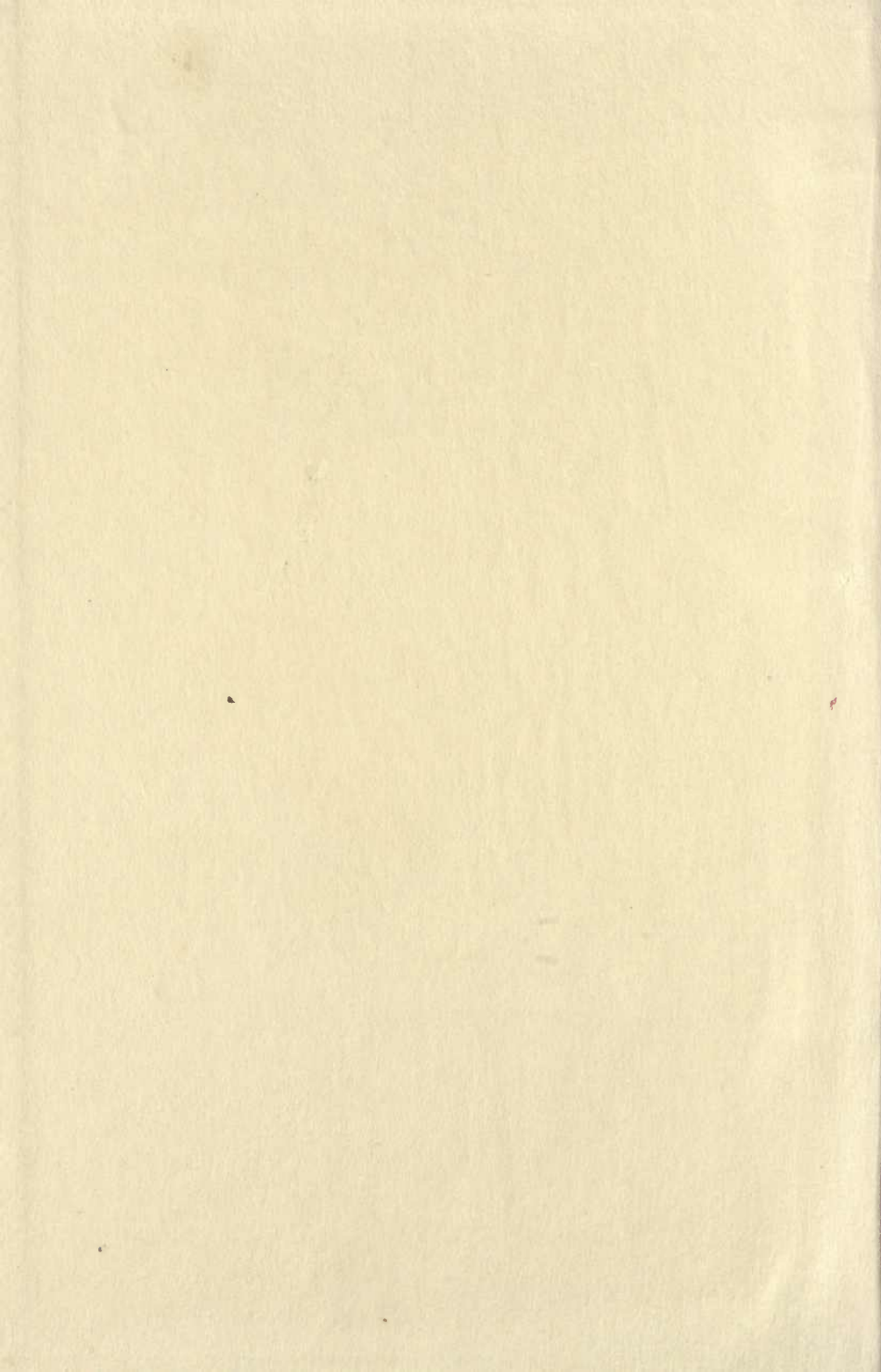
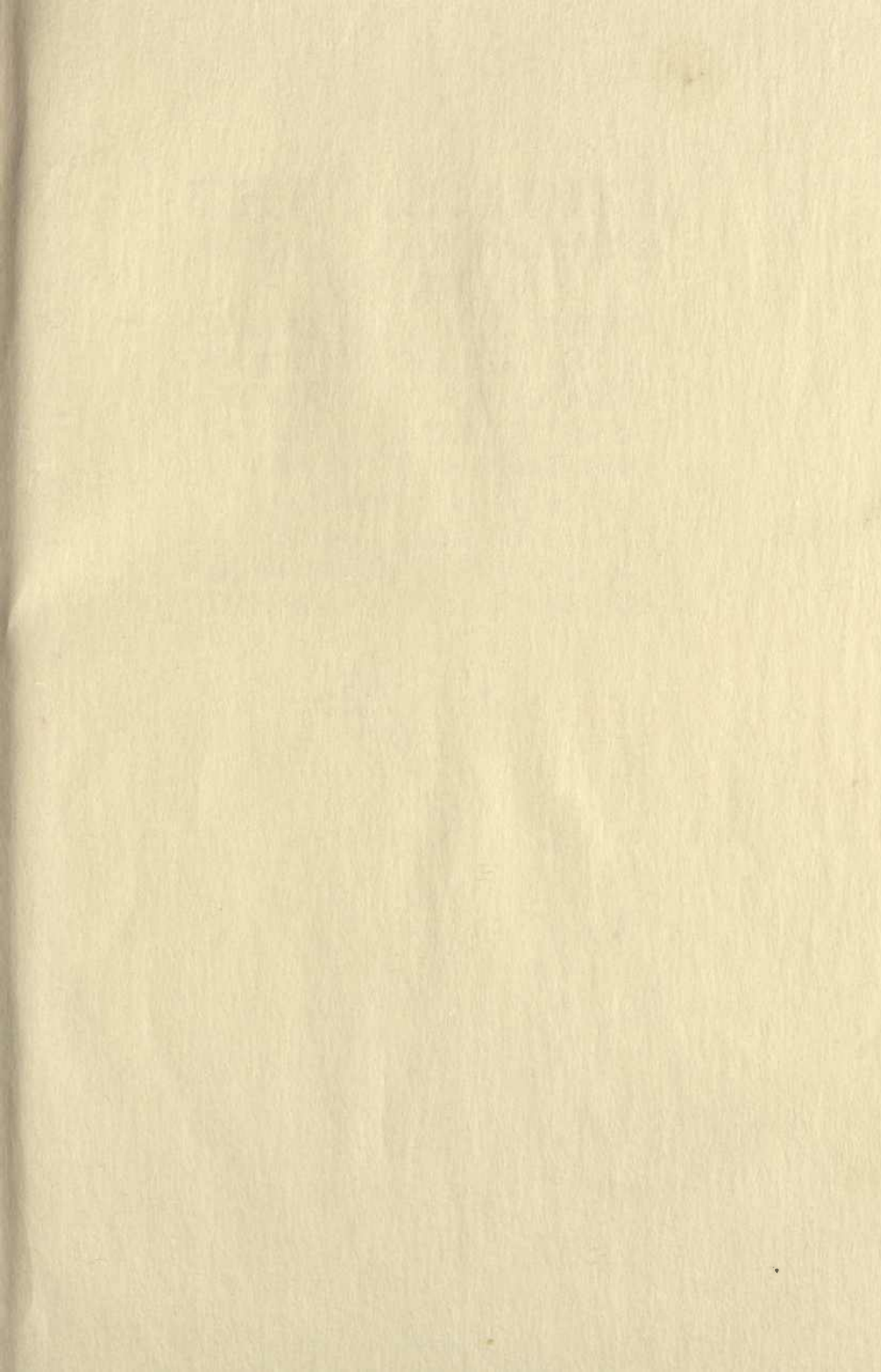


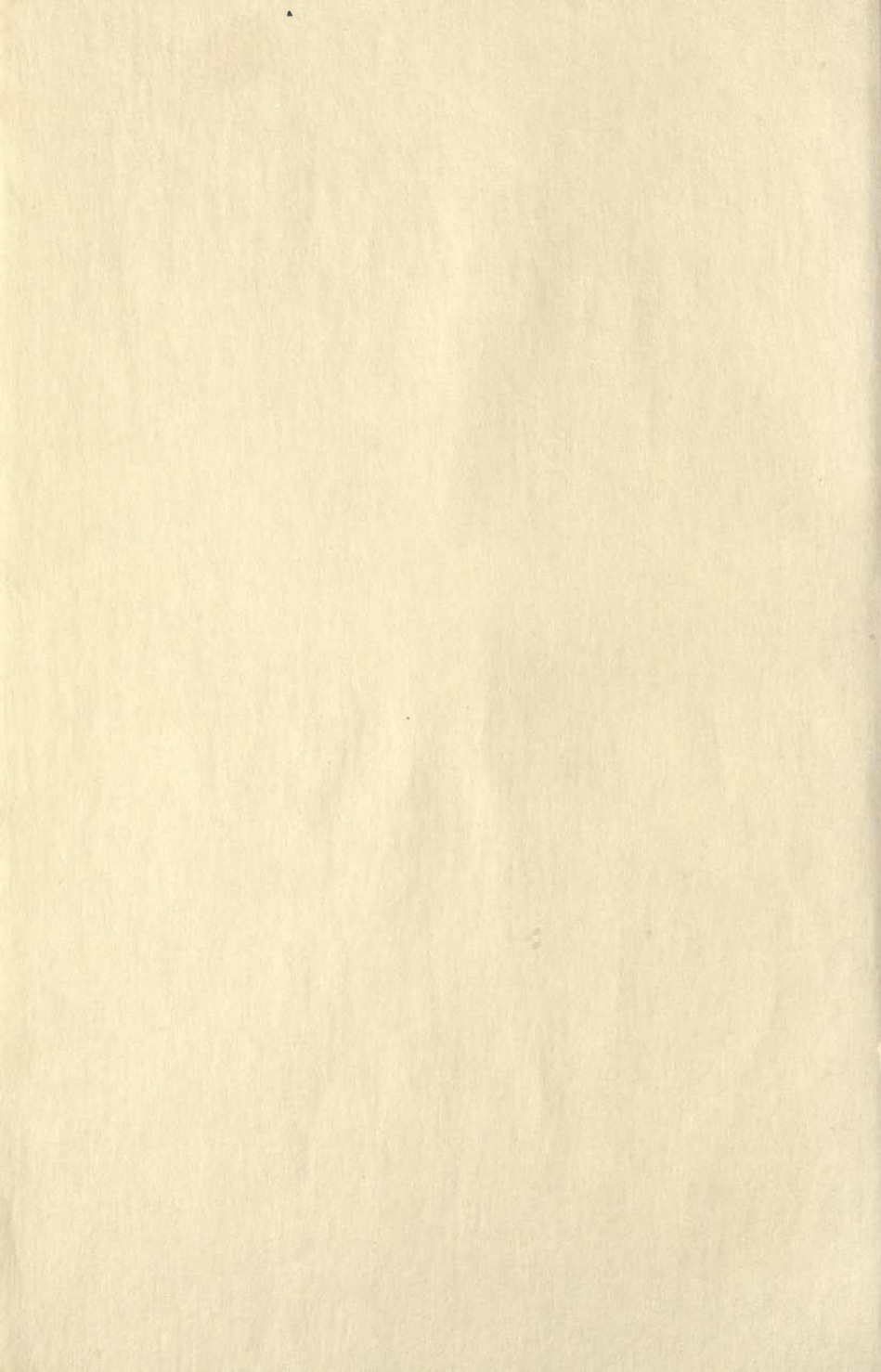
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THE PARADISE
OF THE HOLY FATHERS
VOLUME I

CONTAINING THE INTRO-
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ANTHONY, BY ATHANASIUS
ARCHBP OF ALEXANDRIA:
HISTORIES OF THE FATHERS
BY PALLADIUS B^P OF HELE-
NOPOLIS: THE RULE OF
PACHOMIUS: ST JEROME'S
HISTORY OF THE FATHERS



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THE PARADISE
OR GARDEN OF THE
HOLY FATHERS BE-
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THE ANCHORITES
RECLUSES MONKS
COENOBITES AND ASCETIC
FATHERS OF THE DESERTS OF
EGYPT BETWEEN A.D. CCL AND
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ATHANASIUS ARCHBISHOP
OF ALEXANDRIA: *PALLADIUS*
BISHOP OF HELENOPOLIS: SAINT
JEROME AND OTHERS **U** NOW
TRANSLATED OUT OF THE SYRI-
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TION BY *ERNEST A. WALLIS*
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OF THE ASSYRIAN & EGYPTIAN
ANTIQUITIES IN THE BRITISH
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THE PARADISE

OR GARDEN OF EDEN

HOLY PARADISE

AND HIS GARDEN

THE ANCIENT

RECLUSES

COGNOMIES AND ASCETIC

FATHERS OF THE DESERTS OF

EGYPT BETWEEN A.D. 400 AND

A.D. 600 WITH OTHER COMMENTARY

BY MARY ANNE ARCHBISHOP

OF ALEXANDRIA: WITH A HISTORY

BISHOP OF HELIOPOLIS: SAINT

XEROME AND OTHERS NOW

TRANSLATED OUT OF THE SYRIAC

WITH NOTES & INTRODUCTION

BY MARY ANNE ARCHBISHOP

BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA: WITH A HISTORY

OF THE ASSYRIAN & EGYPTIAN

ANTIGUITIES IN THE BRITISH

MUSEUM



PUBLISHED AT LONDON BY
CHAUTO & WINDUS
MCMVII

Preface

DURING the winter of 1888 the Vicar of the Chaldean Patriarch at Mòsul (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 *Askètikon*, or *History of the Monks of Tabenna*, the *Histories of the Solitaries of the Desert of Egvpt*, 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-

The Paradise of the Holy Fathers

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 Ânan-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.

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Introduction

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Introduction

J. 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 martyrrium 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

Palladius in Egypt

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,

Palladius in Nitria

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 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.

Palladius in the Scete Desert

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 Talidâ 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

Palladius and John of Lycus

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, *Lausiatic 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

Palladius in Jerusalem

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

Palladius in Constantinople

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 became 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

Palladius in Rome

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

Palladius Banished

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 writing 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

Endurance of Palladius

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.

1j. 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 *Lausiatic History* of Palladius. According to some authorities, Lausus, the friend of Palladius, is to be identified with "Lausus præpositus," 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 *Lausiatic 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.

Syriac Recension of Anan-Īsho

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 Ānân-Īshô, 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
“ Ānân-Īshô should drop from our mind, or that we should suppress 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
“ Īshô-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 Īshô-Yahbh.
“ They became disciples in the Great Monastery [of Mount
“ Īzlâ, about ten miles from Nisibis], as the books which belonged to them [and are now] in the library of this monastery (i.e., Bêth Ābhê) testify, for they show that they were
“ written by their hands there. Now Ānân-Īshô, 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 histories 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
“ Īzlâ) he took his brother, and they came to this monastery
“ (i.e., Bêth Ābhê) 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 Ānân-Īshô,
“ the wise of understanding, laboured so hard in the study of

Compilation of the Book Paradise

“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—

Compilation of the Book *Paradise*

“ he arranged and grouped together in smooth order (i. e., consecutively), 615 ‘ Heads ’ (or Chapters), in Canons and Sections, [with] each ‘ Head ’ a ‘ Question ’ giving information 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 consolation 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 ‘ Commentary ’ 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 classified. And he called this Book *Paradise* and under this name hath it been handed down and accepted in all the monasteries 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,

Life of Saint Anthony

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

Contents of the Book *Paradise*

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 judgment 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 I

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 dinârs 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

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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).

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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

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are fairly good reasons for believing that Serapion of the Girde 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'autorisant 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).

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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 II

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.

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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.

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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 BRETHERN 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.

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23. Another AMMON.
24. DIDYMUS.
25. CHRONIUS.
26. The THREE BRETHREN who cut off their ears.
27. PHILEMON.
28. JOHN, Abbâ of Dikâpôlis.
29. SERAFION, 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

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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.

iii. 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

Beginning of Christian Monasticism

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-

Repentance

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-

Founding of Monasteries

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

Starting of
monasteries

Rule of Pachomius

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 *Askètikon* (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

Christian Nunneries

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 is that of a sister who had been possessed of a devil, and who

The Monks of Nitria

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

The Cells and Klímax

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 "Klímax," 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 society of 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).

Holy Women

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-

The Army of the Monks

9
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.

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,"

Sign of the Cross

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

Devils and Demoniacal Possession

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 "striving 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

The Casting of Spells

“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

Supernatural Powers of the Monks

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.

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,

Eating, Drinking, and Sleeping

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. Sisoës 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

Clothing

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).

Silence and Vigil

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 heavens" (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

Weeping and Poverty

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 Sisoës, 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 except 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

Obedience

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). Sisoës 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

Love, Charity, Humility

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 unworthy 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,

Humility

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 kindness 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,

Love of Animals

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).

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 *Lausiatic 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,

Impartiality of Palladius

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

Lives of Holy Women

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

Melania, Candida, Juliana

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") Talidâ 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.

Serapion and the Virgin

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

Historical Character of Paradise

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

Duration of Life

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

Death and Burial of Monks

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.

Beliefs of Pagan and Christian Egypt

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

Beliefs of Pagan and Christian Egypt

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

The Resurrection

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 transgression of the command, and service is constant supplication 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.

the ancient Egyptian, and among those must stand the Greek, and Latin. The Egyptian never succeeded in freeing his mind from the idea that the resurrection of his body, whether mortal or immortal, should be such as to give the efficacy of another material and religious formula, and the number of offerings as soon as he is in Cairo, but the solemn faith of the Christian world, *Antiquity*, made him doubt that resurrection was necessary, and that Christ would give him back his body, but not undusted, or the Resurrection. The hope in the history of the Jacobins or desert was to be in the description of the man of the desert, for it made him reach every worldly thing and live in and by his own life, his *Antiquity*, as exhibited in the Western and Eastern life. The history reached to certain understandings of any extent the most spiritual-minded of the ancient Egyptians. In all the known literature of Egypt he reveals in the following passage can be found: "Feasting is the subjugation of the body, prayer is converse with God, that is a war against *Antiquity*, abstemious is the holy, weaned from human fondling. It is the state of the great man, however, is the industry of the body before the Judge, and the resurrection of the soul, and hence is our captivity, which is caused by the transgression of the command, and service is constant supplication to and praise of God." (Vol. II, p. 207). To follow us to see the order and last history of the body, and words, and deeds of the saints, and counsils of Egypt and every student of the history of religion should be grateful to him for a work which is both and important and grand. Christian movement, the effect of which exist even in our own days.

The Paradise of the Holy Fathers

The Paradise of the Holy Fathers

The Life of Saint Anthony, by
Thomasina, Archbishop of Alex-
andria

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.

The Life of Saint Anthony, by Athanasius, Archbishop of Alex= andria

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 every thing 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

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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 aforesaid, 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

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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

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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.

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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

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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 favour 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

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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]

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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 lxy, 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

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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 flatteries [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 pitifully 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.

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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

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“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 said 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

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made a sign to him, and he drew nigh unto him, and Saint Anthony said unto him quietly, "Come, do [an act of] righteousness (*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 insolent fellow, who hath treated us wholly with contempt and disdain? 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 [with] allowing plan.

Now it is very easy for the w^o 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 phantasms, and said, "Thus

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“ 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 bold-
ness 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 de-
parted 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

*S. Anthony
rewards our
Lord*

*(S. Anthony is
rewarded by
our Lord)*

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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 [wischeth 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

S. Anthony
Goes into the
Desert

Possible
reason for S. Anthony
making a snare
long journey to the
desert, how it could

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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

The desert is the home of the evil spirits!
St. Anthony has the sins of all men over him
desert is a place where the evil spirits are strong

St. Anthony in desert - Divine Residence!

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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 enemies be scattered, and let all those who hate Him flee before Him; let them be destroyed, even as smoke is made to disappear, and as wax melteth before the fire, let the wicked perish before God" (Psalm lxxviii, 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,

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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

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Gospel, "When a servant hath toiled nobly and hath laboured in the work which is outside, as soon as he hath gone inside 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

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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

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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-

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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

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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,

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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

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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

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of what I have said the following [words^{id} ^{gainst} hidden and an explanation. It hath happened by, ^{ow} our hath set out from India, or from some remote coun:]] unto us, and when as yet we did not see him, or thing about him, straightway we have had sight of him a have heard where he was prepared to go, for immediately [tl 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 Gihôn (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 to 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. or if God meditateth anything concerning the waters of ^w river, for He hath power over it, the cunning of the devils 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,

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made in the image of God, "Behold, do not the devils declare many things necessary for us which ye have not [before] heard, and do not they describe to add 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 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 to 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

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

Ye must then make a distinction between the things of the
 ly Spirit, and the things of the congregation of the Evil
 e. And perhaps ye will say, "How are we to make the dis-
 inction?" First of all, pray and make supplication unto the
 vealer of secret things that He will make you to possess
 e power] of distinguishing between these matters; and for
 rest I myself am bound to impart unto you gladly, as my
 us, whatsoever I have learned from a long experience. The
 ions and revelations of the Holy Spirit are not of a terrify-
 or tumultuous character, for they take place under condi-
 ns of rest and tranquillity, and in like manner also with
 ntle pleasure and quiet satisfaction doth the soul feel the
 e of the Holy Ghost therein, for it is not wont to put terror
 o people or to produce trembling where it maketh itself to
 seen. Look ye now into the Scriptures and they will inform
 u in what manner the revelation of the Spirit taketh place,
 d they will shew you that it taketh place in restfulness, and
 dness, and peace (Galatians v, 22, 23): these are the simil-
 les which are in the revelation of the Spirit, and whensoever
 s brought about, it is done in this manner. And if, after the
 nner of men, a man may be straightway terrified or greatly
 ved through the love of the thing itself, or through the
 uty of the revelation, and through the quietness and plea-
 e which are caused thereby, in due season the fear or terror
 l come to an end, and comfort and gladness will come to
 n in its place, even as Gabriel wrought for Zachariah (St.
 ke i, 19), and according to what the other angels did for
 blessed women at the grave of our Lord (St. Matthew,
 viii, 5), and the angel who appeared unto the shepherds and
 claimed to them the good news of the birth of our Re-
 mer (St. Luke ii, 10). And ye will find many other instances
 ich are like unto these in the Scriptures if ye seek for them.
 w if the soul be terrified or be afraid by reason of those
 ions, it doth not follow that such fright is caused by the
 il One, for it may, peradventure, arise in it because the soul
 maketh itself unworthy of the heavenly revelation which hath

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THE HOLY
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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 see after the similitudes of the persons of the children of men, and 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 unto 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 worship 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 depre-

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ty, 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 worship 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 devils [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, and in them the wicked will be able to see their blemishes and [themselves] 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 devils and for them to yield place belongeth not unto him but unto heavenly Grace. For when the Disciples returned with their Lord from [preaching the] Gospel which they had 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). For names to be written down in the Book of Life is a money to conduct which is pleasing [to God], and it showeth those who are worthy of this thing have an upright mind; power over devils is, manifestly, [a mark of] the grace of Redeemer. And that ye may know that this is so, observe how Christ answered those who took refuge in this thing when the spirits were going forth before Him, and they said unto Him, "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). Therefore let us pray, as I have already said, that there

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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 triumph 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 the 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 Gihôn, and how many times did I say unto them, "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 in 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

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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; 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 singers of the Psalms, and they began to speak to me [with words] from the Scriptures; but I, like a deaf man, did notarken unto them. On another occasion they shook down upon the habitation wherein I was living, but I laughed at them for the 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] the devil of an exceedingly haughty and insolent appearance, and 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 devil appeared unto me in the form of a brother monk carrying a head, 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

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“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 giants 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 he 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 fall like lightning fall from heaven” (St. Luke x, 18). And I, O ye 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); 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 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 a 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 seeke

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“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

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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

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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-

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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

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“ shall eat, or what ye shall drink, for such things do the people of the earth seek after, and your Father knoweth whatsoever 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

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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,

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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 thyself, 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 contemplation; 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 [performest] here; if, however, thou wishest to enjoy silent contemplation 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

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“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

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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

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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

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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 servant"; 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]

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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 offering, 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 Corinthians 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 encourage, and him that standeth in the truth He will admonish

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“and urge to new exertions, lest he be filched away by boasting, 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 suffered 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 destruction. 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

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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 Parnîôn, 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 Parnîôn 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

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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

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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

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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.

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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

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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 consequence, 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

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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

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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

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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

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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.

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“ye away then from them afar off that ye become not corrupted 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 association 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 likeness to or association with them, for ye are in the righteousness 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

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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

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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 learning, 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 possesses a wise and understanding 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

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“ 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

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“ 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 wonder 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 contempt? But if a man void of understanding cometh to you, ye liken each one of them [unto gods] in the speech of rational 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 universe. 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 Master-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

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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 knowledge 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 consisteth of] a discussion of words, and that your wisdom cannot 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 believe 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 abundance 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

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“ 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

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“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. Whosoever he received the imperial letters, he would call and gather

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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-Amdid; he was surnamed "Scholasticus," and died about A.D. 360.

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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 delivered 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.

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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

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“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. Harken 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

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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 knowledge unless he was beloved by God?"

Now a certain duke whose name was Bálak (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 therefore, 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,

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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

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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

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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 doctrine 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.

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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 accounted 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 therewith, and be ye, moreover, friends and associates of just men that they may receive you into their everlasting habitations as friends and men of whom they have good knowledge. 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 desert. 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 observed 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 corruption.

"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

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“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.

[N]ow 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]

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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-

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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.

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 Helenopolis, 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.

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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 love, 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

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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

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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;

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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

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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 $33 + 20 = 53$.

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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 constrained 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

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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

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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

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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, meekness, 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 contest 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

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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).

There begin the Histories of the Holy Men by Palladius.

Chapter I. The History of Abba Isidore [Bishop of Thermopolis Parva (Damanbur) 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

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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 departed 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 Paradise 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.

Dorotheos of Thebes

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

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“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 [sometimes] 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 overcame 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

The Virgin Potamiaena

“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-

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“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

Didymus and Alexandra

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.

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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 herself up in the grave. And Alexandra answered and said unto me, 'Inasmuch as the thought of the love of God was present 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 revolve 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 vi. 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-

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

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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 *dinârs*, 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 *dinârs* 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 *dinârs*] 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 *dinârs*." 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.

The Monks of Nitria

Chapter viij. 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-

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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]."

Abba Ammon

“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

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“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 myself.” 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.”

Chapter 1. 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.

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And when he had finished sewing it, he said unto me, "Take "this mat from my hands, so that thou mayest keep me in remembrance, 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 Piôr 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 Piôr 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 Piôr, 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."

Chapter 21. 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

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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 impassibility 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 martyrrium 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 martyrrium 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 marvelous 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

Benjamin and Apollonius

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 xliij. 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

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

AND there were also there two brethren, whose names were Paesius and Isaiab, 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 *dinârs*, 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

Macarius

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 hospitality, 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 embraced 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 strangers 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 goodness 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 receiving [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

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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 confess 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 servant 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-

Blessed Nathaniel

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

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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

Macarius the Egyptian

“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* solitaires); 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.

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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

Macarius the Egyptian

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 transformed into a mare, and behold, she hath eaten no food for "three days." Then the brethren went and told the blessed

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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 happened 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 through-out the desert.

Once a certain unmarried man who was vexed by an evil

Macarius the Alexandrian

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 xviii. 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

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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

Macarius the Alexandrian

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 garden, 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

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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

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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

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“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

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“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 com-
manded 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 vain-
glory vexed him, and urged him to go forth from his cell and
to depart and heal the multitudes in Rome and to give assis-
tance 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 diseas-
ed; 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 kins-
man 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

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“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

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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

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“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 unweave 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

Paul the Simple

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 pleaseth 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

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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.

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 negligence, 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 passion 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 redemption 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 therefore (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

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“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

Stephen

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 xxv. 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-

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“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

Valens

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

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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 xxiiij. 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 accepting] thy doctrine certainly go astray and err, for [men] require 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

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

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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

The Holy Women

arrogance fell into the ditches of fornication, and she opened the window of the habitation in which she had secluded herself, and received [the rein] 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 xxviii. 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.

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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

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“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

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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

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“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 repentance 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

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“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

Abba Elijah

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

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they were; and he dwelt therefrom 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 eating nor fasting. Furthermore, on those who are strong thou "shalt impose severe labours; and upon those who are of

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“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 *Âlâ* 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,

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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 indeed 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]

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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

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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 refectory." 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

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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

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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 hid 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

The Virgin of Alexandria

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 punishment 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 deliverance 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 beautiful. 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."

The Paradise of the Holy Fathers

Chapter xxxv. Of Diamon 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 village."

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 acquainted 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 supplication 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

Talida and Taor

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

Chapter xxxv. Of our Blessed Mother Talida, the Old Woman of Antinoë

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 “Talidâ,” 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 xxxvi. 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.

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Chapter xxxviii. 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 depart from this world unto thy Lord, and thou shalt see all the saints; but come and eat a meal with us in the martyrrium." 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 martyrrium, 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-

The Virgin and Magistrianus

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 inflamed 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 nothing."

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

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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 xi. 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 Adelpsius, 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.

Melania the Great

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

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[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

Melania the Great

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

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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.

Melania the Younger

Chapter xli. 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 husband 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

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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,

The Blessed Olympias

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 xliij. 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 Nebrius, 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

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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 dwell 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

The Blessed Candida

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, "Because 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

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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 xlii. 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 xlii. 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 ministrations. 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 xliii. 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.

The Blesssd Magna

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

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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 xlviii. 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 conducted 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

John of Lycus

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 xlii. Of John of Lycus, a City of the Thebaïd

JOHAN, 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

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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-

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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

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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."

The Blessed Possidonius

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

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“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 ἐξάντησις] 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.

Chapter Ij. 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 Tomártá (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 Iij. Of James the Lame [and of Paphnutius Cephalá]

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 stumbings 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.

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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 Eucarpus, 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 injury 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 example, 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

Papnūtius

“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-

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“ ‘ments? (Psalm 1, 16.) For thou hast taken My covenant in thy mouth.’

“ For in very truth the souls of those who are moved by passions are like unto fountains of divers kinds; the souls of gluttons 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 receiving 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* sweetness), 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 proportion 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 nature, 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 surpass 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

Pybnutius

“ ‘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

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“the blessed Paul understood all these things, did he say concerning men, ‘Because they have not decided within themselves 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 liiv. 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.

Diocles and Kapiton

Chapter Iv. 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 contemplation 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 "the fear of God, no matter what it may be, is with God."

Chapter Ivj. 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

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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 entrusted with this thing." And having reckoned up many names of Saints, they finally said, "No man is fit to be entrusted 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

“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 possi-
 ble 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 in-
 creasing 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-

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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 martyrdom, 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,

Elpidius

“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 IX. 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.

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Chapter xij. 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 xij. 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.

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 lxiiv. 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 lxi. 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

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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 lxxj. 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 *dinârs* in a city of the heathen, and having received these *dinârs* 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

Serapion

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

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“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 *dinâr* 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 *dinâr*.

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 Manichæan, with all his house, and who had several associates [in the city]. Then the monk, according to his former plan, sold himself to this Manichæan, 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

Scrapion

“ hast embarked on the ship without provisions and money? “ Where wilt thou obtain the money to give us for thy passage?” And he said unto them, “ I have thought nothing whatsoever 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 *dinârs* 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.

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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 measure 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 lxxij. 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.

Eulogius and Chronius

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.

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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

Eulogius and Chronius

“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 threetimes, 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 answered 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 causeth 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

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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 because 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

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 Offering 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 Mâr 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

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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

Mar Paule

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

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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

Mar Paule

“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 receiving from this bird half a loaf of bread [daily], but at thy coming, behold, our Lord hath sent unto us a double portion 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

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“ 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 possibly 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-

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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

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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.

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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

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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 theretofar 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, knowest 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 neighbour, 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 brother heard this, he made ready quickly to fulfil the command of the old man, and having gone down and brought that which was

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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 during 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

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“ 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 en-
treaty, 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 ac-
cording 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.

A Sage of Scete

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 exceedingly difficult for me. Peradventure, if through some reason such as this which the Enemy hath prepared for me, I reject

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“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 beseech 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 fornication 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 condemnation 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 prayers, whensoever he casteth thee into the passion of fornication, 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 undoubtingly, 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

A Sage of Scete

“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.

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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 whatsoever, 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 endurance!" and from that day forward the old man led a life of sobriety and became a chosen monk.

Chapter vi. 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,

A Disciple in the Desert

“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, “Behold, 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 holiness; 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, “Peradventure 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

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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 vii. 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 meekness 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 viii. 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?]

IUSED 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

Abba Moses the Indian

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

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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] continually 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 contemplation, 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

Abba Moses the Indian

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 because thou hast not turned away thy heart from the similitudes 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 waterskins 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 forward 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

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“‘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 Pîor

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

Abba Moses the Libyan

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 xiiij. 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

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“ 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 wicked-
ness 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 con-
verse 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 un-
like 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 for-
got 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 supplica-
tion 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 com-
fort 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

A Wandering Monk

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 Merciful 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 especially that I should be disgraced by crying out with the wicked, and that I should suffer torture for ever. Have mercy “then upon me, and I will confess Thy goodness; I have been

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“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 compassion 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] repentance.” 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.

The Blessed Evagrius

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 Nećtarius, Bishop 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,

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“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, concerning 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 habitation 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 Nethrá (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

The Blessed Evagrius

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 day-time, 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.

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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 disobedience 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

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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 setting before them the hope of that which is good, hath nevertheless 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 straightway becometh a prey unto wolves"; and when he had spoken these words unto me I left him.

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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 unconvinced 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, "Servants, 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

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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

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“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 sluggish understandings in this wise [to perform] with a ready “mind the things which befit our redemption.”

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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

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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

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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

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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 therefore, 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

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“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
“yeta monk, but I have seen monks.’ Permit me [to be silent].”

Chapter xxvj^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

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“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 xxij. 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

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“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

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“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 xviii. 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 (Oύση), 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

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“ help of your prayers, for in truth ye serve God, I have travelled 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 sufferings 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 encouragement to hope for the forgiveness of my sins until the completion 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

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“for thee and for me, and if thou dost not wish [for a companion], 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 xxj. 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

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“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 guardians, 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 anything? The people that are afar off come to me, but these who are close by do not come to me, and they have gone nowhere 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 going 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

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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.

Abba Bessarion

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 necessities 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 companionship 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 xxiiij. Of the wonderful things which Abba Bessarion wrought

ABBÂ SHÂÖL (*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,

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“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

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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 everyone 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 contending 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 complete 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

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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,

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“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 bringing 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, “Expose 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.

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Chapter xxx. 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 commandest 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 brethren 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

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“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 except 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 permitted 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 ordereth 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 whatsoever 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].

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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

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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, whenever 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,

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“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

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“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 whensoever 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 perhaps 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

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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

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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 xxviii. 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

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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 unrepented 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

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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 wretchedness, 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 treatment? 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 gratification 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 departed 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 whatsoever 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 terrified by his appearance and form, I scarcely dared to look upon

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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 because 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,

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“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.

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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 Marcarius? 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

Stephana

haughtiness he made answer to him, saying, "What do hypocrites 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 wickedness; 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 within themselves to know God, God delivered them over to the knowledge of vanity, that they might disgrace their bodies

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“ therewith, and they received the reward which befitted their
“ error in their own persons (Romans 1, 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 him-
self 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 seclu-
sion 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 bre-
thren and conversing with them, and next he ceased to medi-
tate 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 wor-
shipped 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

Of Eucarpus

“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

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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 temptation, by the permission of God, for the benefit of his "soul, what is it right for those to do who are made to stumble 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, [saying,] '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 consciences 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

Abba Poemen's Neighbour

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, henceforward, 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 xxxijj. 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

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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 receive 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!"

A Sage of Scete

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 flying about in the heights of heaven, and standing before my head," and the old man said unto him, "Take heed to thyself, and pray unto God with groans and sighs"; and the following 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 supplication." 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 onwards 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

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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 yourselves, 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

Of a certain Harlot

“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 happened to me in the next?” And she repented, and became a chosen vessel.

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Chapter xxxviii. 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 continually 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

Abba Macarius

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 remain 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 21. Of Abba Macarius who was accused of committing fornication

A BBA 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

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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 provide 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

Macarius the Egyptian

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 xli. 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, entertain 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 Melchisedek 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 xlii. 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,

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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 various 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 rebelled 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, "Theopemptus"; 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, "Behold, 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 disturbeth 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

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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 wilderness, 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

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“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 transgression 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 fornication. From those which are on my mouth I throw out flowers (?), and I incite the ascetic by means of blandishments, and I make to sin those who live a life of abstinence and self-denial by means of such dainty meats and foods according 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 believed 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

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“ 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.”

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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 xliiv. 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

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 treasures! 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

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“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

Abba Paule

“ 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).

The Rule of Pachomius at Tabenna

Chapter 1. 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 although all the old men were standing [there], and other brethren who were much older [than he], thou didst command 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

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“ 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

Sylvanus the Actor

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 forgive 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 necessity, 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 forgive 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

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“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 praying with the brethren than when he was eating at the table with them? And is it not possible for the soul to weep continually 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 obliged 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: “Behold, 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 conceived 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

Sylvanus the Actor

“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, re-
ceived 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 iij. 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

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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 becometh 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 immovable. We have seen a new sight with you, O Christians, the like of which hath never been seen, even among the barbarians. 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 bequeathed 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 commanded these things to be done. Ye would take care of the body which is visible, but I strive for his soul [which is invisible]; 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 sufferings, sing Psalms; but I tell you, of a truth, that if ye do indeed sing Psalms over him, he will certainly suffer more

Pachomius and the Sinner

“ 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

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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 continually, 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

Pachomius and the Cook

“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

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“ 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
“ onesmall 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 vii. 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;

Pachomius and the Brethren

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 viii. 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

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[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

Pachomius and the Vision

“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.”

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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 Rabbá 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 redemption; 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, instead 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 dedicated 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 resembleth 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

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“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

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“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 no-thing 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 *dinârs*. 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 *dinârs*. 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

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“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 *dinârs*, 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 *dinârs* 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 *dinâr*, and in no other place in Egypt wilt thou obtain more than five *ardebs* a *dinâr*.” 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 returned 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 *dinârs* 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 become inflamed by love of gain he hath brought us into subjection 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 responsibility 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]?

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“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 hundred *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 sandals 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

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“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 because 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 xlii. 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 companionship 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 certainly 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-

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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 signification [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.

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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 everlasting 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 heaven. 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 altogether 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 condition, 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 converse with any man until death, and to eat one meal daily, of bread and salt only, and to drink water only for the whole

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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 whatsoever 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

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“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 ministers 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 forever 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 beforehand 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 belongeth to God alone to know what is going to happen beforehand, 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

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“confirmation from the things which are provided, and especially 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 destruction of souls resteth with thee to work, and thou surpassest 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 Sustainer 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 although 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 wickedness which never sleepeth! Ye will never cease to stir yourselves 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

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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 children of men whom Thou dost send unto me from the ends of the earth, because I am not acquainted with their languages, 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

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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 Pawnan (i.e. Jonab), 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

Jonah the Gardener

the same kind], but he lived all the years of his life on plants 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.

