the holy man Apollo, relate to us concerning the blessed John, and we marvelled at the greatness thereof. Now we have not written them all down, not because they were not true, but because of the want of faith of various men; but we ourselves believe them to be true, and we are fully persuaded that they are so, because those who related unto us the wonderful things of his life and deeds had certainly seen them with their own eyes, and these men were both numerous and great.

Here end the Triumphs of Abba John and of Apollo who dwelt in the Desert

Chapter xij. The Triumphs of Abba Paphnutius, the Spiritual Merchant

AND we saw also the place of the dwelling of the blessed Paphnutius, a great and glorious man who had departed from this world, and had brought his life to a close but a very short time before in the district of Herakleia which is in Thebaïs; and concerning this man many men relate very many mighty things. For after he had performed great spiritual deeds, he entreated God to inform him which of the saints whose lives had been pleasing unto Him he resembled; and an angel appeared unto him and said, "Thou "art like such and such a singer who liveth in such and such "a city." Then the blessed man made his way to the singer with great zeal and diligence, and having found him, he asked him about his deeds, and made enquiries [concerning his life]. And the singer made answer unto him, telling him at the same time what was actually the truth, saying, "I am a sinner, and "a miserable wretch, and a whoremonger, and it is only a "short time ago since I gave up a life of theft and became as "I am." And when Paphnutius enquired of him, "What hast "thou done which is good?" he made answer unto him, saying, "I did not know that I had ever done anything good except "once. When I was a thief I saw a certain virgin of God "being forced by thieves, and she was nearly seduced, and

Digitized by Google

"I rescued her from them and carried her by night to the "city.

"And on another occasion I found a beautiful woman wan- "dering about in the desert, and she had fled from the men "of the company of the general and counsellor because of a "debt for taxes which her husband had incurred; and she was "crying to herself because of her troubles, and because she "was compelled to roam about and wander in the desert, and "when I saw her I asked her the cause of her weeping. And "she made answer unto me and said, 'My lord, ask me no "'questions, and make no enquiries about a miserable woman "'[like myself], but take me to be thine handmaiden, and carry "'me whithersoever thou pleasest. My husband oweth a debt "'of three hundred darics for taxes to the governor, and be- "'hold, during the whole of the past two years he hath been "'scourged and kept in prison; my three beloved children have "'been sold into slavery, and I myself have been seized on "'several occasions, and carried off and beaten cruelly, and "'[finally] I escaped and fled, and I have been cast forth from "'place to place. And now I am here wandering about in this "'desert, and behold, for the last three days I have eaten no- "'thing whatsoever.' Thereupon I had compassion upon the "woman, and I took her to my cave, and gave unto her three "hundred dînârs, and then I carried her off to the city so that "she might be able to free herself, and to redeem her children "and her husband."

Then the blessed Paphnutius made answer unto him, and said, "I do not know in myself that any such thing as this "hath been done by me, but thou must have heard concerning "my labours and that I am famous, for I have never passed "my life in negligence; now God revealed unto me concern- "ing thee and told me that thou wast not inferior to me in thy "works. Since the care which God hath for thee is not small, "even as He Himself hath shewn me, O brother, neglect not "thyself as if thou wert of no account." And immediately the singer cast away from him the reed pipe which he was holding in his hands, and he abandoned the songs which he used to sing to cheer the workmen, and he turned to the sweet words of the Holy Spirit, and he clung to Paphnutius and departed to the desert. And having passed three years in strenuous labour [there] he brought to an end the period of his life with praises and prayers, and with other works of ascetic excellence, and he travelled the road of the heavenly beings, and was numbered among the company of the holy ones and among the army of the righteous, and went to his rest.

And having despatched this man unto God with good and

Digitized by Google

glorious works, and since he had added excellence to his own labours, Paphnutius asked God again to inform him which of the saints he resembled. And again a divine voice came to him, and said, "Thou art like unto a certain chief of a village which "is near thee"; and straightway Paphnutius went down thereto, and when he had knocked at the door, the master of the house came nigh, as was his wont, to receive strangers, and he opened the door, and brought him inside, and he washed his feet, and set a table before him and entreated him to eat. And the blessed man asked him, saying, "Tell me, O man, "what fair deeds and actions thou doest, for, according to "what God hath made known to me, thou art more excellent "than many monks." Then the man said unto him concerning himself, "I am a sinner, and I am not worthy of the heaven "of the monks." And the blessed man having made enquiries of him persistently, the man answered and said unto him, "I "do not feel constrained overmuch to relate to thee the history "of my deeds, but since thou hast said, 'I have been sent by "'God', I will shew thee what I have done. Behold, for the "last thirty years I have kept myself away from my wife, "and three times only have I had intercourse with her; I have "three children by her, and they minister unto my affairs. "But to this very day I have never ceased to receive strangers, "and no man in my village can boast that he hath excelled "me in hospitality to strangers, and no poor man and no "stranger have ever departed from me with an empty hand, "or without having been suitably supplied by me with pro-"visions for the way. I have never neglected to comfort with "my gifts the poor man who hath been brought low. I have "never accepted the person of my son in judgement. The pos-"sessions of strangers have never entered my house. No strife "hath ever taken place near me which I have not ended peace-"fully. The members of my house have never been blamed for "the committal of abominable deeds, and my flocks and herds "have never drawn nigh to the fruits of strangers. I have "never sowed my fields except for the poor, and I have set "them aside for the pleasure of every man, and I have gather-"ed in that which remained over. I have never allowed the poor "man to be carried away by the rich man by force. I have "never made a man to grieve in [all] my life. And I have never "passed a decree of wickedness upon any man. These, ac-"cording to the will of God, I know within myself that I have "done."

And when the blessed Paphnutius heard the glorious character of the life and works of the man, he kissed him upon the head, and said unto him, "May the Lord bless thee out of Zion,

Digitized by Google

"and mayest thou look upon the prosperity of Jerusalem! "(Psalm cxxviii, 5.) For these things thou hast performed well, "but thou art lacking one of the prime virtues, that is to say, "the knowledge of the wisdom of God, which thou wilt not "be able to acquire without any labour whatsoever, for a man "must deny the world and himself, and must take up the "Cross of our Lord, and follow Him." And when that man had heard these things, straightway, without taking counsel with the children of his house, he clung to the blessed man, and went forth with him to the mountain. And when they had come to the bank of the river, and found that there was no boat to be seen, the blessed Paphnutius commanded that they should pass over it on foot, a thing which no man had ever done at this place because of the depth of the stream. And as they were passing over at that place, the water reached up to their backs; and when they had passed over, Paphnutius left him at the place in that country where he, the first one, went to his rest and completed [his life].

Now when he had gone from him a little way, Paphnutius entreated God that he might see which was the most excellent of these, and after the short period of three years, he saw angels carrying the soul of that man up to heaven, and praising God, and saying, "Blessed is the man in whom Thou hast "pleasure, and whom Thou bringest to dwell in Thy habita- "tion" (Psalm lxv, 4); and the righteous were also returning answer, and saying, "May the peace of those who love Thy "law increase" (Psalm cxix, 165); and Paphnutius knew that that man had filled full his measure.

And when he had continued in prayer, and had fasted for very long periods, he prayed to God and again entreated Him to shew him which of the saints he resembled, and again the Divine Voice said unto him, "Thou art like unto a merchant "who is seeking for beautiful pearls. But arise, and make no "long tarrying, for thou shalt meet a man who resembleth "thee." So the blessed man went down [from the mountain], and he saw a certain God-fearing Alexandrian merchant, who was trafficking with twenty thousand [pieces of] gold and three ships, and who had come down from the upper part of the Thebaïd, and he used to give all his possessions and merchandise to the poor, and to the brethren [and] monks, and he and his household used to take up ten sacks of garden herbs to the blessed man every year. Now when the blessed Paphnutius saw him, he said unto him, "What [meaneth] this, O my beloved?" And the merchant said unto him, "The fruits of my trafficking "are for the relief of the righteous, and I offer them unto God." Then the blessed man said unto him, "Wherefore is it that

Digitized by Google

"thou art not honoured by the same name as that which we "have?" And the merchant answered and said unto him, "I "confess that I have great anxiety so to be called"; and the blessed man said unto him, "How long wilt thou occupy thy- "self with such earthly things, and wilt not draw nigh unto "the things of heaven? Leave, even this very moment, such "things to others, and do thou cling to Christ in the things "which are [more] excellent, for after a little thou shalt depart "unto God."

Then the merchant with joy commanded the members of his household to distribute the remainder of his possessions among the poor, and he went up the mountain, and he confined himself to that place wherein the two men had been crowned, and he awaited God with prayers, and tears, and abundant fastings. And after a short time he also left his corruptible body, and became a son of the city of the heavenly beings. Now since Paphnutius had escorted this man also to heaven, he asked for death for himself also, after the manner of one who was not able to live the life of the upright and glorious deeds which are exalted in majesty; and an angel stood by his side, and said unto him, "Come now, O blessed old man, and take thy "rest in the everlasting tabernacles which God hath prepared "for the blessed, who stand there [waiting] to receive thee, "that is to say, the Prophets in their companies, and the Apos- "tles in their grades; these are they whom thou resemblest. "I did not reveal this unto thee earlier, lest through being "exalted [overmuch] thou mightest lose somewhat of thine "honour." Now after these words Paphnutius lived one day only. And when all the things which had been done by him had been narrated in the presence of the elders who had come unto him through a revelation, he delivered up his soul, and those same priests, after his death, plainly saw him carried upwards with the companies of the saints, and with angels who were praising God.

Here end the Triumphs of Paphnutius

Chapter xiij. The Triumphs of the Blessed Eulogius

AND we saw also another mighty elder whose name was Eulogius, who entreated God to give him at the time when he was about to offer up the Offering such knowledge that he might be able to know the mind of each and every one of the monks who drew nigh to [partake of] the Holy Things; and on several occasions this man saw monks prepared to draw nigh to the Holy and Glorious Mysteries, and restrained them, saying, "How is it that ye dare to draw nigh "to the Holy Mysteries [seeing that] ye have evil minds?"

Digitized by Google

And to another of them also he said, "This night thou hast "pondered in thy mind about filthy fornication." And to another he said, "Thou hast thought in thy mind that whether a man be "righteous or wicked there is nothing to hinder thee from draw-"ing nigh to the goodness of God." And to another he said, "Thou "hast had doubt in thy mind whether the Holy Things are able "to sanctify those who draw nigh to them; therefore keep thou "away for a little from the Holy Mysteries, and repent with all "thy soul, so that thou mayest obtain remission of [thy] sins, and "thou mayest be held worthy of association with Christ. For "if ye do not cleanse your thoughts before ye draw nigh [to "them] ye will be unable to [obtain forgiveness]."

Here endeth the Triumph of Eulogius

Chapter xiv. The Triumph of Isidore

AND we also saw in Thebaïs the monastery of the blessed Isidore, which was a strong building with a high brick wall, and in it dwelt thousands of monks; in it also were a well, and a garden, and whatsoever was required for the food of its inhabitants. None of the monks ever went forth from the monastery, for they had as a doorkeeper a certain elder who would neither permit any man to depart, nor to come in, except him who had determined in his mind to remain there until the day of his death, and never to leave. And this doorkeeper had a small house by the side of the gate wherein he received such strangers as came [by night], and in the morning he would give them a blessing (i.e., a gift) and dismiss them in peace. Now there were two of the elders who used to go outside the building, and they did so to sell the work of the brethren, and to bring in such things as were required by them. And the elder who was always at the door was in the habit of saying that all the monks who dwelt within the building were so holy that all of them could work miracles, and that it was impossible for any one of them to fall into sickness before the day of his departure from the world, and that whensoever the end of any of them was coming he knew it beforehand, and told all the the brethren about it, and then he lay down and died.

Here end the Triumphs of Isidore

Chapter xv. The Triumph of Dioscurus

AND we saw also another holy man in Thebaïs, whose name was Dioscurus, and he was the Abbâ of one hundred monks. And when the monks were about to draw nigh to the gracious gift of the Mysteries, he would say to them, "Peradventure there is a man among you who "dareth to draw nigh to the Holy Things, in whose mind the "lust for women hath risen up during the night. The nocturnal

Digitized by Google

"pollution which is not of the thoughts, is a customary though "involuntary emission, and it is not the result of desire, for "it is a natural result, and is derived from the actual substance "of the body; therefore we are not guilty of sin. On the other "hand, the filthy vision proceedeth from the mind, and the evil "desire is the cause of the same." And Dioscurus used to say, "It is right that a monk should be superior to the law of "nature, and that the smallest impurity whatsoever should not "be in his body; but he should humble himself in such wise "that owing to much fasting the physical matter of the body "may not be able to increase. And it is not right for a monk to "approach lusts, for if he doth, in what respect are we superior "to the men of this world whom we see in several cases curb-"ing their lusts, either for the sake of the health of the body, "or for other befitting causes? How much more, then, is it "fitting for a monk to take care concerning the health of his "mind, and of his soul, and of his spirit?"