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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."

Pachomius and the Heretics

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,

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“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 voluntarily 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 xviii. 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 manifest in very deed the virtues of philosophy, that is to say, long-suffering 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.”

Working Monks

Chapter xix. Of how unclean and contemptible in the sight of Rabbâ 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 kingdom." 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

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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 impossible 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 Theodore, 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

Remarks of Palladius

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 mention 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 reason that I worship Him, and I confess Him and glorify Him ten thousand times because thou art vexed thereby, and thou reelst 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

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[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 myself 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.

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 I. 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 occa-
sions, by the brotherhood of blessed men who had their habi-
tation 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 vexa-
tious 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

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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-

Saint Jerome's Apology

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 they were 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.

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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

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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

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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; permit 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

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“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. Mat-
thew 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 supplica-
tions, 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 sick-
ness, 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 whatsoever
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
answered 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

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“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

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“ 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 xlii, 108). 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

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“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

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“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 't 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

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“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 corruption, 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 regained 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 urgent 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 entreaty 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

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“little, through the multitudinous stripes of the devils, he departed 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 departed 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 themselves to the performance of his excellent rules of life. And in him was fulfilled that which is written, ‘Whosoever humbly himself shall be exalted’ (St. Luke xiv, 11). Therefore, 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 contemplation 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 footsteps of incorporeal beings. And because he was not established 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 exalted 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

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“ 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 zealously 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

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“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

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“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

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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 continually, 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 forgetteth 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 towards 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

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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 Ibor

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 reprov'd 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 shalt 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

Abba Hôr

“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

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“‘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) thou-
sand 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

Abba Abban

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 Jesus 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

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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 vii. 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

Abba Elijah

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]

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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 Elisab

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,

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“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

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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 imprisoned 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

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“ 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

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“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 countries. And they held in reverence their other polluted things, that is to say, dogs, and apes, and all their abominable animals 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

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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

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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

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“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 lxxviii, 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 whatsoever 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

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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 sufficient 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

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“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

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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

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“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 hospitality].” 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 Jerusalem 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

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“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

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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,

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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

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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 boasting, 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-

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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

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“ 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 underfoot 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 suffice 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

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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 Thebais; 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

Abba Paphnutius

“ I rescued her from them and carried her by night to the city.

“ And on another occasion I found a beautiful woman wandering 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 behold, 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 nothing whatsoever.’ Thereupon I had compassion upon the woman, and I took her to my cave, and gave unto her three hundred dinârs, 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 concerning 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

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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 therto, 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 provisions 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 possessions of strangers have never entered my house. No strife "hath ever taken place near me which I have not ended peacefully. 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 gathered 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, according 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,

Abba Paphnutius

“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 an-
gels 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 lxxv, 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 The-
baïd, 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

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“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 thyself 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 Apostles 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?”

Isidore and Dioscurus

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 drawing 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 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

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“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 Petarpemôtis, 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

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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 Petarpemôtis 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

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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 Petarpemôtis 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 Petarpemôtis 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

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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 Petarpemôtis 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 Petarpemôtis 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 mayest 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.

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And Petarpemôtis 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 intentions 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 Petarpemôtis 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 supplication (?); 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, Petarpemôtis 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,

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without trouble. And the blessed Petarpemôtis 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 Petarpemôtis, 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 thereof "of laid hold upon me; and the tree remained with his disciples "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 inhaled "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 Petarpemôtis, and they spake many other things before us the which [if written] the world could not contain. And, according to what these men said, Petarpemôtis 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

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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

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“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

The Paradise of the Holy Fathers

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 Hôr, and Isaiah, and Paul, and Nôpî, 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 depart 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 whatsoever 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

Evagrius

“ 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 Thor, and Isaiab, and Paul, and Kopi, the Confessors

Chapter xviii. 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

The Paradise of the Holy Fathers

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

The Triumphs of the Blessed Fathers

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 lxxix, 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 lxxix, 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

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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

Ammon the First

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

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“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 xxij. 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 courtyard, 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

Chronius, Philemon, John

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 xxviii. 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 Dikâpôlis; and grace clung to him even as unto Abraham, and his beard flowed down like that of Aaron. He worked

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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

Apollo the Less

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,

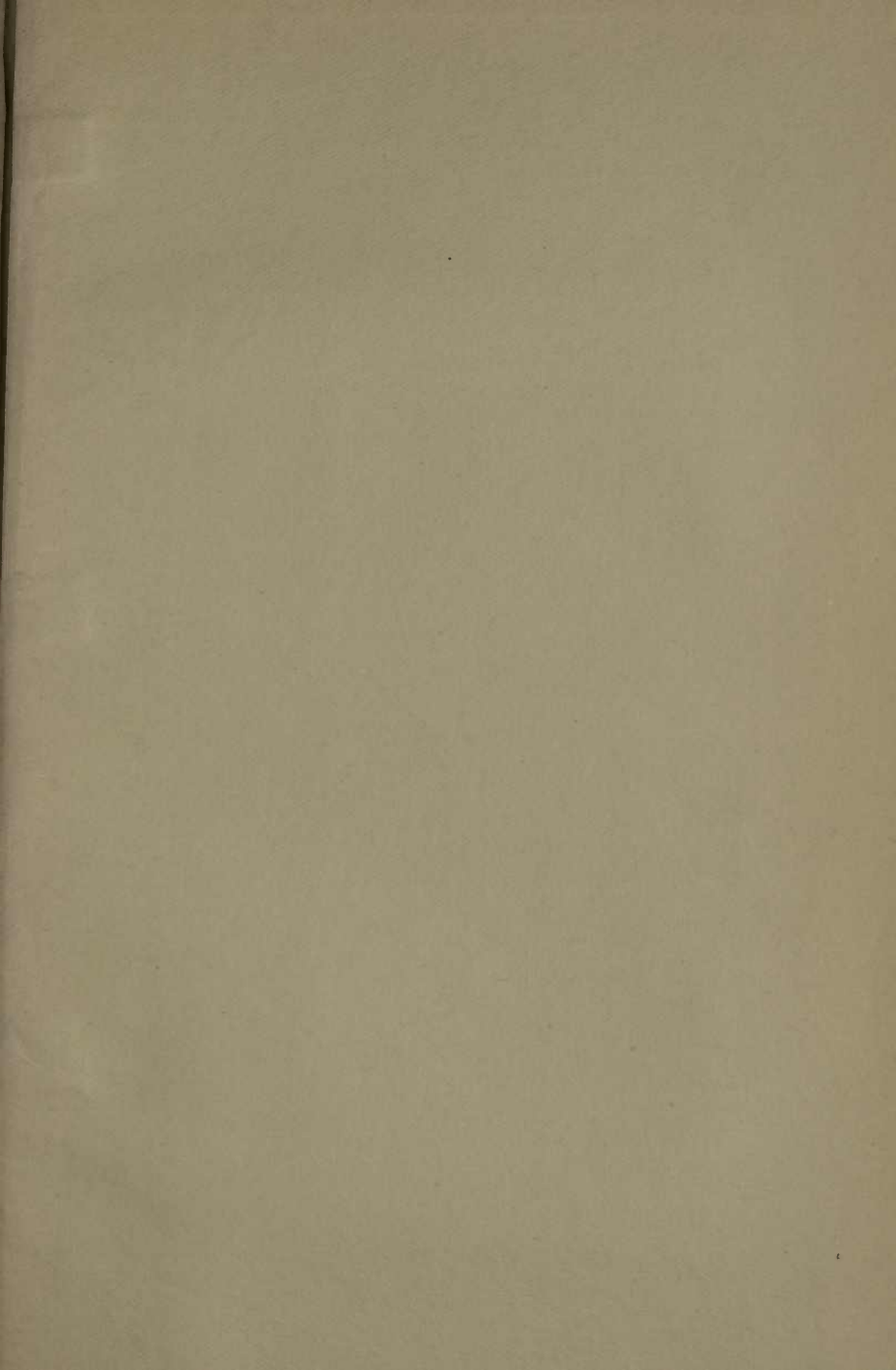
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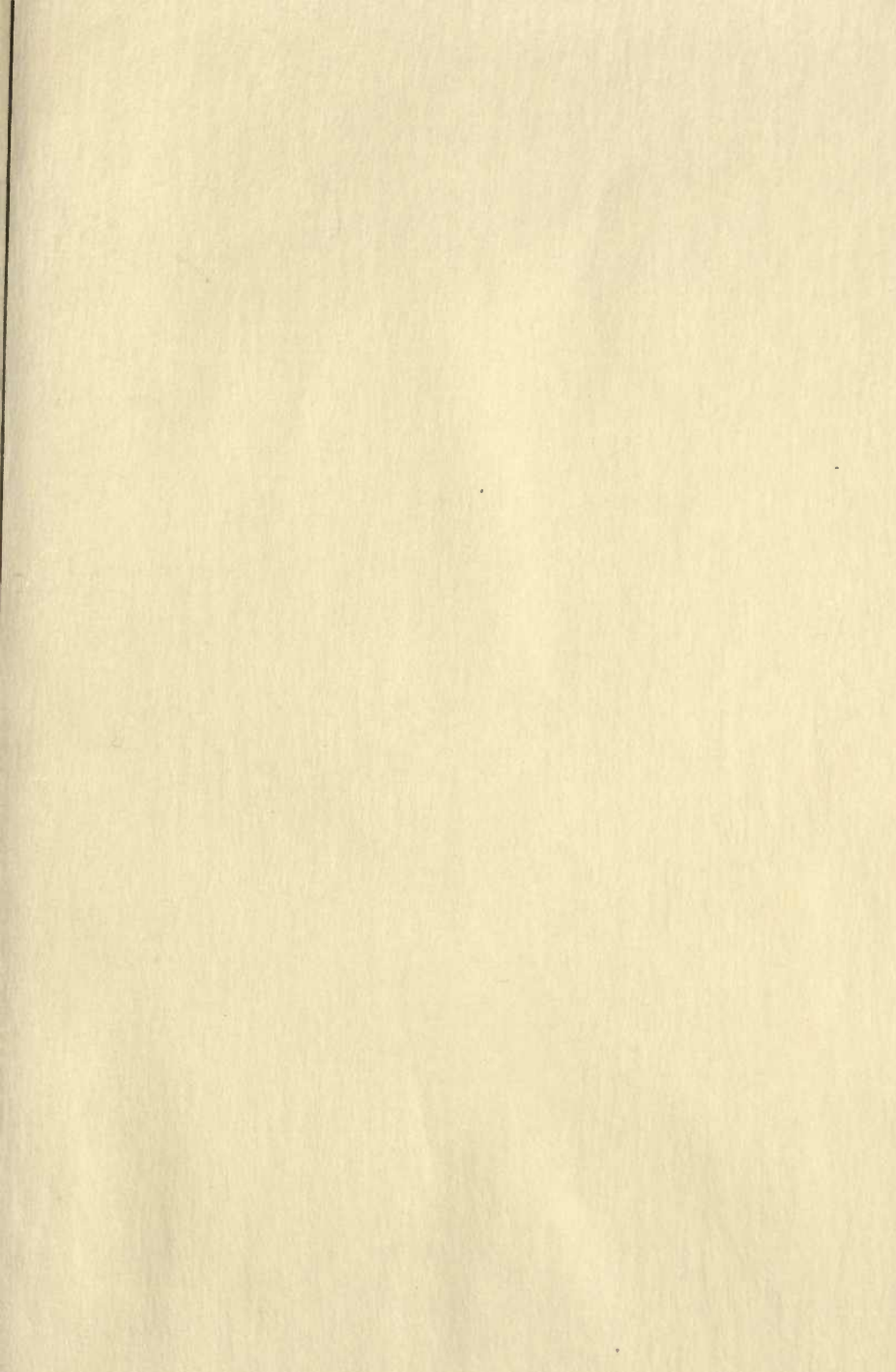
and sent them for all those who were with the judge, and for Philemon, and the blessed Apollo, and other confessors came with them. And as they were going along the road, the gracious gift of the Spirit lighted upon Apollo, and he began to teach the soldiers, and as he spake they hearkened unto him, 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 martyrdom 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.

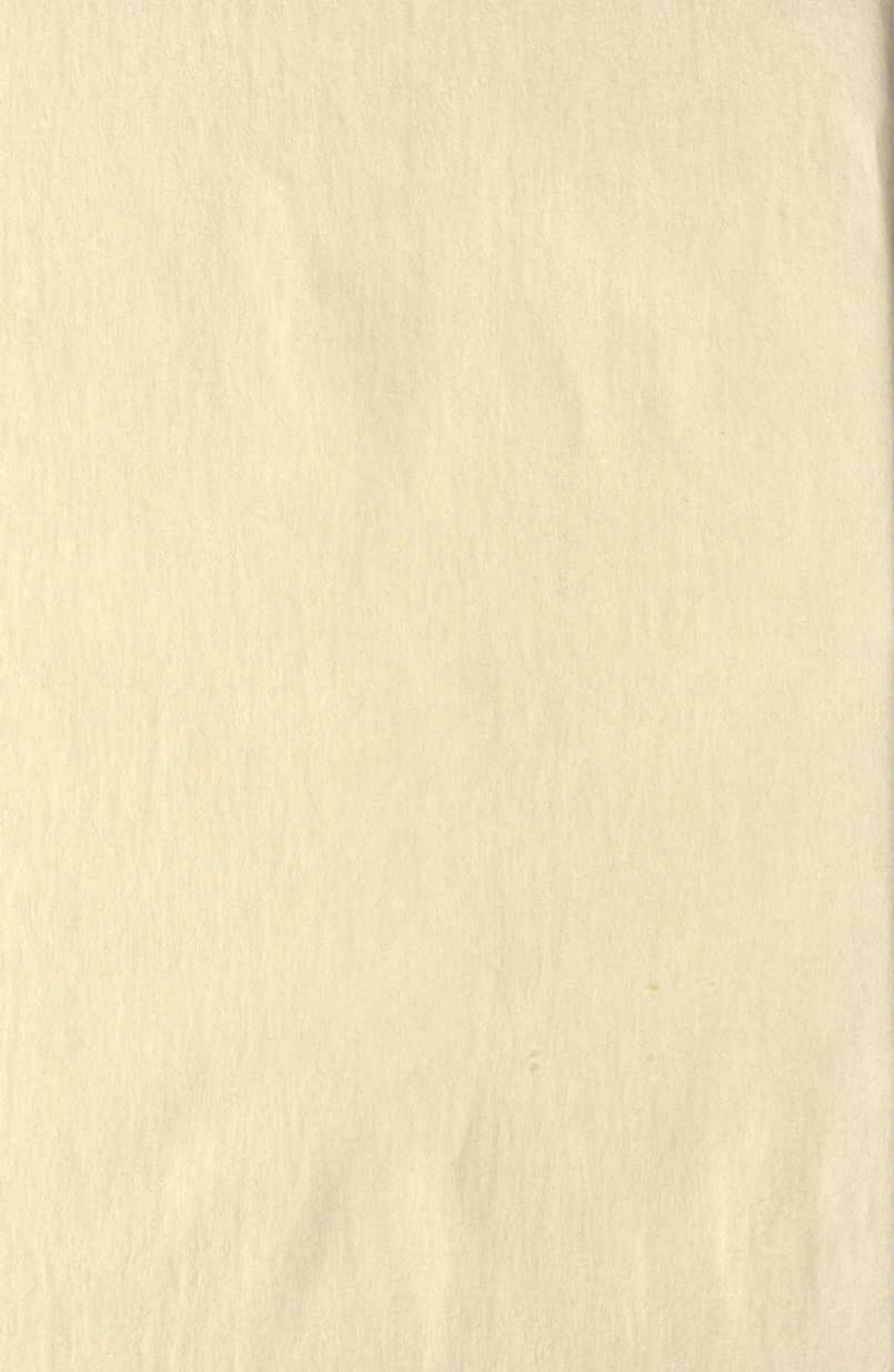
Here end the Triumph of Apollo, the Monk and Martyr, and the other Histories of the Holy Men which were written by Hieronymus the Monk.

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



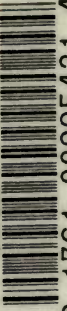




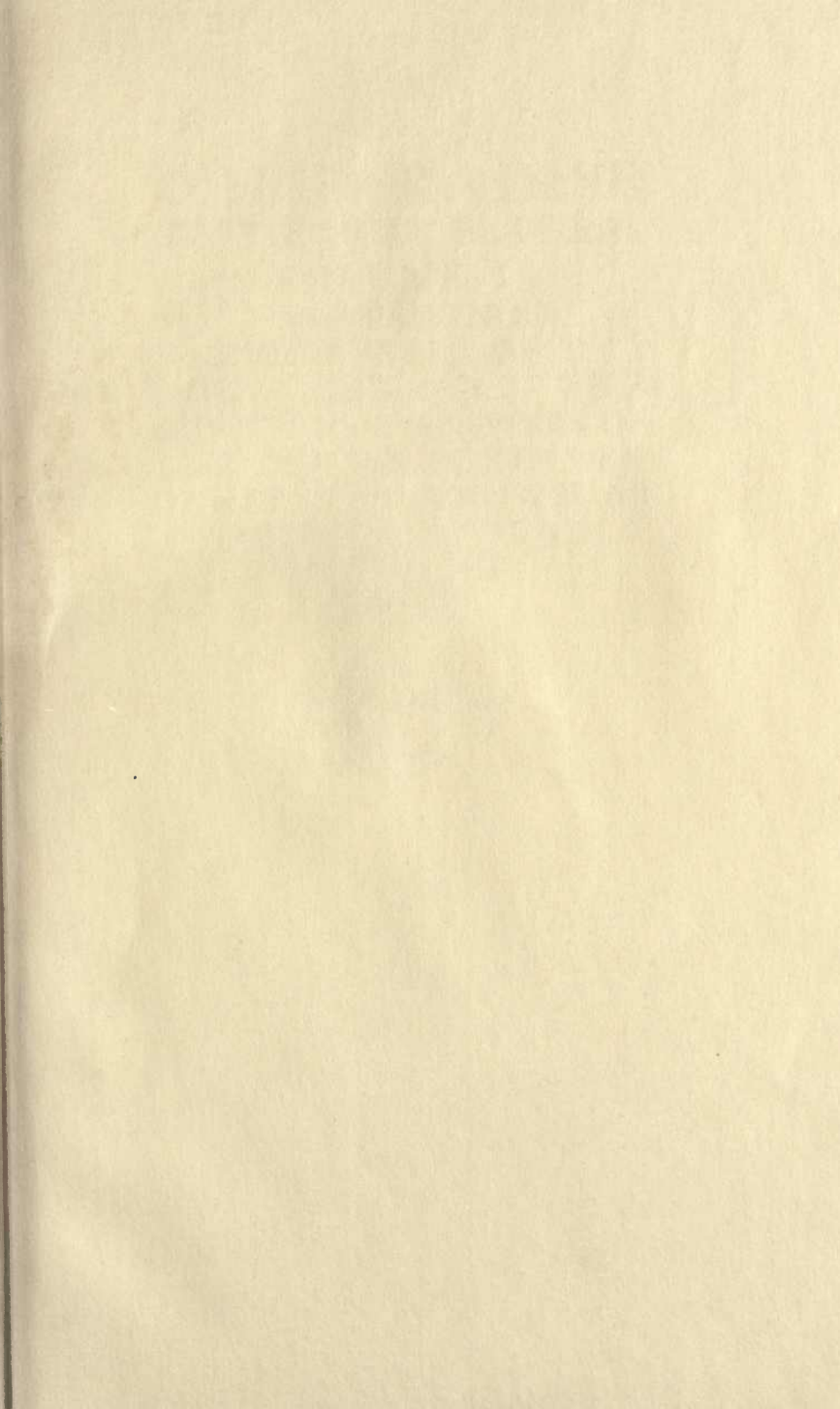
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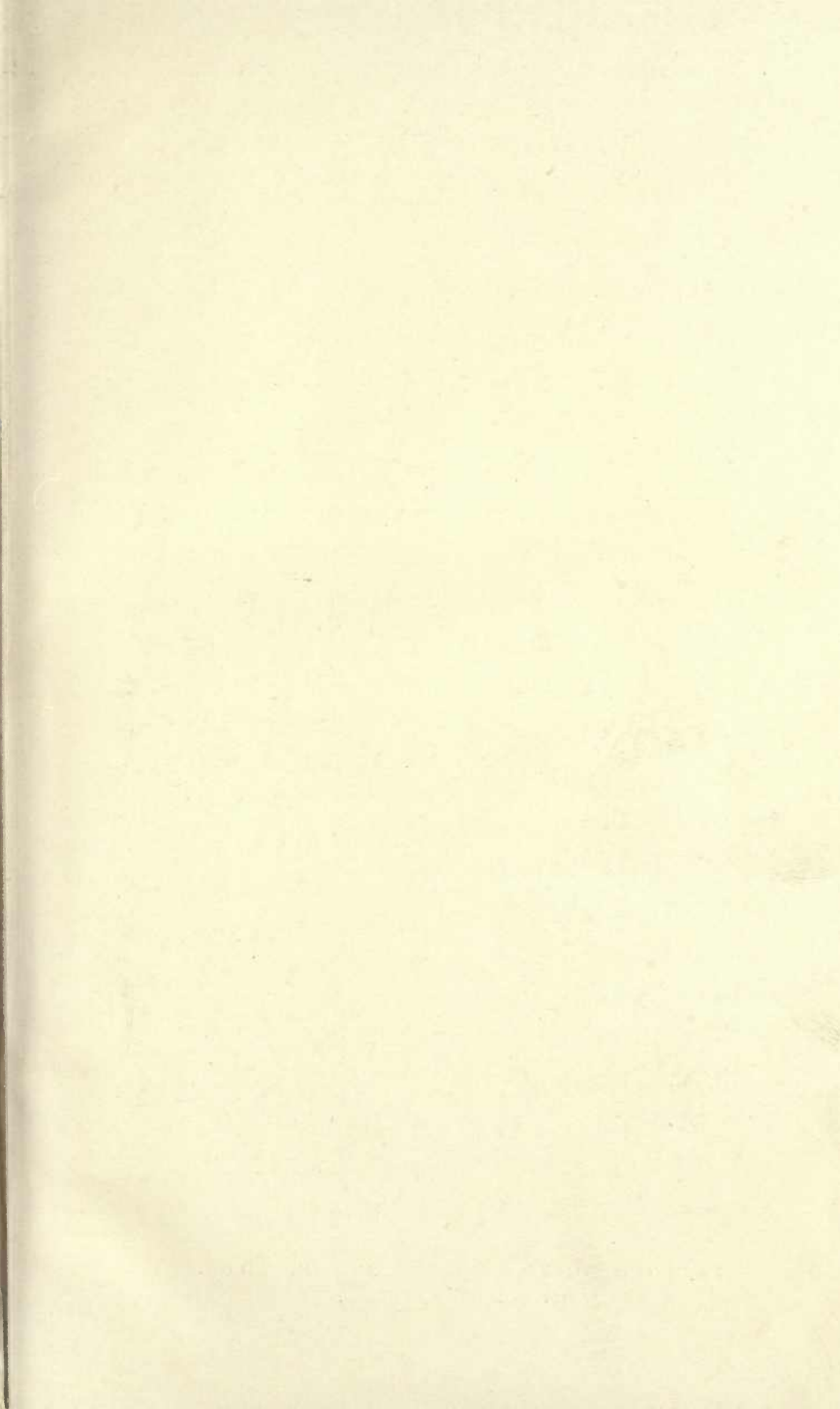


THE PARADISE
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VOLUME II
CONTAINING
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HOLY MEN AND THE
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS OF
THE ASCETIC BRETHERN
GENERALLY KNOWN AS
THE SAYINGS OF THE
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THE PARADISE
OR GARDEN OF THE
HOLY FATHERS BE-
ING HISTORIES OF
THE ANCHORITES
RECLUSES MONKS

COENOBITES AND ASCETIC
FATHERS OF THE DESERTS OF
EGYPT BETWEEN A.D. CCL AND
A.D. CCCC CIRCA COMPILED BY
ATHANASIUS ARCHBISHOP
OF ALEXANDRIA: *PALLADIUS*
BISHOP OF HELENOPOLIS: SAINT
JEROME AND OTHERS **¶** NOW
TRANSLATED OUT OF THE SYRI-
AC WITH NOTES & INTRODUC-
TION BY *ERNEST A. WALLIS*
BUDGE M.A: L^{IT}. D: D. L^{IT}: KEEPER
OF THE ASSYRIAN & EGYPTIAN
ANTIQUITIES IN THE BRITISH
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MCMVII

And again, we begin, by the power of our Lord,
the Third (sic) Part with the Counsels of the
Holy Old Men, and the Questions and the
Answers [which they gave] to the Brethren

Book the First

Chapter I. Of Flight from Men, and of Silent Contemplation, and of Dwelling continually in the Cell, [a work] which was composed by Bishop Palladius for the Prefect Lausus

WHEN Abbâ Arsenius was in the palace, he prayed to God, and said, "O Lord, direct me how to live"; and a voice came to him, saying, "Arsenius, flee from men, and thou shalt live."

2. And when Arsenius was living the ascetic life in the monastery, he prayed to God the same prayer, and again he heard a voice saying unto him, "Arsenius, flee, keep silence, and lead a life of silent contemplation, for these are the fundamental causes which prevent a man from committing sin."

3. A certain man said that there were once three men who loved labours, and they were monks. The first one chose to go about and see where there was strife, which he turned into peace; the second chose to go about and visit the sick; but the third departed to the desert that he might dwell in quietness. Finally the first man, who had chosen to still the contentions of men, was unable to make every man to be at peace with his neighbour, and his spirit was sad; and he went to the man who had chosen to visit the sick, and he found him in affliction because he was not able to fulfil the law which he had laid down for himself. Then the two of them went to the monk in the desert, and seeing each other they rejoiced, and the two men related to the third the tribulations which had befallen them in the world, and entreated him to tell them how he had lived in the desert. And he was silent, but after a little he said unto them, "Come, let each of us go and fill a vessel of water"; and after they had filled the vessel, he said unto them, "Pour out some of the water into a basin, and look down to the bottom through it," and they did so. And he said unto them, "What do ye see?" and they said, "We see nothing." And after the water in the basin had ceased to move, he said to them a second time, "Look into the water," and they looked, and he said unto them, "What do ye see?" And they said unto him, "We see our own faces distinctly"; and he said unto them, "Thus is it with the man who dwelleth with men, for by reason of the disturbance caused by this affair of the world he cannot see his sins; but if he live

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“in the peace and quietness of the desert he is able to see God clearly.”

4. On one occasion Abbâ Ammon came during the season of winter to Abbâ Sisoës, and he saw that the old man was grieved because he had left the desert; and Abbâ Ammon said unto him, “Why art thou distressed, O father? For what wast thou able to do in the desert in thine old age?” And the old man Sisoës looked at him fiercely, and said, “What sayest thou to me, Ammon? Are not the mere thoughts of the freedom which is in the desert better for us [than living out of it]?”

5. There were two brethren in the desert who were the equals of each other in the spiritual life, and they led a life of ascetic self-denial, and performed the exalted works which belong to spiritual excellence. And it happened that one of them was called to be the head of a habitation of the brethren, but the other remained in the desert, where he became a man perfect in self-denial. And he was held by God to be worthy of the gift of healing those who were possessed of devils, and he knew beforehand the things which were about to happen, and he made whole the sick. Now when he who had become the head of a habitation of brethren (i.e., a coenobium, or monastery) heard these things, he decided in his mind that his fellow monk must have acquired these powers suddenly, and he lived a life of silence and ceased from converse with men for three weeks, and he made supplication unto God continually that He would shew him how the monk in the desert wrought these mighty works, while he had not received even one of the gifts which he had. And an angel appeared and said unto him, “He who dwelleth in the desert maketh supplication to God both by night and by day, and his pain and anxiety are for our Lord’s sake; but thou hast care for many things, and thou hast converse with many, and the consolation and encouragement of the children of men must be sufficient for thee.”

6. Abbâ Arsenius on one occasion went to the brethren in a certain place where there were some reeds growing, and the wind blew upon them, and they were shaken. And the old man said, “What is this rustling sound?” and they said unto him, “It is that caused by the reeds which are being shaken by the wind.” And he said unto them, “Verily I say unto you, if the man who dwelleth in silence heareth but the twittering of a sparrow, he shall not be able to acquire that repose in his heart which he seeketh; how much less then can ye do so with all this rustling of the reeds about you?”

7. A certain brother came to Abbâ Arsenius, and said unto him, “My thoughts vex me, and say, ‘Thou canst not fast;

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“ ‘and thou art not able to labour, therefore visit the sick, “ ‘which is a great commandment.’ ” Then Abbâ Arsenius, after the manner of one who was well acquainted with the war of devils, said unto him, “ Eat, drink, and sleep, and toil not, “ but on no account go out of thy cell ”; for the old man knew that dwelling constantly in the cell induceth all the habits of the solitary life. And when the brother had done these things for three days he became weary of idleness, and finding a few palm leaves on the ground, he took them and began to split them up, and on the following day he dipped them in water and began to work (i.e., to weave baskets); and when he felt hungry he said, “ I will finish one more small piece of work, and then “ I will eat.” And when he was reading in the Book, he said, “ I will sing a few Psalms and say a few prayers, and then I “ shall eat without any compunction.” Thus little by little, by the agency of God, he advanced in the ascetic life until he reached the first rank, and received the power to resist the thoughts and to vanquish them.

8. When Abbâ Sisoës was dwelling in the mountain of Abbâ Anthony, the man who used to minister unto him departed and remained away for a period of ten months and did not come [back] to him, and he saw no man. And afterwards, as he was walking in the mountains, he saw a man hunting wild animals, and the old man said to him, “ Whence comest thou? “ And how long hast thou been here?” And the man said unto him, “ Father, I have been in this mountain eleven months, “ and I have seen no man except thyself.” Then the old man having heard these things went into his cell, and smote upon his face, and said, “ Behold, O Sisoës, well mayest thou think “ that thou hast done nothing, for thou hast not made thyself “ even like unto this man who is in the world, and is not a “ monk.”

9. I once asked Abbâ Sarmâtâ a question, and said unto him, “ What shall I do, O my father, for I do nothing which the “ monks do? On the contrary, I am negligent, and I eat, and “ drink, and sleep, and I think many filthy thoughts, and my “ mind is ever disturbed, and I depart from one work to an- “ other, and from one group of thoughts to another. What “ shall I do, then? For I am troubled, and my soul is little.” And Abbâ Sarmâtâ said unto him: “ Sit thou in thy cell, and “ whatsoever thou canst do, that do, and trouble not thyself. “ For I wish thee to do now a little, even as did Abbâ An- “ thony in the mountain, and I believe that by sitting in [thy] “ cell for the sake of the Name of God, thou also wilt be found “ in the same place as Abbâ Anthony.”

10. On one occasion the brethren went up from Scete to go

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to Abbâ Anthony, and having embarked in a boat to journey to him, they found [there] a certain old man, who was also going to visit him, and they were not acquainted with him. And as they were sitting in the boat, they spake now and again a word of the Fathers, or a word from the Book, or they talked about the work of their hands; and the old man listened unto all they said, but held his peace. Then, having crossed the ferry, the old man was found to be going also to Abbâ Anthony. And when they had all arrived at the place where he was, he said unto them, "Ye found excellent company in this old man"; and to the old man himself he said, "Thou didst find excellent brethren to travel with thee, O father." And the old man said, "They are excellent brethren, but they have no door to their house, and whosoever wisheth can go into the stable, and untie the ass, and go whithersoever he pleaseth on him." Now this he said because they uttered every word which came into their mouths.

11. A certain brother asked Abbâ Sisoës, saying, "Father, how was it that thou didst leave Scete where thou wast with Abbâ Macarius, and didst come here?" And the old man said unto him, "When Scete began to be filled [with monks] I heard that Abbâ Antonius had fallen asleep, and I came to the mountain here, and found that this place was quiet, and I lived here for a little time." The brother said unto him, "How long hast thou been here?" and the old man said, "Behold, I have been here seventy years this day."

12. They used to say concerning Abbâ Theodore and Abbâ Luk that they passed fifty years with disturbed minds, and were troubled the whole time about changing their place [of abode]; and they said, "Behold, we will change in the winter"; and when the winter arrived, they said, "We will change in the summer"; and thus they did unto the end of their lives.

13. A certain father came to Abbâ Arsenius, and he knocked at the door, and the old man opened unto him thinking that it was his servant [who had knocked]; and when he saw who it was, he cast himself upon his face, and the father entreated him, saying, "Stand up, O father, that I may give thee the salutation of peace." But Arsenius disputed with him, saying, "I will not stand up until thou hast departed"; and though he entreated him to do so often he would not stand up, and the father left him and departed.

14. Abbâ Battimion said, "When I went down to Scete they gave me some apples to take to the brethren, and when I had knocked at the door of Abbâ Abhîlâ, he said to me when he saw me, 'If these apples had been of gold I would not have wished thee to knock at my door; and moreover, do

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“not knock at the door of any other brother”; so I returned
“and placed the apples in the church and departed.”

15. They said concerning Abbâ Sisoës that when the church began [to fill] he fled quickly to his cell, and, [though] the brethren said, “He hath a devil,” he was performing the work of God.

16. Abbâ Joseph said to Abbâ Nestôr, “What shall I do
“with my tongue, for I cannot conquer it?” Abbâ Nestôr said
unto him, “If thou talkest wilt thou have relief from this
“[trouble]?” And he said unto him, “Nay.” The old man said
unto him, “If then thou hast no relief when thou talkest, why
“dost thou talk?” Abbâ Joseph said unto him, “What shall
“I do? For I cannot stand against it.” The old man said unto
him, “Wilt thou have relief then?” and he said unto him,
“Nay.” The old man said unto him, “If thou canst not gain
“relief by talking, then hold thy peace.”

17. A certain brother went to Abbâ Poemen on the second
Sunday in the Fast of Forty Days and repeated unto him his
thoughts, and sighing over what the old man had told him,
he said unto him, “I had almost kept myself from coming here
“to-day”; and the old man said, “Why?” Then the brother
said, “I said in my mind, Peradventure during the fast the
“door will be closed against thee”; and Abbâ Poemen said
unto him, “We do not learn to shut a door made of wood,
“but to close the door of the tongue.”

18. When a certain brother in Scete was going to the har-
vest, he went to Abbâ Moses, the Black, and said unto him,
“Father, tell me what I shall do; shall I go to the harvest?”
and Abbâ Moses said unto him, “If I tell thee, wilt thou be
“persuaded to do as I say?” And the brother said unto him,
“Yea, I will hearken unto thee.” The old man said unto him,
“If thou wilt be persuaded by me, rise up, go, and release
“thyself from going to the harvest, and come unto me, and I
“will tell thee what thou shalt do.” The brother therefore
departed and obtained his release from his companions, as the
old man had told him, and then he came to him. And the old
man said unto him, “Go into thy cell and keep Pentecost, and
“thou shalt eat dry bread and salt once a day [only], and after
“thou hast done this I will tell thee something else to do later
“on”; and he went and did as the old man had told him, and then
came to him again. Now when the old man saw that he was
one who worked with his hands, he shewed him the proper
way to live in his cell; and the brother went to his cell, and
fell on his face upon the ground, and for three whole days and
nights he wept before God. And after these things, when his
thoughts were saying unto him, “Thou art now an exalted

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“person, and thou hast become a great man,” he used to contradict them, and set before his eyes his former shortcomings, [and say], “Thus were all thine offences.” And again, when they used to say to him, “Thou hast performed many things negligently,” he would say, “Nevertheless I do small services for God, and He sheweth His mercy upon me.” And when by such means as these the spirits had been overcome, they appeared unto him in the form of corporeal creatures, and said unto him, “We have been vanquished by thee”; and he said unto them, “Why?” and they said unto him, “If we humble thee, we are raised up by thee to an exalted position, and if we exalt thee we are accounted by thee for humility.”

19. There was a certain brother in the monastery who worked hard, and the brethren who were in Scete heard about him, and came to see him, and they entered into the place where he used to work; and having received them, and saluted them, he turned round and began to work again. And when the brethren saw what he did, they said unto him, “John gave thee the garb of the monk, and made thee a dweller in a monastery, but he did not teach thee to receive a blessing (*literally*, prayer) from the brethren, or to give one, or to say to them, ‘Pray ye,’ or, ‘Sit ye down.’” And John said unto them, “Nay, a sinner is not sufficient for these things.”

20. Abbâ Anthony said, “As a fish when it is lifted up out of the water dieth, even so doth the monk who tarrieth outside his cell.”

21. They tell the story of a certain brother who came to Scete to see Abbâ Arsenius, and who went into the church and entreated the clergy to take him to see him; and the clergy said unto him, “Refresh thyself a little, and thou shalt see him.” And the brother said unto them, “I will eat nothing before I meet him and see him”; and when the clergy heard this they sent a brother with him to shew him Abbâ Arsenius, because his cell was some distance away. And when they had arrived there, they knocked at the door and went inside, and having saluted him, and prayed, they sat down and held their peace; and the brother who was from the church answered and said, “I will depart, pray ye for me.” But when the other brother saw that he possessed not freedom of speech with the old man, he said unto the brother from the church, “I also will go with thee,” and they departed together.

Then he entreated him, saying, “Take me also to Abbâ Moses who was a thief,” and when they went to him, the old man received them with joy, and having refreshed them greatly he dismissed them in peace. And the brother who had

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brought the visitor to Abbâ Moses said unto him, "Behold, "I brought thee to a man from a foreign land, and to an "Egyptian, which of the two pleaseth thee?" And he answered and said unto him, "The Egyptian who hath just received me, "and refreshed me." And when one of the old men heard what had happened, he prayed to God, and said, "O Lord, shew "me this matter; one fleeth from the world for Thy Name's "sake, and another receiveth and is gracious for Thy Name's "sake." And behold, suddenly there appeared unto him on the river two great boats, and lo, Abbâ Arsenius and the Spirit of God were travelling in silence in the one, and Abbâ Moses and the angels of God were in the other, and they were feeding the monk with honey from the comb.

22. A certain brother asked Abbâ Poemen a question, saying, "If I see something done, dost thou wish me to tell it "abroad?" The old man said unto him, "It is written, 'Who- "soever shall declare a matter incorrectly, it is a disgrace to "him and [a subject for] mockery.' And if thou art asked, "speak; and if thou art not asked, hold thy peace."

23. On one occasion there was an assembly in a great church, and all the old men were asked in a body, "What striving is "the mightiest against the monks?" And they all agreed that there was none stronger than that which would make a man leave his cell and depart, for when this striving is overcome, all the rest can quite easily be brought low.

24. They say concerning Abbâ Âpôs, who afterwards became Bishop of Oxyrhyncus, that when he was a monk he laboured with great toil in the ascetic life, and that he was moved every hour by Divine Grace, but that after he became Bishop, though he wished to perform the same labours, he was not able to do so. And he cast himself before God, and made supplication unto Him, saying, "Peradventure, O my "Lord, it is because of the Bishopric that Thou hast removed "Thy grace from me," and it was said unto him, "It is not "so, but formerly thou wast in the desert, and there were no "men there, and God took care of thee; here, however, thou "art in a portion of the world which is inhabited, and men care "for thee."