Here endeth the Triumph of Dioscurus

Chapter xvj. The Triumphs of Abba Copres and of the Blessed Petarpemotis

AND again we saw another holy man whose name was Copres, and he dwelt in the desert, and was the archimandrite of fifty men; he used to perform many mighty deeds, for he could cure many sicknesses and diseases of various kinds, and he cast out devils, and drove away evil spirits, and did other wonderful works, some of which we saw with our own eyes. Now when he saw us, he saluted us, and prayed over us, and washed our feet, and he began to ask us questions about the world and the affairs thereof, but we entreated him to relate to us the story of his life and works first of all, and how it came to pass that God gave him such gifts, and by what kind of works he had become worthy of the same. And the blessed man, in whose mind there existed not the smallest degree of pride, began to tell us about his own life and works, and also about those of the great, and wonderful, and perfect fathers, the examples of whose lives and works he strove both to imitate and to emulate; and he answered and said unto us:—O my sons, my manner of life and my mourning are not to be compared with those of the early fathers.

For there was here before me a certain man, whose name was Petarpemôtîs, who was first and chief of all the monks who dwelt in this place; it was he who first made manifest (i.e., wore) this garb, and it was he who invented it. Now formerly he had been a thief, and a plunderer of the tombs of the heathen, and he had a great reputation for committing

Digitized by Google

wickednesses of every kind connected with robbery and theft, and the following matter was the cause of [his finding] life. He once went to rob the religious house of a certain blessed woman who dwelt therein chastely, and without knowing it he found himself upon the roof of her house; and being unable to go into her house and plunder it, because the roofs of the house were as flat as the ground and they had no rain water pipes [leading thereto], for there is no rain in Thebaïs, and there was no place on the roof whereby he could enter the house, or by which he could leave it again, and he was neither able to descend nor to escape from it, he [was obliged to] stay there until the morning, and he wondered meanwhile in his mind what he should do until the daylight came. And whilst he was there he sank into a light sleep, and he saw in the form of a man an angel who said unto him, "Devote thou not such close attention, and diligence, and watching to thy life of thievery. If thou "wishest to change thy wickedness into a life of good deeds "thou must serve with the service of angels before Christ the "King, and thou shalt receive from Him this power and authority." And immediately he had heard [these things] he received [them] from him with gladness, and he who had appeared unto him in the form of an angel shewed him a company of monks, and commanded that he should have dominion over them.

And when he woke up from his slumber, he saw the nun standing before him, and saying unto him, "O man, what "doest thou here? And what is thy report? Whence comest "thou? Who art thou?" He saith unto her, "I know not, but "I beseech thee to shew me the church." And when she had shewn him the church, he went and fell down before the feet of the elders, and he entreated them that he might become a Christian, so that he might find an occasion for repentance. Now when the elders knew who he was, they marvelled at him, and they began to admonish him that henceforth he must not be a slayer of men; and he begged them that he might [be allowed] to learn the Psalms, and when he had learned three verses of the first Psalm, he said, "These are sufficient for me "to learn." And he tarried with the elders for three days, and straightway he went forth from them, and departed into the desert. And when he had lived [there] for five weeks without bread, a man came to him carrying bread and water, and he entreated him to eat thereof and to refresh himself. Now Petarpemôtîs lived there for three years in prayer and tears, and he fed himself upon the roots which were in the desert, and wandered about eating them; and after three years he returned to the church, and repeated before the fathers the

Digitized by Google

belief and all the doctrine of the Church, and although he had never learned letters, he could repeat the Scriptures by heart. Then the elders marvelled at him and wondered how a man of his kind could have attained such a degree of learning and asceticism, and they gave him further light in respect of speech and learning, and when they had bestowed baptism upon him, they entreated him to remain with them. And he tarried with them for seven days more, and he went forth and departed to the desert, where he lived for a further period of seven years; and this blessed man was held to be worthy of a constant [gift of] bread, which was found every Sunday in his pillow-cloth. When he had prayed and given thanks, he would partake thereof, and then he would fast again until the following Sunday without in any way suffering.

And he came back again from that wilderness with works of spiritual excellence, and he departed from the desert, and made manifest his rule of abstinence and self-denial, and he incited many to follow after him. Now there drew nigh unto him a certain young man who entreated him that he might become his disciple, and having received him Petarpemôtîs dressed him in the way that he himself was dressed, that is to say, he wore a shirt with short sleeves, and an outer garment, and he placed a cowl upon his head, and tied a napkin about his loins, and he showed him the way and the rules of a life of mourning, and he trained him [in the life and deeds of the monks], and he placed a cape on his shoulders.

Now the custom of the blessed man was as follows: When a Christian died he remained with him the whole night long in vigil and prayer, and he would reverently dress him and bury him. And when that disciple saw him dressing the Christians who died in this way, he said unto him, "Wilt thou also "dress me in this manner when I die, O master?" And he said unto him, "I will dress thee in this fashion, and I will wrap "thee in a shroud until thou shalt say unto me, 'I have "'enough.'" Now after no great length of time that disciple died, and the words of his master were indeed fulfilled, for Petarpemôtîs dressed him reverently in the fear of God, as was right, and he said in a loud voice before all those who were standing [there], "Have I dressed thee well, O my son, "or dost thou still lack anything?" And the dead man sent forth a voice, and they all heard it, saying, "Thou hast "dressed me, O my father, thou hast fulfilled thy promise, "and hast completed thine undertaking"; and wonder laid hold upon all those who were standing there, and they glorified God. Then the blessed man departed into the desert according to his custom, and he went that he might occupy himself in

Digitized by Google

his daily round of devotion, even as a man who fleeth from vainglory.