25. A certain brother from the Cells soaked some palm leaves in water, and then sat down to weave ropes, and his mind said unto him, "Go and visit such and such a brother"; and he pondered on the matter, and said, "I will go after a "few days." And again his mind said unto him, "Supposing "thou shouldst die, what wilt thou do? for thou wouldst not "see thy brother"; and once again he satisfied his mind by saying, "I will go after such and such a time." Now when the

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summer had come, he said within himself, "To-day is not the "right time for going," and again he said to his mind, "As "soon as thou hast cut off the end of the palm leaves it will "be time for thee to go"; and he said to himself, "I will "finish these leaves, and then I will go." And once again his mind urged him and said, "The weather is beautiful to-day," and he rose up straightway and left the palm leaves soaking in the water, and he picked up a cloak and ran off on his way. Now he had as a neighbour a certain old man who used to see visions, and as soon as this man saw the brother running, he cried out, and said unto him, "Prisoner, prisoner, come "hither"; and when he had gone in the old man said unto him, "Go back to thy cell," and the brother went back, and he related unto him the whole story of his war. And having entered his own cell, he offered up repentance unto God, and the devils cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Thou hast "vanquished us, thou hast vanquished us, O monk." Now he had a palm-leaf mat under him, and it was charred as if it had been burned in the fire, and the devils vanished like smoke; then straightway the brother perceived their wiles, and he gave thanks unto God.

26. Abbâ Poemen said: A certain brother asked Abbâ Sîmôn, and said, "If I go out from my cell, and I find a brother absorbed and immersed in matters unnecessary for salvation, "shall I associate myself also with him? And supposing also "that I should find him laughing, and that I also should laugh, "when I have gone into my cell again shall I not be forgiven "my relaxation?" And the old man said unto him, "What "dost thou wish? Dost thou mean that having gone out of thy "cell and having found a man who was laughing, and laughed "with him, and having found a man who was talking, and "talked with him, thou canst go back to thy cell and find thyself as thou wast before thou didst go out?" And the brother said unto him, "If not, how then?" Then the old man answered and said unto him, "It is right for thee to keep a careful watch both within and without."

27. An old man said, "One man is thought to be silent, and "yet his heart judgeth and condemneth others, and the man "who acteth thus speaketh continually; another man speaketh from morning till evening, and yet keepeth silence, that "is to say, he speaketh nothing which is not helpful."

28. There were two excellent brethren in the Cells, and they were held to be worthy to see things of mystery, and each one of them saw the might which was sent down by God upon his brethren. Now it happened that one of them came on Friday to the coenobium, and as he was outside, he saw that some of the

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brethren were eating from the morning [upwards], and he said unto them, "Is it possible that ye eat at this time on Friday?" "And do ye usually hold a congregation at the turn of the day?" And as his brother looked upon him, he saw that the might of God was going away from him, and he was grieved, for he was accustomed to see it upon him. And when they had come to their own cell he said unto him, "What hast thou done, O my brother? Or what thoughts hast thou had? For I do not see upon thee as usual the might of God." And the brother made answer and said, "I know not; I do not feel that I have any filthy thoughts in me, and I do not perceive in my soul that any evil act hath been committed by me." His brother said unto him, "Peradventure some vain and empty word hath gone forth from thy mouth." Then that brother recalled the matter to his mind, and said, "Yea, yesterday I saw certain men outside the coenobium eating, and I said unto them, 'Do ye eat at this time on Friday?' This then is my sin. But I entreat thee to labour with me for two weeks, and thou and I will beg God to forgive me." And they did even as he had said, and after two weeks his brother saw that might which is of the goodness of God come upon him as usual.

29. The old men used to say about the blessed Abbâ Arsenius, and Abbâ Theodore of Parmê, that they possessed in a far greater degree than many monks a hatred of the admiration of men; Abbâ Arsenius was never pleased at meeting and conversing with a man, and Abbâ Theodore, even though he was willing to meet a man, was as sharp as a sword in his conversation.

30. Abbâ Macarius said unto the brethren when the service in the church was ended, "Flee ye, O brethren"; and one of the old men said, "Father, whither can we flee farther than this desert?" Then Macarius laid his hand upon his mouth, saying, "Flee in this manner," and straightway he went to his cell and, shutting the door, sat down.

31. Abbâ Poemen said:—Abbâ Moses asked Abbâ Zechariah a question when he was about to die, and said unto him, "Father, is it good that we should hold our peace?" And Zechariah said unto him, "Yea, my son, hold thy peace." And at the time of his death, whilst Abbâ Isidore was sitting with him, Abbâ Moses looked up to heaven, and said, "Rejoice and be glad, O my son Zechariah, for the gates of heaven have been opened."

32. A brother asked an old man, saying, "What is humility?" And the old man answered and said unto him, "That thou payest not back evil for evil." That brother said unto

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him, "And supposing that a man cannot attain to this measure, what must we do?" The old man said unto him, "Let us flee and follow after silence."

33. And an old man said, "Lay hold upon silence. Look carefully into and scrutinize the manner in which thou trainest thyself, both when thou art lying down, and when thou art standing up. Meditate upon the fear of God, and be not afraid of the attack of sinners. Consent not to everything. Be swift to hear and slow to believe."

34. An old man said: "The man, who hath learned by experience the sweetness of the quietness which is in his cell, doth not flee from meeting his neighbour because he is as one who despiseth him, but because of the fruits which he plucketh from silence."

35. Abbâ Moses used to say, "The man who fleeth from the world is like unto ripe grapes, but he who dwelleth among the attractions of the children of men is like unto sour grapes."

36. An old man said: "Human care and worry and anxiety about the things of the body destroy the faculties of knowledge and expression in a man, and leave him like unto a piece of dry wood."

37. They used to say about Abbâ Nastîr that the old man was like unto the serpent which Moses made for the healing of the people (Numbers xxi, 9 ff.), and that he was perfect in all spiritual excellences, and that, although he kept silence, he healed every man.

38. A certain brother asked an old man a question, and said unto him, "Father, what shall I do? For, although my body is in my cell, my thoughts wander about into every place, and because of this they vex me greatly, saying, 'Thou hast no benefit whatsoever, for though thy body is shut up in the cell, thy thoughts wander and are scattered abroad.' And they bring me to despair, and counsel me to go back to the world as one who has not the ability to acquire the rule of life which is proper for the ascetic monk." The old man said unto him, "Thou must know, O my son, that this is an attack of Satan, but go, and continue to abide in thy cell, and go not out of it at any time, and pray to God that He may give thee the power to endure patiently, and then thy mind shall collect itself in thee. For the matter is like unto that of a she-ass which hath a sucking foal. If she be tied up, however much the foal may gambol about or wander hither and thither, he will come back to her eventually, either because he is hungry, or for other reasons which drive him to her; but if it happen that his mother be also roaming about

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“loose, both animals will go to destruction. And thus is it in the matter of the monk. If the body remain continually in its cell, the mind thereof will certainly come back to it after all its wanderings, for many reasons which will come upon it, but if the body as well as the soul wander outside the cell, both will become a prey and a thing of joy to the enemy.”

39. A certain brother belonging to a habitation of brethren said to Abbâ Bessarion, “What shall I do?” The old man said unto him, “Keep silence, and consider thyself to be nothing.”

40. Abbâ Moses besought Abbâ Zechariah, saying, “Speak a word of consolation to the brethren”; and Zechariah took his cloak, and placed it under his feet, saying, “Except a man die thus he cannot be a monk.”

41. Abbâ Poemen said, “The rule of the monk is this—to bear at all times his own blame.”

42. Abbâ Poemen said, “If thou holdest thyself in thine own sight to be of no account, thou mayest dwell where thou pleasest, and find rest.”

43. The same old man used to say, “A man will be always tripped up by that thing which he will not cut off from himself.”

44. Abbâ Alônîs said, “If a man will only remember that which is written, ‘Thou shalt be justified by thy words, and shalt be condemned by thy words’ (St. Matthew xii, 37), he would know that it is right to hold his peace.”

45. Abbâ Poemen said, “If thou wishest to acquire the power to keep silence, think not and say not within thyself that thou art doing the works of spiritual excellence, but say, ‘I am not even worthy to speak.’”

46. Abbâ Anthony said, “He who liveth in the desert is free from three kinds of spiritual attacks, that is to say, those which arise through the ears, speech, and sight; he hath only one kind to fight, namely, that of the heart.”

47. Abbâ Alônîs said, “Unless a man saith in his heart, ‘Only God and myself exist in this world,’ he will not find rest.”

48. Abbâ Sisoës used to say, “It is well for a man to dwell in his cell, and if he suffer with patient endurance he will find blessings of every kind.”

49. A certain brother asked Abbâ Panbô (Pambo), “Is it a good thing for a man to praise his neighbour?” Saith the old man, “It is a much better thing for a man to hold his peace.”

50. Abbâ Poemen said, “In all the labour which cometh upon a man, his victory is only assured when he holdeth his peace.”

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51. A certain brother said unto an old man, "If a brother bringeth unto me news from the outer world, dost thou wish me to tell him not to bring it to me?" The old man said unto him, "Nay," and the brother said unto him, "Why?" The old man said unto him, "Because not even we are able to flee from this. For having told our neighbour that he must not do this, we ourselves afterwards may be found doing the very same thing." And that brother said unto him, "What then is the right [course of action]?" Then the old man said unto him, "If we take upon ourselves to hold our peace, the example alone will be sufficient to make our neighbour do the same."

52. The blessed Theophilus, Archbishop of Alexandria, once went with a certain judge to Abbâ Arsenius, and begged the old man to let him hear some saying from him; and the old man held his peace for a little, and then answered him, and said, "If I speak a word to you will ye observe it?" And they promised to keep it. The old man said unto them, "In whatsoever place ye hear that Arsenius is, come not nigh thereunto."

53. Abbâ Macarius said unto Abbâ Arsenius, "Why fleest thou from us?" And the old man said unto him, "God knoweth that I love you, but I cannot be both with God and with men. The thousands and ten thousands of beings who are above have only one will, but men have many wills: I cannot, therefore, leave God and be with men." And the old man was always uttering these words, "Arsenius, for this thou didst go forth." And he used to say thus: "I have many times repented that I spoke, but that I held my peace I have never repented."

54. Abbâ Anthony 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."

55. On one occasion the Fathers in Scete were gathered together, and because certain folk were wishing to see Abbâ Moses, they treated him with contumely, saying, "Why doth this Ethiopian come and go in our midst?" But Moses hearing this held his peace. And when the congregation was dismissed, they said unto him, "Abbâ Moses, wast thou not afraid?" And he said unto them, "Although I was afraid I uttered not a word."

56. On one occasion certain brethren came unto John the Less to tempt him, for they had heard that he never permitted his mind to think about any of the affairs of this world, and that he never spoke about them. And they said unto him, "Father, we thank God because He hath brought down this

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“year rain in abundance, and the palms are thriving and are flourishing beautifully, and work for the hands of the brethren is abundant.” The old man John saith unto them, “Even thus is it with the Holy Spirit of God, for when It descendeth upon the hearts of holy men they blossom and bring forth the fruit of the fear of God.”

57. A certain brother came to take some baskets from John the Less, and when he had knocked at the door, the old man came out to him, and said unto him, “What seekest thou?” And the brother said unto him, “Father, I want baskets.” And John the Less went in to bring them out to him, but he forgot to do so, and sat down, and went on plaiting. And the brother knocked at the door again, and when Abbâ John went forth to answer him, he said unto him, “Wilt thou bring out the baskets to me, Father?” And again John went in, and sat down, and went on plaiting, and when the brother knocked again, John went forth and said unto him, “Brother, what seekest thou?” And he said unto John, “Baskets, Father”; and John took his hand and led him inside, saying, “If thou wishest for baskets take them and get thee gone, for I am not able [to bring them to you].”

58. Some time ago Abbâ Evagrius went to Scete to a certain father and said unto him, “Speak some word whereby I may be able to save myself.” The old man saith unto him, “If thou wishest to be saved, when thou goest unto any man speak not before he asketh thee a question.” Now Evagrius was sorry about this sentence, and shewed regret because he had asked the question, saying, “Verily I have read many books, and I cannot accept instruction of this kind”; and having profited greatly he went forth from him.

59. On one occasion there was a congregation in the Cells concerning a certain matter, and Abbâ Evagrius spoke. And a certain elder said unto him, “We know, Abbâ, that hadst thou been in thine own country where thou art a bishop and the governor of many, [thou wouldst have been right in speaking]; but in this place thou sittest [as] a stranger.” Now Evagrius was sorry, but he was not offended, and he shook his head, and bent his gaze downwards, and he wrote with his finger and said unto them, “Verily, it is even as thou sayest, O my fathers; I have spoken once, but I will not do it a second time.”

60. Abbâ John, who was in prison, said that there was a man sitting in his cell who always made mention of God, and in this was fulfilled that which is written, “I was in prison, and ye came unto Me” (St. Matthew xxv, 36).

61. They used to say about Abbâ Agathon that for a period

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of three years he placed a stone in his mouth [and kept it there], until he had learned thoroughly how to hold his peace.

62. A certain brother went to Abbâ Moses in Scete, and asked him to speak a word; and the old man said unto him, "Get thee gone, and sit in thy cell, and thy cell shall teach thee everything."

Chapter ij. Of Fasting and Abstinence and of other [similar] Labours

THEY used to say about Abbâ Paphnutius that he would not readily drink wine, and that on one occasion he came by chance upon a band of thieves, and found them

63. drinking; and the captain of the thieves recognized him, and knew that he never drank wine; and he looked closely at him [and saw that] he was a man of great ascetic works. And the captain filled a cup with wine and, taking a sword in his hand, he said unto the old man, "If thou wilt not drink I will slay thee"; and the old man knew that the grace of God wished to work on the captain of the thieves through him, and sought to do good to him, so he took [the cup] and drank [the wine]. Then the captain made excuse to him and said, "Forgive me, father, for having distressed thee"; and the old man said unto him, "I believe, by God, that through this cup God will forgive thee thy sins." And the captain of thieves said unto him, "I believe, by God; from this time forth I will never vex any man." Thus, because for God's sake Paphnutius gave up his own wish, he was able to do good to all that band of thieves.

64. A certain old man came unto one of the holy men who was a companion of his, and who cooked a few lentiles; and one of the two said unto his fellow, "Shall we sing a part of the service?" And he sang the whole of the Psalms of David, and his companion repeated two books of the Great Prophets, and when it was morning the old man departed to his own place, and they forgot all about the food. And the old man went another evening and found the food which had been cooked, and he was sorry and said, "Oh! how was it that we came to forget that little mess of lentiles, and did not eat it?"

65. On one occasion a brother came to Abbâ Isaiah, who threw a handful of lentiles into a saucepan to boil, but when they had just begun to boil he took them off the fire; and the brother said unto him, "Are they not yet cooked, O father?" And the old man said unto him, "Is it not sufficient for thee to have seen the fire? For this [alone] is great refreshing."

66. A certain old man became very seriously ill, for he suffered from some disease of the stomach, and much blood came

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away from him; and one of the brethren had some dried prunes, and because of the severe illness of the old man he cooked a little food, and put some of the prunes in it, and brought it to him, and entreated him, saying, "Father, do [me] an act of grace, and take a little of this stew, for perhaps it will do thee good." And the old man lifted up his eyes and looked at him, and said, "In which of the Scriptures hast thou found this thing? Verily I have wished that God would leave me in this illness for the last thirty years, for when I am weak then am I strong"; and the old man, although he was grievously sick, would not take even a little of the food, and when the brother saw [this] he took it and went back to his cell.

67. They used to say concerning Abbâ Macarius, the Egyptian, that if it happened that he ate with the brethren, he would make an agreement with himself that if there was wine [on the table] and he drank one cup of it, he would drink no water for a whole day; now the brethren, wishing him to be refreshed (*or* pleased), used to give him wine, and the old man took it joyfully so that he might torment his body. And when his disciple saw this thing, he said unto the brethren, "I entreat you, for our Lord's sake, not to give him wine to drink, for if he drinketh it he will go to his cell and afflict himself because thereof"; and when the brethren knew this they did not give him any more wine to drink.

68. There was a certain old man who made a vow not to drink any water during the Fast of Forty Days; and when he became thirsty (*literally*, hot) he would wash a potter's vessel, and fill it with water, and hang it up in front of him. Then the brethren asked him why and wherefore he acted thus, and he said, "That I may labour the more, and receive a reward from God"; now he said this that he might incite them to great labours.

69. A brother asked an old man questions about comforts [*or* pleasures], and the old man said unto him, "Eat grass, wear grass, and sleep on grass, and then thy heart will become like iron."

70. A certain brother was hungry one morning, and he fought against his inclination and determined not to eat until the third hour; and when the third hour had passed, he dipped his bread in water, and sat down to eat, but he forced himself to wait until the sixth hour arrived, when he said within himself, "Let us wait till the ninth hour." And when the ninth hour had come, he prayed, and saw the working of Satan rising up before him like smoke, and he suppressed his desire [to eat], and his hunger passed away from him.

71. A certain brother from the Cells brought some new bread, and he invited all the old men who were under vows at

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Scete to partake of a meal; and when each of them had eaten two bread-cakes, they ceased eating. Then the brother, who knew their labours of abstinence, and that they did not usually eat, and never satisfied themselves, made excuses to them, saying, "Eat ye this day, for our Lord's sake, until ye are "satisfied"; and hearing this each ate ten cakes more. All this [sheweth] how much they afflicted themselves in not satisfying themselves with any kind of food.

72. On one occasion two old men were going up from Scete to Egypt, and because of the fatigue of the way they sat down on the bank of the river to eat some food, and one of them took his bread-cake in his hand and dipped it in the water; and he answered and said unto his companion, "Wilt thou not dip "thy cake in water, O father?" And his companion answered and said unto him, "It is written, When a possession increaseth "set not thy heart upon it" (Psalm lxii, 10).

73. They used to say about Abbâ Isaac, the priest of the Cells, that he ate the ashes of the censer which was before the altar with his bread.

74. On one occasion there was an offering [made] in the mountain of Abbâ Anthony, and a skin of wine was there, and one of the monks took some of it in a small vessel, and with a cup in his hand he went and carried it to Abbâ Sisoës. And he mixed him a cupful, and he drank it, and he mixed him a second cupful, and he took it and drank it, but when he mixed him a third cupful Abbâ Sisoës refused to drink it, saying, "Stay thy hand, brother, knowest thou not that [the third cup] "is of Satan?"

75. Abbâ John said, "If a king wishes to subdue a city be-
"longing to enemies, he first of all keepeth them without
"bread and water, and the enemy being in this wise harassed
"by hunger becometh subject unto him; and thus it is in respect
"of the hostile passions, for if a man endureth fasting and
"hunger regularly, his enemies become stricken with weak-
"ness in the soul."

76. They used to say about Abbâ Dioscurus that his bread was made of barley and lentiles, and that at the beginning of each year he would set himself some [new] task of ascetic excellence, saying, "This year I will not hold converse with (*or* "visit) any man," or, "I will not speak at all," or, "I will not "eat food which hath been boiled," or, "I will not eat fruit," or, "I will not eat vegetables." He began each year with resolutions of this kind and carried them out, and each year he set himself some new task.

77. On one occasion when certain brethren went to the church during the Easter Festival, they gave a brother a cup

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of wine, and when they urged him to drink it, he said to them, "Forgive me, O my fathers, but ye did the same thing to me last year, and I drank a cup of wine, and I was greatly troubled thereby for a long time."

78. The monks were celebrating a festival in Scete, and they gave a certain old man a cup of wine, and he handed it back, saying, "Take this death away from me"; and when the others who were eating with him saw him [do this] they also would not take the wine.

79. And again on another occasion certain first-fruits of wine were sent that it might be given to the brethren cup by cup, (i.e., a cup each). And one of the brethren went up to a roof, that he might escape from drinking, and it parted asunder beneath him, and he fell through it; and when the sound came [to the brethren] they went and found him lying [on the ground], and they began to think about him, and said, "O lover of vain-glory, this hath befallen thee rightly." And an old man laid him out, saying unto them, "Forgive ye my son, for he hath done a good work. And, as the Lord liveth, this breach shall not be built up in my days, for all the world shall know that because of a cup of wine a schism hath taken place in Scete."

80. It was reported to Abbâ Poemen about a certain brother that he would not drink wine, and the old man Poemen said, "The nature of wine is not such as to make it useful to the dwellers in monasteries."

81. They used to say about Abbâ Sisoës the Theban that he never ate bread. During the Easter Festival the brethren came to him, and having made excuses they entreated him to eat with them; and he answered and said, "I will do one [of two] things; I will either eat bread and bread alone, or I will eat of the meats which ye have boiled." And they said unto him, "Then eat bread only."

82. A certain old man said, "Reduce thy knowledge of the things of man, and thy belly also, and thou shalt find all [manner of] delights."

83. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "The Spirit of God never entereth into the house wherein there are delights and pleasures."

84. A brother asked Abbâ Sisoës, "What [good do] I do in going to church, for often [the devils] recognize me and seize me?" The old man saith unto him, "There is work in the matter."

85. Abraham his disciple thereupon said unto him, "Father, if there happen to be a congregation on the Sabbath, or on Sunday, and a brother drink three cups of wine, is that too much?" The old man saith unto him, "If Satan did not

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“exist three cups would not be too much to drink, but since “he doth exist three cups are too much.”

86. On one occasion some early grapes were sent to Abbâ Macarius because he longed for them, and to give a proof of his abstinence, he sent them to another brother who was sick, and who craved for grapes; and having received them, he rejoiced over them greatly, and then he despised his desire, and sent them on to another brother, as one who had no wish for food of any kind, and who held his self-denial in contempt. Now when the brother had received the grapes, although he desired greatly to eat them, he did the same as the other brother had done, and no man wished to eat them. And after they had gone about among many of the brethren, the last one who received them sent them to the blessed Macarius as a gift of great honour; and when the blessed Macarius saw the grapes he marvelled at the extent of the self-denial of the brethren, and gave thanks unto God, and he did not eat them.

87. On one occasion certain monks went down from Egypt to visit the Fathers, and when they saw that they were eating—now it was after prolonged hunger and very much fasting, and continual abstinence,—they were greatly offended; and when the elder of the coenobium learned [about this] he came to quiet their minds. And he proclaimed in the church of the congregation, saying, “Ye shall fast in your customary manner, and honour your ascetic rule of life, so that your voluntary abstinence may not be held in contempt.” Now the Egyptian strangers wished to depart, but the monks shut them in cells. And when they had fasted the whole of the first day they began to feel faint, but notwithstanding this the monks made them to fast two days at a time; now the monks who were in Scete used to fast for a week at a time. And when the day of the Sabbath came, the Egyptians sat down to eat with the old men, and when one of the Egyptians began to eat hurriedly and voraciously, one of the old men caught hold of his hands, saying, “Eat moderately, (*or* according to rule) “like the monks.” Then one of the others clutched at the old man’s hand, saying, “Let me eat so that I may not die, for “behold, I have not eaten a piece of boiled food for a whole “week.” And the old man said unto him, “If now ye have become so very weak after having fasted but one night only, “why were ye offended at the brethren who live a life of self-denial for long periods of time, and who fulfil their seasons “with voluntary abstinence?” And straightway those Egyptians made excuses to the old men, and they were edified by their patient endurance, and departed rejoicing.

88. Once Abbâ Agathon had two disciples, and they sepa-

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rated from him, and each of them dwelt in a place by himself. One day he asked one of them, and said, "How dost thou live in thy cell?" And the disciple answered and said, "I fast until evening, and then I eat two bread-cakes"; and Abbâ Agathon said unto him, "It is a beautiful way of living, but it is very laborious." Then Abbâ Agathon said unto the other disciple, "And how dost thou live?" And the disciple answered and said unto him, "I fast two days at a time, and after each fast I eat two bread-cakes." Then the old man said unto him, "Thou toilest greatly, and maintainest a twofold strife. For one man eateth every day and filleth not his belly, and another fasteth two days at a time and taketh whatsoever he needeth; but thou, though thou dost fast two days at a time, dost not fill thy belly."

89. Abbâ Abraham went to Abbâ Areus, and as they were sitting down, another brother came to Abbâ, and asked him, saying, "Tell me what I shall do to live?" And he said unto him, "Go and pass the whole week in plaiting palm leaves and twisting ropes thereof, and eat bread and salt once each day in the evening, and then come again to me, and I will tell thee [what else to do]." And the brother went away and did as he had told him to do, and when Abbâ Abraham heard this he wondered. Now when the week was ended that brother came again to the old man Areus, with whom there happened to be also Abbâ Abraham. And the old man said unto the brother, "Get thee gone, and pass thou the whole week in fasting two days at a time." And when that brother had gone, Abbâ Abraham said unto Abbâ Areus, "Why dost thou command all the other brethren to bear a light burden, but layest a heavy load upon the brother who was here?" Then the old man said unto him, "The other brethren as they come, ask, and according as they ask they receive and depart; but this brother cometh for God's sake, that he may hear the word of profit, for he is a worker, and whatsoever I say unto him he performeth with care and diligence."

90. Abbâ Theodotus used to say, "Abstinence from bread quieteth the body of the monk."

91. A certain old man used to say, "I knew Abbâ Patermuthis in the cells, and he did not drink wine, but when they took some wine and mixed it with water, and urged him to drink [it], he said, 'Believe me, O my brethren, I hold it to be a most beautiful thing.' And he blamed himself and condemned himself because of the mixing, and at the same time he gave thanks unto God and accepted His gracious gift."

92. They used to say about Abbâ Paphnutius that he did not drink wine readily, even though he was sick.

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93. Abbâ Poemen said, "The soul can be humbled by nothing except thou enfeeble it by the eating of [little] bread."

94. They used to say about Abbâ Sarnâôs that he laboured exceedingly hard, and that he only ate two bread-cakes each day. And when he came to Abbâ Job, who was a man that was perfect in the laborious work of active excellence, and who was also a man that practised strict self-denial and abstinence, he said unto him, "As long as I live in my cell I can observe my rule of life, but if I go outside my cell I make openly submission because of the brethren." Then Abbâ Sarnâôs said unto him, "To be able to keep hold upon thy rule of life only so long as thou art in thy cell is no great act of spiritual excellence, but it would be if thou couldst do so when thou didst go forth outside thy cell."

95. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "As smoke driveth away bees, and men take the sweetness of their labour, even so also doth ease of the body drive away the fear of God from the heart, and it carrieth away all the good [effect] of its labour."

96. On one occasion Abbâ Sylvanus and Zechariah his disciple were going to a monastery, and they prepared a little food to eat before they set out on their journey. And when they had gone forth his disciple found water on the way, and he wished to drink, but the old man said unto him, "Zechariah, to-day is a fast day," but the disciple said, "Nay, O father, for behold we have eaten." Then Abbâ Sylvanus said unto him, "The food which we ate was obligatory, but let us keep the fast, O my son."

97. Abbâ Poemen said, "Every corporeal pleasure is contemptible before the Lord."

98. The disciple of Abbâ Sisoës had to say unto him several times, "Rise up and let us eat." And he used to say unto him, "My son, have we not eaten?" And the disciple would say unto him, "Nay, father." Then the old man would say unto him, "If we have not eaten, bring the food and let us eat."

99. Abbâ Daniel used to say, "In proportion as the body groweth, the soul becometh enfeebled; and the more the body becometh emaciated, the more the soul groweth."

100. Abbâ Benjamin, the priest of the Cells, said, "On one occasion we went to a certain old man in Scete, and we wanted to give him a little oil; and he said unto us, 'Behold, that little vessel of oil which ye brought to me three years ago is still lying in the place where ye put it, and it hath remained in the same state as that wherein ye brought it.' And when we heard [this] we marvelled at the old man's manner of life."

101. Abbâ Benjamin also said, "We went to another old

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“man, and he took some food which we were going to eat, and threw into it a little oil of radishes. And we said unto him, ‘Father, throw into our food a little sweet oil,’ but when he heard these words, he made the sign of the Cross over himself, and said, ‘If there be any other oil besides this I know not of it.’”

102. Abbâ Joseph asked Abbâ Poemen what was the proper way in which to fast, and Abbâ Poemen said unto him, “I prefer the man who eateth every day a very small quantity of food, and who doth not satisfy his cravings for food.” And Abbâ Joseph said unto him, “When thou wast a young man didst thou not fast two days at a time, O father?” Then the old man said unto him, “Yea, I did, and three days at a time, and four days at a time, and even a week at a time; and the old men, like men of might, have tried all these by experience, but they have found that it is beneficial for a man to eat an exceedingly small quantity of food each day, and because of this they have delivered unto us an easy way to the kingdom.”

103. One of the fathers said, “I knew a brother in the Cells who used to fast the whole of the Great Sabbath, and when the brethren were assembled in the evening he used to flee to his cell in order that he might eat nothing in the church; and he would eat a few plantains with salt, and without bread, that he might conceal his abstinence.”

104. They used to tell about a certain monk who, having gone forth from the world, and lived in the coenobium for a number of years, was gracious unto every man in his humility, and all the brethren marvelled at his abstinence from meats; then he went to the barren desert, and lived there for many years, eating for food wild herbs. And afterwards he entreated God to inform him what reward He would give him, and it was said unto him by an angel, “Go forth from this desert and get thee along the road, and behold a certain shepherd shall meet thee, and according to [what he saith] so shalt thou receive.” Now when he had made ready to depart, the shepherd of whom he had been told by the angel met him, and saluted him, and having sat down to hold converse with each other, the monk saw in the shepherd’s bag some green herbs, and he asked him, saying, “What is this? And the shepherd said unto him, “It is my food.” And the monk said unto him, “How long hast thou been feeding thyself on these green herbs?” And the shepherd said unto him, “Behold, for the last thirty years, more or less, and I have never tasted anything else except these herbs which I have eaten once a day, and I drink as much water as my food requireth; and the

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“wages which are given to me by the owner of the sheep
“I give unto the poor.” Now when the monk heard these things he fell down at the feet of the shepherd, and said, “I
“imagined that I had laid hold upon abstinence, but thou
“through thy well-ordered life art worthy of a greater reward
“than I, because I have eaten every kind of green thing im-
“mediately it came in my way.” Then the shepherd said unto him, “It is not right that rational men should make them-
“selves like unto the beasts, but they should eat whatsoever is
“prepared for them at the seasons which are duly ordered and
“appointed for them, and afterwards they should fast from every-
“thing until an appointed time.” And the monk profited by these words, and he added to his labour and became perfect, and he praised God, and marvelled how many were the saints in the world who were not known to the children of men.

Chapter iij. Of the Reading of the Scriptures, and of watching by Night, and of the Service of the Psalms, and of constant Prayers

THEY used to say about Abbâ Arsenius that no man was able to attain to the manner of life in his abode. And they also said about him that on the night of the Sabbath

105. which would end in the dawn of Sunday, he would leave the sun behind him, and would stretch out his hands towards heaven, and would pray [in this position] until the sun rose in his face, when he would satisfy his eyes with a little slumber.

106. A certain old man was complete in all perfection, and he could see what was happening from a very long way off; and he said, “I once saw in a monastery a certain brother who
“was meditating on the study of God in his cell, and behold,
“a devil came and stood outside, and he wanted to go in, but
“he could not do so, so long as the brother was meditating.
“Finally, however, when the monk ceased his contemplation
“the devil was able to enter his cell, for his power is not able
“to vanquish those whose converse is with God.”

107. An old man said, “Whensoever a man readeth the
“Divine Books, the devils are afraid.”

108. They used to say about Abbâ Pachomius that he spent much time in striving with devils like a true athlete, and after the manner of Saint Anthony. And because many devils came against him in the night season, he asked God to keep away sleep from him both by day and by night, so that he might not sleep at all, and might be able to bring low the might of the Enemy, even according to that which is written, “I will
“not turn back until I have made an end of them”; for they

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are powerless against the faith which is in the Lord. Now this gift was given unto him, even as he had asked, for a certain time, and because he was pure, his heart used to see God, Who is invisible, as in a mirror.

109. They used to say about Abbâ Pachomius and Abbâ John that they lived together in the same religious house (now John was larger in stature than Pachomius), but both had adopted a life of poverty voluntarily, and they possessed nothing whatsoever except the fear of God. Whatsoever they gained by the work of their hands they gave to those who were in need, and they kept for themselves only what was sufficient for their bare necessities; in respect of clothes they were well-nigh destitute, and they had so few of them that they were obliged to wash those which they wore [and put them on again]. Now Abbâ Pachomius always wore a garment made of hair, because of the toil of his body. And whensoever they wished to refresh their bodies by a little sleep after their vigil and prayer, each of them would sit down in the middle of the cell, and, without leaning against a wall, would go to sleep. And they continued to do this for fifteen years, and many of the fathers heard of them, and saw them living thus, and they also strove in like manner to humble their bodies for the redemption of their souls.

110. They used to say about Abbâ Joseph that when he was about to die, and the old men were sitting about him, he looked at the window and saw Satan sitting there; and he cried out to his disciple and said, "Bring me a stick here, for "this devil thinketh that I have become old, and that I am "no longer able to stand up against him," and as soon as he grasped the stick in his hand, Satan, in the form of a dog, threw himself from the window, and the old man saw him taking to flight.

111. They used to relate concerning Abbâ Sisoës that if he did not bring down his hands swiftly when he was standing up in prayer, his mind would be carried off on high; but whensoever it chanced that one of the brethren was with him he would bring his hands down hurriedly lest peradventure his mind should be carried off, and he should be left alone.

112. Abbâ Isaiah, the elder of the church, rebuked the brethren when they were eating that which had been prepared for them because they began to talk with each other, and he said to them, "Hold ye your peace, O my brethren. I know "a brother who eateth with us and drinketh with us full (?) "cups even as we do, and yet his prayer ascendeth up before "God like fire."

113. One day Abbâ Arsenius called Abbâ Alexander and

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Abbâ Zôllâ, and said unto them, "Because the devils are
"striving with me, and because I do not know but that they
"may carry me off during [my] sleep, toil ye here with me
"this night, and keep vigil, and watch me and see if I sleep
"during [my] vigil." So they sat down, one on his right hand,
and the other on his left, from the evening even until the
morning. And they said, "We slept and we woke up, and we
"did not observe that he slept at all; but when it began to be
"light there came unto us three times the sound of breathing
"in his nostrils, but whether he did this purposely so that we
"might think he slept or whether slumber had really fallen
"upon him we know not." And he stood up and said unto us,
"Have I been asleep?" And we answered and said unto him,
"We do not know, O father, for we ourselves went to sleep."

114. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, "How, and in
"what manner is it right for a man to walk in the path of
"righteousness?" Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "We have
"seen Daniel, and also that his enemies were unable to bring
"any accusation whatsoever against him except in respect
"of his service of God."

115. On one occasion Abbâ Sisoës was sitting in his cell, and
when his disciple knocked at the door [meaning to] go in, the
old man cried out, saying, "Flee, Abraham, and do not come
"in now, for this place is not empty."

116. They say concerning Abbâ Sisoës of Babylon that, wish-
ing to vanquish sleep, he stood upright upon a mountain crag,
and that the angel of the Lord came and rescued him from that
place, and commanded him never to do such a thing again, and
not even to hand on this tradition to another.

117. An old man said, "I knew a brother who used to sit
"with the brethren at the meal which is made for the coming
"of the brethren, and although the brethren ate and drank, he
"never made himself to be remote from converse with God in
"his prayer, and he did not drink even a cup of wine. Now
"this man's manner of life was marvellous, and a certain man
"used to say about him, 'I once wished to count the prayers
"which he made, and I saw that he did not cease to pray
"either by day or by night.'"

118. On one occasion a Bishop was sent secretly to Abbâ
Epiphanius by the head of a certain monastery in Palestine, say-
ing, "We have not treated lightly thy services of prayer since
"thy departure from us, but we perform most carefully the
"services for the third, and sixth, and ninth hours, and also
"vespers." Then Abbâ Epiphanius blamed those who sent him,
and wrote a message, which he sent to them, saying, "Ye must
"know that ye are indeed neglectful of the services and prayers

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“ which belong to the other eight hours which are in the day,
“ for it is right for the monk who hath made himself to be re-
“ mote from the world to be occupied with prayers to God un-
“ ceasingly, and he should pray either in his heart, or in a care-
“ fully defined service, or in that service which he performeth
“ with his will and with understanding. For the Calumniator
“ addeth greatly to any small failing which he may find in a
“ monk, and by being with him continually he enlargeth greatly
“ the breach which he hath made, and by his habit of persist-
“ ency he acquireth his natural power, and more particularly
“ is this so in the case of those who are careless and lazy.”

119. Abbâ Epiphanius also said, “Whatsoever food thou
“ wishest to eat with gratification, that give not to thy body,
“ especially when thou art in good health, and that which thou
“ lustest after, eat not; and when thou feedest upon the things
“ which are sent unto thee by God, give thanks unto Him at
“ all seasons, and receive His gracious gift, the delights and
“ the pleasures which we have received through the name of
“ monk, [although] we do not do the works of monks. And [if]
“ it be that thou art a monk, wilt thou then not make thyself
“ strong, lest peradventure thou art arrayed in apparel which
“ is strange to thee? Tell me, O brother, dost thou possess the
“ seal of the service, that is to say, humility? For the holy man
“ who seeth another man sin weepeth bitterly, saying, ‘It is
“ ‘this man who sinneth now, but some time subsequently it
“ ‘may be myself.’ However much then a man may sin before
“ thee, condemn him not, but esteem thyself a sinner far greater
“ than he is, even though he may be a child of this world, and
“ besides there is the fact that he may have sinned greatly
“ against God.”

120. And he said also, “Know thyself, and thou shalt never
“ fall. Give thy soul work, that is to say, constant prayer, and
“ love of God, before another can give it evil [and filthy] thoughts;
“ and pray ye that the spirit of error may be remote from you.”

121. And he also said, “Whatsoever ye do successfully, and
“ what ye boast of, destroy, for it is not right for a monk to
“ boast of his fair deeds, and if he boasteth he will fall.”

122. [And he also said], “When thou prayest speak unto
“ God in a quiet voice and say, ‘How can I possess Thee, O
“ ‘Lord? Thou knowest full well that I am a beast, and that I
“ ‘know nothing. Thou hast brought me to the prime of this
“ ‘life, deliver me then for Thy mercy’s sake; I am Thy ser-
“ ‘vant, and the son of Thine handmaiden, O Lord, by Thy
“ ‘will, vivify Thou me.’ The old man is falsehood, and the new
“ man is truth; the truth is the root of good works, and false-
“ hood is death. If the liar, and the thief, and the calumniator

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“knew that they would finally be made known unto all and [their works] revealed, they would never offend. And thus also was it with the adulterous sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, for they were not priests of the Lord, and they feared not God, and they perished, together with all their house. And the man who taketh hold of, and bindeth to himself, and shutteth within himself the memory of evil things is like unto the man who hideth fire in straw. If thou speakest to a man concerning life, and if thou sayest a word unto him let it be with feeling, and penitence, and with tears; and say thy word to the man who will hearken and will do it, but if not, speak not, lest thou die, and thou depart from this world without any profit from the words whereby thou didst wish to give life unto others. For unto the sinner God saith, ‘What hast thou to do with the Books of My Commandments? For thou hast taken My covenant in thy mouth [only]’” (Psalm l, 16).