And after these things he went forth from the desert and departed to work for the brethren who were his disciples, and who were sick; now one of these was nigh unto death, and this God had revealed unto him, and the day wherein he would pass away was nigh, and the village was far away. And because he did not wish to enter therein by night (for he suspected evil), and because he would fulfil the word of our Lord, which said, "Walk "in the light whilst ye have the light, and he who walketh in "the light shall not be tripped up" (St. John xii, 35), when he saw that the day was declining, he answered and said unto [the sun], "Tarry thou on the path of thy course, and wait for me "a short time until I can come to the village"; and the sun stood still for a while, and went not down, and remained in his place, and he neither set nor went to rest until Petarpemôtîs had entered the village. Now this appearance was known unto all those who dwelt in the village, and they all ran, and stood still, and gazed for a long time at the sun, which set not. And when they saw Petarpemôtîs coming from the desert, they asked him, "What is the meaning of the sign of this sun which goeth "not down?" Then he said unto them, "Do ye not remember "the word of our Lord which said, 'If ye have in you faith like "'unto a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall work miracles which "'shall be greater and more excellent than these'?" (St. Matthew xvii, 20.) Now when they heard these things great fear laid hold upon them, and they knew immediately that it was he who had held back the sun, and large numbers of them remained with him and became his disciples.

And he went into the house of one of his disciples who had been sick, and found that he was dead, and he drew nigh to the bier whereon the dead man was lying, and he prayed, and kissed him, and said unto him, "Dost thou desire to depart "to God now, O my son, or wouldst thou remain alive in the "body?" And the dead man sat up, and made answer unto him, saying, "It is better for me to leave the body that I may "be with Christ, for I have no desire to live in the body"; and the blessed man said unto him, "Then die in peace, my son, "and make entreaty before God on my behalf that thou may-"est go unto Him." And immediately the blessed man had said these words the man died on his bier. Then fear fell upon all those who were standing there, and they said, "Verily this "is a man of God"; and when the blessed man had dressed him carefully (*or* well), he kept vigil the whole night [by him] and prayed and sang Psalms, and [then] he buried him in a proper manner.

Digitized by Google

And Petarpemôtîs went and visited another brother who was sick, and he saw that he was dying with difficulty, and that he was troubled in his mind; now his mind was rebuking him, and his conscience was pricking him because of his wickednesses. And the blessed man said unto him, "How canst thou go to "God seeing that thou art prepared to carry with thee the "accusation of neglect of thy works, that is to say, lax inten- "tions in respect of thy manner of life?" Then that brother begged and entreated him to pray to God on his behalf, that there might be given unto him a little longer period of life so that he might amend his ways and deeds. And he answered and said unto him, "Now that thy life hath come to an end "thou askest for time for repentance! What hast thou been "doing all thy life long? Wast thou not able to heal thy "blemishes? Yet thou hast added others to thy negligence!" But the man made supplication the more to him, and begged and entreated him to pray that he might rise up [again from his bed of sickness]. And Petarpemôtîs said unto him, "If thou "wilt not add sins to thy sins, but wilt seek with all thy soul "to repent, I will entreat God on thy behalf, for He is good "and merciful, and ask Him to grant thee time and life that "thou mayest pay back all that thou owest." And when he had prayed he said unto him, "God hath granted thee to live in the "body for three years longer, but only through earnest sup- "plication (?)"; then he took him by the hand and raised him up from his sickness straightway, and he led him away with him and carried him off to the desert, where he lived with him for three years.

And when the three years were ended, he brought him back to his village, and set him before God, not as an ordinary man merely, but as a messenger who had been chosen by God, and they all marvelled at his works. And when the brethren were gathered together to him, Petarpemôtîs set that brother in the midst, and he narrated unto them the doctrine of life the whole night long; and suddenly he sank into a slumber, wherein he departed from this life to our Lord. Then the blessed man dressed him for burial, and he accompanied him to the grave with prayers.

Now they used to say that very many wonderful works were wrought by him, and they testified that on several occasions he walked upon the waters. And besides this he was once found in an upper chamber with the brethren, although the doors had been shut, for he had come in to them in the air by the power of angels. And they also said that he obtained from God everything which he asked for, and that he had the power to go whithersoever he pleased and whensoever he pleased,

Digitized by Google

without trouble. And the blessed Petarpemôtîs once related to the brethren a story of how, on one occasion when he had gone out from the desert, he saw in his dream as if he had been taken up into heaven, and he saw there the good things that were prepared for the monks, and that the mouth of man could not describe, and that could not be uttered thereby. And he also said, "I saw Paradise with the eyes of this body, and "I saw there the many multitudes of the saints, and I tasted "the fruits of Paradise." And he produced a proof of his assertion, that he might shew that the things which had been said by him were true, for he gave his disciples to eat [of the fruit of] a great, and marvellous, and extraordinarily large fig-tree, which possessed an odour that was different from any other smell in the world.

And whilst this holy man Copres was relating unto us all these things concerning Petarpemôtîs, he said, "I have seen "in my youth [portions] of that fig-tree in the hands of his "disciples, and I kissed them, and wonder at the odour there-"of laid hold upon me; and the tree remained with his dis-"ciples for many years as a manifestation [of the truth of his "words] unto many. For it was great beyond measure, and it "had such wonderful properties that any sick person who in-"haled its odour was straightway healed of his sickness."

Now they say that at the beginning of his going into the desert, when he had not tasted food of any kind whatsoever for five weeks he found a man in the parched desert carrying bread and water, who begged of him to eat, and when he had done so he removed himself from him. And on another occasion the Evil One shewed him some fine gold which [in quantity] surpassed the treasures of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he answered and said unto him that showed him the gold, "May thou and thy money go to hell." These and suchlike great things were, according to what they said, performed by Abbâ Petarpemôtîs, and they spake many other things before us the which [if written] the world could not contain. And, according to what these men said, Petarpemôtîs spake unto us, saying, "If we who are little people perform things which are "little, like unto ourselves, that is to say, if we heal the halt "and the blind, which selfsame things the physicians do by "means of their art, in what consisteth the greatness?" Now whilst Copres, the elder, was relating these things unto us, one of us slumbered and fell into a sleep, and this man did not believe the things which he had heard the blessed man say. And having fallen asleep, he saw a marvellous book, and the book was laid upon the knees of this elder, and it was written wholly in gold, and above it there stood an old man who said unto him

Digitized by Google

in a very threatening manner, "Didst thou not hear well what "was being said that thou didst fall asleep?" Then immediately the man awoke from his sleep, and told us in the Greek tongue what he had seen.