123. Abbâ Epiphanius said, “Whensoever a thought cometh and filleth thy bosom, that is to say, thy heart, with vain-glory or with pride, say thou unto thyself, ‘Old man, behold thy fornication.’”

124. And he also said, “If we do evil things God will be unmindful of His longsuffering; but if we do good things, it will not help us greatly because we increase the advantage of freedom, and the merchandise is not plundered thereby, for the will rejoiceth in the striving.”

125. Certain brethren entreated Abbâ Epiphanius on one occasion, saying, “Father, speak unto us some word of life, even though when thou speakest we may not grasp the seed of thy word, because the soil is salt.” Then the old man answered and said unto them, “Whosoever receiveth not all the brethren, but maketh distinctions between them, cannot become a perfect man. If a man revile thee, bless him, whether it be good for both of you, or whether it be not; it will be he who will receive a reward of blessing. This is the right way for a monk to live, and in this way lived Abbâ Arsenius, who took care each day to stand up before God without sin, and he drew nigh unto Him with tears like the sinful woman. In this manner pray to the Lord God—as if He were standing before thee, for He is nigh unto thee and He looketh upon thee. It is right that the man who wisheth to dwell in the desert should be [as] a teacher in his knowledge, and he must not be in need of instruction lest he be swept away by the devils; and he must look into his mind most minutely, both in respect of the things which are above, and those which are below, lest he become a laughing-stock unto them

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“by some means or other. It is right that the manner of life of the man who loveth God should be blameless.”

126. A certain man made answer to the brethren against evil thoughts, saying, “I entreat you, O my brethren, let us cease from ascetic works, and let us give up also anxious thoughts. For what are we? A voice which cometh out of the dust, or a cry which riseth from the mud? When Joseph of Ramah had asked to be allowed to take the body of Jesus, he took it, and wrapped it round in a sheet of clean linen, and then he laid it in a new sepulchre of the new man” (St. Matthew xxvii, 59).

127. On one occasion a certain monk saw a devil who was calling to his fellow to come with him, so that the two together might wake up a monk for service, and might lead him into error thereby, [and cause him to think] that angels had appeared unto him. And the monk heard the voice of the other devil, who made answer to his fellow, saying, “I cannot do this. For once I woke him up, and he stood up and broke me with a terrible breaking, and [all the time he was doing it] he sang psalms and prayed.”

128. A brother asked an old man and said, “Why is it that when I go forth to labour I feel wearied and disgusted in my soul, and my mind is wholly empty of spiritual thoughts?” And the old man said unto him, “Because thou dost not desire to fulfil that which is written, ‘I will bless the Lord all ways, and His praises shall be ever in my mouth’ (Psalm xxxiv, 1). Therefore, whether thou art inside or outside, and whithersoever thou goest thou must not cease from blessing God; not only in actions, but with word and mind thou shalt bless thy Maker. For God doth not dwell in any place which hath bounds and limits, but He is everywhere, and by His Divine Power He sustaineth all things, and is capable of all things.”

129. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen concerning the thoughts which invaded his mind, and he said unto him, “This matter is like unto that of a man who hath a fire on his left hand, and a tank of water on his right hand; if he wisheth to extinguish the fire, he taketh the water from the tank and doeth it, and it is right for a man to act thus every hour. Now the fire is the evil thought, which cometh from enemies, and the water is the pouring out of the soul before the Lord which a man should do.”

130. There was a certain monk who did not do any work whatsoever with his hands, but he prayed without ceasing; and at eventide he would go into his cell and find his bread laid there [for him], and he would eat it. Now another monk came

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to him, who had upon him [materials] for the labour of his hands, and wheresoever he entered in he worked, and he made the old man, into whose cell he had entered, to work with him. And when the evening had come, he wished according to his custom, to eat, but he found nothing, and he therefore lay down in sorrow; and it was revealed unto him, saying, "Whilst thou wast occupied 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."

131. They tell the story that on one occasion, whilst the blessed Anthony was dwelling in the desert, thoughts of dejection and despair rose up in his mind, and he was in deep gloom of thought, and said unto God, "Lord, I wish to live, but my thoughts will not permit me to do so. What shall I do in my tribulations to be saved?" And he came a little nearer [to the town] from the place where he was, and he saw a man who was like unto himself, and was in his own form, and he was sitting down and twisting palm leaves into ropes; and this man rose up from his work, and prayed, and afterwards he sat down again and continued his work, and then he stood up once more, and prayed. Now the man was an angel who had been sent from God to correct and to admonish the blessed Anthony, who afterwards heard him say unto him, "O Anthony, do thou also do this and live"; and when Anthony heard this, the blessed man had great joy, and afterwards he did as the angel had done, and lived.

132. They said concerning Abbâ John the Less that, on one occasion, he steeped the palm leaves for two baskets in water, and sewed one basket to the other without perceiving it until he came to the side of it, for his mind was led captive by the sight of God.

133. And Abbâ Daniel used to say concerning Abbâ Arsenius that he would pass the whole night in vigil, and when, for the sake of nature, he wished for the approach of the morning so that he might have some relief, he would struggle against sleep, and say, "Get thee gone, O wicked handmaiden"; then he would snatch a very little slumber and stand up straightway.

134. Abbâ Arsenius used to say, "One hour's sleep is sufficient for a monk, provided that he be strenuous.

135. They used to say about a certain monk who lived in a monastery of the brotherhood, that although he kept frequent vigil and prayed he was neglectful about praying with the congregation. And one night there appeared unto him a glorious pillar of brilliant light from the place where the brethren were congregated, and it reached up into the heavens;

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and he saw a small spark which [flew] about the pillar, and sometimes it shone brightly, and sometimes it was extinguished. And whilst he was wondering at the vision, it was explained to him by God, Who said, "The pillar which thou seest is "the prayers of the many [brethren] which are gathered together and go up to God and gratify Him; and the spark is "the prayers of those who dwell among the congregation, "and who despise the appointed services of the brotherhood. "And now, if thou wouldst live, perform that which it is customary to perform with the brethren, and then, if thou "wishedst to do so, and art able to pray separately, do so." And the monk related all these things before the brotherhood, and they glorified God.

Chapter iv. Of how it is meet for us to Weep for our Sins and to Mourn for them always

A BROTHER asked Abbâ Ammon, and said unto him, "Tell me some word whereby I may live"; and Abbâ Ammon said unto him, "Go and make thy mind like
136. "unto the minds of those evil-doers who are in the prison "house, and who ask those who go to them, saying, 'Where "is the governor? When will he come here?' And their minds "tremble in fearful expectation. Thus also is a monk bound to "wait in expectation always, and he must admonish himself, "saying, 'Woe is me! For how can I stand before the throne "of Christ? And how shall I be able to make answer unto "'Him?' If thou art able to think thus always thou wilt be "able to live."

137. Abbâ Poemen was once passing through Egypt, and he saw a woman sitting in the cemetery and weeping, and he said, "If every kind of instrument of sweet music in the world "were to come [here] they would not be able to change the "grief of this woman's soul [into gladness]; even thus it is "meet for a monk to have pain (*or* grief) within himself."

138. Three old men once came to Abbâ Sisoës because they had heard that he was a great man. And the first one said unto him, "Father, how can I escape from the river of fire?" And Abbâ Sisoës answered him never a word. Then the second old man said unto him, "Father, how can I escape from the "gnashing of teeth, and from the worm which never dieth?" And Abbâ Sisoës answered him never a word. Then the third old man said unto him, "Father, what shall I do? For the remembrance of the outer darkness troubleth me." And Abbâ Sisoës answered and said unto them, "I never think on any "of these things, but I believe that God is Merciful, and that "He will shew mercy unto me"; then the old men went away

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grieved at the answer which Abbâ Sisoës had spoken unto them. Now because he did not wish to send them away sorrowful, he brought them back, and said unto them, "Blessed "are ye, O my brethren, for I have been jealous of you"; and they said unto him, "In what matter hast thou been jealous "of us?" And he said, "The first one of you spake about a "river of fire; and the second spake about the gnashing of "teeth and the worm which dieth not; and the third spake "about the outer darkness; if remembrances of this kind "have dominion over your minds it is impossible for you to "commit sin. What can I do who am stubborn of heart? For "hardness of heart will not allow me to perceive even that "there a punishment for men existeth, and because of this "I sin every hour." And when the old men had heard these words, they made excuses to him, and said, "In very truth "according to what we have heard, even so have we seen."

139. A certain father said that on one occasion when the brethren were eating the food of grace, one of them laughed at table; and Abbâ Sînû saw him, and burst into tears, and said, "What can there be in the heart of this brother who "hath laughed? It is meet that he should weep because he is "eating the food of grace."

140. They say that when Abbâ Sisoës was sick the old men who were sitting with him saw that he was talking [to some one], and they said unto him, "What seest thou, O father?" And he said unto them, "Some people came to take me away, "and I entreated them to leave me [here] a little longer that "I might repent." Then one of the old men said unto him, "What power hast thou in thee now for repentance?" Abbâ Sisoës said unto them, "If I can do nothing else I can sigh "and lament a little over my soul, and this will be sufficient "for me."

141. Certain brethren went to an old man and, making apologies to him, they said, "Father, what shall we do, for Satan "is hunting after us?" And he said unto them, "It is right "for you to be watchful and to weep continually. My own "thoughts are always fixed upon the place where our Lord "was crucified, and I sigh and lament and weep about it "always;" and thus having received a good example of repentance the brethren departed and became chosen vessels.

142. A brother asked Abbâ Muthues, saying, "Speak a word "to me"; and the old man replied, "Cut off from thee contention concerning every matter whatsoever, and weep, and "mourn, for the time hath come."

143. Abbâ Ammon said that he saw a young man who laughed, and he said unto him, "Laugh not, O brother, for if

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"thou dost, thou wilt drive the fear of God out of thy soul."

144. Abbâ Paule used to say, "I had sunk in the mire up to my neck, and I wept and spake before God, saying, 'Have mercy on me.'"

145. They used to say that Abbâ Theodore and Abbâ 'Or put on the skins of lambs for clothing; and they said to each other, "If God were to visit us now what should we do?" and they left [the skins], and departed to their cells weeping.

146. A blessed Archbishop, when he was about to depart from this world, said, "Blessed art thou, O Arsenius, because thou hast remembered this hour."

147. An old man said, "God dwelleth in the man into whom nothing alien entereth."

148. A brother asked a certain old man, and said unto him, "My soul desireth tears, even as I have heard that the old men [desire] them, but they will not come to me, and my soul is vexed." And the old man said unto him, "The children of Israel entered into the land of promise [after] forty years; now tears are the land of promise, and since thou wouldst enter therein thou must not henceforward be afraid of fighting. For God wisheth to bring tribulation upon the soul in this manner in order that it may at all times be wishful to enter into that land [of promise]."

149. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen a question and said unto him, "What shall I do? for my thoughts disturb me, and they say unto me, 'Thy sins have been forgiven thee,' and they make me to pry into the shortcomings of the brethren." Then Abbâ Poemen spake to him about Abbâ Isidore, who dwelt in a cell and wept over his soul, and his disciple used to dwell in another cell; and the disciple came to the old man, and finding him weeping, said unto him, "My father, why weepest thou?" And the old man said unto him, "I am weeping for my sins." Then the disciple said unto him, "And hast thou any sins, father?" And the old man said unto him, "Indeed I have, my son, and if I were permitted to see my sins, not three or even four men would suffice to weep with me for them." Then Abbâ Poemen said, "Thus it is with the man who knoweth himself."

150. I have heard that the old men who lived in Nitria sent to Macarius the Great, who was living in Scete, and entreated him, saying, "In order that all the people may not be vexed, we beseech thee, O our father, to come to us so that we may see thee before [thou departest] to our Lord. And having gone [to them] they all gathered together to him, and the old men begged and entreated him to speak unto the brethren one

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word of profit; and the holy old man wept, and said unto them, "Let us weep, O my brethren, and let us make our eyes to overflow with tears before we go to the place where the tears of our eyeballs will burn up our bodies." And they all wept, and they fell upon their faces, saying, "Father, pray for us."

151. When the blessed Arsenius was about to deliver up his spirit the brethren saw him weeping, and they said unto him, "Art thou also afraid, O father?" And he said unto them, "The dread of this hour hath been with me in very truth from the time when I became a monk, and was afraid." And so he died.

152. And when Abbâ Poemen heard that he was dead, that is to say, that Abbâ Arsenius had gone to his rest, he said, "Blessed art thou, O Abbâ Arsenius, for thou didst weep over thyself in this world. For he who weepeth not for himself in this world must weep for ever in the next. He may weep here voluntarily, or there because of the punishments [which he will receive], but it is impossible for a man to escape weeping either here or there."

153. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen and said unto him, "What shall I do in the matter of my sins?" And the old man said unto him, "When Abraham went into the Land of Promise he bought himself a grave, and through the grave he inherited the land." And the brother said unto him, "What is a grave?" Then the old man said unto him, "Weeping and mourning are a grave and a place [of burial]."

154. One of the brethren asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, "Father, what shall I do in the matter of my sins?" The old man said unto him, "Whosoever wisheth to blot out his offences can do so by weeping, and he who wisheth to acquire good works can do so by means of weeping; for weeping is the path which the Scriptures have taught us, and the fathers have also wept continually, and there is no other path except that of tears."

155. And the same old man (i.e., Poemen) said, "There are two things [to remember]: We must fear our Lord, and do good unto our neighbour."

156. Abbâ Noah asked Abbâ Macarius, and said unto him, "Speak to me a word"; and the old man said, "Flee from the children of men." Noah said unto him, "Father, what doth it mean to flee from the children of men?" The old man said unto him, "Thou shalt sit in thy cell and weep for thy sins."

157. A brother asked an old man, and said unto him, "What shall I do, father?" The old man said unto him, "It is right that we should sigh and lament always." Now it happened that one of the old men fell asleep, and that after a long inter-

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val he came to himself again, and the brethren asked him, saying, "What didst thou see there, O father?" and he said unto us with many tears, "I heard there the sound of the weeping of many, who were crying out and wailing incessantly, and saying, 'Woe is me! Woe is me!' And it is meet that we should always be saying the same thing."

Chapter v. Of Voluntary Poverty

ABBÂ ARSENIUS once fell sick at Scete, and he was in need of a bowl of pottage; and since this was not to be found there, he took the remains of the Eucharist
158. (or food of grace), and said, "I give thanks unto Thee, O Christ, that, because of Thy name, I am able to receive the food of grace."

159. There was a certain holy man whose name was Philagrius, who lived in Jerusalem, and he worked with his hands and toiled [to earn] the food which he needed; and the old man rose up to see the work of his hands, and he found a purse containing one thousand darics which had dropped from some one [on the road], and he remained in the place where he was, saying, "The man who lost this will come back seeking for it." And behold the man did come back, and he was weeping, and the old man took him aside and gave him the darics; and their owner laid hold upon him, and wished to give him some small sum of money, but the old man refused to accept anything. Then the owner of the darics began to cry out and say, "Come ye and see what the man of God hath done"; but the old man fled secretly and departed from the city, lest what he had done should become known, and men should pay him honour because of it.

160. They say that Abbâ Serapion the Bishop went on one occasion to one of the brethren, and found [in his cell] a hollow in the wall which was filled with books; and the brother said unto him, "Speak to me one word whereby I may live." And the Bishop said unto him, "What have I to say to thee? For thou hast taken that which belongeth to the orphans and widows and laid it up in a hole in the wall."

161. Abbâ Theodore of Parmê possessed some beautiful books, and he went to Abbâ Macarius and said unto him, "Father, I have three books, and I gain profit from them, and the brethren borrow them from me, and they also have profit from them; tell me, now, what shall I do with them?" And the old man answered and said, "Ascetic labours are beautiful, but the greatest of them all is voluntary poverty." And when Abbâ Theodore heard these words he went and sold the books and gave the price of them to the poor.

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162. They say about a certain monk that when his food came to him he was in the habit of taking so much of it as he needed, [but that if it happened that another man was brought to him he would not accept any of it], saying, "It is sufficient for me; behold my Lord hath fed me."

163. A certain monk used to live in a cave in the desert, and a message was sent unto him by his kinsfolk, saying, "Thy father is grievously sick, and is nigh to die, therefore come, and inherit his possessions"; and he made answer unto them, saying, "I died to the world long before he will die, and a dead man cannot be the heir of a living one."

164. An old man was asked by a brother the question, "How shall I live?" Then the old man took off his garment, and girded up his loins therewith, and lifted up his hands and said, "It is meet for a monk to be as naked in respect of this world's goods as I am of clothing. And in his striving against his thoughts he must stand as upright as a vigorous athlete, and when the athlete contendeth he also standeth up naked, and when he is anointed with oil he is quite naked, and hath nothing upon him; and he learneth from him that traineth him how to contend, and when the enemy cometh against him he throweth dust upon him, which is a matter of this world, that he may be able to grasp him easily. In thyself, then, O monk, thou must see the athlete, and he who sheweth thee how to contend is God, for it is He Who giveth the victory, and Who conquereth for us; and those who contend are ourselves, and the striving is [our] opponent, and the dust is the affairs of the world. And since thou hast seen the cunning of the Adversary, stand thou up and oppose him in thy nakedness, being free from any care which belongeth to this world, and thou shalt overcome [him]. For when the mind is weighted down with the care of the world it cannot receive the holy word of God."

165. They say concerning Abbâ Arsenius that as, when he lived in the world, his apparel was finer than that of anyone else, so, when he lived in Scete, he wore raiment which was inferior to that of every one else. And when, at long intervals, he came to church, he used to sit behind a pillar so that no one might see his face, and he might not see the faces of others; now his face was like that of an angel, and his hair was as white as snow, and as abundant as [that of] Jacob. His body was dry by reason of his labours, and his beard descended to his belly, but his eyelashes were destroyed by weeping; he was tall in stature, but somewhat bowed by old age and he ended his days when he was ninety-five years old. He lived in the world, in the palace, for forty years, in the days of

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Theodosius, the great king, who became the father of the Emperors Honorius and Arcadius, and he lived in Scete forty years, and he lived for ten years in the Troja of Babylon which is opposite the Memphis which is in Egypt, and he dwelt for three years in Canopus of Alexandria, and during the two remaining years he came to Troja again, where he died. And he finished his career in peace and in the fear of God.

166. On one occasion a certain Bishop came to the Fathers in Scete, and a brother went forth to meet him, and having met him, he took him and brought him into his cell; and having set before him bread and salt, he said, "Forgive me, O my father, for I have nothing else to set before thee." And the Bishop said unto him, "I wish that when I come another year I may not find even bread and salt in thy cell."

167. One of the old men said, "If thou sittest in a place and seest people with abundant provisions, look not at them; but if there be a man who is destitute, look at him as one who hath no bread, and thou shalt find relief."

168. Abbâ Isaac, the priest of the Cells, used to say that Abbâ Pambô said, "The manner of the apparel which a monk ought to wear should be such that if it were cast outside the cell for three days no one would carry it away."

169. A certain brother asked one of the old men a question, and said unto him, "Dost thou wish me to keep two darics as provision for the needs of the feebleness of the body?" And the old man, perceiving his mind and also that he wished to keep them, said unto him, "Yea." Now when the brother had gone to his cell, he became troubled in his mind, and he debated in his thoughts, saying, "Did the old man speak truthfully or not?" Then he rose up, and went back to the old man, and made excuses to him, and said, "For our Lord's sake, tell me the truth, because my thoughts are troubling me about these two darics." The old man said unto him, "I spake to thee as I did because I saw that thy mind was to keep them, but it is not necessary for thee to keep the two darics, except only for the need of thy body. But why is thy hope set upon two darics? If by chance they were lost would not God take care of thee? Let us then cast [our] care upon Him, for it belongeth to Him to take care of us continually."

170. Some of the old men used to tell a story about a gardener who used to work and to give away whatsoever he gained thereby in alms, but subsequently his thoughts said to him, "Gather together a few oboli, lest when thou hast grown old thou fall into want"; so he gathered together some money, and filled a large vessel therewith. And it fell out that he became sick, and the disease seized upon his foot, and he spent the whole

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of the money in the vessel on the physicians, and was not in the least benefited thereby. At length another physician came unto him and said, "If thou dost not cut off thy foot all thy body will putrefy," and he came to consider the cutting off of his foot. And in the night he came to himself, and he groaned, and wept, and said, "Remember, O Lord, my former deeds," and straightway a man appeared behind him, and said unto him, "Where are thy oboli?" and the gardener said immediately, "I have sinned, forgive me"; and straightway the man approached his leg, and it was made whole forthwith, and he rose up, and went to the garden to work. And in the morning the physician came to cut off his foot as he had said, and [the servants] told him, "He went to this work in the night"; and straightway [the gardener] glorified God.

171. Abbâ Agathon saw Abbâ Nastîr wearing two shoulder wrappers, and he said unto him, "If a poor man were to come, and ask thee for a garment, which of them wouldst thou give him?" And Abbâ Nastîr replied, "I would give him the better of them"; and Abba Agathon said unto him, "And if another poor man came, what wouldst thou give him?" Abbâ Nastîr saith unto him, "I would give him the half of that which remained." And Abbâ Agathon said unto him, "Supposing yet another beggar came, what wouldst thou give unto him?" And Nastîr said unto him, "I would cut the half which remained into two pieces, and give one to him, and with the other I would cover my body." And Abbâ Agathon said unto him, "And supposing yet another beggar were to come?" and Nastîr said, "I would give him what was left. For though I do not wish to receive anything from any man, yet I would go and sit down in some place until God sent me wherewith to cover myself."

172. The blessed woman Eugenia said, "It is right for us to beg, but only we must be with Christ. He who is with Christ becometh rich, but he who honoureth the things of the body more than the things of the spirit shall fall both from the things which are first and the things which are last."

173. One of the old men said, "How can a man teach unto his neighbour that which he himself doth not observe?"

174. They say that Abbâ Theodore excelled in the three following things more than any other man, and that he attained in their performance a degree which was greater than that of many, namely, voluntary poverty, self-abnegation, and flight from the children of men.

175. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "He who laboureth and keepeth [the result of] his work for himself is a twofold grief."

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176. Abbâ Isaac used to say to the brethren, "Our fathers
"and Abbâ Panbô used to wear old garments which were much
"mended and were patched with rags, but at this present ye
"wear very costly apparel; get ye gone from this place, for ye
"have laid the country waste, and I will not give you com-
"mandments, for ye will not keep them."

177. On one occasion a brother came to the church of the
Cells wearing a small head-cloth which came down to his
shoulders, and when Abbâ Isaac saw him he followed him, and
said, "Monks dwell here, but thou art a man in the world,
"and thou canst not live here."

178. A certain man, having made himself remote from the
world, and divided his possessions among those who were in
need, left to himself the remainder of his riches. And when the
blessed Anthony heard [this] he said unto him, "Dost thou
"wish to become a monk? If thou dost, get thee to such and
"such a village, and take some meat, and lay it upon thy body,
"and come hither alone"; and having done this the dogs, and
the hawks and other birds of prey rent and tore his body. And
when he returned to the blessed man, Saint Anthony asked
him whether he had done as he had commanded him, and when
the man had shewn him his body which was rent and torn, the
blessed Anthony said unto him, "Even thus are those who
"wish to go out from the world, and who nevertheless leave
"themselves certain possessions, wherefrom arise for their
"owners war and strife."

179. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen the question, saying,
"An inheritance hath been bequeathed to me; what shall I do
"with it?" Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "Go, and after three
"days come unto me, and I will give thee counsel." And the bro-
ther came, and Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "What counsel
"shall I give thee, O brother? If I tell thee to give it to the
"church, they will make feasts with it; and again, if I tell thee
"to give it to thy kinsmen, thou wilt have no reward; but if I
"tell thee to give it to the poor, thou wilt have no [further]
"care. Therefore go and do with thine inheritance what thou
"pleasest, for I am not able to advise thee rightly."

180. A certain man entreated an old man to accept from him
a gift of grace for his wants, but he refused to do so because
the labour of his hands was sufficient for him; and when he who
asked him to accept it persisted, saying, "If thou wilt not
"accept it for thine own needs, at least do so for the wants of
"others," the old man answered and said unto him, "It would
"be a twofold disgrace [unto me]. First, because I should ac-
"cept something which I do not want, and secondly, because I
"should be giving away with boasting the charity of another."

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181. An old man used to say, "It is not right for a man to have any care whatsoever except the fear of God, for," said he, "although I am forced to take care for the needs of the body, no thought whatsoever concerning anything riseth in my mind before the time when I shall require to make use of it."

182. The same old man used to say, "When thou risest up, in the morning, say, 'O body, work that thou mayest be fed; O soul, rouse up that thou mayest inherit life.'"

Chapter vi. Of Patient Endurance

ON one occasion certain brethren went to Abbâ Agathon, because they had heard that he took the greatest possible care that his mind should not be disturbed by anything,

183. and they sought to try him, and to see if his mind would rise [to any matter]; and they said unto him, "Art thou indeed Agathon? We have heard that thou art a whoremonger and a boastful man." And Agathon said unto them, "Yea, I am." And again they said unto him, "Agathon, thou art a garrulous and talkative old man"; and he said unto them, "Indeed I am." And again they said unto him, "Agathon, thou art a heretic"; and he said unto them, "I am not a heretic." Then they said unto him, "Tell us now why in answer to all these things which we have said to thee thou hast replied, 'Yea,' and that thou hast endured them all with the exception of the accusation of being a heretic." Abbâ Agathon said unto them, "The earlier things I accounted as profitable to my soul, but heresy meaneth separation from God, and I do not wish to be separated from God." And when the brethren heard [these words] they marvelled at his solicitude, and went away rejoicing.

184. A certain father used to tell the story of a father who had a book wherein were the New Testament and the Old Testament, and the price thereof was more than eighteen darics, and he laid up the book in a hole in the wall; and there came a certain stranger and stayed there, and he coveted the book greatly, and stole it, and departed, but the old man did not go after him, although he knew that he had taken it. And the brother went to a neighbouring village and wished to sell the book, and he asked as its price sixteen darics, and the man who wanted to buy it said unto him, "Give it to me, that I may shew it [to a friend]," and he took it and carried it to the old man who had lost it. Then the old man said unto him, "How much doth he ask for it?" And when he heard how much he said to him, "It is well" (*or* "it is a good price"). Then the man went and said unto the brother who wished to sell the

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book, "Behold, I have shewn it to Father So-and-so, and he hath told me that thy price is dear." And the brother answered and said unto him, "I did not tell thee anything to the contrary," and the would-be buyer said, "No, thou didst not." Said the brother, "I will not then sell thee the book," and straightway he repented, and came to the old man and made excuses to him, and offered him the book, but the old man refused to accept it. And the brother entreated him, saying, "Allow me [to restore it to thee], O father, for if thou dost not accept it I cannot obtain life"; so the old man was entreated, and he took it, and that brother remained with him until his death, and through the patient endurance of the old man he gained life.

185. On one occasion certain philosophers came to the desert to try the monks. And there was living there a man who led a life of fair works, and they said unto him, "Come thou hither," and his anger rose and he reviled them. Now there passed by a certain great monk who was a Libyan, and they said unto him, "O thou monk who hast grown grey-headed in iniquity, come hither"; and he went to them readily, and they smote him on one cheek, whereupon he turned the other to them. And when they saw this they rose up straightway and worshipped him, and they said, "Verily this is a monk"; then they set him in their midst, and asked him, saying, "What things do ye who are living in the desert do more than we? Ye fast, and we also fast; ye lead pure lives, and we also lead pure lives; whatsoever ye do we also do; what do ye who live in the desert do more than we?" The Libyan said unto them, "We keep watch over our minds"; and the philosophers said unto him, "We are unable to keep watch over our minds."

186. They say that Abbâ Macarius the Egyptian on one occasion went up from Scete to the Nitrian mountain, and as he drew nigh unto a certain place, he said unto his disciple, "Pass on a little in front of me"; and when he had done so there met him a certain heathen priest, who was running along and carrying some wood about the time of noon. And that brother cried out to him and said, "O minister unto devils, whither runnest thou?" And the priest turned round and smote him with many severe blows, and he left him with but very little breath remaining in him, and he took up his wood and went on his way; and when he had gone on a little further the blessed Macarius met him on his journey, and said unto him, "Mayest thou be helped, O man of labours?" And the priest was astonished, and came to him and said, "What fair thing hast thou seen in me that thou shouldst salute me [in this gracious

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“fashion]?” And the old man said unto him, “I see that thou toilest, and that thou dost not know that thou art toiling for naught”; then he said unto the old man, “At thy salutation I also was very sorry, and I learned that thou didst belong to the Great God. But a wicked monk met me just before thou didst, and he cursed me, and I smote him even unto death.” And the old man knew that it was his disciple [of whom he spake], and the priest laid hold upon the feet of Macarius, and said unto him, “I will not let thee [go] until thou makest me a monk”; and they came to the place where the brother was lying, and they carried him and brought him to the church of the mountain. Now when the fathers saw the heathen priest with him, they marvelled that he had been converted from the error which he had held; and Macarius took him and made him a monk, and through him many of the heathen became Christians. And Abbâ Macarius said, “‘An evil word maketh wicked even those who are good, and a good word maketh good even those who are wicked,’ as it is written.”

187. On one occasion thieves came to the cell of an old man, and said unto him, “We have come to take away everything which thou hast in thy cell”; and he said unto them, “My sons, take whatsoever ye please”; and they took everything which they saw in his cell and departed. Now they forgot [to take] a wallet which was hanging there, and the old man took it and ran after them, and entreated them, saying, “My sons, take this wallet which ye have left behind in your cell.” And when the thieves saw this they marvelled at the good disposition of the old man, and they gave back everything which they had taken from his cell, and they repented, and said to each other, “Verily, this man is a man of God.”

188. Abbâ Macarius the monk loved money so little that, on one occasion when thieves came to his cell by night, and took out whatsoever they could find in it, as soon as he perceived what they were doing, he helped them in their work and also to carry [their plunder] out of the desert.

189. They say that once when Abbâ Macarius was absent a thief entered his cell, and that when he returned and found a thief therein loading upon a camel everything which he had in his cell, he also went in and took some of the things and laid them on the camel; and when the thief had loaded the camel, he began to beat it in order to make it rise up, but it would not move. Now when Abbâ Macarius saw that the beast would not stand up, he took a basket which was remaining, and brought it out and laid it on the camel, and said, “The camel wisheth to carry off this also, O brother, and because of this

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“it would not stand up.” Then the old man cried out to the camel, “Stand up,” and straightway, because of the old man’s words, it stood up; but when it had gone forward for a little it lay down again, and it would not rise up until the thief had emptied the whole of its load.

190. And another of the fathers when he was being plundered said unto the thieves, “Make haste, and be quick, before “the brethren come.”

191. On one occasion when some men of iniquity, and doers of wickedness, and thieves, rose up against him on the eve of the day of the congregation, an old man said unto the brethren, “Let them do their work, and let us do ours.”

192. And when certain evil-doers rose up against one of the brethren in his cell, he brought forth a basin and entreated them to wash their feet, and the thieves were ashamed and repented.

193. And another brother who was travelling on a journey, and did not know the road, asked a man to shew him the way and to direct him; now the man whom he had asked was an evil-doer, and he led the brother out of his road into a waste place, and he made him to arrive at the river Nile, which he commanded the brother to cross over. And when he began to cross over, behold a crocodile was swiftly pursuing the man who was a thief, but the servant of God, not being unmindful of him, cried out to him, and made known to him concerning the fierce attack which the animal was about to make. Then, the thief having been delivered from death, gave thanks to that brother, and marvelled at his affection, and protected him.

194. The blessed Pîôr was on one occasion working for a man in the fields in the summer time, and he was weary, and reminded the lord of his hire about his wages, and when he delayed [in paying him] Abbâ Pîôr returned to his monastery. And on another occasion, when the time of harvest had arrived, Abbâ Pîôr went to the same man, and reaped his crops with a good will, and he returned to his monastery, the man having given him nothing. And again in the third year Abbâ Pîôr came and helped him to harvest his crops, and when he had made an end of the work of harvest according to custom, and yet received nothing, he departed again to his monastery. Meanwhile the man, who was worthy of blessing, laboured according to his custom in the life and works of spiritual excellence, and rejoiced that he had been defrauded of his hire. And Christ worked upon the lord of his hire in his house, and he took the wages of the blessed man, and went round about among the monasteries seeking for him, and when, after the greatest difficulty, he had found him, he fell at his feet and

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entreated him to receive his hire. But when the holy man refused the wages and said, "Perhaps thou hast need of them, "and as for me God will give me my hire," the man increased his supplications unto him, and finally the holy man permitted him to give the money to the church.

195. An old man used to say, "We do not advance because "we do not know our capacity, and we have not sufficient "patience in the work which we begin, and we wish to possess spiritual excellences without working for them, and we "go from place to place, and expect to find some spot where "Satan is not, and when we see the temptation of Satan in "that place whereunto we have been called, he who knoweth "what the war is will remain in God. For the kingdom of "heaven is within you."

196. An old man used to say, "If it should happen that a "sickness of the body overtake thee, let it not be grievous "unto thee, for if thy Lord wisheth thee to be sick in the body, "who art thou that thou shouldst be in despair? Doth He not "take care for thee in everything? Couldst thou live without "Him? Be patient, and entreat thou Him to give thee such "things as are helpful, and which are according to His will; "and besides this eat thou His food of grace with long-suffering."

197. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "The certain sign that "a monk is a monk is made known by trials (*or* temptations)."

198. A certain brother was estranged from a fellow monk, and he came to Abbâ Sisoës the Theban, and said unto him, "I am estranged from a fellow monk, and I wish to take vengeance for myself"; and the old man said, "Let us pray." And whilst he was praying, he said in his prayer, "O God, "henceforward we have no need of Thee to take care of us, "for we will take vengeance for ourselves"; and when the brother heard these words he fell down at the feet of the old man straightway, and said unto him, "Henceforward I will "not enter into judgement with that brother. Forgive me, "O Father." And thus Abbâ Sisoës healed that brother.

199. They say that Abbâ John the Less, the Theban, the disciple of Abbâ Ammon, ministered unto the Abbâ in his sickness for twelve years, and he sat by him when the old man was in a state of exhaustion, and he persevered and endured so patiently, even whilst he was performing great labours, that the old man never once said unto him, "Rest, my son; rest, my "son!" And when the old man was about to die, and the other old men were sitting before him, Abbâ Ammon took his hand, and said unto him, "Live, my son, live!" Then he committed

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him to the old men and said unto them, "This is an angel, and not a man."

200. Abbâ Paulê and Tîmâth his brother dwelt in Scete, and there was contention between them frequently; and Abbâ Paulê said, "How long are we to remain thus?" Abbâ Tîmâth said unto him, "When I come upon thee bear with me; and when thou comest upon me I will bear with thee." And from that time they were at peace.

201. Certain brethren asked Abbâ Sisoës a question, and said unto him, "If we are going along a road, and he who is conducting us forgetteth the way, is it necessary for us to tell him?" And Abbâ Sisoës said unto them, "No." Then a brother said unto him, "Are we then to let him lead us astray?" And the old man said unto him, "What then? Thou hast a stick, canst thou not take it and smite him? Now I knew twelve brethren who were travelling along the road, and in the night time he who was leading them lost the way, and all the brethren knew that he had done so; and every one of them struggled with his thoughts, [and decided] not to tell him. And when the day had come he who had been leading them learned that he had wandered off the road, and he made excuses and said unto them, 'Forgive me because I lost the way'; and they all said, 'We all of us knew it, brother, but we held our peace.' And when he heard this he marvelled, saying, 'The brethren would endure even unto death and would utter never a word'; and he glorified God. Now the distance which they had wandered from the road was twelve miles."

202. Certain brethren came unto Abbâ Anthony, and said unto him, "Speak unto us a word whereby we may live"; and the old man said unto them, "Behold, ye have heard the Scriptures, and they are sufficient for you," and the brethren said, "We wish to hear [a word] from thee also, O father." Abbâ Anthony said unto them, "It is said in the Gospel, 'If a man smite thee on the [one] cheek, turn to him the other also'" (St. Luke vi, 29); and they said unto him, "We cannot do this." Abbâ Anthony said unto them, "If ye cannot turn the other cheek, continue [to be smitten] on the one cheek"; and they said to him, "And this we cannot do." The old man said unto them, "If ye cannot do even this, do not pay back blows in return for the smiting which ye have received"; and they said, "We cannot even do this." Then the old man said unto his disciples, "Make then for the brethren a little boiled food, for they are ill"; and he said to them, "If ye cannot do this, and ye are unable to do the other things, prayers are necessary forthwith."

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203. They used to say that Mother Sarâ, who dwelt above the river and was sixty years old, had never looked out [from her abode] and seen the river.

204. A certain old man dwelt in the desert at a distance of ten miles from the monastery, wherefrom he had always to draw water, and on one occasion the matter became very wearisome to him, and he said, "What is the necessity for me to labour so much? I will come and will take up my abode by the side of this stream." And having said this, he turned behind him and he saw a man coming after him, and he was counting his footsteps, and he asked him, saying, "Who art thou?" And he answered and said unto him, "I am an angel of the Lord, and I have been sent to count thy footsteps, and to give thee thy reward"; and having heard this the old man was consoled greatly, and he went five miles further from the place wherein he was, and took up his abode there.

205. They say that three thieves went into the cell of Abbâ Theodore, and that two of them laid hold upon him whilst the third carried off the things which he had in his cell; and having taken out even the books which he had there, they were going to carry away his cloak, when he said unto them, "Leave me this"; and as they refused to do so, he moved his arms and hands and hurled the two men who were holding him from him, and when they saw this they were afraid. Then the old man said unto them, "Fear ye not, but divide what ye have taken into four parts, and take three of them, and leave me one."

206. They used to say that the cave in Patârâ which belonged to Abbâ Chaeremon who was in Scete, was forty miles distant from the church, and twelve miles further from a spring of water. And he used to bring to the church, with the labour of his hands, two pitchers of water, one for each day, and when he was tired he would set one down by the roadside and go back afterwards and fetch it.

207. They used to say that the cell of the blessed Arsenius also was two and thirty miles from the church, but he never went anywhere and others brought him whatsoever he required.

208. The blessed Arsenius never changed the water [wherein he soaked] the leaves which he twisted into ropes except once a year, but he used to add frequently to it, for he twisted palm leaves and sewed them together until the sixth hour [daily]. And the fathers entreated him, saying, "Tell us why thou dost not change the water of the leaves, for it is very foul"; then the old man answered, and said, "It is right that I should endure this foul smell in return for the odours of the sweet scents, and oils, and delightful odours, which I enjoyed when I was in the world."

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209. It is related of a certain old man that if he heard a brother speak evilly to him he would labour very hard to make something which would please the brother who had spoken to him, and that if that brother did not live with him, the old man would send whatsoever he had made to the place where he was.

210. A certain old man used to say, "It is a disgrace for a monk to enter into judgement with the man who hath done him an injury."

211. A brother asked a certain old man, saying, "Tell me one thing, whereby, if I keep it, I shall live." The old man said unto him, "If thou canst endure being reviled and cursed, this command is the greatest of all the commandments."

212. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, "What shall I do to my heart which flaggeth and is frightened if a little toil, and tribulation overtake me, or if temptation come upon me?" The old man said unto him, "Therefore we should wonder and admire the righteous man Joseph who, being only a very young man—that is to say, seventeen years of age—was sold into slavery into the land of Egypt, the land of the worshippers of idols, and he endured temptations, and God made him glorious to the end."

213. And he said also, "We may consider also the blessed Job, who never became slothful, for he persevered in his trust in his God, and his enemies were not able to shake him from his hope."

214. On one occasion the brethren who were in Scete were cleaning and dressing palm leaves, and there was among them a man who had become ill through his excessive spiritual labours, and he was coughing, and bringing up clots of phlegm and spittle; and as he spat, involuntarily, some of the spittle fell upon a certain brother. Then the mind of that brother on whom the spittle had fallen said unto him, "Tell that brother not to spit upon thee"; but straightway he licked up the spittle, and he turned and said to his mind, "Thou hast not licked up the spittle, therefore do not tell him not to spit upon thee."

215. Abbâ Poemen used to say that John Colob, who made entreaty unto God, and [his] passions were removed from him, and he was set free from anxious care, went and said unto a famous old man, "I perceive that my soul is at rest, and that it hath neither war nor strife [to trouble it]." Then the old man said unto him, "Go and entreat God to let war and strife come unto thee again, for it is through war and strife that the soul advanceth in spiritual excellence." And afterwards, whensoever war stood up before him, he did not pray, "O Lord, remove striving from me," but he made supplication unto

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God, saying, "O Lord, give me patience to endure the "strife."

216. There was a certain man who had within himself love and affection for the brotherhood, and who never had in his mind any evil thought whatsoever; and a certain brother stole some things and brought [them] and deposited them with him, and the man did not consider or perceive by what means the brother had obtained them. Now some days later the matter was discovered, and it was pointed out to the owner of the things that they had been deposited with the old man, who made excuses to them, saying, "Forgive ye me, for I repent." And after a few days the brother who had stolen the things came to him, and he began to demand [them from] the old man, and said unto him, "Thou thyself didst take the things"; and the old man made excuses to him, saying, "Forgive me"; and the old man brought out all the work of his hands, and gave it to him, and the brother took it and departed. Now the disposition of the old man was such that, if one of the brethren committed a fault, and denied it, he would make excuses for him, saying, "It was I who did this thing"; thus meek and humble was the holy man, and he never wronged any man even by the least word.

217. A certain brother lived by himself, and he was disturbed in his mind, and went and revealed the matter to Abbâ Theodore of Parmê. And the old man said unto him, "Go and "humble thy mind, and submit thyself to live with the brethren"; and he went and did as the old man had told him, and took up his abode with other men. And he went back to the old man, and said unto him, "Father, I am not content to "dwell with other men"; then the old man said unto him, "If "thou art not content to live either by thyself or with others, "why didst thou come out to be a monk? Is it not necessary "for thee to endure trials? Tell me, how long hast thou lived "this life?" And the brother said unto him, "Eight years." The old man said unto him, "Verily I have led the life I lead "now for seventy years, and not one pleasure hath come in "my way [the whole time], and yet thou wishest to find pleasure (or rest) in eight years!"

218. A certain brother, who had vanquished Satan in everything, subsequently had his eyes blinded by Satan so that he could not see, yet this blessed man did not pray for himself, and that he might be able to see, but he only prayed that he might be able to endure patiently his trial; and through his constancy his eyes were opened.

219. A monk was smitten by a man on the leg and was severely injured, but the holy man was neither angry nor wroth

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with him that had smitten him, [but he nursed the place wherein he had been wounded, and made excuses to the man who had struck him].

220. Abbâ Arsenius used to say, "When an unbaked [or moist] brick is laid in the foundations of a building by the river-side, it will not support it, but if it be burnt in the furnace it will support the building like a stone. And thus it is with the man who possesseth a carnal mind, and who doth not become hot and burn with heat, even as did Joseph with the word of God, for when he cometh to have dominion he will be found to be wanting. For very many of those upon whom trials have come have straightway been swept away and have fallen. It is therefore a good thing for a man to know the gravity of dominion, and to be required to bear trials, which are like the onset of many mighty waters, so that he may remain firm and unmoved." And of this holy man Joseph—if a man wisheth to have the story told—Arsenius used to say that "He was not a being of earth at all—so much was he tempted. And [consider] the country [of Egypt] wherein formerly there was not even a trace of the fear of God! But the God of his fathers was with him, and He delivered him out of all his tribulations, and Joseph is now with his fathers in the kingdom of heaven; and let us also make supplication with all our might that we too may in the same manner be able to flee from and escape from the righteous judgement of God."

221. They say that there was with Abbâ Isidore, the priest of Scete, a certain brother who was infirm in his mind, and he was a man who used abusive language and possessed very little intelligence, and Abbâ Isidore wished to turn him out from his abode; and when that brother came to the door of the monastery, the old man said once again, "Bring him to me," and he rebuked him, saying, "Brother, be silent, lest through thy little intelligence and thine impatience thou provoke our Lord to anger"; and thus by his longsuffering Abbâ Isidore quieted that brother.

222. A lover of ascetic labours saw a man carrying a dead person on a bier, and he said unto him, "Dost thou carry a dead man? Go and carry the living."

223. They say that there was a certain monk who, whenever he found a man reviling and cursing him, used to run towards him with all his power, saying, "These [words] are the causes of spiritual excellence in those who are strenuous, for those who ascribe blessing to a man disturb the soul, as it is written, 'Those who ascribe blessing to you lead astray your soul.'"

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224. Certain old men came unto an old man who dwelt in the desert that they might reveal unto him their thoughts, and might profit by his knowledge, and they found some young men outside his cell who were pasturing sheep, and they were saying unto one another words which were unseemly. And the old men said unto the old man, "Father, how is it that thou dost not command these young men not to curse?" And the old man said unto them, "My brethren, believe me, I have many times wished to command them [not to do so], but I have rebuked myself, saying, 'If thou canst not endure this little thing, how couldst thou bear some severe trial if it were to come upon thee?' I have therefore never said anything to them, so that the matter might be a cause of remembering that I have to endure the things which are to come."

225. A certain brother ministered unto one of the fathers who was sick, now his disease was decline of the body, and he used to bring up foetid pus; and the mind of the brother said unto him, "Flee from him, for thou canst not endure this foetid smell." Then the brother took an earthen vessel and put into it some of the water in which the old man had washed, and when he was thirsty he used to drink some of it; and his mind began to say unto him, "Flee not, but drink not of this filthy water." But that brother laboured on greatly in respect of the water in which the sick man had washed, and although his soul shrank from that filthiness, he persevered in drinking it; and God saw his labour and tribulation, and He changed the filthy washing water which was in the earthen vessel into clean water, and He healed that old man.

226. One of the monks wished to go out from his monastery and to wander about so that he might have a little relaxation and enjoyment, and when they saw him, an old man said unto him, "Seek not gratification in this world, O my son, but work rather and persevere therein in the invincible power of the Holy Trinity."

227. Abbâ Moses used to say, "Secret withdrawal [from work] maketh dark the mind, but for a man to endure and to persevere in his works maketh light the mind in our Lord, and it strengtheneth and fortifieth the soul."

228. And he used to say also, "Bear disgrace and affliction in the Name of Jesus with humility and a troubled heart; and shew before Him thy feebleness, and He will become unto thee might."

229. Certain people praised one of the brethren before the blessed Anthony, and when that brother came to the blessed man the old man put him to the test, and he found that he could not bear contempt and contumely. And the old man said unto

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him, "Thou art like unto a palace the front of which is decorated and beautiful, but the back whereof hath been broken into by thieves and plundered."

230. A brother asked an old man a question, saying, "What shall I do?" And the old man said unto him, "Go and learn to love putting restraint upon thyself in everything."

231. One of the old men said concerning Lazarus, the poor man, "We cannot find that Lazarus ever did one excellent thing except that he never murmured against the rich man as being one who had never shewn him an act of mercy; but he bore his infirmity with the giving of thanks, and because of this God took him to Himself."

232. Abbâ Macarius used to say, "If contumely be accounted by thee as an honour, and blame as praise, and poverty as wealth, thou wilt not die."

233. A certain brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, "What mean the words, 'If a man be angry with his brother without a cause?'" (St. Matthew v, 22.) The old man said unto him, "If thy brother make use of oppression, and wrong, and fraud in respect of thee, and thou art angry with him [because of them], thou art angry with him without a cause. And if he tear out thy right eye, or cut off thy right hand, and thou art angry with him, thou art angry with him without a cause; but if a man wisheth to separate thee or to put thee away from God, then to be angry and wroth with him is a good thing."

234. There were two men in the desert who were brethren in the flesh, and a devil came to separate them from each other; and one day the younger brother lit a lamp and set it upon a candlestick, but, by the agency of the Evil One, he overturned the candlestick and extinguished the lamp. Then the elder brother was angry and smote him, and the younger brother made excuses to him, saying, "Have a little patience with me, and I will light the lamp again." Now when God saw his patient endurance, He punished that devil until the morning, and the devil came and told the prince of devils what had happened; and there was with the prince of devils a certain priest of idols, and straightway this man left everything, and he went and became a monk. And at the very beginning he laid hold upon humility, saying, "Humility is able to bring to naught all the power of the Adversary, even as I have heard from the devils, who said, 'Whosoever we stir up the monks, they turn to humility, and they make excuses one to the other, and thus they do away all our power.'"

235. Abbâ Poemen said, "Abbâ Isidore, the priest of the church, on one occasion spake to the people, saying, My

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“brethren, when ye are working in a certain place it is not strength to depart therefrom because of the labour; and as for myself, I wrap myself up in my cloak and I go to the place where labour is, and labour becometh unto me a pleasure.”

236. Paesius, the brother of Abbâ Poemen, had an affection for the people who were outside his monastery, and Abbâ Poemen did not wish this to be, and he rose up and fled to Abbâ Ammon, and said unto him, “My brother Paesius hath made a promise of love to certain folk, and I am not pleased thereat.” Abbâ Ammon said unto him, “Poemen, thou art still alive. Go, and sit in thy cell, and meditate in thy mind, saying, ‘Behold, there is a year for thee in the grave.’”

237. There were two monks who lived in one place, and an old man came to them, and wishing to put them to the test, he took a stick, and began to beat to pieces the garden herbs of one of them; and when one monk saw him doing this, he hid himself. And when only one root was left, the other brother said unto him, “Father, if it please thee, leave me this root that I may boil it and we may eat together.” Then the old man made excuses to that brother, and said unto him, “The Spirit of God hath rested upon thee, O my brother.”

Chapter vii. Of Obedience towards God, and towards our Fathers and Brethren

THEY say that Abbâ John, the disciple of Abbâ Paulê, possessed great obedience. Now in the place where they used to live there was a sepulchre, wherein dwelt

238. a savage panther, and Abbâ Paulê saw in it a few little heaps of goods, and he said unto John, “Go to the sepulchre and bring me some of the things from there”; and John said unto him, “My father, what shall I do with the panther?” And the old man laughed and said unto him, “If he cometh against thee, tie him up and bring him here”; so John went there at eventide, and the panther came against him, and when he went to lay hold of him the animal fled from him. Then John pursued him, saying, “My father told me to fetter thee,” and he seized him, and bound him with cords. Meanwhile the old man was very much troubled about John, and he was sitting waiting for him anxiously; and behold, he came dragging along the panther which was tied with ropes, and the old man saw and marvelled. Then the brother said unto him, “Father, behold, I have taken prisoner the panther according as thou didst command, and I have brought him here”; and the old man, wishing to remove from him the occasion for boasting,

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smote him, and said, "Thou hast brought a wandering dog!" and he untied the animal and let him depart.

239. Abbâ Joseph used to say, "There are three things which are held in honour before God: first, when a man is sick, and he addeth to his toil, and receiveth it with thanksgiving; secondly, when a man maketh all his works to be pure before God, and when he hath in them no human consideration; thirdly, when a man submitteth himself to authority, and obeyeth his father, and setteth aside his own will. Such a man hath one crown the more, but I personally would choose the sickness."

240. They used to say that Abbâ Sylvanus had in Scete a disciple whose name was Mark, and that he possessed to a great degree the faculty of obedience; he was a scribe, and the old man loved him greatly for his obedience. Now Sylvanus had eleven other disciples, and they were vexed because they saw that the old man loved Mark more than them, and when the old men who were in Scete heard [of this] they were afflicted about it. And one day when they came to him to reprove him about this, Sylvanus took them, and went forth, and passing by the cells of the brethren, he knocked at the door of each cell, and said, "O brother, come forth, for I have need of thee"; and he passed by all their cells, and not one of them obeyed him quickly. But when they went to the cell of Mark, he knocked at the door and said, "Brother Mark," and as soon as Mark heard the voice of the old man, he jumped up straightway, and came out, and Sylvanus sent him off on some business. Then Sylvanus said unto the old men, "My fathers, where are the other brethren?" And they went into Mark's cell, and looked at the quire of the book which he was writing, and they saw that he had begun to write [one side of] the Greek letter o (*ο* or *ω*), and that as soon as he heard the voice of his master, [he ran out] and did not stay to complete the other side of the letter. Now when the old men perceived these things, they answered and said unto Sylvanus, "Verily, O old man, we also love the brother whom thou lovest, for God also loveth him."

241. On another occasion the mother of Mark came to see him, and she had with her an abundant company of members of her household; and an old man went forth to her, and she said unto him, "Abbâ, tell my son to come forth and see me"; and the old man went in, and said to him, "Go forth and see thy mother." Then Mark wrapped himself up in rags, and blackened his face by standing up in the sooty chimney, and he went forth thus fulfilling the behest of his master, and shutting his eyes, he said unto those [who were with his

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mother], "Live ye! Live ye!" but he did not look at them. Now his mother did not recognize him, and she sent in again to the old man a message, saying, "Send me my son, O father, so that I may see him." Then the old man said unto Mark, "Did I not tell thee to go out and see thy mother?" And he said unto him, "Father, I went forth according to thy word, but I beseech thee do not tell me to go forth again, lest peradventure I feel myself compelled to disobey thee"; and [the old man] spake with her, and quieted her, and sent her away in peace.

242. And they used to tell about two brethren who lived in a monastery, and who both had arrived at a high grade in the ascetic life; the one devoted himself to an austere life of self-denial and poverty, and the other was obedient and humble. And being angry with each other they wished to know which of the two [kinds of] service was the greater, and they went down to the river where there were many crocodiles, and that brother who possessed the faculty of obedience went in, and stood up among them, and they all worshipped him. Then he cried out to his fellow who was a mourner, and said unto him, "Forgive me, O my brother, I have not yet attained to such a high degree of faith as thou hast"; and when they returned to the monastery, the head of the monastery heard a voice, saying, "The man who obeyeth is better than the man who leadeth a life of voluntary poverty."

243. Abbâ Daniel used to say, "On one occasion Abbâ Arsenius called me and said unto me, 'Make thy father to be gratified, so that when he goeth to our Lord, he may make entreaties to Him on behalf of thee, and good shall be unto thee.'"

244. A certain brother was engaged in a war against Satan, and he told the matter to Abbâ Herakles; and wishing to strengthen and confirm him the old man told him the following story:—There was a certain old man who had a disciple, and he had been very obedient unto him for many years, and when the war came upon him, he made a request to his master, saying, "I beseech thee to make me a monk." And his master said unto him, "Seek out a place for thyself, and we will build a cell for thee, and thou shalt become a monk." So the disciple went and found a place, which was distant from his master about one hundred paces, and he made himself a cell. Then the old man said unto that brother, "Whatsoever I say unto thee, that do. When thou art hungry, eat; and when thou art thirsty, drink; and sleep, but thou must not go out from thy cell until the Sabbath Day, when thou shalt come to me." Then the old man went back to his cell. And the

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brother did according as the old man told him for two days, but on the third day he became dejected, and wearied, and said, "What hath the old man done for me, seeing that he hath not commanded me to make prayers?" Then he rose up and sang more Psalms than usual, and after the sun had set he ate his food, and he rose up, and went, and lay down upon his mat; and he saw, as it were, an Ethiopian who stood up and gnashed his teeth at him, and the monk, by reason of his great fear, ran quickly to his master, and he knocked hastily at his door, saying, "Father, have mercy upon me, and open to me immediately." Now because the old man knew that he had not kept his commandment he refused to open the door to him until the morning, and when he opened the door in the morning, he found him [there], and as the brother entreated him to be allowed to enter, the old man had compassion upon him and brought him in. Then he began to say unto the old man, "I beseech thee, O father, [to believe me]. When I went to lie down to go to sleep, I saw a black Ethiopian on my bed." The old man said unto him, "This [happened] because thou didst not keep my words." Then he laid down a rule for him which was suitable to his strength and to the monastic life, and dismissed him, and little by little he became an excellent monk.

245. A man who wanted to be a monk came to Abbâ Sisoës the Theban, and the old man asked him, if he had any possession whatsoever in the world, and he said, "I have one son"; and the old man, wishing to find out if he possessed the faculty of obedience, said unto him, "Go, and throw him in the river, and then come, and thou shalt be a monk," and because the man was obedient he went straightway to do it. Now when he had departed the old man sent another brother to prevent him from doing this thing, and when the man had taken up his son to throw him into the river, the brother said unto him, "Thou shalt not cast him in." Then the man said unto him, "My father told me that I was to cast him in," and the brother replied, "He told me that thou wast not to cast him in," so the man left him, and came [unto the old man], and through his obedience he became a chosen monk.

246. The Abbâ who was in Îlû used to say, "Obedience cometh into existence because of obedience; for if a man obeyeth God, God also will obey him."

247. On one occasion four brethren came to Abbâ Pambô from Scete, and they were wearing skins, and each one of them, whilst his neighbour was absent, recounted [to him] his works, [saying], the first one fasteth very often, and the second leadeth a life of poverty, and the third possesseth great

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love, and concerning the fourth the other three said, "He hath been in subjection to the old men for twenty-two years." Then Abbâ Pambô said unto them, "I say unto you that the spiritual excellence of this man is great. Each of you hath chosen the ascetic virtue which he possesseth according to his own wish, but this man hath cut off his own desire, and hath performed the will of others; and those who are thus will, if they keep these things to the end, become confessors."

Chapter viii. Of Scrupulous Watchfulness in our Thoughts and Words and Deeds

ABBÂ POEMEN used to say, "Satan hath three kinds of power which precede all sin. The first is error, and the second is neglect (*or* laxity), and the third is lust.

248. "When error hath come it produceth neglect, and from neglect springeth lust, and by lust man fell; if we watch against error neglect will not come, and if we be not negligent, lust will not appear, and if a man worketh not lust, he will, through the help of Christ, never fall."

249. They used to say that there was a certain father who was [occupied] in great works, and that [on one occasion], when he was singing the Psalms and praying, one of the holy men came unto him, and he heard him striving with his thoughts, and saying, "How long for the sake of one thought wilt thou go through all this?" Then the man who had come thought that the father was striving with another man, and he knocked at the door before going in to make peace between them; but when he had gone inside he saw no other man there. And because he possessed some authority over the father, he said unto him, "Father, with whom wast thou striving?" And he said, "With my thoughts. For I can repeat fourteen Books, but if I hear one little word outside it will make useless my service to me, and [the repetition] of all these Books will be in vain. And this word only cometh and standeth before me at the season of prayer, and it is because of this that I strive." And when the holy man heard [these things], he marvelled at the spiritual excellence and purity of the old man, and how openly he had told him about his war.

250. One of the old men used to say, "The Prophets compiled the Scriptures, and the Fathers have copied them, and the men who came after them learned to repeat them by heart; then hath come this generation and [its children] have placed them in cupboards as useless things."

251. A disciple of Abbâ Ammon told the following story: "On one occasion when we were singing the service, my mind became confused, and I forgot the verse in the Psalm; and

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“when we had ended the service Ammon answered and said unto me, ‘Whilst I was standing up during the service it seemed that I was standing on fire and was being consumed, and my mind was unable to make me turn aside either to the right hand or to the left. And as for thee, where was thy mind when we were singing the service? for thou didst omit a verse from the Psalm. Didst thou not know that thou wast standing in the presence of God, and that thou wast speaking unto Him?’”

252. A certain brother came to dwell in a cell with one of the fathers, and he told him of a thought whereby he was afflicted; and the old man said unto him, “Thou hast left upon the earth the excellent service of the fear of God, and thou hast taken and hast laid hold upon a staff made of a reed, that is to say, evil thoughts. Take unto thyself the fear of God, which is the fire, and as soon as they come nigh unto thee they shall be burned like reeds.” Now this man was, according to what his disciple related about him, a great old man, and for twenty years he never lay upon either of his sides, but slept upon the seat whereon he sat to work. Sometimes he ate once in two days, and at other times once in four days, and at others once in five days, and in this manner he passed twenty years. Now I said unto him, “What is this which thou doest, O father?” And he said unto me, “Because I set the judgement of God before my eyes I cannot be negligent, for I keep in remembrance [the fact that] my sins are many.”

253. Whilst Abbâ Arsenius was dwelling in Canopus of Alexandria a certain noble lady came to him; she was a virgin, and was exceedingly rich, and she feared the Lord, and she was from Rome and had come to see Abbâ Arsenius. Now Theophilus, Archbishop of Alexandria, received her, and she begged him to entreat the old man to receive her. Then Theophilus went to Abbâ Arsenius and entreated him, saying, “Such and such a noble lady hath come from Rome, and she wisheth to see thee, and to be blessed by thee”; but the old man refused to receive her. And when Theophilus informed her that the old man refused to receive her, she commanded them to make ready the beasts [for travelling], and she said, “By God, I believe that I shall see him. I did not come to see men, for there are men in my own city, but I came to see a prophet.” And when she came outside the cell of the old man, he happened, through the working of God, to be there, and she saw him, and fell down at his feet; then he lifted her up eagerly, and looking at her, said, “If thou wishest to look upon my face, behold, look”; but she by reason of her bashfulness, was not able to look upon his face. Then the old man said unto

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her, "Hast thou not heard about my works, and that I am a sinner? For it is these which it is necessary for thee to see. How didst thou dare to travel hither by ship? Didst thou not know that thou wast a woman, and that it was incumbent upon thee not to go forth anywhere? Wouldst thou go back to Rome and make a boast to the women [there] that thou hast seen Arsenius, and dost thou wish to make the sea into a road whereby women shall come unto me?" And the lady said unto him, "Please God I will not let any woman come unto thee; but pray for me that God may have me in remembrance always." Then Abbâ Arsenius said unto her, "I will pray to God that He may blot out the memory of thee from my heart"; and when she heard these words she went forth, being afraid. Now as soon as she had come to the city a fever began to come upon her because of her grief of mind, and the people told the Bishop, saying, "That noble lady is ill"; and he came to her, and entreated her that he might learn the cause of her sickness. Then she said unto him, "Would that I never had journeyed thither! For I said unto the old man Arsenius, 'Make mention of me in prayer,' and he said unto me, 'I will pray unto God that He may blot out the remembrance of thee from my heart,' and behold I shall die of grief." And the Archbishop said unto her, "Dost thou not know that thou art a woman, and that the Enemy doeth battle with the holy men by means of women? It was for this reason that the old man spake as he did; for thy soul, however, he will pray always." And the noble lady remembered [these things] in her mind, and she rose up, and went to her country with gladness.

254. They say that Abbâ Hôr (*or* Ôr) of the Cells dwelt for twenty years in the church, and that he never once lifted his eyes and saw the roof thereof.

255. Abbâ Ammon asked Abbâ Poemen about the unclean thoughts which a man begetteth, and about vain lusts; Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "Peradventure shall an axe boast itself without him that heweth therewith? (Isaiah x, 15.) Do not henceforward aid these thoughts and they will come to an end."

256. They say concerning Abbâ Paphnutius, the disciple of Abbâ Macarius, that when he was a youth he used to look after the oxen with others of his companions; and they went to take some cucumbers to the animals, and as they were going along one of the cucumbers fell, and Abbâ Paphnutius took it up and ate it, and whensoever he remembered this thing, he used to sit down and weep over it with great feeling.

257. One of the fathers went to Abbâ Akilâ and saw that he was throwing up blood from his mouth, and he asked him,

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saying, "What is this, O father?" and the old man said unto him, "It is a word. I was vexed with a certain brother, and "I was engaged in a strife of which I knew nothing, and I "made supplication to God that it might be taken from me; "and straightway that word became blood in my mouth, but "when I spat it up I was relieved, and I forgot my vexation."

258. One of the old men used to say: "We were going [on "one occasion] to the mountain of the blessed Anthony to visit "Abbâ Sisoës, and when he sat down to eat there came up to "us a young man who begged for alms; and when we were "beginning to eat, the old man said, 'Ask that young man if he "wisheth to come in and eat with us.' Now when one had "said this to him, the young man refused [to do so], and the "old man said, 'Let whatsoever is left over by us be given to "him to eat outside.' Then the old man brought out a jar of "wine which he kept for the Offering, and he mixed for each "one of us a cup, but he gave to the young man two cups, "whereat I smiled, and said unto him, 'I also will go outside, "and thou shalt give me two cups of wine also.' Abbâ Sisoës "said, 'If he had eaten with us he would have drunk the same "quantity as ourselves, and he would have have been con- "vinced that we did not drink more than he did; but now he "will say in his mind, These monks enjoy themselves more "than I do. It is good therefore that our conscience should "not hold us in contempt.'"

259. One of the old men came to another old man who was his companion, and as they were talking together one of them said, "I have died to the world"; and his companion said, "Have no confidence in thyself that this is so until thou goest "forth from the world, for although thou sayest, 'I have died,' "Satan is not dead."

260. A brother asked Abbâ Sisoës, saying, "Tell me a word "[whereby I may live]." The old man saith unto him, "Why "dost thou urge me, O brother, to speak a useless word? What- "soever thou seest me do, that do thyself."

261. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, "Is it possible "for a man to keep hold upon all thoughts, and not to give "any of them to the Enemy?" The old man said unto him, "There are some of them who give ten and keep one, and "there are some who give one and keep ten." And the brother told this saying to Abbâ Sisoës, who said, "There are some "who do not give even one [thought] to the Enemy."

262. Abbâ Joseph asked Abbâ Sisoës, saying, "How many "times is it right for a man to cut off his passions?" The old said unto him, "Dost thou wish to learn when thou must cut "them off?" and Joseph said unto him, "Yes." Abbâ Sisoës

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said unto him, "Whensoever passion cometh cut it off immediately."

263. Abbâ Nastîr and a certain brother were walking together in the desert, and they saw a serpent, and both took to flight; and the brother said to Nastîr, "Father, art thou also afraid?" The old man said unto him, "My son, I am not afraid, but it was a beneficial thing for me to flee, for otherwise I should not have been able to escape from the thought of the love of approbation."

264. Certain men who lived in the world came to see Abbâ Sisoës, and though they spoke much he held his peace and answered them never a word; at length one of them said to his companions, "My brethren, why do ye trouble the old man? He eateth not, and for this reason he is not able to talk." And when the old man heard this, he made answer unto them straightway, and said, "My sons, I eat whensoever I feel the need of eating."

265. On one occasion a certain judge of the district wished to see Abbâ Poemen, but the old man refused [to see him]. And, like a crafty man, the judge made an excuse, and seized Abbâ's nephew, and threw him into prison, saying, "Unless Abbâ cometh and maketh entreaty on his behalf he shall not go out." Then Abbâ's sister came and stood by the door of his cell and wept for her son, but although she importuned him greatly, he did not give her an answer; now when the woman saw this she began to revile him, saying, "O thou who possessest mercy of brass, have mercy upon me, for my son is the only [child] I have." And Abbâ Poemen sent her a message, saying, "Poemen hath no sons," and thus she departed. And when the judge heard [these things] he answered and said, "If Abbâ will only give the order I will release him"; and after this the old man sent him a message, saying, "Examine and consider his case according to the Law, and if he be worthy of death, let him die; and if he be not do whatsoever thou pleasest with him."

266. They say that in the mountain of Abbâ Anthony seven brethren dwelt, each of whom used to watch in the date season and drive away the birds; and among them was an old man who, when it was his day for watching [the dates], used to cry out, saying, "Depart, O ye evil thoughts, from within, and depart, O ye birds, from without."

267. On one occasion the Arabs came and plundered Abbâ Sisoës and the brother who was with him of everything they had, and being hungry, the brethren went out into the desert to find something to eat. And when they were some distance from each other, Abbâ Sisoës found some camel dung, and he

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broke it, and found inside two grains of barley; and he ate one grain and placed the other in his hand; and when the brother came, and found that he was eating, he said unto him, "Is this love? Thou hast found food, and thou eatest it by thyself and hast not called me [to share it with thee]." Abbâ Sisoës saith unto him, "I have not defrauded thee, O brother, for behold, I have kept thy share in my hands."

268. Mother Sarah used to say, "Whensoever I put my foot on the ladder to go up, before I ascend it I set my death before mine eyes."

269. A certain brother came to Abbâ Theodore and entreated him to shew him how he twisted palm leaves, and he sent him away, saying, "Go away, and come here to-morrow morning." Then the old man rose up straightway, and put some leaves to soak in water, and made ready, and when the brother came in the morning he shewed him [how to make] one or two plaits, and he said to him, "Work thus"; and the old man left him and went to his cell. And at the proper season the old man took him food and made him eat, and he rose up and went away; and when he came [back again] in the morning, the old man said unto him, "Why didst thou not take some palm leaves with thee? Take some now, and get thee gone, for thou hast made me fall into the temptation of caring about things," and he did not allow him to come inside [his cell] again.

270. On one occasion Abbâ Muthues went from Re'ith to Mount Gebêl, and he had with him his brother 'Awsâbh, and Kântîrsâ, the Bishop, took the old man and made him a priest. And when they were eating together the Bishop said unto him, "Forgive me, Abbâ, for I know that thou didst not wish for this thing, but I ventured to do this thing that I might be blessed by thee." Then the old man said unto him with a meek spirit, and with a sorrowful mind, "I will labour in this work, though I must be separated from this my brother who is with me, for I cannot endure the making of all the prayers." The Bishop said unto him, "If thou knowest that he is worthy I will make him a priest also"; and Abbâ Muthues said unto him, "Whether he be worthy [or not] I do not know, but one thing I know, and that is, that he is better than I am," so the Bishop laid his hands upon him and made him a priest also. And they ended their lives together, but one of them never approached the altar for the purpose of offering up the Offering, for the old man used to say, "By God, I hope that ordination doth not make it obligatory on me to do so, because I cannot offer up the Offering, for ordination belongeth unto those who are pure [only]."

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271. A certain brother in Scete called one of his companions to come to him in his cell to wash his feet, and he did not go; and twice and thrice he said, "Come to [my] cell, and wash thy feet," and he went not. And at length the brother went to him, and made excuses to him, and entreated him to go with him, and he rose up and went; and the brother said unto him, "How is it that thou didst not come when I entreated thee so often to do so?" And he answered and said unto him, "Whilst thou wast speaking my will would not consent to my coming, but when I saw that thou wast doing the work of monks, that is to say, repenting, then I rejoiced and came."

272. On one occasion when the old man Zeno was walking in Palestine, he became weary, and he sat down by the side of a cucumber bed to eat; and his thought said to him, "Take a cucumber and eat, for of what value is one cucumber?" And he answered and said to his thought, "Those who steal go to torment; try thy soul, then, and see if it be able to endure the torment." And he crucified himself in the heat for five days, and having tortured himself he said unto his thought, "I cannot endure that torment; how then can the man who cannot do this steal and eat?"

273. They say that on one occasion, when it was time for Abbâ Poemen to go to the congregation for the service, he sat down for about one hour examining and passing judgement upon his thoughts, and that at the end of this time he went forth.

274. They say that a certain old man dwelt by himself in silence, and that a son of the world used to minister unto him continually; and it happened that the son of that son of the world fell sick, and his father entreated the old man to go with him to his house and to pray over him, and, when he had entreated him to do so often, the old man went forth and departed with him. And the man went before him and entered the village, and he said unto the people thereof, "Come forth to meet the monk"; now when the old man saw the people from afar off, and perceived that they had come forth to meet him carrying lanterns, straightway he stripped off his garments, and dipped them in the river, and he began to wash them, being naked. And when the man who ministered unto him saw [this], he was ashamed, and he entreated the people of the village, saying, "Get ye back, for the old man hath certainly gone mad"; then he approached the old man, and said unto him, "Father, what is this which thou hast done? For all the people are saying that the old man hath a devil." And the old man said, "This is what I wished to hear."

275. Paesius on one occasion had strife with the brother who

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was with him whilst Abbâ Poemen was sitting by, and they fought with each other until the blood ran down from both their heads; and although the old man saw [them] he uttered no word whatsoever. Then Abbâ Job came and found them fighting, and he said to Poemen, "Why hast thou let these brethren fight, and hast said nothing to them whilst they have been fighting?" Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "They are brethren, and will become reconciled again." Abbâ Job said, "What is this that thou hast said? Thou seest that they continue to fight, and yet thou sayest that they will be reconciled again." Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "Thou must think in thy heart that I am not here."

276. Mother Sarah sent a message to Abbâ Paphnutius, saying, "Dost thou think that thou art doing God's work in allowing thy brother to be reviled?" Abbâ Paphnutius saith, "Paphnutius is here doing the work of God, and I have no concern whatsoever about man."

277. The old man Poemen used to say, "Thou shalt have no dealings whatsoever with a child of the world, and thou shalt hold no converse with women"; and he also said, "Thou shalt possess no knowledge of the judge (*or* governor), lest, when thou hearest his words, thou perform his work."

278. One of the old men used to say, "I have never taken one step forwards without first of all learning where I was about to set my foot, and I have neither crossed my boundary to walk on a height, nor have I descended into a deep place, and been troubled by so doing; for my only care hath been to beseech God until He brought me forth from the old man."

279. On one occasion the brethren were gathered together in Scete that they might enquire into the history of Melchisedek, and they forgot to invite Abbâ Copres to be with them; finally, however, they did call him, and they enquired of him concerning the matter. And he smote three times on his mouth, and said, "Woe be to thee! Woe be to thee, O Copres, for thou hast left undone what God commanded thee to do, and thou art enquired of concerning the things which God hath not demanded of thee"; and they all left the place and fled to their cells.

280. An old man used to say, "Freedom of speech (*or* boldness) is a wind which parcheth, and it smiteth the fruit at the harvest."

281. An old man used to say, "The act of despising oneself is a strong fence for a man."

282. The old man said, "The withdrawal in secret [from works] maketh dark the understanding, but the persisting

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“in endurance with vigilance illuminateth and strengtheneth
“the soul of a man.”

283. An old man used to say, “Laughter and familiar talking are like unto the fire which kindleth among the reeds.”

284. Certain heretics came on one occasion to Abbâ Poemen, and they began to calumniate the Archbishop of Alexandria, and to speak evil things concerning him, and they sought to prove that as they had received consecration from the priests, they were consecrated like [other] priests; and the old man held his peace. Then he called his brother, and said unto him, “Make ready a table and make them eat,” and he dismissed them that they might depart in peace.

285. Some of the old men asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, “If we see one of the brethren committing sin, wouldst thou have us rebuke him?” And the old man said unto them, “If I had some business which made me pass by him, and in passing by him I saw him committing sin, I should pass him by and not see him.”

286. And the old man also said, “It is written, ‘Whatsoever thine eyes have seen, that declare.’ But I say unto you, that unless ye have not first touched with your hands, ye shall not testify. For on one occasion the devil led astray a brother in a matter of this kind. This brother saw a brother committing sin with a woman, and the war being strong against him, he went to them, thinking that what he saw was really a man and a woman, and he kicked them with his foot, and said, ‘Enough, enough, how long [will ye act thus]?’ And suddenly he discovered that the things were sacks of wheat. For this reason I say unto you that unless ye have felt with your hands ye should not offer rebuke.”

287. One of the fathers related a story, saying:—On one occasion in Scete when the clergy were offering up the Offering, something which was like unto an eagle descended upon the Offering, and no man saw the appearance except the clergy; and one day a brother questioned the deacon about the matter, and the deacon said unto him, “I am not at leisure now [to discuss it].” And afterwards when the time arrived for the Offering, and the clergy went in as usual to offer It up, the form of the eagle did not appear as it did before; and the priest said unto the deacon, “What is this? The eagle hath not come as usual, and the fault of this lieth either upon me or thee. But get thee gone from me, and if the eagle then appeareth and descendeth, it will be evident that it did not come down now because of thee, and if it doth not descend thou wilt know that the fault is mine.” Now as soon as the deacon had departed, the eagle appeared as usual, and after the Office had

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been said, and the service was ended, the priest said unto the deacon, "Tell me what thou hast done." And the deacon, wishing to shew him everything, made excuses, saying, "I am not conscious in my soul of having committed any sin, except when a brother came to me, and asked me a question on the matter, and I made answer to him, saying, 'I am not at leisure [to talk] with thee.'" Then the priest said, "It was because of thee that the eagle came not down, for the brother was offended at thee"; and straightway the deacon went to the brother, and expressed his contrition, and entreated him [to forgive] him his offence.

288. They used to speak about a certain father, who for seven years asked God to give him a certain gift, and [at length] it was given unto him; and he went to a great old man and told him about the gift, and when the old man heard thereof, he was grieved, and said, "What great labour!" Then he said unto the father, "Go and spend seven years more in entreating God that the gift may be taken away from thee, for it will do thee no good"; and the old man went, and did as he had told him until the gift was taken away from him.

289. A certain brother dwelt in a cell outside his village, and he had passed many years without going into the village; and he said unto the brethren who were with him, "Behold, how many years have I lived here without going into the village, whilst ye are always going therein." Now Abbâ Poemen was told about this man, and that he used to say words of this kind to the brethren, and he said, "If I were [that man] I would go up and walk round about in the village during the night, so that my thoughts might not be able to boast themselves that I had not gone into it."

290. One of the fathers said, "God beareth with the sins of those who live in the world, but He will not endure the sins of those who live in the desert."

291. Abbâ Job used to say, "Since the time when I was [first] called by the Name of Christ, falsehood hath never gone forth from my mouth."

292. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "If a man dwelleth with a youth, however much he may guard his thoughts he maketh a means for sin."

293. A certain brother asked an old man, saying, "What shall I do because of my negligence?" The old man said unto him, "If thou wilt root out this small plant, which is negligence, a great forest will come into being."

294. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "Do not dwell in a place wherein thou seest that there are those who have envy against thee, for if thou dost thou wilt never advance."

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295. Abbâ Chronius used to say, "The man who dwelleth with a youth will, unless he be mighty, go downwards, and if he be mighty, even though he doth not go downwards temporarily, yet he will never advance in spiritual excellence."

296. Abbâ Anthony used to say, "There are some monks who vex their bodies with the labours of abstinence and self-denial, and who, because they have not found understanding, are remote from the path of God."

297. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "Teach thy heart to keep that which thy tongue teacheth."

298. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "One man is thought to be silent, yet his heart condemneth others, and he who is thus speaketh everything; and another speaketh from morn until evening, and yet keepeth silence, but such a man speaketh not without profit."

299. I have heard that there were two old men who dwelt together for many years, and who never quarrelled, and that one said to the other, "Let us also pick a quarrel with each other, even as other men do." Then his companion answered and said unto him, "I know not how a quarrel cometh," and the other old man answered and said unto him, "Behold, I will set a brick in the midst, and will say, 'This is mine,' and do thou say, 'It is not thine, but mine'; and from this quarrelling will ensue." And they placed a brick in the midst, and one of them said, "This is mine," and his companion answered and said after him, "This is not so, for it is mine"; and straightway the other replied and said unto him, "If it be so, and the brick be thine, take it and go." Thus they were not able to make a quarrel.

300. There was a certain brother who lived a life of very strict seclusion, and the devils, wishing to lead him astray, [used to appear] to him, when he was sleeping at night, in the form of angels, and wake him up to sing the Psalms and pray, and they would shew him a light. And he went to an old man, and said unto him, "Father, the devils come to me with a light and wake me up to sing and pray"; and the old man said unto him, "Hearken not unto them, O my son, for they are devils, but, if they come to wake thee up, say unto them, 'When I wish to rise up I will do so, but unto you I will not hearken.'" And when they came to wake him he said unto them what the old man had told him, and they said unto him forthwith, "That wicked old man is a liar, and he hath led thee astray. For a certain brother came to him and wished to borrow some oboli on a pledge, and although he had money to lend, he lied and said, 'I have none,' and he gave him none, and learn from this thing that he is a liar." Then

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the brother rose up early in the morning and went to the old man and related unto him everything which he had heard, and the old man said unto him, "The matter is thus. I had some oboli, and a brother came and asked me for some money, and I would not give him any because I saw that if I did so we should arrive at the loss of [our] soul[s]. And I made up my mind that I would treat with contempt one of the commandments, and not ten, and [therefore] we came to enmity [with each other]. But do thou hearken not unto the devils who wish to lead thee astray." And when he had been greatly confirmed by the old man, that monk departed to his cell.

301. Abbâ Isaac, the priest of the Cells, said, "I saw a certain brother reaping the harvest in the field, and he wanted to eat one ear of wheat; and he said to the owner of the field, 'Dost thou wish me to take one ear of wheat to eat?' And the owner of the field wondered (now he profited greatly therefrom), and said unto him, 'My son, the field is thine, and dost thou ask [my] permission to eat?' To this extent did that brother shew scrupulous care."

302. A brother asked an old man, and said unto him, "What shall I do? For the thoughts which make war with me are many, and I know not how to contend against them." The old man said unto him, "Do not strive against them all, but against one, for all devilish thoughts have only one head, and it is necessary for a man to understand and to make war upon this head only, for afterwards all the rest will perforce be brought low. Just as in war, if on one side a very mighty man appear, the men on the other side use every means in their power to set up in opposition to him a mighty man who is stronger than he is, because, if he be able to hurl down that chief, all the rest will take to flight and be vanquished. In this same manner there is one head to all the thoughts which come from devils, whether it be fornication, or riotous living, or love of money, or wandering about from place to place, for if thou wilt first of all recognize it and wilt drive it out, it will not lead thee astray in respect of other things." And [when] that chief thought came, and stood up and fought against him, he recognized which it was, and contended against it only.

303. Abbâ Lôt went to Abbâ Joseph, and said unto him, "Father, according to my strength I sing a few Psalms, and I pray a little, and my fasting is little, and my prayers and silent meditations [are few], and as far as lieth in my power I cleanse my thoughts, what more can I do?" Then the old man stood up, and spread out his hands towards heaven, and

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his fingers were like unto ten lamps of fire, and he said unto him, "If thou wishest, let the whole of thee be like unto fire."

304. A certain brother entreated one of the old men to interpret to him some words which he had asked him, saying, "If I see a man doing something, and I tell others about it, I mean not by way of passing judgement upon him, but merely for the sake of conversation, would this be considered as evil talk of the thoughts?" The old man said unto him, "If there be any motion of passion the repetition is wicked, but if it be free from passion the repetition is not wicked, but speak in such a way that evil increase not." And another brother made answer to the old man, and said, "If I come to one of the old men and ask him, saying, 'I wish to dwell with such a man, [may I do so?]' and I know at the same time that it will not be profitable for me, what answer must he make me? If he saith, 'Thou shalt not go,' hath he not condemned that man in his mind?" Then the old man answered and said unto him, "This refinement [of thought] is not [given] to many, and I do not regard it as a sure matter. If there be any passion in the motion of the soul I should say that he would injure himself; but in words there is no power [to do so]. And as to 'What is he bound to say?' I say that I do not know, if his soul be [not] free [from passion]; but if it be free from passions he will not condemn any man, and he will condemn himself, and say, 'I am a changeable person,' now perhaps [this] will not help thee, but if he be a man of understanding he will not go." Now the old man did not speak concerning wickedness, but only that wickedness might not be multiplied.

305. Abbâ Arsenius said unto Abbâ Alexander, "When thou hast finished the work of thy hands, come to me and we will eat; but if strangers come, eat with them, and do not come to me." Now Alexander continued at his work late, and when the time for the meal had arrived, and palm leaves were still standing before him, although he was anxious to keep the word of the old man, he also wanted to finish up the leaves, and then to go to him. Now when the old man saw that Abbâ Alexander delayed [in coming] to eat, he thought that it was because strangers had come to him. And when Abbâ Alexander had finished his work he went to the old man, who said unto him, "Did strangers come to thee?" And Alexander said unto him, "No, father." Then the old man said unto him, "Why hast thou delayed [in coming]?" And Alexander answered and said unto him, "Because thou didst say unto me, 'When thou hast finished thy leaves come to me'; and paying heed to thy word, and having finished [my work], behold, I have come."

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And the old man marvelled at this scrupulous obedience, and said unto him, "Make haste and perform thy service of praise
"and prayer, and bring it to an end, and drink some water,
"for if thou dost not do it quickly thy body will become sick."

306. Abbâ Poemen used to say often, "We need nothing
"except a watchful and strenuous heart."

307. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, "How is it
"right for me to live in the place wherein I am?" The old
man saith unto him, "Acquire the thought of sojourning in
"the place where thou livest, and desire not to cast thy word
"among the multitude, or to be the first to speak, and thou
"wilt find rest."

308. Abbâ Agathon said concerning Abbâ Mûaîn that, on
one occasion, he made fifty bushels of wheat into bread for
the needs of the community, and then laid it out in the sun,
but before it became dry and hard he saw something in the
place which was not helpful to him, and he said to the brethren
who were with him, "Arise, let us go hence"; and they were
greatly grieved. And when he saw that they were grieved, he
said unto them, "Are ye troubled about the bread? Verily I
"have seen men take to flight and forsake their cells, although
"they were well whitewashed and contained cupboards which
"were filled with books of the Holy Scriptures and service
"books, and they did not even shut the cupboard doors, but
"departed leaving them wide open."

309. Abbâ Copres used to say, "Blessed is the man who
"beareth temptation with thanksgiving."

310. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "The mighty ones have
"been many, and those who never felt envy have been many,
"and they have neither been jealous in an evil way, nor have
"they stirred up their own passions."

311. Abbâ Sisoës used to say, "Seek the Lord, and search
"[Him] out, but not only in the place where [thou] dwellest."

312. An old man used to say, "Eat not before thou art
"hungry; lie not down to sleep before thou art sleepy; and
"speak not before thou art asked a question."

313. An old man used to say, "Prepare not a table before
"the time when thou art alone, and speak not before thou art
"asked a question, and if thou art asked a question, speak
"that which is fair and helpful, and not that which is evil and
"destructive."

314. Abbâ Euprepîus said, "If thou art not certain in thy-
"self that God is faithful and mighty, believe in Him, and
"associate thyself with those who are His, but if thou art
"doubtful thou canst not believe. For we all believe and con-
"fess that God is mighty, and we are certain that all things

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“are easy for Him [to do]; do thou then also shew thy belief
“in Him by thy works, for in thee also He worketh miracles,
“and doeth wonders, and sheweth forth marvels.”

315. Abbâ Theodore used to say, “If thou hast affection
“for a man, and it happeneth that he fall into temptation,
“stretch out thy hand to him, and lift him up therefrom, but
“if he fall into heresy, and will not be persuaded by thee to
“return, cut him off from thee immediately, lest, if thou tarry
“long with him, thou be drawn unto him, and thou sink down
“into the uttermost depths.”

316. One of the fathers used to tell the story of Abbâ John, the Persian, who by reason of the abundance of his spiritual excellence arrived at goodness; now this man used to dwell in the Arabia of Egypt. And on one occasion he borrowed one dînâr from a brother, and bought some flax to weave, and a brother came and entreated him, saying, “Give me a little flax
“that I may make a tunic for myself”; and he gave it to him with joy; and then another [brother] entreated him, saying, “Give me a little flax that I may make myself a turban,” and he gave unto him also, and the man departed. And many other brethren borrowed from him, and he gave them [the flax] with rejoicing; but finally the owner of the dînâr came, and wanted to take it back. Then the old man said unto him, “I
“will go and bring it to thee,” but as he had no place wherefrom he could give it to him, he rose up and went to Abbâ Jacob, so that he might persuade him to give him a dînâr wherewith to repay the brother; and as he was going he found a dînâr lying on the ground, but he was not disposed to offer it to him, so he prayed and returned to his cell. And the brother came again and pressed him to let him have what was his own, and the old man said unto him, “Have patience with me this
“time only, and I will bring it to you.” And he again rose up and went to that place where he had found the daric, and, having made a prayer, he took it. And he came to the old man Jacob, and said unto him, “As I was coming to you, O father, I found
“this dînâr on the road. Do now, O father, an act which is
“worthy of love, and make a proclamation throughout these borders, for perhaps some one hath lost the dînâr, and if its owner
“befound, give it unto him.” Then the old man went, and made a proclamation for three days, and he could not find the man who had lost the dînâr. Then the old man said unto Abbâ Jacob, “If no man hath lost the dînâr give it unto that brother to
“whom I owe one, for I was coming to obtain one from thee
“for the Lord’s sake, when I found it.” And the old man Jacob marvelled at him, because, although he owed a dînâr, and had found one, he did not immediately take it and pay his debt.

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Now this habit also was found with that old man who owed the *dînâr*: if any man came and wanted to borrow something from him, he did not give it unto him with his own hands, but he said unto him, "Take for thyself whatsoever thou wishest"; and when the man brought back that which he had taken, the old man would say unto him, "Place it where thou didst take it from," and if he did not bring it back he would say to him nothing at all.

317. Abbâ Daniel used to say that on one occasion certain fathers came from Alexandria to see Abbâ Arsenius, and one of them was the brother of Timothy, Patriarch of Alexandria, and they were taking his nephew also. Now the old man was ill at that season, and he did not wish to spend much time with them, lest, peradventure, they should come to visit him another time and trouble him; and he was then living in Patârâ of Estôrîs, and the fathers went back sorrowfully. And it happened on one occasion that the barbarians invaded the country, and then Abbâ Arsenius came and dwelt in the lower countries; and when those same fathers heard [of his coming] they went to see him, and he received them with gladness. Then the brother who belonged to them said unto him, "Father, knowest thou not that when [these fathers] came to thee on the first occasion at Estôrîs thou didst not protract thy conversation with us?" The old man said unto him, "My son, ye ate bread, and ye drank water, in very truth, but I refused to eat bread and drink water, and I would not sit upon my legs through torturing myself, until the time when I knew from experience that ye must have arrived at your homes, for I knew that for my sake ye had given yourselves trouble." Thus they were pleased and gratified in their minds and they departed rejoicing.

318. Abbâ Daniel used to say: Abbâ Alexander dwelt with Abbâ Agathon, and the old man loved Abbâ Alexander because he was a man of labour, and he was gentle and gracious. And it happened that all the brethren were washing their linen armcloths in the river, and Alexander was quietly washing his with them; but the brethren said unto Abbâ Agathon, "Brother Alexander doeth nothing," and the old man, wishing to quiet his disciples, said unto him, "Wash well, O brother, for the armcloth is [made] of linen." Now when Alexander heard [this] he was grieved, and afterwards the old man entreated him, saying, "What then? Do I not know that thou canst wash well? But I spake as I did to thee before them so that I might rebuke their minds by thine obedience."

319. They used to say that one day when Abbâ John came to the church which was in Scete he heard the brethren quar-

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relling with each other, and that he went back to his cell, and went round it three times, and then entered it; now the brethren saw him, and they expressed their contrition to him, saying, "Tell us why thou didst go round thy cell three times." And he said unto them, "Because the sound of the quarrel was still in my ears, and I said, 'I will first of all drive it out from them, and then I will go into the cell.'"

320. They used to say about Abbâ 'Ôr that whilst other monks would give a pledge for the palm leaves when they wished to buy, he would never give any pledge whatsoever, but whensoever he required leaves he would send the price of them, and take them. Now his disciple went on one occasion to buy leaves, and the gardener said unto him, "A man gave me a deposit, but he hath not taken away his leaves, and therefore thou mayest take them"; and having brought them he came to the old man and related unto him the matter as it had happened. And when the old man heard it, he wrung his hands, and said, "'Ôr will not work this year," and he did not cease [to importune] his disciple until he had returned the palm leaves to their [proper] place.

321. They used to tell the story of a certain brother who never ate bread, but only unleavened cakes soaked in water; and whenever he visited the monks when they sat down to eat he would set before himself unleavened cakes and eat [them]. And it happened that one day he went to a certain great Sage, and there also visited him at the same time other strangers, and the old man boiled a few lentiles for them; and when they sat down to eat that brother also brought out his soaked cakes, and set them before himself, and ate them. Now when the old man saw this, he held his peace and did not rebuke him before the brethren who happened to be there, but when they rose up from the table, he took him aside privately, and said unto him, "O brother, if thou goest to visit a man do not reveal thy rule of life, but eat with the brethren that thou mayest not think within thyself that thou art better than they, and so condemn them. But if thou wishest to keep hold upon thy self-denial, sit in thy cell and do not go out of it." Then the brother was persuaded by the old man, and he ate with the brethren what they ate so as to deceive them, according to what the old man had said.

322. A certain father whose name was Eulogius, having led a life of great austerity and labour in Constantinople, obtained great fame and reputation; and he came to Egypt in order that he might see something more excellent, and when he heard about Abbâ Joseph he came to him, expecting to see a very much more laborious form of life than his own. And the old

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man received him with gladness, and said unto his disciple, "Make some distinction in the food which ye have to prepare, and let it be suitable for strangers." Now when they had sat down to eat, those who were with Abbâ Eulogius said, "Bring a little salt, for the father will not eat this"; but Abbâ Joseph ate, and drank, and held his peace. And Eulogius passed three days with him, but he never heard them singing the Psalms, and he never saw them praying, for every act of worship which they performed was in secret; and he went forth from them having profited in no wise. And by the Providence of God it happened that they lost their way, and they returned the same day, and they came and stood at the door of the old man's cell; and before they could knock at the door, Eulogius heard them singing the Psalms inside, and having waited for a long time, they knocked, and immediately those of the company of Joseph who were singing inside stopped. Now when Eulogius and those who were with him had gone inside the old man received them again with gladness, and because of the heat which they had endured, Abbâ Joseph's monks gave Eulogius [some] water to drink; and this water was a mixture, part being sea water and part being river water, and when Eulogius had tasted it he was unable to drink it. Then he repented within himself, and he went in to Abbâ Joseph and fell down at his feet, and entreated him to be allowed to learn his rule, for he wished so to do, and he said, "What doth this mean? When we were with you ye sang no Psalms, but as soon as we have left you ye perform services overmuch. And when I want to drink water I find it to be salt." The old man said unto him, "It was brother Sylvanus who did this, and he mixed the water without knowing"; and Eulogius entreated him [to tell him about it], for he wished to learn the truth. Thereupon Abbâ Joseph said unto him, "That mixture of wine which we drink we drink for the sake of the love of Christ, but the brethren always drink this water." And Abbâ Joseph taught him the difference [between their rules of life], and that he toiled in secret and not before the children of men; and he ate a meal at the same table with them, and he partook of whatsoever was set thereupon; and Eulogius learned that, even as the old man had said, Abbâ Joseph performed his ascetic labours in secret, and having profited greatly he departed with gladness, giving thanks unto God.

323. On one occasion there was a feast, and the brethren were eating in the church; and there was among them a brother who said unto him that ministered at the tables, "I do not eat boiled food, but bread and salt," and the servant

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cried out to certain other brethren before the whole assembly, saying, "Such and such a brother doth not eat boiled food, "therefore bring him salt." Then one of the old men came to that brother, and said unto him, "It would have been better "for thee this day to have eaten flesh in thy cell than that this "word should have been heard before the whole assembly."

324. On one occasion Ammon came to the brethren, and the brethren expressed contrition, saying, "Tell us a word [where-"by we may live]." The old man said unto them, "It is this: "we must travel along the path of God with due order."

325. They used to say that the face of Abbâ Panbô never smiled or laughed. Now one day when the devils wished to make him laugh, they hung a feather on a piece of wood, and they carried it along and danced about therewith in great haste, and they cried out, "Hâilâw, Hâilâw." Now when Abbâ Panbô saw them, he laughed, and the devils began to run and jump about, saying, "Wâwâ, Abbâ Panbô hath laughed." Then Abbâ Panbô answered and said unto them, "I did not "laugh [for myself], but I laughed at your weakness, and be-"cause it needeth so many of you to carry a feather."

326. On one occasion a certain brother committed an offence in the coenobium, and in the places which were therein a certain old man had his abode; now he had not gone out of his cell for many years. And when the Abbâ of the coenobium came to the old man he told concerning the folly (*or* offence) of that brother, and about his transgression. Then the old man answered and said, "Drive him out from you"; and when that brother was driven out, he departed and went into a reedy jungle, and as some brethren happened to pass by to go to Abbâ Poemen they heard the voice of the brother weeping; and they went in and found him in great labour, and they entreated him to let them take him with them to Abbâ Poemen, but he would not be persuaded [to go], and said, "I will die here." And when they came to Abbâ Poemen they told him about him, and he entreated them, saying, "Go to that brother, and say "ye unto him, Abbâ Poemen calleth thee"; now when the brother learned that Abbâ Poemen had sent the brethren to him, he rose up and went. And when Abbâ Poemen saw that he was sorrow-stricken, he rose up and gave him the salutation of peace, and smiling with him, gave him [food] to eat. Then he sent his brother to the old man, saying, "For many years past "I have greatly longed to see thee, because I have heard "about thee, but through negligence both of us have been pre-"vented from seeing each other. Now therefore that God "wisheth it, and the opportunity calleth, I beg thee to trouble "thyself [to come] hither, and we will each welcome the other."

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Now, as I have already said, the old man had up to that time never gone out of his cell. And when the old man heard the message, he said, "If God had not worked in him he would not have sent for me"; and he rose up and came to him; and having saluted each other, they sat down with gladness. And Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "There were two men living in one place, and both of them had dead, and one of them left weeping for his own dead and went and wept over that of his neighbour"; and when the old man heard these words he repented, and he remembered what he had done, and said, "Abbâ Poemen is above in heaven, but I am down, down, on the earth."

327. An old man used to say, "It is right for a man to keep his work in all diligence so that he may lose nothing thereof; for if a man worketh even a very little, and keepeth it, his work remaineth and abideth." And the old man used to narrate the following matter: An inheritance was left unto a certain brother, and whilst he was wishing to make therefrom a memorial to him that had died, a certain brother who was a stranger came to him, and he roused him up in the night saying, "Arise, and help me to sing the service." Then the stranger entreated him, saying, "Leave me, O my brother, for I am away from labour, and I cannot [get up]"; and the brother who had welcomed him said, "If thou wilt not come, get up and depart from this place"; and the stranger rose up and departed. And at the turn of the night he saw in his dream him who had driven him out giving wheat to the baker, and that the baker did not give him [back] even one loaf of bread; and he rose up and went to an old man and related unto him the whole matter even as it had taken place, and the old man said unto him, "Thou hast performed a beautiful action, but the Enemy hath not allowed thee to receive the reward [thereof]." And after these things the old man said that [this] story was a proof according to which it is right for a man to be watchful and to guard his work with great care.

328. An old man said, "The Calumniator is the Enemy, and the Enemy will never cease to cast into thy house, if he possibly can, impurity of every kind, and it is thy duty neither to refuse nor to neglect to take that which is cast in and to throw it out; for if thou art negligent thy house will become filled with impurity, and thou wilt be unable to enter therein. Therefore whatsoever the Enemy casteth in little by little do thou throw out little by little, and thy house shall remain pure by the Grace of Christ."

329. On one occasion Abbâ Poemen entreated Abbâ Macarius with frequent supplication, saying, "Tell me a word [whereby

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“I may live]”; and the old man answered and said unto him, “The matter which thou seekest hath this day passed from the monks.”

330. Abbâ Nicetas used to tell about two brethren who had met together, and who wished to dwell together; and one of them thought, saying, “Whatsoever my brother wisheth that will I do,” and similarly the other meditated, saying, “Whatsoever will gratify my brother that will I do.” Now when the Enemy saw this, he went to them and wished to separate each from the other, and as he was standing before the door, he appeared unto one of them in the form of a dove, and to the other in the form of a raven. Then one of them said unto his companion, “Seest thou this dove?” and the other replied, “It is a raven.” And they began to quarrel with each other, neither of them yielding to his companion, and they stood up and fought with each other, even unto blood, and at length, to the joy of the Calumniator, they separated. And after three days they came to themselves and were sorry for what had happened, and they went back and lived together in peace as they did formerly, and each expressed his sorrow unto the other. And each of them devoted himself to performing the will of his companion, and they lived together until the end.

331. One of the old men used to say, “If thou seest a man who hath fallen into the water, and thou canst help him, stretch out thy staff to him, and draw him out, lest, if thou stretch out thy hand to him, and thou art not able to bring him up, he drag thee down and both of you perish.” Now he spake this for the sake of those who thrust themselves forward to help other people who are being tempted, and who, through wishing to help [others] beyond their power, [themselves] fall. It is right for a man to help his brother according to the power that he hath, for God demandeth not from a man that which is beyond his strength.

332. A brother asked an old man, and said unto him, “Supposing that I find sufficient for my daily wants in any place, dost thou wish me not to take care for the work of my hands?” The old man said unto him, “However much thou mayest have, do not neglect the work of thy hands; work as much as thou canst, only do not work with an agitated mind.”

333. An old man used to say, “When the soldier goeth into battle he careth for himself only, and so also doth the watchman; let us then imitate these men, for riches, and family, and wisdom, without a correct life and works, are dung.”

334. An old man used to say “I await death evening, and morning, and every day.”

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335. The same old man used to say also, "As he who is a stranger is not able to take another stranger into the house of one by whom he hath not been entreated to enter, so also is it in the case of the Enemy, for he will not enter in where he is not welcomed."

336. Abbâ Epiphanius said, "He who revealeth and discovereth his good work is like unto the man who soweth [seed] on the surface of the ground, and doth not cover it up, and the fowl of the heavens cometh and devoureth it; but he who hideth his good works is like unto the man who soweth his seed in the furrows of the earth, and he shall reap the same at harvest."

337. Abbâ Epiphanius used to say, "Whensoever a thought cometh and filleth thy breast, that is to say, thy heart, with vainglory or pride, say thou unto it, 'Old man, behold thy fornication.'"

338. And he also said, "O monk, take thou the greatest possible care that thou sin not, lest thou disgrace God Who dwelleth in thee, and thou drive Him out of thy soul."

339. The old men said, "Let no monk do anything whatsoever without first of all trying his heart [to see] that what he is about to do will be [done] for God's sake."

340. One of the fathers asked a youthful brother, saying, "Tell us, O brother, is it good to hold one's peace or to speak?" then that young brother spake unto him, saying, "If the words [to be said] be useless, leave them [unsaid], but if they be good, give place to good things, and speak [them]. Yet, even though the words be good, prolong not thy speech, but cut it short, for silence is best of all."

341. Rabbâ Paul the Great, the Galatian, used to say, "The monk who living in his cell hath some small need, and who goeth out to provide therefor, is laughed at by the devils."

342. The blessed woman Eugenia said, "It is helpful to us to go about begging, only we must be with Jesus, for he who is with Jesus is rich, even though we be poor in the flesh. For he who holdeth the things of earth in greater honour than the things of the Spirit falleth away both from the things which are first and the things which are last. For he who coveteth heavenly things must, of necessity, receive the good things which are on the earth. Therefore it belongeth unto the wise to await not the things which now exist [here], but the things which are about to be, and the happiness which is indescribable, and in this short and troublesome life they should prepare themselves therefor."

343. On one occasion when Abbâ Arsenius was living in the lower lands, and was troubled, he determined to leave his cell

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without taking anything from it, and he departed to his disciples in the body, that is to say, to Alexander and Zoilus. Then he said to Alexander, "Arise, and go back to the place "where I was living"; and Alexander did so; and he said to Zoilus, "Arise; and come with me to the river, and seek out "for me a ship which is going to Alexandria, and then come "back, and go to thy brother." Now Zoilus marvelled at this speech, but he held his peace; and thus they parted from each other, and the old man Arsenius then went down to the country of Alexandria, where he fell ill of a serious sickness. And his disciples went back and came to the place where they had been formerly, and they said to each other, "Perhaps one of us "hath offended the old man, and it is for this reason that he "hath separated from us"; but they could not find in themselves anything with which they had ever offended him. Now the old man became well again, and he said, "I will arise and "go to the fathers," and he journeyed on and came to Patârâ where his disciples were. Now when the old man was nigh unto the river-side a young Ethiopian woman saw him, and she came behind him, and drew near him, and plucked his raiment; and the old man rebuked her. Then the maiden said unto him, "If thou art a monk, depart to the mountain." Now the old man being somewhat sad at this remark, said within himself, "Arsenius, if thou art a monk, depart to the mountain"; and afterwards his disciples Alexander and Zoilus met him, and they fell down at his feet, and the old man threw himself down [on the ground] also, and he wept himself, and his disciples wept before him. And the old man said unto them, "Did ye not hear that I have been sick?" And they said unto him, "Yes." And the old man said, "Why did ye not seek to "come and see me?" And Abbâ Alexander said, "Because "the way in which thou didst leave us was not right, and because of it many were offended, and they said, 'If they had "not wearied (*or* pressed) the old man in some way he would "never have separated from them.'" The old man saith unto them, "I know that myself, but men will also say, 'The dove "could not find rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned "to Noah in the ark"; thus the disciples were healed, and they took up their abode with him again.

344. Abbâ Daniel used to tell concerning Arsenius that he never wished to speak about any investigation into the Scriptures, although he was well able to speak [on the subject] if he had been so disposed, but he could not write even a letter quickly.

345. A certain old man used to say, "Vaunt not thyself over "thy brother in thy mind, saying, 'I possess a greater measure

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“of self-denial than he doth, and I can endure more than he,’
“but be subject unto the Grace of Christ, with a humble spirit,
“and love which is not hypocritical, lest through thy haughty
“spirit thou destroy thy labours. For it is written, ‘Let him
“that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall’ (1 Corin-
“thians x, 12); and, ‘A man must be seasoned with Christ as
“with salt.’”

346. An old man used to say, “Let there be not unto thee
“free converse with the governor or with the judge, and be
“not with either of them continually; for from such freedom
“of speech (*or* boldness) thou wilt acquire [the habit of think-
“ing], and from merely thinking thou wilt covet.”

347. Abbâ Agathon used to say, “I have never lain down
“to sleep and kept anger in my heart, or even a thought of
“enmity against any man; and I have never allowed any man
“to lie down to sleep keeping any anger against me.”

348. The old man Hyparchus used to say, “Do not abuse
“thy neighbour, and drive not away a man who turneth to-
“wards thee, so that thou mayest be able to say to our Lord,
“‘Forgive us our sins, even as we also forgive those who
“trespass against us.’”

349. One of the fathers used to say, “If a man ask thee for
“anything, and thou givest it to him grudgingly, thou wilt not
“receive a reward for that which thou hast given, as it is
“written, ‘If a man ask thee to go with him a mile, go with
“‘him two’; and the meaning of this is, ‘If a man asketh
“‘anything of thee give [it] unto him with all thy soul and
“‘spirit.’”

350. One of the fathers related that there were three things
which were especially honoured in monks: that is to say, with
fear and trembling, and spiritual gladness they thought it meet
to draw nigh, I mean to the participation in the Holy Mysteries,
and the table of the brethren, and the washing of one another,
according to the example which their true Rabbâ Christ shewed
unto them, before the great day of His Resurrection was ful-
filled. And the old man himself produced an illustration [of this],
saying, “There was a certain great old man who was a seer
“of visions, and he happened to be sitting at meat with the
“brethren, and whilst they were eating, the old man saw in
“the Spirit as he was sitting at the table that some of the
“brethren were eating honey, whilst others were eating bread,
“and others dung; and he wondered at these within himself.
“And he made supplication and entreaty unto God, saying,
“‘O Lord, reveal unto me this mystery, and tell me why
“‘when the food is all the same, and when the various
“‘things which are laid upon the table are only different forms

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“thereof, the brethren appear to be eating different kinds of food, for some seem to be eating honey, and others bread, and others dung.’ Then a voice came unto him from above, saying, ‘Those who are eating honey are those who eat with fear, and with trembling, and with spiritual love when they sit at the table, and who pray without ceasing, and whose praise goeth up to God like sweet incense; for this reason they eat honey. And those who eat bread are those who confess and receive the Grace of God, which is given unto them by Him for these things. And those who eat dung are those who complain, and say, This is sweet and pleasant, and that is not seemly and prospereth not.’ Now it is not right to think about these at all, but we should glorify and praise God the more, and receive (*or* welcome) His abundant provisions which come to us without labour, so that there may be fulfilled in us that which was said by the blessed Apostle, ‘Whether ye eat, or whether ye drink, or whether ye do anything else, do all things unto the glory of God’” (I Corinthians x, 31).

351. They say that Abbâ 'Ôr never told a lie, and never swore, and never cursed a man, and never spoke unless it was absolutely necessary.

352. One of the old men said, “That which thou observest not thyself, how canst thou teach to another?”

353. And it was he who said unto his disciple, “Take heed that thou never bringest an alien word into this cell.”

354. An old man used to say, “As far as I have been able to overtake my soul when it hath transgressed, I have never slipped (*or* committed an offence) a second time.”

355. An old man used to say, “Strive with all thy might so that thou mayest never in any way do evil to any man, and make thine heart to be pure with every man.”

356. Abbâ Agathon used to say to himself, whensoever he saw any act or anything which his thought wished to judge or condemn, “Do not commit the thing thyself,” and in this manner he quieted his mind, and held his peace.

357. The old men used to say, “For a man to be so bold as to condemn his neighbour resembleth the sweeping of the lawgiver, or the judge, from off his seat, and the wishing to pass judgement in his place, and it is as if a man were to bring an accusation against the weakness of the judge and to condemn him, and such an act will be found to be the rebellion of the slave against his Lord, and against the Judge of the living and the dead.”

358. An old man used to say, “From the greatest to the least of the things which I perform, I carefully consider the fruit

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“ which will be produced from it, whether it be in thoughts, or
“ in words, or in deeds.”

359. They used to tell the story about Abbâ Pachomius and say that on many occasions he heard the devils repeating many evil things of various kinds, some of which were to come upon the brethren. First of all he heard one of them saying, “I have [strife] with a man who constantly [defieth] me, for whensoever I approach to sow thoughts in his mind, immediately he turneth to prayer, and I depart from him being consumed with fire.” And another devil said, “I have [strife] with a man who is easy to persuade, and he doeth whatsoever I counsel him to do, and I love him dearly.” It is right then, O my brethren, that we should keep ourselves awake always, and that, making ourselves mighty men in the Name of the Lord, we should strive against the devils, and then they will never be able to overcome us.

360. One of the holy men used to say, “Through holding small wickednesses in contempt we fall into great ones; consider then attentively the following story which is told even as it took place. A certain man laughed in an empty manner, and his companion rebuked and condemned him; [another brother] happened to be there, and he thought lightly of the matter, saying, ‘This is nothing; for what is it for a man to laugh?’ [And the brother replied, ‘From laughter] pleasure is produced, and next empty words, and filthy actions, and iniquity, and so from the things which are thought to be small that wicked devil bringeth in great wickednesses. And from great wickednesses a man cometh to despair, for this cruel and wicked evil hath the Evil One discovered (or invented) through the malignity of his craftiness, for a man to commit sin is not so destructive as for a man to cut off hope from his soul. For he who repenteth in a fitting manner, and according to what is right blotteth out his offences; but he who cutteth off hope from his soul perisheth because he will not offer unto it the binding up of repentance. Therefore let not a man hold in contempt small wickednesses. For this is the seed which the Calumniator soweth, for if he made war openly it would not be difficult to fight, and victory would be easy; and even now, if we be watchful and strenuous, it will be easy for us to conquer, for it is God Who hath armed us, and He teacheth us and entreateth us not to hold even the smallest wickednesses in contempt. Harken thou unto Him as He admonisheth [us], saying, (St. Matthew v, 22) “Whosoever shall say unto his brother ‘Râkâ,’ shall be guilty of the fire of Gehenna”; and, “He who looketh upon a woman to desire her hath already

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“ “committed adultery with her in his heart” (St. Matt. v, 28).
“ And in another place He rebuked and admonished those who
“ laugh, and concerning the idle word also He said, “Its
“ “answer is given”; and on account of this the blessed Job,
“ because of the thoughts which were in the hearts of his sons,
“ offered up an offering. Now therefore, since we know all these
“ things, let us take good heed to ourselves [and avoid] the
“ beginning of the movement of our thoughts, and then we
“ shall never fall.”

361. A brother said unto an old man, “Dost thou not see
“ that I have not even one war in my heart?” The old man
said unto him, “Thou hast an opening in thee at each of the
“ four points of the compass, and whatsoever wisheth can go
“ in and come out without thy perceiving it. But if thou wilt
“ set up a door, and wilt shut it, and wilt not allow evil
“ thoughts to enter, thou wilt then see them standing outside;
“ for if our minds be watchful and strenuous in loving God,
“ the Enemy who is the counsellor of wickednesses will not
“ approach [us].”

362. A certain Mother of noble rank said, “As the stamped
“ silver coin which is current loseth its weight and becometh
“ less, so doth the spiritual excellence which is apparent and
“ is made manifest become destroyed; and as wax melteth be-
“ fore the fire, so also doth the soul become lax and confused,
“ and strenuousness departeth from it.”

363. One of the old men used to say, “The man who doeth
“ many good deeds doth Satan cast down by means of small
“ matters into pits, so that he may destroy the wages of all
“ the good things which he hath performed.”

364. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, “For what
“ purpose were spoken the words, ‘Take no thought for the
“ ‘morrow?’” The old man said unto him, “For the man who
“ is under temptation, and is in affliction; for it is not meet
“ that such a man should take thought for the morrow, or
“ should say, ‘How long shall I have to endure this tempta-
“ ‘tion?’ but he should think upon patient endurance, saying,
“ ‘It is to-day, and the temptation will not remain thus for a
“ ‘long time.’” And the old man said, “It is good that a man
“ should be remote from temptation of the body, for he who
“ is nigh unto the temptation of the body is like unto him
“ that standeth upon the mouth of a deep pit, and whom, when-
“ soever his enemy wisheth, he can easily cast therein. But if
“ he be remote from the temptation of the body, he is like unto
“ a man who is far away from the pit, and even though his
“ enemy may wish to cast him into it, he is not able to do so
“ because the pit is far away from him, and whilst he is either

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“urging him or dragging him thereto, God, the Merciful One, sendeth him a helper.”

365. And a brother said unto Abbâ Poemen, “My body is weak, and I am not able to perform ascetic labours; speak to me a word whereby I may live”; and the old man said unto him, “Art thou able to rule thy thought and not to permit it to go to thy neighbour in guile?”

366. And a brother also asked him, “What shall I do? For I am troubled when I am sitting in my cell.” The old man said unto him, “Think lightly of no man; think no evil in thy heart; condemn no man and curse no man; then shall God give thee rest, and thy habitation shall be without trouble.”

367. And the same old man used to say, “The keeping of the commandments, and the taking heed to oneself in everything, and the acquisition of oblations, are the guides of the soul.”

368. Abbâ Poemen said, “A brother asked Abbâ Moses, saying, ‘In what manner is a man to keep himself from his neighbour?’ The old man said unto him, ‘Except a man layeth it up in his heart that he hath been already three years in the grave, he will not be sufficiently strong [to keep] this saying.’”

369. Abbâ Poemen said, “If thou seest visions and hearest rumours, repeat them not to thy neighbour, for this is victory of the war.”

370. The same old man also said, “The chief of all wickednesses is the wandering of the thoughts.”

371. Abbâ Poemen said, “If a man perform the desire, and pleasure, and custom of these, they will cast him down.”

372. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, “If a brother owe me a few oboli, shall I remind him of it?” The old man saith, “Remind him once.” And the brother said unto him, “And if I have reminded him and he hath given me nothing, [what am I to do then?]” The old man saith unto him, “Let the thought perish, only do not harass the man.”

373. A brother asked Abbâ Joseph, saying, “What shall I do? For I cannot be disgraced, and I cannot work, and I have nothing [wherefrom] to give alms.” The old man said unto him, “If thou canst not do these things, keep thy conscience from thy neighbour, and guard thyself carefully against evil of every kind, and thou shalt live; for God desireth that the soul shall be without sin.”

374. A brother asked Abbâ Sisoës of Shëkîpâ about his life and works, and the old man said unto him that which Daniel spake, “The bread of desire I have not eaten,” that is to say, “A man should not fulfil the lust of his desire.”

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375. On one occasion Abraham said unto Abbâ Sisoës, "Abbâ, "thou hast grown old, let us draw nigh unto the habitations "of the children of men for a little"; and Abbâ Sisoës said unto him, "Let us go where there is no woman"; then his disciple said unto him, "And what place is there without a "woman except the desert?" The old man said unto him, "Then let us go to the desert."

376. On one occasion certain brethren came to Abbâ Pambô, and one of them asked him, saying, "Father, I fast two days "at a time, and then I eat two bread-cakes; shall I gain life, "O father, or am I making a mistake?" And another asked him and said, "I perform work with my hands [each] day to "the value of two kîrâts (i.e., carats), and I keep a few oboli "by me for my food, and the remainder I spend upon the relief "of the poor; shall I be redeemed, O father, or am I making "a mistake?" And the other brethren asked of him many things, but he answered them never a word. Now after four days they were wishing to depart, and the clergy entreated them, saying, "O brethren, trouble not ye yourselves, for God "will give you a reward. The custom of the old man is not to "speak immediately, for he doth not speak until God giveth "him permission to do so." Then the brethren went to the old man and said unto him, "Father, pray for us"; and he said unto them, "Do ye wish to depart?" And they said unto him, "Yes." Then he took their actions into his consideration, and he put himself in the position of one who was writing on the ground, and said, "Pambô, one fasteth two days at a time, "and then eateth two bread-cakes; shall he become a monk "by such things as these? No! Pambô, [another] worketh for "two carats a day, and giveth to those who are in need, shall "he become a monk by such things as these? No!" And he said, "[Thy] actions are good, and if thou preservest thy con- "science with thy [good actions] thou shalt live"; and being consoled by these words, the brethren departed rejoicing.