Now whilst our brother was relating this dream to us, a certain villager was found to be standing there before him bearing upon his shoulders a bucket of sand, and he was waiting there to hear the end of his story; and we begged him to tell us why he was carrying the sand, and why he stood there, and what he wanted. Then Abbâ Copres answered and said unto us, "My sons, it is not seemly for us to boast, but it is fitting that "we should declare before you the triumphs of the fathers, so "that we may not be unduly exalted in our minds, and so lose "our reward. Nevertheless, because of the earnestness, and for "the sake of the welfare of you who have come unto us from "a distance, we will not deprive you of benefit, and we will re-"late before your brotherhood whatsoever God hath wrought "by our hands. At one time the land which is about us produced "nothing, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the villa-"gers who owned it were able to gather from it as much again "as they sowed, for the worms were produced in the ears, and "they destroyed all their harvest. Now some of those husband-"men had been converted by us, and they begged us to pray "for their harvest, and we said unto them, 'If ye have faith in "'God even this desert sand shall bring forth crops for you'. Then, "without any doubt whatsoever, they filled their bosoms with "the sand which is trodden under our feet, and they entreated "us to bless it, and when we had prayed that it might be unto "them even according to their faith, they went and mixed it "with the wheat and sowed it in their fields, and immediately "their land produced for them abundant crops, and they were "larger than the crops obtained from the other lands in Egypt. "Thus it became the custom for them [to bring sand] each year, "and to trouble us [to bless it]."

And he also related unto us a certain wonderful thing which the Lord had wrought for us when large numbers of the brethren were gathered together, and he said, "On one occa-"sion I went down to the city, and I found there a certain "Manichean who was leading the multitudes into error, and "because I was unable to rebuke and convince him openly "I turned towards the multitudes, and said unto them, 'Kin-"'dle ye a large fire, and let the two of us go into it when it "'is burning brightly, and he who remaineth in the fire with-"'out being burnt shall be the man who possesseth the true "'faith.' And when this had been done, and the crowd had lit "a fire with ready zeal, I urged the Manichean to go with me

Digitized by Google

"into it, but he said, 'Let each of us go in by himself, and,
"'moreover, it is meet that thou shouldst be the first to go in
"'because thou didst give the command to have it made.'
"Then, having made upon myself the sign of the Cross in the
"Name of Jesus Christ, I went into the fire, and was unharmed
"thereby, for the flame parted asunder on this side and on that,
"and it vexed me in no wise. And when I had remained in the
"fire for half an hour, and the multitudes had seen the won-
"derful thing, they cried out, and gave thanks to God, and
"compelled the Manichean to go into the fire, and when, be-
"cause of his fear, he was unwilling to go into it, the crowd
"took him, and pushed him into the fire, and he was wholly
"consumed. As for me they took me, and escorted me to the
"church, and ascribed praise to God as they went.

"And on another occasion when I was passing by a certain
"heathen temple, the heathen were offering up sacrifices to
"their idols; and I said unto them, 'Why do ye who are rational
"'beings offer up sacrifices to things which are dumb? Are ye
"'of your own will dumb that ye sacrifice to dumb things?'
"And they admitted that what I said was good, and they
"came after me, and believed in Christ.

"And, moreover, we had a garden in a certain neighbour-
"ing place which was [intended] for the pleasure of the breth-
"ren who came unto us from afar off, and a certain poor man
"used to work therein. And one of the heathen went into the
"garden and stole some vegetables and departed; but he was
"not able to cook them, for although he kept the fire burning
"under the saucepan for three hours, they remained in the
"same state as when they were taken from the garden, and
"even the water would not boil! And when the man came to
"his senses he took the vegetables and brought them to us,
"and he begged that he might be forgiven the offence, and
"become a Christian; and he actually became one. Now on
"that very day certain brethren came unto us from a distance,
"and it is probable that those vegetables were brought on
"their account, so that they might enjoy them; and when
"we had tasted them, we gave thanks unto our Lord, for we
"had a twofold joy, first, because of the redemption of the
"soul of the man who had stolen them, and secondly, because
"the brethren who had come to us enjoyed them."

These and many other wonderful things did our holy father Copres relate to us, and when he had made us rest, he took us into his garden and shewed us the palms and other fruit trees which Koprîs [*sic*] had planted with his own hands for the encouragement of those husbandmen who believed in Christ, and to whom he had said that this desert was able to bring

Digitized by Google

forth fruit for those who believed in God; "And," said he, when "I saw that they had sown sand, and that their crops were "abundant, I also planted this garden for the enjoyment of the "brethren, and it has come to its present state [of perfection]."

Here end the Triumphs of Copres and Petarpemotis

Chapter xvij. The Triumphs of Abba Hor, and Isaiah, and Paul, and Nopi, the Confessors

ON a certain occasion it happened that Abbâ Hôr and Isaiah, and Paul met each other by chance by the side of a great river, and all three of them were chaste and perfect ascetics, who were going to visit a certain great confessor whose name was Nôpî, who lived at a place which was three stages distant, and they said to each other, "Let each "of us shew the other his triumphs, and in what way, and to "what extent he is, on account of his deeds, honoured by God." And Abbâ Hôr said unto them, "I beg God for this gift—that "we may journey to the place in that country by the might of "the Holy Spirit, without any labour [on our part]"; and immediately he had prayed, a boat was found to be ready, and a wind favourable for its journey was blowing, and they sailed up against the stream, and in a short time found themselves at that place.

And when they had gone up from the river, Isaiah said unto them, "O my beloved, would it not be a greater [display "of the power of] God if that man whom we are going to see "were to come to us and meet us, and were to describe to each "of us his life and works?" And Paul said unto them, "God "hath revealed unto me that after three days He will take "him, and that the man whom we are going to see will de-"part from this world into life." Now when they had journeyed onwards a short distance from that place, the man himself met them, and saluted them; and Paul said unto him, "Brother, "explain to us thy manner of life and works, for the day after "to-morrow thou wilt go to God." And Abbâ Nôpî said unto them, "Blessed be God, Who hath also revealed these things "unto me, and hath shewn me concerning your coming and "concerning your life and works." And when he had described the upright dealings of each one of them, and how they lived, and how they laboured, he afterwards began to speak and to describe his own life and works, and he spake thus:—

"Since the day wherein I confessed the Name of our Lord "Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and God, no falsehood whatso-"ever hath gone forth from my mouth on earth, and I have "never taken any earthly thing, for an angel hath fed me each "day with heavenly food. In my heart I have never had any

Digitized by Google

"other desire than that which is of God; and God hath not "hidden from me anything which is honourable and glorious; "and I have never been deprived of or lacked the light of mine "eyes. I have never gone to sleep in the daytime, and during "the night season I have never rested from making supplica- "tion to God, and the angel of God hath accompanied me "always and hath shewn me the might of the world which is to "come, and His light hath never gone out in my mind. Every "request which I made unto God I have received straightway. "At all times I have seen myriads of angels standing before "God. I have seen the companies of the saints. I have seen "the congregations of the martyrs. I have seen the triumphs "of the monks who mourn. I have seen the works of the soli- "tary brethren, and the congregations of the righteous. I have "seen all created things glorifying God. I have seen Satan "delivered over to the burning fire. I have also seen his angels "suffering torments, and the righteous enjoying the happiness "which hath no cessation." And, having told us these things, and many others which were like unto them, on the third day he delivered up his soul; and straightway the angels and the armies of the martyrs received it, and took it up into heaven, and we saw them singing praises and heard them.