377. Certain of the old men used to say, "If temptation "cometh upon thee in the place where thou dwellest, forsake "not the place in the time of temptation, lest peradventure "thou findest wherever thou goest that from which thou "fleest; but endure until the period of temptation be overpast, "and thy departure can be [effected] without offence and with- "out affliction, for thou wilt have departed in a time of peace. "Now if thou departest during a period of temptation, many "will be afflicted because of thee, and will say that thou didst "depart because of the temptation, and this will be unto them "a source of grief."

378. On one occasion when Abbâ Sisoës was sitting down

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with a certain brother, he sighed unknowingly, and he did not perceive that the brother was with him, because his mind was carried away by the noonday [prayer]; and he made apologies to that brother, and said unto him, "Forgive me, O my brother, that I heaved a sigh before thee [proves] that I have not yet become a monk."

379. An old man used to say, "Whensoever I bring down the bar of the loom, and before I raise it up again, I always set my death before mine eyes."

380. Another old man used to say, "When I am plaiting (or sewing) a basket, with every stitch which I put into it I set my death before my eyes before I take another stitch."

381. Abbâ Daniel used to say, "On one occasion we went to Abbâ Poemen, and having eaten together, he said unto us subsequently, 'Go ye and rest yourselves a little, O my brethren'; and when the brethren had gone to rest themselves I remained that I might be able to talk to the old man privately. And I rose up and came to his cell, and I saw that he was sitting outside on a mat, and seeing me he lay down; now he did not know that I had seen him seated, and he pretended to be asleep. And this was the custom of the old man, for everything which he did was done by him in secret."

382. One of the fathers asked Abbâ Sisoës, saying, "If I am living in the desert and the barbarians come against me to kill me, supposing that I have strength may I kill one of them?" The old man said unto him, "No. Commit thyself unto God, and leave [it to Him]. For with every trial which cometh upon a man he should say, 'It hath come because of my sins'; but if something good happeneth to him, let him say, 'It is of the Providence of God.'"

383. One of the old men used to say, "When the eyes of the ox are covered over then he is subjugated by the yoke bar, but if they do not cover [his] eyes he cannot be made to bow beneath the yoke; and thus is it with Satan, for if he can cover over the eyes of a man he can bring him low with every kind of sin, but if his eyes be able to see (or shine), he is able to flee from him."

384. Abbâ Anthony said, "It is not seemly for us to remember the time which hath passed, but let a man be each day as one who beginneth his toil, so that the excessive weariness [which we shall feel] may be to our advantage. And let him say, as Paul said, 'That which is behind me I forget, and I reach out to that which is before me'" (Philippians iii, 13). And let him also remember the word of Elijah, who said, 'As the Lord liveth, before Whom I stand this day'" (1 Kings xvii, 1).

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385. And the same old man said also, "Let us not consider the time which is past, but let a man be even as he who be-ginneth, and let him take care in such wise that he shall make himself stand before God."

386. Abbâ Paphnutius said: "A monk is bound to keep not only his body pure, but his soul free from unclean thoughts. Now we find that the body is consoled by thoughts, and unless the thoughts withdraw themselves they will sink the body; and the manner in which the thoughts work is as follows: they feed all lusts of the flesh, which is ruled by them, and in welcoming the lusts they stir up the body also in revolt, and they cast it down, like a pilot who is caught in a storm, and they make the ship to sink. And is it fitting that we should know that if one man loveth another he will say nothing evil about him? for if he doth speak against him he is not his friend; similarly he who loveth lust will not speak anything evil against it, and if he doeth so he is not its friend. But if a man [speak] against that which he knoweth not, (*or* against that which causeth him no affliction), or against that which causeth him no pain, [he may speak evil], but against that which he hath suffered, and that wherewith he hath been tried by the Enemy, he will speak evil, and he will not talk about him as a friend, but as an enemy. Thus whosoever speaketh evil of and who despiseth lust is not a friend of lusts.

387. And he also said, "As judges (*or* governors) slay the wicked, even so do labours slay evil lusts; and as wicked slaves fly from their lords even so do lusts fly from the exhaustion [caused by] ascetic labours. But good slaves hold their masters in honour as sons hold in honour their fathers. For the exhaustion [caused by ascetic labours] produceth good works, and from it the virtues spring up, even as the passions are produced from dainty meats. Exhaustion then begetteth good works, when a man hath wearied himself with [all] his soul, and it bringeth forth virtues and destroyeth vices, even as a righteous judge [destroyeth the wicked]."

388. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, "Since I suffer loss in spirit when I am with my Abbâ, dost thou wish me to continue to live with him any longer?" Now that old man knew that the brother was suffering loss through living with his Abbâ, and the old man marvelled how the brother could ask him the question, "Dost thou wish me to dwell with him any longer." And the old man said unto him, "If thou wishest, dwell [with him]," and the brother went and did so, but he came again to the old man and said, "I am suffering

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“loss in spirit”; and the old man said unto him nothing. And, when for the third time the brother came and said unto him, “Indeed, I cannot henceforth dwell with him,” Abbâ Poemen said unto him, “Now thou knowest how to live; depart, and dwell with him no longer.”

389. Therefore the old man said, “If there existeth a man who knoweth how to suffer loss in his spirit, and who still [feeleth] the need to ask a question about [his] secret thoughts, it is a good thing that he should ask; and it belongeth unto the old men to search into and investigate a matter of this kind, for concerning open sins a man doth not feel it necessary to enquire, but he cutteth them off immediately.”

390. A brother asked one of the fathers, saying, “Tell me a word whereby I may live”; and the old man answered and said, “We must be careful to work a little, and we must be neither negligent nor contemptuous, and then we may be able to live.” And an old man told him the following story, saying, “There was a certain prosperous husbandman who was exceedingly rich, and wishing to teach his sons husbandry he said unto them, ‘My sons, behold, see how I have become rich, and if ye will be persuaded by me, [and will do as I have done], ye will become rich also.’ Then they said unto him, ‘Father, we will be persuaded [by thee], tell us how [to become rich].’ Now although the husbandman knew well that he who laboureth always becometh rich, yet because he thought that they might be negligent, and despise [work], he made use of cunning in his words, and said unto them: ‘There is one day in the year whereon if a man worketh he will become rich, but because of my exceedingly great old age I have forgotten which it is; therefore, ye must work continually, and ye must not be idle even one day, and ye must by every possible means in your power go forwards. But if ye are neglectful and disinclined to work, even for one day, take good heed to yourselves lest the day whereon ye do not work be that very day, and that lucky day pass you by, and your labour for all the rest of the year be in vain.’” Thus also, O my brethren, if we labour and work each day, and we do not make use of sloth and negligence and contempt we shall find the way of life.

391. Abbâ Agathon asked Abbâ Alônîs, saying, “I wish to hold my tongue that it may not speak falsehood, [what shall I do?”] Abbâ Alônîs said unto him, “If thou dost not lie, thou art about to commit many sins.” Agathon said, “How?” And the old man said unto him, “Behold, two brethren are going to commit a murder, and one of them will flee to thee. And it will happen that the judge will come and search

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“for him, and he will ask thee, saying, ‘Did this murder take
“ ‘place in thy presence?’ And if thou dost not wish to tell a
“ lie thou wilt deliver up to death the other man, whom it would
“ be right for thee to let go free, so that he might be reserved
“ for the judgement hall of God, Who knoweth all things.”

392. A certain brother was travelling on a road, and his aged mother was with him, and they came to a river which the old woman was not able to cross; and her son took his shoulder cloth and wound it round his hands so that they might not touch his mother’s body, and in this manner he carried her across the river. Then his mother said unto him, “My son, why didst thou first wrap round thy hands with the cloth, and then take me across?” and he said, “The body of a woman is fire, and through thy body there would have come to me the memory of [the body of] another woman, and it was for this reason that I acted as I did.”

Chapter ix. Of Love, and Charity, and of the Welcoming of Strangers

A CERTAIN old man used to dwell with a brother in a cell in a friendly manner, and he was a man of compassionate disposition; now a famine broke out, and
393. the people began to be hungry, and they came to him that they might receive charity, and he gave bread unto them all. And when the brother saw that he was giving away large quantities of bread, he said unto the old man, “Give me my portion of the bread”; and the old man said unto him, “Take [it],” and he divided [what there was] and gave him [his share], and the brother took it from him for himself. And the old man was compassionate, and gave away bread from his portion, and many folk heard [that he was doing this] and came unto him, and when God saw the generosity of the old man He blessed his bread; but the brother took all his portion and ate it up, and when he saw that his bread was finished, and that the portion of the old man was still lasting, he made entreaty unto him, saying, “My portion hath come to an end, and this [bread of thine is all] that I have; receive me as a partner [therein].” And the old man said unto him, “Good,” and he associated him with himself again. And when there was abundance [again], the people came to take [bread] from him, and he gave it unto them again. Now it came to pass that they lacked bread, and the brother went and found that bread was wanting, and a poor man came for some, and the old man said unto the brother, “Go in and give him some,” and the brother said, “There is none”; for he was filled with bread. The old man said, “Go in and search [for some],” and

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having gone in he found that the place wherein they used to set [the bread] was filled with loaves to the very top, and he took [some] and gave to the poor man, and he was afraid. Thus that brother knew the excellence and the faith of the old man, and he gave thanks unto God, and glorified Him.

394. Two brethren went to the market to sell their wares, and whilst one of them had gone to perform the service, he who was left by himself fell into fornication; and the other brother came and said unto him, "My brother, let us go to the cell," but he said unto him, "I cannot go, for I have fallen into fornication." Now whilst he was seeking to do better, the brother began to swear to him, saying, "I also, when I was away from thee, fell in the same manner, nevertheless, come, and let us repent together, and it may happen that God will pardon us." And when they came to their cells they informed the old men about the temptation which had come to them, and whatsoever the old men told them to do the two brothers did, and the one brother repented with the other, just as if he had sinned with him. Now God saw the labour of his love, and in a few days He sent a revelation unto one of the old men concerning the matter, saying, "For the sake of the love of that brother who did not sin, forgive thou him that did commit sin." This is what is meant by the words, "A man should lay down his soul for his friend."

395. And they also say that there was a certain self-denying and ascetic brother who wished to go to the city to sell his handiwork, and to buy the things which he needed; and he called a brother, and said unto him, "Come with me, and let us go and return together." And when they had gone as far as the gate of the city, the man of abstinence said unto his companion, "Sit down here, O my brother, and wait for me while I go in and perform my business; and I will return speedily." And having gone into the city, and wandered round about in the streets, a certain rich woman tried her blandishments upon him, and he stripped off his monk's garb and took her to wife. Then he sent a message to his companion, saying, "Arise, get thee to thy cell, for I can never see thee again"; now the man who had been sent to him with this message related unto him the whole matter, even as it had happened, and he said to the messenger, "God forbid that such things should be spoken about my holy brethren, and God forbid that I should depart from this place until my brother cometh, according to his word to me." And having tarried there a long time, and ceasing not from weeping and praying either by night or by day, the report of him was heard throughout the city, and the clergy, and the monks, and the governors of the

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city entreated him to depart to his monastery, but he would not hearken unto their supplication, and he said, "I cannot transgress my brother's command, and I cannot leave this place until we go back together to the monastery." So he stayed there for seven years, being burned by heat in the summer, and dried up by the cold and ice in the winter, and with hunger, and thirst, and weeping and watching, he made supplication on behalf of his brother. Then at length one day his former companion himself came unto him, dressed in costly garments, and said unto him, "O So-and-so, I am he who was with thee the monk So-and-so, arise, get thee gone to thy monastery"; and the brother looked at him and said, "Thou art not, for he was a monk, and thou art a man in the world." Then God looked upon the trouble of that brother, and at the end of the seven years the woman died, and the brother who [had married her] repented, and again put on the garb of the monk, and went out to his companion; and when he saw him, he rose up, and embraced him and kissed him, and he took him with gladness, and they went forth to the monastery. Then that brother renewed his former ascetic works, and he was worthy of the highest grade of perfection. Thus by the patience of one man the other lived, and the saying, "A brother is helped by his brother, even as a city is helped by its fortress," was fulfilled.

396. On one occasion two old men came to an old man, whose custom was not to eat every day; and when he saw them he rejoiced, and said, "Fasting hath its reward, and he who eateth for the sake of love filleth two commandments, for he setteth aside his own desire and he filleth the commandment, and refresheth the brethren."

397. They used to tell the story of a certain brother who fell into sin, and he came unto Abbâ Lôt, and he was perplexed and confused, and was going in and coming out, and was unable to rest. And Abbâ Lôt said unto him, "What is the matter with thee, O my brother?" and he said, "I have committed a great sin, and I am unable to confess it before the fathers." The old man said unto him, "Confess it unto me, and I will bear it"; and then the brother said unto him, "I have fallen into fornication, and I thought thou hadst discovered the matter." And the old man said unto him, "Be of good courage, for there remaineth repentance; get thee gone and sit in thy habitation, and fast for two weeks, and I will bear with thee one half of thy sin"; and at the end of three weeks it was revealed unto the old man that God had accepted the repentance of that brother, and he remained with the old man, and was subject unto him until the day of his death.

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398. Certain of the fathers came to Joseph to ask him a question about welcoming the strangers who came to them, that is to say, whether it was fitting for a man to forsake his work, and to be with them in the ordinary way or not; and before they asked him, he said unto his disciple, "Lay to heart "that which I am about to do this day, and wait." Then the old man placed two pillows, one on his right hand, and the other on his left, and he said unto the fathers, "Sit ye down"; and he went into his cell, and put on the apparel of beggars, and went forth to them; and again, he took this off, and put on the beautiful apparel of the monks, and he went forth again, and passed among them; and he went in again and took this off, and having put on his own clothes, he sat down in their midst, and they marvelled at the doings of the old man. Then he said unto them, "Have ye understood what I did?" and they said unto him, "Yes." He said unto them, "What is it?" And they said unto him, "Thou didst put on first of all the apparel of "beggars"; he said unto them, "Peradventure I have been "changed by that disgraceful apparel?" and they said unto him, "No." The old man said unto them, "Since I have not "myself been changed by all these changes of raiment, for "the first change brought no loss upon me and the second "did not change me, so are we in duty bound to welcome the "brethren, according to the command of the Gospel, which "saith, 'Give to Caesar the things of Caesar, and to God the "things of God' (St Matthew xxii, 21). Therefore, whenso- "ever strange brethren arrive we must welcome them gladly, "for it is when we are alone that it is necessary for us to "suffer." Now when the fathers heard [these words] they marvelled that he had spoken unto them that which was in their hearts before they asked him, and they glorified God, and departed with rejoicing; and they received his word as if it had [come] from God, and they accepted what he had said, and did it.

399. They used to speak about an old man, who was from Syria, and who used to dwell on the road of the desert of Egypt, and whose work was as follows:—At whatever time a monk came to him he would welcome him. And it came to pass that on one occasion a man came from the desert and asked him to allow him to rest, but he would not permit him to do so, and said unto him, "I am fasting." Then the blessed man was grieved and said unto him, "Is this thy labour, that thou "wilt not perform thy brother's desire? I beseech thee to come, "and let us pray, and let us follow after him with whom this "tree, which is here with us, shall bow." Then the man from the desert knelt down, and nothing happened, but when he who received strangers knelt down, that tree inclined its head at

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the same time, and seeing this he profited, and they glorified God.

400. On one occasion Abbâ Ammon came to a certain place to eat with the brethren, and there was there a brother concerning whom evil reports were abroad, for it had happened that a woman had come and entered his cell. And when all the people who were living in that place heard [of this], they were troubled, and they gathered together to expel that brother from his cell, and learning that the blessed Bishop Ammon was there, they came and entreated him to go with them. Now when the brother knew [this], he took the woman and hid her under an earthenware vessel. And much people having assembled, and Abbâ Ammon, understanding what that brother had done, for the sake of God hid the matter. And he went in and sat upon the earthenware vessel, and commanded that the cell of the brother should be searched, but although they examined the place they found no one there. Then Abbâ Ammon answered and said, "What is this that ye have done? May God forgive you"; and he prayed and said, "Let all the people go forth," and finally he took the brother by the hand, and said unto him, "Take heed to thy soul, O my brother," and having said this he departed, and he refused to make public the matter of the brother.

401. There were two brethren who lived in the wilderness, and they were neighbours, and one of them used to hide whatsoever he gained from his work, whether it was bread or whether it was oboli, and place it with his companion's goods; now the other brother did not know this, but he wondered how it was that his goods increased so much. One day, however, he suddenly caught him doing this, and he strove with him, saying, "By means of thy corporeal things thou hast robbed me of my spiritual goods"; and he demanded that he should make a covenant with him never to act in this manner again, and then he left him.

402. On one occasion Abbâ Macarius went to visit a certain monk, and he found him to be ill, and he asked him if he wanted anything to eat, for he had nothing whatsoever in his cell, and the monk said unto him, "I want some honeycakes"; and when the wonderful old man heard [this] he set out for Alexandria, and he did not regard this journey as a trouble, although [the city] was sixty miles away from them, and he brought the honeycakes to give to the sick monk. And this he did himself, and did not tell anyone else to bring them, and the old man thus made manifest the solicitude which he felt for the monks.

403. They used to tell the story of an old man who lived in Scete; now he had fallen sick, and wished to eat a little fine

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bread. And when a certain brother heard [this], he took his cloak and placed in it some dry bread, and he went to Egypt and changed it [for fine bread] and brought [it] to the old man, and the old man looked upon him and wondered. But the old man refused to eat it, saying, "This is the bread of blood, O my brother," and the old men entreated him to eat lest the offering of the brother should be in vain, and having pressed him the old man was persuaded and he ate the bread.

404. The blessed Anthony never deemed it right to do that which was convenient for himself to the same extent as that which was profitable for his neighbour.

405. An old man used to say, "I have never desired any work which doeth good to myself and harm to my neighbour, and I have the hope that what is of benefit to my brother will be labour that is beneficial to me, and that it will be a thing that will invite a reward for me."

406. A certain brother from the Great Monastery was accused of fornication, and he rose up and came to Father Anthony; and there came brethren after him from that monastery to inform him about the matter and to take him away, and they began to accuse him, saying, "Thus and thus hast thou done," and the brother made excuses, and said, "I never acted in this manner." Now Abbâ Paphnutius happened to be there, and he spake a word unto them, saying, "I saw a man in the river with the mud up to his knees, and some men came to give him help and to drag him out, and they made him to sink up to his neck." And when Abbâ Anthony heard [him say this], he spake concerning Abbâ Paphnutius, saying, "Behold, indeed, a man who is able to make quiet and to redeem souls!" And the eyes of those brethren were opened, by the word of the old man, and they took that brother, and he departed with them to their monastery.

407. They used to say about Abbâ Theodore that when he was a young man he dwelt in the desert, and that he went to make his bread in the same place as the monks made theirs; and he found a certain brother who wished to make bread, but he had no one to do the work for him, and he was unable to do it for himself. Then Abbâ Theodore left his own bread and made that of the brother, and a second brother came and he made his also, and a third brother came, and he did likewise; and finally when he had satisfied them, he made bread for himself.

408. A brother asked an old man, saying, "There were two brethren, and one of them led a life of silent contemplation in his cell, and used to fast six days at a time, and to devote himself to great labour, and his companion used to minister

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“to the sick; which of them will receive the [greater reward for] “his service?” The old man saith, “If he who fasted were to “raise himself up upon the works which are profitable, he “would not find himself equal before God with him that visited “the sick.”

409. There was a certain head of a monastery in a house of monks in the desert, and it happened that the brother who ministered unto him had a desire to leave the monastery, and he departed and dwelt in another monastery; now the old man was unwilling to let him go, and on this account he was always going to him to visit him, and he entreated him to return to his monastery, and the brother refused to do so. And for three whole years the old man used to go to the brother and entreat him to return, and finally he was constrained, and he departed with him. One day the old man told him to go out and bring in some fuel for the fire, and whilst he was gathering the firewood, by the agency of Satan, a stick stuck in his eye and it was put out; and when the old man heard of this he was greatly grieved, and being full of sorrow he began to speak to him words of good cheer. And the brother answered, and said, “Be not afflicted, O father, “for I was the cause of this myself, for this hath happened to “me through all the toil and labour which I brought upon thee “when thou usedst to go and come to me.” And after a little time, when the brother had recovered from the sickness caused by the injury to his eye, the old man said unto him, “Go out “and bring in some palm leaves from the ground,” for this was the work which the monks who dwelt there had to do; and whilst the brother was cutting them, once again, as it were by the agency of Satan, a stick sprang up in the air, and smote the man in the other eye, and it was put out, and he came to the monastery in grief, and he was perforce idle and useless because he was unable to do any work. Thus the old man was deprived [of a servant], and he had no one with him, because each of the brethren dwelt in his own cell. And after a short time the day of his departure, which he had known beforehand, drew nigh, and he sent and called all the brethren and said unto them, “The day of my departure hath drawn nigh. Watch ye “yourselves, and take good heed to the service of your lives “(or life’s work), and treat not lightly your ascetic labours.” And each one of them began to say to him sorrowfully, “Father, “why art thou leaving us?” and the old man held his peace. Then he sent and brought the blind man, and revealed to him concerning his departure, and the blind man wept and said unto him, “Wherefore leavest thou me, the blind man?” The old man saith unto him, “Pray that I may have openness of “face with God, and that I may find mercy before Him, and

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“ I have hope through His help, that on the First Day of the “ Week thou wilt be able to perform the service with thy companions ”; and straightway the old man died. And, according to his word, a few days later he appeared unto that brother, and his eyes were opened, and he became an Abbâ and a head of monks. Now these things were related unto us by those who were acquainted with the period wherein the old man lived.

410. A certain man of abstinence saw a man who had a devil, and who was unable to fast, and he was exceedingly sorry for him; and by reason of the love for Christ with which he was filled, and because he not only took care for himself, but for his companion also, he prayed and entreated God that the devil might come to him, and that the man might be released from him. Now God looked upon his prayer and upon his good will, and saw that the holy man was carrying a great load on behalf of that demoniac, and since that brother began to prolong his fasting and prayer, and to practise continually self-denial, in a few days that evil spirit departed.

411. They used to say concerning Abbâ Poemen that when he was pressed by any man to go with him to eat at an unusual time, he would go, with the tears streaming from his eyes, so that he might not resist the wish of that brother and cause him annoyance; for he would forgo his own will, and he would humble himself and go.

412. There was an old man in the Cells whose name was Apollo, and when one of the brethren came to call him to work, he would go joyfully, saying, “ I go to-day with the King “ Christ to work on my own behalf, for this is the reward of “ this labour.”

413. On one occasion Abraham, the disciple of Abbâ Sisoës, was tempted by Satan, and the old man saw him fall down, and straightway he spread out his hands towards heaven, and said to God, “ My Lord, I will not let Thee go until Thou hast “ healed him,” and straightway Abraham was healed.

414. A certain monk was sitting by the monastery, and whilst he was occupied in great labours, it happened that strangers came to the monastery, and they forced him to eat with them contrary to his usual custom, and afterwards the brethren said unto him, “ Father, wast thou not just now afflicted?” And he said unto them, “ My affliction is to break “ my will.”

415. On one occasion three old men went to Abbâ Akilâ, and on one of them [rested] some small suspicion of evil; and one of them said unto him, “ Father, make me a net,” and he replied, “ I will not make thee a net.” Then another said unto him, “ Do [us] an act of grace, and make us a net, so that we

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“ may be able to keep thee in remembrance in our monastery”; and Akilâ said again, “ I am not at leisure [to do so].” Then the third brother, on whom [rested] the suspicion of evil, also said unto him, “ Father, make me a net which I can possess “ [direct] from thy hands ”; and Akilâ answered straightway, and said unto this man, “ I will make one for thee.” And afterwards the [other] two brethren said unto him privately, “[Consider] how much we entreated thee, and yet thou wouldst not “ be persuaded to make [a net] for us, and thou didst say to “ this man, ‘ I will make thee one immediately!’ ” The old man said unto them, “ I told you that I would not make one, “ and ye were not grieved, because I had not the leisure; but “ if I had not made one for this man, he would have said, ‘ It “ ‘ was because the old man had heard about my sins that he “ ‘ was unwilling to make a net for me.’ ”

416. On one occasion three brethren went to harvest, and the three of them undertook to reap the harvest [in certain fields] together for a certain sum of money; but one of them fell sick on the first day, and was unable to work, and he went back and lay down in his cell. Then one of the two brethren who remained said unto his companion, “ Behold, O my “ brother, thou seest that our brother hath fallen sick, let us “ exert ourselves a little, thou and I, and let us believe that by “ his prayers we shall be sufficiently strong to do his share of the “ work of harvest for him.” Then when the harvest was ended, and they came to receive their hire, they called the [sick] brother, and said unto him, “ Come, brother, and take also the hire of “ thy harvesting ”; and he said, “ What hire can there be for “ me since I have not been harvesting?” And they said unto him, “ Through thy prayers the harvest hath been reaped; “ come now, and take [thy] hire.” Then the contention between them waxed strong, for the [sick] brother contended that he ought not to receive [any wages], and they said, “ We will not “ leave thee until thou dost.” So they went, that they might be heard by a certain great old man, and that brother answered and said, “ O father, three of us went to harvest, but I fell sick “ on the first day, and went and lay down in my cell, and although I did not work even one day these brethren urge me, “ saying, ‘ Come and take the hire for which thou didst not “ ‘ work.’ ” Then the two brethren said, “ Three of us went to “ the harvest, and we took certain fields [to reap] together, “ and if we had been thirty we should have succeeded in reaping “ them with great labour; but through the prayers of this “ our brother the two of us reaped them quickly, and we “ said to him, ‘ Come, take thy hire, because, through thy “ ‘ prayers, God helped us, and we reaped quickly,’ but he

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“would not take [it].” Then the old man said unto the brethren who were with him, “Beat the board, and let all the brethren be gathered together,” and when they were assembled he said unto them, “Come, O ye brethren, and hear this day a righteous judgement,” and he related before them the whole matter, and they decided that the brother was to receive his hire, and that he might do whatsoever he wished [therewith]. And the brother went away weeping and distressed.

417. On one occasion a certain demoniac came to Scete, and having passed a long time there without being healed, he complained about the matter to one of the old men, who made the sign of the Cross over him, and healed him. But the devil was angry, and said unto the old man, “Now that thou hast cast me out I will come upon thee”; and the old man said unto him, “Come gladly, and I shall rejoice.” And the old man passed twelve years with the devil inside him, vexing him, now he used to eat twelve dates each day, and after these years that devil leaped out of him, and departed from him. Now when the old man saw that he was taking to flight, he said unto him, “To whom dost thou flee? Continue [with me] longer”; and the devil answered and said unto him, “By Jupiter, God hath made thee useless, O old man; God alone is equal to thy strength.”

418. The old man Theodore asked Abbâ Pambô, saying, “Tell me a word”; and with much labour he said unto him, “Theodore, get thee gone, and let thy mercy be poured out on every man, for [thy] lovingkindness hath found freedom of speech (or boldness) before God.”

419. A certain brother went to buy some linen from a widow, and as she was selling it to him, she sighed; the brother said unto her, “What aileth thee?” and the widow said unto him, “God hath sent thee this day that my orphans may be fed.” Now when that brother heard [these words] he was distressed, and he took secretly from the linen which was his, and threw it on to the widow’s side of the scales until he fulfilled an act of charity towards her.

420. A certain brother came to Abbâ ’Ôr, and said unto him, “Come with me to the village, and buy me a little wheat of which I am in need”; now the old man was greatly troubled at this, because he was not accustomed to go to the village, nevertheless, being afraid [of transgressing] the commandment, he rose up and went with him. And when they arrived at the village the old man saw a man passing by, and he called him and said unto him, “Do an act of kindness, and take this brother and satisfy his need,” and in this way he was able to flee to the mountain.

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421. On one occasion Adlêp, Bishop of Neapolis, went to visit Abbâ Sisoës, and when he wished to depart the old man made him and the brethren who were with him to eat in the morning; now the days were the first days of the fast. And when they had made ready the table to eat, behold, certain men from the plough knocked at the door, and the old man said unto his disciple, "Open to them, and put some of the "boiled food in a dish, and set it before them to eat, for they "have just come from labour." The Bishop said, "Let it "alone, or perhaps they will say that Abbâ Sisoës eateth at "this time." And the old man looked at the youth and said unto him, "Go, and give them the food"; and when the strangers saw the boiled food they said unto him, "Have ye "strangers with you? Peradventure Abbâ is also eating with "them?" And the disciple said unto them, "Yes." Then they cried out and spake words of condemnation to the company, saying, "May God forgive you, for ye have made the old man "to eat at this time of the day. Perhaps ye are unaware that "ye are causing him much vexation thereat?" And when the Bishop heard these things he expressed contrition, and said unto him, "Forgive me, I have behaved after the manner of a "man, but thou hast acted like God."

422. They used to say that, [on one occasion] when Abbâ Agathon came to the city to sell his handiwork, he found a stranger lying sick in the market, and he had no man to care for him, and the old man stayed with him; and he hired a room in the town and remained therein working with his hands, now [what he received therefor] he spent on the rent of the room and on the needs of the sick man, for a period of four months, and when the sick man was made whole the old man departed to his own cell.

423. And an old man used to say, "It is a defect in a man "if, when he is reviled by his brother, or when any evil cometh "to him from him, he cannot strengthen his love before he "meeteth him."

424. A brother was, on one occasion, sent from Scete by his Abbâ on a camel to Egypt to fetch palm leaves for [making] baskets, and having gone down and brought the camel, another brother met him and said unto him, "Had I known "that thou wast coming up I should have begged thee to bring "a camel for me also"; and when the brother came and told his Abbâ what had been said unto him by his companion, his Abbâ said unto him, "Take the camel and lead it to that "brother, and say unto him, 'We have taken counsel, and we "have given up the intention of bringing up palm leaves at "'present, but do thou take [the camel] and bring some up

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“for thyself.” Now the brother did not wish to accept the camel, but [his companion] entreated him [to do so], saying, “If thou dost not take him we shall waste what we have paid in hire for him.” So the brother took the camel and brought up his palm leaves. And after he had gone up to Egypt that brother took the camel a second time, and he came back that he himself might go up; and the brother said unto him, “Where takest thou the camel?” and he said unto him, “To Scete, so that we also may bring up our palm leaves”; and that brother repented and was very sorry, and he expressed contrition and said, “Forgive me, my brethren, for your great charity hath taken away my hire.”

425. One of the brethren said, “Whilst we were sitting and talking about love, Abbâ Joseph said, ‘Do we know what love is?’ And he said that Abbâ Agathon had a little knife, and that a certain brother came to him and said, ‘Father, the little knife which thou hast is pretty’; and Abbâ Agathon did not let him depart until he had taken it.”

426. Abbâ Agathon used to say, “If I could find an Arian to whom I could give my body and take his in its place, I would do so, because this would be perfect love.”

427. A brother asked Abbâ Muthues, saying, “What shall I do if a brother come unto me, and it be a time of fast or the morning, and I am in tribulation?” The old man said unto him, “If thou art afflicted, and dost eat with the brother thou doest well; but if thou dost not look at the man, and dost eat, this is a matter of thy will only.”

428. Mother Sarah used to say, “It is a good thing for a man to give alms, even though he do so for the approbation of the children of men, for from this he will come to do it for God’s sake.”

429. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, “If I find a place wherein there is pleasure for the brethren, dost thou wish me to dwell there?” The old man said unto him, “Where thou wilt not do harm to thy brother, there dwell.”

430. Abbâ Poemen used to say that whenever Isidore, the priest of Scete, used to address the brethren in the church, he spake the following words only: “My brethren, it is written, ‘Forgive thy brother that thou also mayest be accounted worthy of forgiveness’ (St. Luke vi, 37; St. Matthew vi, 14).”

431. They used to say that at the beginning Abbâ Zeno refused to take anything from any man, and that those who brought him things used to go away sorrowfully because he would not be persuaded to accept them from them. And other men used to come and ask him to give them gifts as of a great old man, and they also went away sorrowfully because he re-

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fused to do so. Then the old man said within himself, "Those who bring go away in sorrow, and those who beg also go away grieving because they have received nothing; I will, therefore, act as follows: If any man bringeth me anything I will take it, and if any man asketh me for anything I will give it"; and he did so, and pleased every one.

432. The disciple of Abbâ Theodore said, "A certain man on one occasion came to sell onions, and he filled a basin with some of them and gave them to us; and the old man said to me, 'Fill [the basin] with wheat and give it to him.' Now there were two baskets of wheat there, one full of clean wheat, and the other was full of wheat which was dirty, and I filled the basin with the dirty wheat and gave it to him. Then the old man looked at me in wrath and anger, and in my fear I fell down, and broke the basin; and the old man said unto me, 'Arise, thou art not akin to me, but I know well what I said unto thee.' And the old man went in and filled his garment with clean wheat, and gave it to the man with the onions, together with his onions."

433. A certain monk used to dwell by the side of a coenobium, and he was occupied in great ascetic labours, and led a life of hard work, and strangers came to the coenobium, and forced him to eat before his time; and afterwards the brethren said unto him, "Art thou not now afflicted, father?" He said unto them, "Although I am afflicted I have cut off my desire."

434. A certain old man used to say, "It is right for a man to take up the burden for those who are akin (*or* near) to him, whatsoever it may be, and, so to speak, to put his own soul in the place of that of his neighbour, and to become, if it were possible, a double man; and he must suffer, and weep, and mourn with him, and finally the matter must be accounted by him as if he himself had put on the actual body of his neighbour, and as if he had acquired his countenance and soul, and he must suffer for him as he would for himself. For thus is it written:—'We are all one body,' and this [passage] also affordeth information concerning the holy and mysterious kiss."

435. An old man said that the father had a custom of going to the cells of the new brethren, who wished to live by themselves, to visit them, lest one of them might be tempted and injured in his mind by the devils, and if they found any man who had been harmed they would bring him to the church, and would place a wash-basin full of water [in the midst], and when prayer had been made on behalf of him that had been brought there, all the brethren would wash themselves and

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then pour some of the water upon him, and immediately that brother was cleansed.

436. A brother asked an old man, saying, "If I find a brother concerning whom I have heard [that he hath committed] some offence, I never rest until I have brought him into my cell; but if I see a man who leadeth a good life I bring him unto myself gladly." The old man said unto him, "Do that which is good twice over unto the former man, for he is sick, and he needeth help."

437. An old man used to say, "Defeat cometh to a man if, when he is reviled and treated with contempt by his brother, he doth not shew him evenness of heart before he repenteth and asketh him to forgive him."

438. There was a monk, and away on the mountain, which was about ten miles distant from him, was another monk; and the first monk had some bread in his cell, and he meditated in his mind and determined to invite the other monk to come and partake of his bread. And again he thought in his mind, saying, "Since the bread is with me I shall give my brother the labour [of walking] ten miles [if I invite him to come here], but it will be more helpful [to him] if I take one half of the bread which I possess, and carry it to him"; so he took the bread to carry it to the cell of the other brother. Now as he was journeying along, he tripped up, and fell, and injured one of his fingers, and as the blood was running down he began to cry because of the pain; and there appeared unto him suddenly an angel who said unto him, "Why weepeth thou?" And the monk said unto him, "I have hurt my finger, and it paineth me"; and the angel said unto him, "Dost thou weep because of this? Weep not, for the number of every step which thou takest for our Lord's sake is written down, and is estimated at a great reward (*or* hire) before Him, and the report of the labour of such things goeth up to Him. And that thou mayest be certain that such is the case, behold, in thy presence I will take some of this blood and carry [it] to our Lord"; and immediately the monk was healed, and with rejoicing and thanksgiving to God he set out again on his journey to go to his companion. And having come to him and given him the bread, he related unto him concerning the love for man which is found in the good Lord, the Creator of the universe, and then went back to his cell. Now after one day he took the other half of the bread and went to carry it to another monk. And it happened that he also was found to be burning with anxiety to emulate works of this kind, and he wanted to do even as the other monk had done; and having set out to go and carry the bread of the first monk, they hap-

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pened to meet each other on the way. Then the first monk who had done good to the other monk began to say unto him, "I possessed a certain treasure, and thou wishest to rob me [of it]"; and the other monk said unto him, "Where is it written that the strait and narrow door is sufficient for thyself alone? Let us, even us, go in with thee." Then straightway, whilst they were holding converse, the angel of the Lord appeared, and said unto them, "Your contending hath ascended unto the Lord even as a sweet smell."

439. On one occasion, a certain excellent man, who feared God in his life and works, and who was living in the world, went to Abbâ Poemen, and some of the brethren, who were also with the old man, were asking him questions [wishing] to hear a word from him. Then Abbâ Poemen said to the man who was in the world, "Speak a word to the brethren"; but he entreated him, saying, "Forgive me, father, but I came to learn." And the old man pressed him [to speak], and, as the force of his urging increased, he said, "I am a man living in the world, and I sell vegetables, and because I do not know how to speak from a book, listen ye to a parable. There was a certain man who had three friends, and he said to the first, 'Since I desire to see the Emperor come with me'; and the friend said unto him, 'I will come with thee half the way.' And the man said to the second friend, 'Come, go with me to the Emperor's presence'; and the friend said unto him, 'I will come with thee as far as his palace, but I cannot go with thee inside'; and the man said the same unto his third friend, who answered and said, 'I will come with thee, and I will go inside the palace with thee, and I will even stand up before the Emperor and speak on thy behalf.'" Then the brethren questioned him, wishing to learn from him the strength of the riddle (*or* dark saying), and he answered and said unto them, "The first friend is abstinence, which leadeth as far as one half of the way; and the second friend is purity and holiness, which lead to heaven; and the third friend is loving-kindness, which stablisheth a man before God, and speaketh on his behalf with great boldness."

440. A brother went to visit a certain monk, and when he went forth from him, he said unto him, "Forgive me, father, for having made thee to desist from thy rule"; and the monk said unto him, "My rule is to refresh thee, and to send thee away in peace."

441. On one occasion a command was given to the brethren who were in Scete, and it was said unto them, "Fast ye this week, and celebrate the Passover." And it happened that some brethren came from Egypt to Abbâ Moses, and whilst

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he was boiling for them a little food, his neighbours saw the smoke [of his fire] rising up, and they said to the clergy, "Behold, Moses hath broken the command, and hath boiled some food in his cell"; and they said unto them, "Hold ye your peace, and when he cometh to us we will speak to him." Now when the Sabbath arrived, the clergy, having regard to his great ascetic labours, said unto him before the whole assembly, "O Abbâ Moses, though thou dost break the command of men, thou stablishest [that of God]."

442. They used to tell the story of a certain brother who, when he was throwing away the handles of his baskets, heard his neighbour say, "What shall I do? For the festival draweth nigh, and I have no handles to put on my baskets"; and the brother went straightway and picked up the handles of his baskets, and brought them to his companion, saying, "Behold I have these, of which I have no need, take them and put them on thy baskets"; and he left his own work and completed that of his companion.

443. Certain of the old men went to Abbâ Poemen, and said unto him, "Dost thou wish us if we see brethren sleeping in the congregation, to smite them so that they may wake up?" And he said unto them, "If I see my brother sleeping, I place his head upon my knees, and I give him a place to rest upon"; then an old man said unto him, "And what dost thou say unto God?" Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "I say unto Him thus: Thou Thyself hast said, 'First of all pluck the beam out of thine own eye, and then thou wilt be able to see to take the mote out of the eye of thy brother'" (St. Matthew vii, 3).