Here end the Triumphs of Abba Hor, and Isaiah, and Paul, and Hopi, the Confessors

Chapter xviij. The Triumph of Evagrius

AND we also saw Evagrius, who was a man of great ability and learning, and who, through the experience of the matters which had passed over him, had acquired the discernment of good thoughts; and he had on several occasions gone down to the city of Alexandria and shut the mouths of the heathen philosophers. Now he commanded the brethren who were with us not to drink their fill of water, because devils were always to be found in the places where there were fountains of water, even according to the word of our Lord, Who said, "When the evil spirit hath gone forth "from a man, it departeth and wandereth about in the places "wherein there is no water seeking rest, which it findeth not" (St. Matthew xii, 43). And he spake unto us many things concerning the labours of ascetic excellence, and he confirmed our souls in the faith. Now many of the monks neither ate bread nor fruit (God forbid!), but bitter herbs and vegetables soaked in vinegar; and some of them never slept at all during the night, but, either sitting up or standing, they continued to pray until the morning.

Here endeth the Triumph of Evagrius

Digitized by Google

Chapter xix. The Triumph of Abba Pithyrion

AND we also saw in Thebaïs a certain high mountain which lay by the river, and it was an exceedingly terrible mountain with high barren peaks, and in the caves thereof there dwelt many monks; and these men had as Abbâ one Pithyrion, who was a disciple of the holy man Anthony. He was the third who had received that place from Anthony, and he used to perform many mighty deeds, and to carry on the persecution of devils openly; and since he was the man who had received the place of Anthony, the blessed and great man, and of Ammonius his disciple, he received also, and rightly so, the inheritance of his labours. Now Pithyrion spake many other things, and he discoursed with power, especially on the faculty of discerning spirits, saying, "There are certain devils which "cling to the passions, and on several occasions they turn our "good desires into evil; therefore, O my sons, those of you "who wish to drive away devils must first of all bring into "subjection your lusts, for a man must vanquish not only "every lust, but he must drive away the devil thereof. It is "right that ye should overcome your lusts little by little, so "that in the same way ye may drive away the devils which "appertain thereto. There is a devil which belongeth to a waste-"ful and dissolute life, and he who is able to conquer the de-"sire therefor is also able to drive away that devil." And this man used to eat twice a week, that is to say on Sunday, and on Thursday, and his food consisted of a little flour and some water which he baked into a thin cake; and he was unable to eat anything else, because his nature was thus.

Here endeth the Triumph of Pithyrion

Chapter xx. The Triumphs of the Blessed Fathers

AND we also saw many other fathers and monks in several places throughout Egypt who used to work mighty deeds and miracles, but they were so many in number that we cannot mention them all, and we therefore only narrate a few things out of many. For what shall we say of the upper part of the Thebaïd, namely that [which is near] Syene, wherein live many wonderful men, and countless monks, who lead lives which are wholly beyond the nature of ordinary men? For at the present time they raise the dead, and, like Peter, they walk upon the water, and, to this very day, everything which our Redeemer performed by His saints is performed by these holy men. Now because of the great danger which we should run of thieves and barbarians falling upon us, we did not dare to go up the Nile any further to the south

Digitized by Google

than Lycus, and therefore could not see the holy men who were there. Now we were not able to know even the fathers of whom we have spoken above without toil and tribulation, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that we were able to narrate their histories, for in order to do this we had to suffer much, and we were within a very little of having to endure many tribulations; but at length we were worthy to see these men. For on seven occasions we were delivered, and on the eighth evil came not nigh unto us, because, at all times, God protected us.

On the first occasion we nearly perished of hunger and thirst whilst we were wandering about in the desert [without food] for five days and five nights. On the second occasion we fell among savage, rugged mountains until our feet were pierced by the stones, and we suffered very great pain, and very nearly had to yield up our souls. On the third occasion we sank in the mud several times up to our backs, and there was none to help [us], and we cried out the words of the blessed David, "Save me, O God, for the waters have come "even unto my soul, I have sunk into a dark abyss, where-"in is no place on which to stand. Save me from the mire that "I sink not" (Psalm lxix, 1, 2). On the fourth occasion a flood of many waters burst upon us at the period of the inundation of the Nile, and we walked about in the water, and we sank down very nearly to the nostrils [of the animal which we rode], and we cried out and said, "Drown us not, O Lord, in a whirl-"pool of waters, and let not the abyss swallow us up, and let "not the pit close its mouth over us" (Psalm lxix, 14, 15). On the fifth occasion we fell in with some river thieves whilst we were walking along on the river banks to go into the city of Dekaplîôs, and they pursued us and sought to capture us, until very little breath was left in our nostrils, for they chased us for a distance of ten miles. On the sixth occasion we were sailing on the Nile when the boat capsized and sank under us. On the seventh occasion we were arriving at Lake Mareotis, and we were cast up on a small desert island, where the papyrus plant groweth, and we passed there three whole days and nights under the open sky in severe cold and with the rain falling upon us; now the season was the days of the Epiphany.

The story of the eighth occasion may be superfluous, but it is helpful. For when we were going to Nitria we passed a great deep place in one of the fields, which was full of water, and after the waters had run off the fields several crocodiles remained therein; now three very large crocodiles were stretched out on the edge of the pool, and we drew nigh to them that we

Digitized by Google

might see them, because we thought they were dead. But they ran after us very fast, and we cried out with a loud voice, saying, "In the name of Jesus Christ, spare our souls," whereupon the crocodiles, as if they had been driven away from us by angels, cast themselves into the water. And we made our way to Nitria with all possible haste, and as we went we meditated upon the words of the righteous man Job, who said, "Seven times He shall deliver thee from tribulation, "and on the eighth evil shall not draw nigh unto thee" (Job v, 19). Therefore we gave thanks unto our Lord, who had redeemed us out of all tribulations, and had made manifest unto us great and marvellous revelations by the hands of his believing saints and monks.

Here end the Triumphs of the Blessed Fathers

Chapter xxj. The Triumphs of the Monks who were in Nitria

AND we came also to the district of Nitria, where we saw many great disciples who had departed from the world, and some were natives of the country, and some were strangers (i.e., foreigners), who were more excellent in glory than the others, and they were emulating each other in the beautiful deeds of strenuousness, and were striving to outstrip each other in their noble and glorious lives and works. Now some of them possessed divine vision, and others works of ascetic excellence. And as we were coming from the desert some of their number saw us when we were afar off, and they met us on the way, and some of them brought water, and others washed our feet, and others washed our garments, and others entreated us to eat, and others called us to the doctrine of glory, and others to the vision of divine knowledge, and each one of them wished to help us so far as it lay in his power to do so. And however much a man might speak about their glorious life, it would be impossible for him to describe it as it really is. For they dwell in a waste place, and their dwellings are remote, and the men live apart from each other so that one man may not be known to his fellow, and that he may neither be seen readily nor his voice heard, and they live in the strictest silence, and each one of them is secluded within his cell, and only on Saturday and Sunday do they assemble in the church, and so meet each other. On several occasions many of them have been found dying in their chambers without ever having seen each other except when assembled for service in the church; for some of them only assembled once every three or four months, and thus they were remote from each other. Now these monks have much affection both for each other and for the rest of the

Digitized by Google

brethren, for each one of them would be exceedingly anxious to give up his chamber to any man who wished to seek for grace.

Here end the Triumphs of the Monks who were in Nitria

Chapter xxij. The Triumph of Ammon the First

THERE was in the early times in Nitria a certain man whose name was Ammon, whose soul the blessed Anthony saw being taken up to heaven, and this man became the chief of the monks who were in Nitria. He belonged to a noble family, and because his parents were exceedingly rich, they urged him to marry a wife, although he was unwilling to do so; and having persisted in urging him [he did so], but in the wedding chamber he persuaded the maiden who became his bride to keep [her] virginity, and he promised to do the same. Now after a few days he departed to the country of Nitria, and the maiden herself called all the members of her household to virginity, and turned her house into a nunnery.

Now the blessed Ammon was living by himself in the country of Nitria, and they brought unto him a certain young man who had been seized with madness and he was bound with chains; a mad dog had bitten him, and the madness of the animal had entered into him, and his body was torn by the severe pain which was in it. And when the blessed man saw that the relatives of the young man were making supplication unto him, he said unto them, "What are ye bringing to me, "O men? Ye are seeking from me what is greater than my "power, and besides it lieth in your own hands to help and "to heal the young man. Get ye gone, and restore [the value "of] the widow's bull which ye slew secretly, and your son "shall be given back to you healed." Then they, as people who had been rebuked, fulfilled his commandment with gladness, and he prayed straightway, and their son was healed.

And on one occasion certain people came to visit the blessed Ammon, and he, having learned their mind, said unto them, "Bring hither to me a large potter's vessel, so that "there may be an abundance of water for the people who "come here." Now, although they promised him that they would do so, one of them, as soon as he had gone to his village, took counsel and said unto his companion, "I am not "going to carry the potter's vessel on my camel and kill it"; and when the other man heard this, he saddled his asses, and carried the vessel to the holy man with great labour. And the blessed man Ammon said unto the man before he could speak, saying, "What [is this]? Behold, thy friend's camel died whilst

Digitized by Google

"thou wast coming here"; and when the man returned he found that the camel had been killed by wolves. And many [other] miracles were worked by this man.

Here endeth the Triumph of Ammon

Chapter xxiij. The Triumph of another Ammon who was in Nitria

AND we also saw there a certain Abbâ whose name also was Ammon, and he possessed [a number of] small houses which were exceedingly beautiful, and a court-yard, and a well of water, and other things for use; and a certain brother, who wished earnestly to obtain mercy, came to him, and said unto the blessed man, "Build me a little house "wherein I may dwell." Then the holy man, like one who was going forth [to do] this, ordered him not to depart from these chambers until he could find one which would be convenient for him; and he left to him everything he had, together with the chambers, and went and shut himself up in a house which was far away from that place. And if the brethren who came to him seeking to have mercy shown to them were many, he would assemble the whole brotherhood, and [tell] one to draw water, and another to bring bricks, and a house for them would be completed in a day. Then the brethren would invite those who were ready to inhabit the chambers to refresh themselves in the church, and whilst they were resting there he would fill his cloak, and baskets also, with bread and with other things which they would want to make use of, and would carry them to the new house, and it was not known to any man that he was the source (*or* head) of the gifts of each one of them. And at eventide the brethren who were ready to take up their abode in these [new] chambers would come there, and would find ready before them whatsoever they required.

Here endeth the Triumph of the other Ammon

Chapter xxiv. The Triumph of Didymus

AND we also saw there another blessed man whose name was Didymus, and he was very far advanced in years, and his countenance was beautiful; and this man used to kill scorpions and other venomous reptiles with his feet, which no other man dared to do.

Here endeth the Triumph of Didymus

Digitized by Google

Chapter xxv. The Triumph of Chronius

AND we also saw another brother among the monks whose name was Chronius, and he had arrived at a good old age, and was one of the first men who were contemporaneous with Abbâ Anthony; he was about one hundred and ten years of age, and he comforted us greatly and admonished us by his humility, which he had preserved even in his old age.

Here endeth the Triumph of Chronius

Chapter xxvj. The Triumph of Three Brethren

AND we saw there also three brethren who were learned in speech and glorious in their lives and deeds, and because of their splendid works they were about to be raised to the grade of the episcopate. They had cut off their ears in the fear of God, but although they had done this with great boldness (*or* presumption), the object with which they had done it was a good one, for [they wished] that henceforth no man might vex them.

Here end the Triumphs of Three Brethren

Chapter xxvij. The Triumph of Philemon

AND we also saw there a certain elder who was exceedingly holy and humble, and he was constantly seeing revelations, and his name was Philemon; and when this man was offering unto God the service [due] to him, he saw an angel standing at the right hand of the altar. He used to write and set down in a book the names of those brethren who drew nigh to the Gift of Grace, and he took care that the names of those who did not come to the congregation were erased, and such men, after three days, died. On several occasions the devils beat this man, and they brought so many sicknesses upon him that he was unable to stand by the altar, and could not even offer up the Offering; but an angel came and took him by the hand, and straightway he received strength, and the angel made him to stand up healed before the altar. And the brethren saw the scars made by his beatings, and marvelled.

Here endeth the Triumph of Philemon

Chapter xxviij. The Triumph of John

AND we saw another blessed man whose name was John, and he was an Abbâ of the monks in the city of Dîkâpôlîs; and grace clung to him even as unto Abraham, and his beard flowed down like that of Aaron. He worked

Digitized by Google

many mighty deeds and cures, and he healed those who were afflicted with gout, and the sick, and those who were paralytics.

Here endeth the Triumph of John

Chapter xxix. The Triumph of Serapion

AND we also saw in the regions of Arsinoïtes a certain elder whose name was Serapion; he was the father of all the monasteries, and the head of numerous brotherhoods, which contained about ten thousand men, and he took the greatest care in providing for the wants of all the brethren. And in the season of harvest he would make those who worked for hire from year to year bring and gather together to him twelve ardebs of wheat, that is to say, forty bushels, that it might serve for his ministrations to those in want, and might be distributed by his hands, so that in that district no destitute man might be found, and he sent to the needy in Alexandria the Great their gifts. Now the fathers of whom we have already spoken did not at any time neglect to visit the whole of Egypt, but as a result of the toil of the brethren they used to fill boats with food and apparel, and send them year after year to the poor who were in Alexandria, because the poor and needy who lived round about them were too few [to exhaust their benevolence]. And we saw in the region of Babylon and Memphis many great fathers, and many, yea innumerable, monks who were adorned with works which were glorious before God.

Here endeth the Triumph of Serapion

Chapter xxx. The Triumphs of Apollo the Less, the Reader and Martyr

AND we saw also the granaries of Joseph (i.e., the Pyramids of Gizah) wherein he collected grain in the time of famine. And there was there, in Thebes, a certain monk whose name was Apollo, and he made manifest many mighty deeds, and led a life of great works; he was held to be worthy of the office of deacon, and his works of spiritual excellence were as glorious and renowned as [those of] the famous monks of old. During the period of the persecution he made many martyrs by putting courage into the hearts of the confessors of Christ, but at length he himself was seized and put under ward in the prison-house, and the wickedest men among the heathen used to come to him and heap words of hatred and blasphemy upon him. Now one of those who behaved thus was a certain singer, who was a famous man, and was beloved by all the people; and this man drew nigh and reviled the blessed Apollo, and called him a wicked man, and a liar, and a hater of all mankind, and said that he was guilty

Digitized by Google

of death before all the people. Then to him the blessed man Apollo made answer, and he said unto him, "O man, may God "have mercy upon thee, and may the sin which hath been "uttered by thee not be accounted unto thee as anything."

Now when the man who was a singer, whose name was Philemon, had heard these things, he repented at the words of the blessed man, because he had gone into the place where he was, and caused him pain, and he went down immediately, and stood up before the throne of the judge, and in the presence of all the people said unto him, "O judge, thou art acting "wickedly in tormenting the servants of God without a cause, "for the Christians neither say nor do wicked things, on the "contrary, they even bless their enemies." Now when the judge heard the things which Philemon was saying, he thought at first that he had gone mad through his pride, and that having gone mad he had spoken; but as soon as the judge perceived that he persisted in his words, he answered and said unto him, "Thou art mad, O man, and hast suddenly become "a fool." And Philemon made answer to him and said, "I have "not gone mad, O thou wicked judge, but I am a Christian, "and I fear the God of heaven." And the judge and all the people wished to persuade him [to be quiet] by means of flattering speeches, but, when they saw that he would not yield to them, they applied to him all kinds of wicked tortures. And after these things they seized the blessed and holy Apollo, and brought him [there], and they laid many stripes upon him, and they scourged him as men scourge those who are wicked and who lead the people into error.

Then the blessed Apollo spake unto the judge, saying, "I "pray God that thou also, O judge, and all those who are here "present with thee may follow after my error"; and when the judge perceived that he had spoken such words unto him, he commanded that both Apollo and Philemon should be delivered over to be burnt by fire in the presence of all the multitude. And when they were in the blazing fire before the judge the blessed Apollo cried out with a loud voice unto God, so that all the assembly and even the judge himself might hear, saying, "O "Lord, give not to be broken the souls which confess Thee, "but make us to see Thy deliverance boldly." Then straightway a brilliant cloud, which was laden with dew, appeared, and it enveloped these men and quenched the flames of fire; and the crowds and the judge marvelled and cried out, saying, "One is the God of the Christians."

And certain wicked men made known the things which had taken place to the governor of Alexandria, and he chose out from among his bodyguard some savage and merciless men,

Digitized by Google

and sent them for all those who were with the judge, and for Philemon, and the blessed Apollo, and other confessors came with them. And as they were going along the road, the gracious gift of the Spirit lighted upon Apollo, and he began to teach the soldiers, and as he spake they hearkened unto him, and they repented at his words, and believed in Christ, and they all stood up with the prisoners before the throne. And as soon as the governor perceived and knew that they could not be changed from the faith of Christ, he commanded that they should be cast into the depth of the sea; and since they were drowned of their own will for Christ's sake, this became unto them a sign of baptism. Now the sea refused to keep them, and it brought them together near the shore, and on the spot where they had lain a temple was built in their honour, and in it great miracles were wrought; and such grace was found with the blessed man, and he was so greatly honoured that he was heard by Christ in respect of the things for which he prayed and made supplication. And we ourselves saw the martyrium wherein he and those who had testified with him were laid, and we prayed and worshipped God, and also touched their dead bodies, for they were not as yet buried because of the inundation of the Nile, but lay embalmed upon their biers in Thebaïs, and for this reason we made ready to insert here the history of the man.

Here end the Triumph of Apollo, the Monk and Martyr, and the other Histories of the Holy Men which were written by Hieronymus the Monk.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, now, and always, and for ever and ever.

End of Volume the First

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

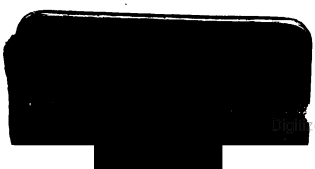
Digitized by Google

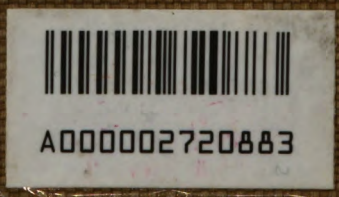
Digitized by Google

BX2734
.A6
1907
V.1

A000002720883

Digitized by Google


Digitized by Google


A000002720883