Chapter x. Of Humility and of how a Man should think lightly of himself, and should esteem himself the Inferior of every Man

ABBÂ ISAAC, the priest of the Cells, used to say: When I was a young man I used to dwell with Abbâ Chronius, and he never at any time told me to do any

444. work; now he was an old man and he trembled, but he would stand up and give water with his hands to me, and to all of us alike. And with Abbâ Theodore of Parmê it was the same, for he never told me to do any work whatsoever, but he would make ready the table with his own hands, and would say, "Brother, come [and] eat." And I said unto him, "Father, I came that I might assist thee, and how is that thou dost not tell me to do something?" But the old man in all this held his peace. And I went up and informed the old men, and they came to him, and said unto him, "Father, this brother came

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“unto thy holiness that he might be assisted [by thee], and “why dost thou not tell him to do something?” Then the old man said unto them, “Am I the head of a monastery that I should give him a command? I shall say unto him nothing except that [I] wish him to do that which he seeth me do.” And from that time I was always before him in doing that which the old man was going to do; now whatsoever he did, he did in silence, and in this manner he made me to know and taught me to work in silence also.

445. There was a certain Egyptian monk in Constantinople under the reign of Theodosius the Less, and he used to dwell in a little cell, and when the Emperor went forth [on one occasion] to take his pleasure, he came by himself to the monk; now the following of men who were with him waited for him at a distance. And the Emperor took off his crown from his head, and hid it, and he knocked at the door of the monk, and when he opened to him he knew that it was the Emperor, but he [feigned] forgetfulness and would not recognize him, and he welcomed him as one of his own rank in life, and he prayed and sat down. Then the Emperor began to question him, saying, “How are the fathers who are in Egypt?” And the monk said unto him, “They all pray for thy health.” And the Emperor examined his cell, and saw nothing there except a small basket wherein was bread, and the monk said to him, “Eat,” and he dipped the bread in water, and poured oil on it, and salt, and he gave it to the Emperor, who ate it; and he gave him some water, and he drank. Then the Emperor said unto him, “Knowest thou who I am?” And the monk said unto him, “God knoweth who thou art.” And the Emperor said unto him, “I am Theodosius, the Emperor,” and straightway the monk paid homage unto him. Then the Emperor said unto him, “Blessed art thou in that thou hast none of the cares of “this world; verily I was born to kingship and before this day “I have never been satisfied with bread and water, and they “have pleased me greatly”; and the Emperor began to pay honour to him. And straightway that monk fled to Egypt with all the speed that was possible.

446. A certain brother came to Abbâ Macarius, the Egyptian, and said unto him, “Father, speak to me a word whereby I “may live.” Abbâ Macarius saith unto him, “Get thee to the “cemetery and revile the dead”; and he went and reviled them, and stoned them with stones, and he came and informed the old man [that he had done so]. And the old man said unto him, “Did they say nothing unto thee?” and the brother said unto him, “No.” And again the old man said unto him, “Go “to-morrow and praise them, and call them, ‘Apostles,

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“ ‘Saints, and Righteous Men’ ”; and he came to the old man, and said, “ I have praised them.” And the old man said unto him, “ And did they return thee no answer?” and he said “ No.” And the old man said unto him, “ Thou seest how “ thou hast praised them, and that they said nothing to thee, “ and that although thou didst revile them they returned thee no “ answer. And thus let it be with thyself. If thou wishest to “ live, become dead, so that thou mayest care neither for the “ reviling of men nor for [their] praise, for the dead care for “ nothing; in this wise thou wilt be able to live.”

447. One of the fathers used to relate that he had an old man in a cell, who performed many ascetic labours, and who clothed himself in a palm-leaf mat; and this old man went to Abbâ Ammon, who, seeing that he wore a palm-leaf mat only, said unto him, “ This will profit thee nothing.” And the old man asked him, saying, “ Three thoughts vex me. Shall I go “ to the desert, or shall I go forth into exile, or shall I shut “ myself up in a cell, and receive no man, and eat once every two “ days?” Abbâ Ammon said unto him, “ Thou art not able to “ do any one of these things, but go, sit in thy cell, and eat a “ very little food each day, and let there be in thine heart al- “ ways the word[s] of the publican, ‘ God be merciful to me “ ‘ a sinner,’ and thus thou shalt be able to live” (St. Luke xviii, 13).

448. Abbâ Daniel used to relate a story, saying :—There was with us in Babylon of Egypt the daughter of a man who was the captain of a company of soldiers, and she was possessed of a devil, and her father took her to many places, but she could not find healing. Now her father had a friend who was a monk, and he said unto him, “ No man is able to cure her ex- “ cept those monks of whom I spake unto thee, but even if we “ entreat them to do this they will not agree to it, because they “ flee from the love of the approbation [of men]. Nevertheless, “ when they come to sell [their] baskets, ye shall pretend that “ ye wish to buy some, and when they come to sell and to take “ the price of the baskets from thy house, we will say unto “ them, ‘ Put up a prayer, and this maiden shall be healed’ ”; and the man did so. And they came as it were to buy baskets, and they found the disciple of these holy men sitting down and selling [them], and they took him and the baskets, and carried him to their houses, and then they set another man in his place, and commanded him when the monks came to bring them to them. Now when their disciple entered the house, the maiden who was possessed of a devil went forth and smote him on the cheek, but that brother fulfilled the commandment and turned to her the other cheek, and straightway that devil, who was unable to bear the

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blow of the commandment of Christ which was fulfilled, cried out with a loud voice, and departed. And when the monks came [the people in the house] related unto them the reason for what had happened, and they glorified God, and said, "It is customary for the boasting of the Evil One to fall before the humility of the commandments of Christ."

449. On one occasion Abbâ Ammon went to Abbâ Anthony, and he lost the way, and sat down for a little and fell asleep; and he rose up from his slumber, and prayed unto God, and said, "I beseech Thee, O Lord God, not to destroy that which Thou hast fashioned." Then he lifted up his eyes, and, behold, there was the form of a man's hand above him in the heavens, and it shewed him the way until he came and stood above the cave of Abbâ Anthony; and when he had gone into the cave to the old man, Abbâ Anthony prophesied unto him, saying, "Thou shalt increase in the fear of God." Then he took him outside the cave, and showing him a stone, said, "Curse this stone, and smite it," and he did so, and Abbâ Anthony said unto him, "It is thus that thou shalt arrive at this state, for thou shalt bear heaviness, and great abuse"; and this actually happened to Abbâ Ammon. Now, through his abundant goodness Abbâ Ammon knew not wickedness. And after he had become a Bishop, through his spiritual excellence they brought unto him a virgin who had conceived, and they said unto him, "So-and-so hath done this deed; let them receive correction"; but he made the sign of the Cross over her belly, and ordered them to give her six pair of linen cloths, and he said, "Peradventure when she bringeth forth either she or the child will die, [and if either dieth] let them be buried." Then those who were with him said unto him, "What is this that thou hast done? Give the command that they receive correction." And he said unto them, "See, O my brethren, she is nigh unto death, and what can I do?" Then he dismissed her. And the old man never ventured to judge anyone, for he was full of lovingkindness and endless goodness to all the children of men.

450. They used to say that [on one occasion] when Abbâ Arsenius the Great fell ill in Scete, a priest went and brought him to the church, and he spread a palm-leaf mat for him, and [placed] a small pillow under his head; and one of the old men came to visit him and saw that he was lying upon a mat and that he had a pillow under his head, and he was offended and said, "And this is Arsenius lying upon such things!" Then the priest took the old man aside privately, and said unto him, "What labour didst thou do in thy village?" and the old man said unto him, "I was a shepherd." And the priest said unto

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him, "What manner of life didst thou lead in the world?" and he said unto him, "A life of toil, and sore want." And when the old man had described all the tribulation which he had endured in the world, the priest said unto him, "And here what manner of life dost thou lead?" And the old man said unto him, "In my cell I have everything comfortable, and I have more than I want"; and the priest said unto him, "Consider [the position of] Abbâ Arsenius when he was in the world! He was the father of kings, and a thousand slaves, girt about with gold-embroidered vests, and with chains and ornaments round their necks, and clothed in silk, stood before him; and he had the most costly couches and cushions [to lie upon]. But thou wast a shepherd, and the comforts which thou didst never enjoy in the world thou hast here; but this man Arsenius hath not here the comforts which he enjoyed in the world, and now thou art at thine ease whilst he is troubled." Then the mind of the old man was opened, and he expressed contrition and said, "Father, forgive me; I have sinned. Verily this is the way of truth. He hath come to a state of humility, whilst I have attained to ease." And the old man having profited went his way.

451. They used to say that on one occasion Abbâ Macarius was passing along the road when Satan met him, and the Devil wished to cut him down with the scythe which he held in his hand, but he was unable to do so, and he said unto him, "Macarius, I am dragged along by thee with great force, but I cannot overcome thee. Now, behold, everything which thou doest I can do also. Thou fastest, and I never eat at all. Thou watchest, and I never go to sleep, and there is one thing only wherein thou dost conquer me." Then Macarius said unto him, "And what is that?" And Satan said, "It is thy humility, for it is because of this that I cannot vanquish thee"; then Macarius spread out his hands in prayer, and the Devil was no more seen.

452. On one occasion a devil took a knife and stood over Abbâ Macarius wishing to cut off his leg, and when he was unable to do so on account of the humility [of the old man], he answered and said unto him, "Everything which ye possess we possess also, and it is only in humility that ye are superior to us, and [it is only by means of it] that ye conquer us."

453. Abbâ Anthony said, "I saw all the snares of the Enemy laid out upon the ground, and I groaned and said, 'Who can escape from these?'" And the devils said unto me, 'Humility maketh a man to escape from these, for we cannot attain unto it.'

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454. An old man said, "Whensoever a man is praised it is meet for him to think upon his sins, and he should consider, saying, 'I am unworthy of the things which are said about me.'"

455. The blessed Macarius behaved towards all the brethren without any wicked suspicion, and certain people said unto him, "Why dost thou act in this manner?" And he said, "Behold, for twelve years I have been supplicating my Lord to give me this gift, and would you advise me to relinquish it? If it happen that one of the brethren commit a sin before the eyes of him who possesseth no wickedness, and he know that it is an evil thing, it is not right that he should bear some of the pain of him that hath fallen."

456. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "No monk should condemn any man in anything, and no monk should reward a man with [evil for] evil, and no monk should be a man of anger."

457. An old man asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, "Some brethren dwell with me; dost thou wish me to give them commandments?" And he said unto him, "No, but thou thyself must first do work, and if they wish to live, they will observe [it] and do [it]." The old man said unto him, "Ought they also to wish me to govern them?" And Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "No, be unto them an example, and not a lawgiver."

458. Abbâ Poemen said, "If a brother come unto thee, and thou be not benefited by his coming in [to thee], enquire in thine heart, and learn what thought thou hadst [in thy mind] before the entrance of that brother, and then thou wilt learn whence cometh the source of injury; if thou wilt do this with humility and knowledge, behold, thou wilt live without blame with thy brother, and thou wilt bear thine own shortcomings. If a man maketh his habitation with knowledge it will not fall, for God is before it, and, as it appeareth to me, from this habitation a man may acquire the fear of God."

459. A brother asked an old man, saying, "By what means may a man go forward? and the old man said unto him, "The greatness of a man consisteth of humility, for in proportion as a man descendeth to humility, he becometh exalted to greatness."

460. Abbâ John used to say, "We relinquish a light burden when we condemn ourselves, but we take upon ourselves a heavy burden when we [attempt to] make ourselves righteous."

461. On one occasion Abbâ Theophilus went to the Nitrian Mountain to visit the fathers, and the priest of the Mountain came to him; and Abbâ Theophilus said to him, now he was Theophilus the Bishop of Alexandria, "What thing of excellence hast thou found on this road?" And the old man said unto him, "I make accusations against myself, and I blame

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“myself at all times”; and Abbâ Theophilus said unto him, “Verily this is the way of truth.”

A variant reads: “On one occasion the Archbishop Theophilus went to the mountain of Nitria, and a certain Abbâ of the monks who was in the mountain came unto him; Abbâ Theophilus said unto him, “What more do the monks find in this way [than in any other]?” The old man said unto him, “They condemn themselves continually, and they do not judge their neighbours”; and Abbâ Theophilus said, “There is no way but this.”

462. On one occasion they brought a man possessed of a devil to one of the old men of Thebes, and entreated him to cast the devil out, but the old man was unwilling [to do so]; but since they urged him strongly he was persuaded, and he had mercy on the man, and he said to the devil, “Get thee out from that which God hath fashioned.” Then the devil answered and said, “I am going out, but I would ask thee to tell me one thing: What is the meaning of that which is written in the Gospel, Who are the goats and who are the sheep?” The old man answered and said, “I myself am [one of] the goats, but God knoweth who the sheep are”; and when the devil heard this, he cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Behold, I go forth because of thy humility,” and straightway he left the man and departed.

463. They used to say that on one occasion a few early, white figs came to Scete, but because they were nothing [of importance] they did not send any to Abbâ Arsenius, not wishing to insult him; and when the old man heard of this he did not come to the congregation, saying, “Ye separated me from the blessed gift which God sent to the brethren because I was unworthy to partake of it.” And when the old man heard [this] they profited [greatly] by his humility, and the priest went and carried some of the figs to him, and brought him to the congregation with great joy.

464. A certain Abbâ asked Abbâ Muthues, saying, “If I go to a place to dwell, how wouldst thou have me conduct myself?” The old man said unto him, “If thou wishest to dwell in a certain place, [do so,] but do not let go forth concerning thyself any fame for praiseworthy acts, [or say,] ‘I do not eat,’ or, ‘I do not drink,’ for such things only produce empty fame; and thou wilt find at length that thou wilt profit from many, for men will go where they can find qualities of this kind.” Then the brother said unto him, “What shall I do?” and the old man said unto him, “Wheresoever thou dwellest conduct thyself in a simple manner like every one else, and what thou seest those who fear God do, [I mean] those in whom thou

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“hast confidence, that do also, and thou shalt be at ease. For to be as all other men are is true humility, and the men who see that thou art like unto all other men will regard thee as they regard every one else, and thou wilt not be troubled.”

465. A certain brother went on one occasion from Egypt to Syria to visit Abbâ Zeno, and the Egyptians began to make accusations against his thoughts before the old man. And when Abbâ Zeno heard this, he marvelled and said, “The Egyptians always hide the spiritual excellences which they possess, but they describe the shortcomings which they do not possess; on the other hand, the Syrians and the Greeks declare that they possess the virtues which they have not, and they hide the shortcomings which they do possess.”

466. They used to talk about a certain old man who fasted for seventy weeks, and who only ate each Saturday; and he asked God that a word from the Book might be given unto him, but it was not given. Then he said within himself, “Behold, I have laboured in all these things, and I have omitted nothing; I will arise and go to my brother and question him [about it].” And when he had shut the door to depart, the angel of the Lord appeared, and said unto him, “The seventy weeks wherein thou didst fast have not come nigh unto God, but, inasmuch as thou hast humbled thyself to go to thy brother, I have been sent to make known unto thee a word, and to give thee rest”; thereupon he made the word known unto him, and gave him rest, and departed.

467. A brother asked an old man, saying, “What shall I do? For the love of praise is killing me.” The old man said unto him, “Thou doest well, for behold, thou hast made the heavens and the earth.” Then the brother was sorry because of what the old man had said unto him, and he expressed contrition, and said, “Father, forgive me, but I have done nothing of the kind”; the old man said unto him, “If now He Who did make them came into this world in humility, why dost thou who art mud boast thyself?”

468. One of the old men said, “Be not humble in thy words only, but also in thy deeds.”

469. On one occasion a certain governor came to see Abbâ Sîmôn, and when the old man heard of his coming from those who came to make it known to him beforehand, he straightway girded up his loins, and went up a palm tree to clean it. And when those who came cried out to him, saying, “Old man, tell us where the monk is,” he said unto them, “He is not here”; so they departed from that place.

470. One of the fathers from Parmê told a story of how, on one occasion when he had returned to Abbâ Theodore, he found

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him wearing a ragged shirt, and his breast was naked and bare, and his outer garment was dragged round in front of him. And, behold, a certain Count came to see him, and when his followers knocked at the door, and called the old man, he went out to meet him quite carelessly; and I took a small piece of coarse cloth and threw it over his shoulders that his breast might be covered, but the old man took it in his hand and waved it, and threw it away. And when the Count went I said to him, "Father, what is this that thou hast done? For a nobleman came unto thee to be helped, and to gain profit, and behold, he hath perhaps gone away offended." And the old man said unto me, "Get thee gone, Abbâ. We are still subject unto men. We have done the deed, and he is gone; but whether he wisheth to be benefited, or whether he wisheth to be offended is his affair. As for me, as far as I am able I shall always meet men of this kind in this way." And he commanded his disciple, saying, "If any man cometh and wisheth to see me, say not to him anything after the manner of men, but if I am eating, tell him that I am eating, and if I am asleep, tell him that I am asleep."

471. A certain woman who was afflicted in her lungs with the disease called cancer, heard concerning Longinus and wished to see him; now he used to dwell in [the monastery of] Hantôn in Alexandria. And whilst the woman was seeking and wishing for him, it happened that the blessed man was gathering sticks on the sea-shore, and when the woman found him, she said unto him, "Father, where dwelleth the man of God, Abbâ Longinus?" Now she did not know that he himself was Longinus. And he said unto her, "What dost thou want with that lying hypocrite? Do not go to him, for he is a liar. What is it that causeth thee pain?" Then the woman shewed him the place, and the old man made the sign of the Cross over it, and he dismissed her, saying, "Go, and may our Lord heal thee, for Longinus is unable to do thee any good whatsoever." And the woman went away believing in the word, and she was healed straightway; and afterwards when she was telling folks the story, she said, "I have learned by the marks which were on the old man that he himself was Abbâ Longinus."

472. On one occasion a certain governor arranged to see Abbâ Sîmôn, and the clergy told him beforehand, saying, "Father, make thyself ready, for a certain governor hath heard of thy life and works, and he wisheth to come and be blessed by thee"; and the old man said unto them, "I am ready." Then the old man went in and took in his hand some bread and cheese, and went out to the door and sat down there, and

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he changed about from place to place eating; and when the governor came with his company, and saw him sitting and eating, they despised him, saying, "So this is the monk of whom "I have heard!" And they left him and departed.

473. An old man was asked, "How is it that there are men "who say, 'We have seen a vision of angels?'" and the old man said, "Blessed is he who seeth his sins continually."

474. They used to say that when any man came to Abbâ Poemen he used to send him to Abbâ Job, his brother, saying to him, "He is older than I am"; and Job used to say to those who came, "Go unto my brother Poemen, for he possesseth "the grace of these gifts." Now if Abbâ Joseph was sitting with him Abbâ Poemen would not speak before him.

475. When a certain brother went to the festival he asked Abbâ Poemen, "What wouldst thou have me to do?" The old man said unto him, "Be thou a friend unto him that lead- "eth thee away by force, and sell thy work graciously."

476. A brother asked an old man, "What is the work of "exile?" And the old man said unto him, "I knew a brother "who went forth into exile, and he went in to lodge in a church, "and it happened that the brethren were about to eat some of "the sacramental bread; and when they sat down this man "sat down with them. Now when some of the other monks "saw him, they said, 'Who hath brought this man in [to eat] "with us?' And one of them said [unto him], 'Arise, and get "thee outside,' and straightway he rose up and went forth "as the brother had told him; but the others being sorry about "this matter went out and brought him in. And after these "things a certain man asked him, 'What was in thy mind "when thou didst go out and come in again?' He said unto "them, 'I thought in my mind that I was like a dog which "when he is driven out goeth out, and when he is called "cometh in.'"

477. They used to say that when Abbâ Moses was one of the clergy he wore a long outer garment, and that the Bishop said unto him, "Behold, thou art wholly white, O Abbâ "Moses." The old man said unto him, "Is the Pâpâ within "or without?" And again, wishing to try him, the Bishop said unto the clergy, "When Abbâ Moses goeth into the "sacrarium drive him out, and go after him and hear what he "saith." Now when he went into the sacrarium they rebuked him and drove him out, saying, "Get outside, O Ethiopian"; and having gone forth he began to say to himself, "They have "treated thee rightly, O thou whose skin is dark and black; "thou shalt not go back as if thou wert a [white] man."

478. An old man used to say, "Do not despise or think

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“lightly of him that standeth before thee, for thou knowest
“not whether the Spirit of God is in thee or in him, though
“thou callest him who standeth before thee him that minis-
“tereth unto thee.”

479. Abbâ John the Less used to say, “Humility and the
“fear of God are more excellent than all the [other] virtues.”

480. They used to say that a certain old man, who had
young men living with him, told them on one occasion to do
something, and when they did it not he said nothing further
to them about it, but rose up himself in their sight and did
what he had told them to do without anger, and without
labour.

481. Another old man used to say, “Humility is not with-
“out salt, but it is salted with salt.”

482. An old man used to say, “I would rather learn than
“teach.”

483. And he also used to say, “Do not learn before the
“time, so that thou mayest not have little admonition all thy
“time.”

484. Abbâ Agathon said, “If a man of wrath were to raise
“the dead, he would not be accepted by any man.”

485. A brother asked Abbâ Timothy, saying, “I myself can
“see that my memorial is ever before God”; and the old man
said unto him, “It would not be any great thing for thy thought
“(or mind) to be with God, but it would be a great thing for a
“man to see his soul beneath all creation.”

486. Abbâ Theodore used to say, “There is no spiritual
“excellence greater than that of a man who despiseth not his
“companion.”

487. An old man was asked, “By what means doth the soul
“receive humility?” And he said, “By searching into it, and
“by remembering the evil things which have been done by it.”

488. One of the old men said, “I asked Abbâ Sisoës, saying,
“‘Tell me a word,’ and he said, ‘It is right for a monk to
“‘humble himself lower than the idols’; and I went to my cell,
“and took counsel with myself, and meditated for an hour,
“saying, ‘What do the words “lower than the idols” mean?’
“Then I returned and went to the old man, and said unto
“him, ‘What do the words “lower than the idols” mean?’ And
“he said unto me, ‘It is written concerning the idols, “They
“‘“have a mouth and speak not, and they have eyes and see
“‘“not, and they have ears and hear not”; even thus is it right
“‘“for a monk to be.’ And because idols are an abomination, a
“man must hold himself to be abominable in his own sight.”

489. A brother asked Abbâ Sisoës of Thebaïs, saying, “Speak
“a word to me,” and Sisoës said unto him, “What have I to

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“say unto thee? I read the New Testament, and I reflect on the Old Testament.”

490. That same brother went to Abbâ Sisoës of Pâtârâ, and told him the word which Abbâ Sisoës of the Thebaïd had spoken, and Abbâ Sisoës said unto him, “I lie down to sleep in my sins, and I rise up in my sins.”

491. There was a certain monk who lost himself in the desert, and he said to himself, “I have kept myself rightly, and I possess all the virtues,” and he prayed to God and said, “If I be lacking in anything, shew Thou me how I may perform it.” And God, wishing to humble his mind, said unto him, “Go to such and such a head of a monastery, and whatsoever he telleth thee to do that do.” And God sent a revelation to the head of the monastery, and said unto him, “Behold, such and such a monk will come unto thee, and say thou unto him, ‘Take a whip in thy hands, and go forth and pasture swine.’” And the monk went forth immediately, even as the head of the monastery told him, and pastured swine, and when those who had known him formerly, and those who had heard about him, saw him pasturing swine, they said, “Ye see the great monk about whom we have heard, behold, his heart hath gone mad, and a devil hath seized him, and he is [now] pasturing swine.” Then God, when He saw his humility, and that he was hearing and bearing the reproach of men, set him free so that he might go back where he had been formerly.

492. An old man used to say, “If a man hath laid some work upon a brother to do, he must perform that command in the fear of God and in humility; for he who for God’s sake layeth [some work] upon a brother maketh the brother to submit himself thereto, and [the one brother] must do what [the other brother] hath laid upon him. But if a man wisheth to give commands to a brother, not in the fear of God, but on his own authority, wishing to be unto him a master and a governor, God, Who seeth the hidden things of his heart, will not allow him to be obedient unto him and to do [that] work, for the work that is for God’s sake is evident, and that which is of the man’s own authority is well known. For that which is for God’s sake cometh with humility and entreaty, whilst the works which are of man’s own authority are with wrath and trouble, and they come from the Evil One.”

493. A brother asked Abbâ Isidore, “Why is it that the devils fear thee so greatly? The old man said, “Because from the time that I became a monk I have laboured hard not to allow anger to enter into my throat; that is why they fear me.”

494. An old man used to say, “On one occasion I went to

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“the fair to sell with [other] brethren a few things, and I saw
“anger drawing nigh unto me, and I left the things and fled
“straightway.”

495. Abbâ John the Less used to say, “On one occasion
“when I was going up on the Scete road with some palm leaves
“I heard a camel speaking words to me, and he was about to
“make me angry, but I straightway left the palm leaves and fled.”

496. The same old man when he was in the harvest [field]
heard a brother speaking to his companion in anger, saying,
“Come hither,” and straightway he left the harvest and fled.

497. A brother asked an old man, “Why is it, when I am
“performing my little services of prayer and praise, that I some-
“times see in myself that there is nothing lacking in my heart,
“and that I do not wish it?” The old man said unto him,
“How then can a man appear to love God?”

498. Abbâ John the Less said unto the brethren who were
with him, “Although we be little folk in the eyes of men, let
“us consider how we may be held in honour before God.”

499. They used to say that Abbâ Patrâ and Abbâ Ampîkôs
were close and affectionate friends, and that when the old men
were eating in the church, and they were urging them to come
to the table of the fathers, it was only with hard work that Abbâ
Patrâ would go by himself; and after he had eaten, Abbâ
Ampîkôs said unto him, “How didst thou dare to go to the
“table of the old men?” Abbâ Patrâ said unto him, “If I had
“sat with you the brethren would have honoured me as an old
“man, and they would have required it of me to be the first to
“say the blessing, and I might have thought in my mind that
“I was greater than you all. But since I went to the fathers I
“am the least of you all, and I am abased, and I think in my
“thoughts that I am nothing.”

500. On one occasion a brother committed sin in the church,
and the priest drove him out therefrom, and there was there a
man of discretion whose name was Bessarion, and he also arose
and went out of the church, and said, “If ye have judged that
“this man who hath committed only one offence is not fit to
“worship God, how very much less fit am I, who have com-
“mitted many sins, to do so?” And the old man said, “Woe
“be unto him that is without more than unto him that is with-
“in, that is to say, ‘Woe be unto him that is [within him that
“is without!] Now this is what I would say, When a man in
“the world findeth a cause [of complaint] against a man who
“liveth a life of silent contemplation, or who hath departed
“from the world, this is a [cause of] judgement and of a fall
“unto him who giveth him reason [for complaint]. Take the
“greatest possible care then, O monk, not to commit sin, lest

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“thou disgrace God, Who dwelleth in thee, and drive Him out from thy soul.”

501. Abbâ Pîôr worked hard to be able to overcome the disposition to say “Thou” to any of the brethren.

502. The disciple of Abbâ Arsenius used to say, “When the old man was about to die, he commanded us, saying, ‘Do not let it be a care unto you to make a commemoration for me, but offer up the Offering only; for, he used to say, ‘if during my life-time I have done anything which is worthy of commemoration, I shall most certainly find [a memorial of it].’”

503. Abbâ Ammon said, “A man may pass one hundred years in his cell, and not know rightly how a monk should live in his cell, or even how to live secluded for one day.” And he used to say, “The proper way and manner for a monk to live is to condemn himself continually.”

504. Abbâ Poemen used to say, “If a man will only condemn himself he will be able to endure and continue wheresoever he dwelleth.”

505. Abbâ Poemen used to say, “We live in the troubles and trials which come upon us because we do not take to ourselves the humble names which the Scriptures have given us; and because we do not consider how our Lord Jesus relieved the Canaanitish woman (St. Matthew xv, 22) who took to herself abominable names, moreover, we do not consider how, when Abigail said unto David, ‘On me be the sin’ (1 Samuel xxv, 24), he was entreated by her and loved her. Abigail must be taken as [representing] the person of the soul, and David as the Godhead; if then, the soul will condemn itself before God, He will love it, and will give it the delight of rest.”

506. An old man used to say, “In all thy trials blame no man; blame thyself only, saying, ‘These things have happened to me because of my sins.’”

507. On one occasion Abbâ John was called to the church, and the brethren surrounded him and asked him questions about their thoughts; and one of the old men said unto him, “John is like unto a whore who adorneth herself that she may multiply lovers for herself; thus art thou.” And Abbâ John sighed and said, “Father, thou hast spoken the truth.” Afterwards a certain man told him that he loved him, [and said], “Art thou not disturbed within?” He said unto him, “No. But as I am without, even so am I within.”

508. One of the old men used to say about Abbâ John, that he lived in such a way that, through the humility which he possessed, he held all Scete suspended on his finger.

509. Abbâ John of the Thebaïd used to say that, before all

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else, it was right for a monk to acquire humility, for this was the first commandment of our blessed Redeemer, Who said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God" (St. Matthew v, 3).

510. John Kolob used to say, "Humility is the door which leadeth into the kingdom, and our fathers, through many revilings, have gone into the city of God rejoicing."

511. An old man used to say, "It is good for a man to say, 'Forgive me,' and then to make an offering of something; for this suiteth the monkish garb."

512. The same old man also said, "A dog is better than I am, for he hath love, and he cometh not to judgement."

513. Abbâ Eupraxius used to say, "The tree of life which riseth in the heights is humility." He also said, "Make thyself like unto the publican; and be not made guilty with the Pharisee; choose for thyself the meekness of Moses, so that thine heart, which is as hard as steel, thou mayest change into a fountain of water."

514. One of the old men said, "I would rather have defeat with humility than conquest with boasting."

515. An old man said, "When the thought of pride goeth up in thee, and thou becomest arrogant, examine thy conscience [and see] if thou hast kept all the commandments, and if thou lovest thine enemies, and if thou lovest the approbation of thine enemy, and if thou art grieved when he is afflicted, and if thou art considered by thyself to be an unprofitable servant, and a sinner greater than any other man. And even if thou hast performed rightly all the demands of ascetic excellence, thou shalt not be proud, for thou must know that the thought of pride abrogateth and maketh unprofitable all the virtues."

516. An old man used to say, "He who is held in greater honour or is more praised than he deserveth suffereth great loss; but the man who receiveth neither honour nor praise from men shall be praised above all."

517. A brother asked an old man, saying, "Is it a good thing for us to repent many times?" The old man said unto him, "We see that when Joshua, the son of Nun, lay upon his face the Lord spake with him" (Joshua v, 14).

518. An old man was asked, "Why do the devils fight against us in the way they do?" And he said, "Because we throw away from us our armour, that is to say, obedience, humility, and abstinence."

519. The old men used to say, "Whensoever we have no war to wage then especially it is meet that we should abase ourselves, for God, because He knoweth our feebleness,

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“giveth us His protection for nothing, but if we boast ourselves, He removeth it from us and we perish.”

520. A brother asked an old man, saying, “What is the perfection of a monk?” The old man saith unto him, “Humility, for when once a man hath arrived at humility, he can reach forward to the goal.”

521. The old man said, “If a man can say unto his brother, ‘Forgive me,’ and can humble himself, this belongeth to the perfection of the monk.”

522. One of the old men said, “When a man saith unto his companion, ‘Forgive me,’ and at the same time humbleth himself, the devils are consumed.”

523. A certain brother was offended at his brother, and when the latter heard thereof he went to him to express his contrition, but he would not open the door; then he who had offended his brother went to another old man and related the matter unto him, and the old man answered and said, “Observe lest in thine own mind thou art justifying thyself, and art condemning thy brother, as if he were the offender, for it may be that because of this he would not be persuaded to open unto thee. Nevertheless, do thou what I am going to tell thee. For although he hath offended thee, go thou, and hold firmly [to the belief] that thou hast offended against him, and may God put it into thy brother’s mind to be reconciled to thee.”

524. And the old man related unto him a story which explained the matter, saying, “There were two men who were living in the world, and were fearers of God, and they were both of the same mind, and they went forth and became monks; and when they heard in a plain manner the word of the Gospel which saith, ‘There are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven’ (St. Matthew xix, 12), they arrived at the hottest point of their love, and they made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Now when the Bishop heard [of this] he set them aside and excommunicated them. Then those men, wishing to show that they had done what was good, said unto one another, ‘We have made ourselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, and this Bishop driveth us out! Let us go and make a complaint against him to the head of our monasteries, that is, to the Bishop of Jerusalem’; and when they had gone to him they related unto him the whole matter. Then the Bishop said unto them, ‘And I also set you aside and excommunicate you’; and being greatly grieved at this remark also they went to the Bishop of Antioch, and related the matter unto him, and he also drove them away with the same words.

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“ Then the two brethren said unto each other, ‘ Let us go to
“ ‘ the Patriarch of Rome, and he will avenge us and will take
“ ‘ vengeance on all these [Bishops].’ And having gone to the
“ ‘ great Patriarch and Bishop of Rome, and made him to know
“ ‘ their matter, and what the Bishop and Patriarch [of Antioch]
“ ‘ had said unto them, they said at length, ‘ We have come
“ ‘ unto thee because thou art the head of them all.’ Then the
“ ‘ Bishop of Rome also said unto them, ‘ I also excommunicate
“ ‘ you and excommunicate ye shall be.’ Then, not knowing what
“ ‘ to do, they said to each other, ‘ All these men accept the
“ ‘ persons each of the other, and each honoureth the other,
“ ‘ because they are accustomed to assemble together at the
“ ‘ Synods, but let us go to the holy man of God, Epiphanius,
“ ‘ Bishop of Cyprus, because he is indeed a Bishop, and he
“ ‘ doth not accept the person of any man.’ Now when they
“ ‘ drew nigh unto the city, it was revealed unto Epiphanius
“ ‘ concerning them, and he sent [a man] to meet them, and to
“ ‘ say unto them, ‘ Ye shall not come into the city.’ And when
“ ‘ they came to themselves they repented, and said, ‘ In very
“ ‘ truth we have sinned; with what can we justify ourselves?
“ ‘ For, even supposing that the Bishop and the Patriarchs
“ ‘ have excommunicated us in an unseemly manner, perad-
“ ‘ venture this man is a prophet besides, for behold, God hath
“ ‘ revealed unto him concerning us beforehand; let us then
“ ‘ condemn ourselves in respect of everything which we have
“ ‘ done.’ Then when God, Who knoweth that which is in the
“ ‘ hearts [of men] saw that they had in very truth condemned
“ ‘ themselves, He worked upon the mind of Epiphanius so that,
“ ‘ of his own accord, he sent and brought them, and associated
“ ‘ them in communion with him. And he also wrote concerning
“ ‘ them to the Bishop of Jerusalem, saying, ‘ Receive thy sons,
“ ‘ for they have repented in truth.’ ”

And the old man said, “ This is the healing of a man,
“ and God desireth that a man should lay the offence of his
“ companion upon himself.” And when that brother heard [this
story] he acted according to the word[s] of the old man, and
he went and knocked at the door of that brother, who, imme-
diately he perceived and knew from inside [that it was he], ex-
pressed his contrition to him whilst he was as yet inside, and
then straightway opened the door; and they made friends to-
gether, each with each, with all their souls, and the two of them
were in great peace.

525. Abbâ Poemen used to say, “ As the earth falleth not,
“ because it is fixed from below, even so he who abaseth him-
“ self shall never fall.”

526. Abbâ Sisoës asked Abbâ 'Ôr, and said unto him, “ Tell

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“me a word of excellence”; and he said unto him, “Dost thou think me true, and dost thou believe my promise?” And Abbâ Sisoës said unto him, “Yes.” Abbâ 'Or said unto him, “Go, and whatsoever ye have seen me do, that also do thyself”; and Abbâ Sisoës said unto him, “What do I see in thee, O my father?” And Abbâ 'Or answered and said unto him, “My mind is more abased than that of the least of all the children of men.”

527. On one occasion seven brethren came to Abbâ Arsenius and they entreated him, saying, “What is the work of monks?” And the old man answered and said, “When I came to dwell in this place I went to two old men, and I asked them this same question. And they answered and said unto me, ‘Dost thou believe in us?’ and I said, ‘Yes.’ Then they said unto me, ‘Go, and whatsoever thou hast seen us do, that also do thyself.’” And the brethren asked him subsequently, saying, “Tell us, father, what was their work?” Then the old man said unto them, “The one acquired great humility, and the other obedience.” And they said unto him next, “Tell us what is thy work?” and the old man said unto them, “According to my will, and according to my mind; it is a great thing for a man not to bind himself with any matter”; and having profited they departed in gladness, giving praise unto God.

528. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, “What shall I do with the weight of weariness which holdeth me?” And the old man said unto him, “Both large and small boats are provided with thick ropes for towing, and if there be blowing a wind which is not favourable to the course of the ship, they throw them round their breasts and pull them along [from] dry land; and quietly and little by little they let the ship go on her way until God sendeth a wind which is suitable for bearing her along whithersoever they wish her to go. But if they learn that a storm hath begun to rise, they make haste and drive a stake in the ground, and tie up the ship lest she should drift away. Now the stake is that a man should condemn himself.”

529. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, “How is it possible for a man to avoid speaking evilly to his neighbour?” The old man answered and said unto him, “We and our brethren possess two images. Whensoever then a man condemneth himself, his brother appeareth unto him beautiful and excellent; but whensoever a man appeareth beautiful to himself, his brother will be found to be, in his sight, hateful and abominable.”

530. Another old man said also, “Humility is not insipidity, but it is seasoned, as it were, with salt.”

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531. He also used to say, "For a man to despise himself is a strong wall."

532. He also used to say, "Him who hath become despised for our Lord's sake, will our Lord make wise."

533. An old man used to say, "Take heed, with all thy might, that thou doest nothing which meriteth blame, and desire not to adorn thyself."

534. An old man used to say, "If humility descendeth to Sheol it is exalted unto the heavens; and although pride goeth up to the heavens it shall be brought down to Sheol."

535. There were two brethren in Scete, and he who was younger than his fellow was the older in the monastic garb, and one of the fathers having come to visit them, they brought out a vessel of water and wanted to wash him. And the man who was the younger in respect of years drew nigh to wash the old man, but the old man laid hold upon his hands, and prevented him, and then he drew near him that was the elder [in respect of years] to wash him. And the brethren who were standing near him said unto him, "The younger brother, O father, is the older in respect of the monastic garb"; then the old man said unto them, "I take the priority in the monastic garb of the younger man and place it upon him that is the elder."

536. There was a certain brother in a monastery, and he used to take the whole weight of the brethren upon himself, and seeking to be held in contempt in the sight of every man, he used to make accusations against himself, even to the committing of fornication, and he used to say, "I have committed it." Now the brethren who did not understand his life and works used to murmur against him, saying, "How very many are the wickednesses which this man doeth here, and because of them he doth not even work." Then their Abbâ, because he knew his works, and because he knew also that he was taking the affairs of every man upon himself, and that he did not do these things, spake unto the brethren, saying, "I will undertake that he will make one mat in a week, in humility, [which is more than all] your work [which is done] with boasting, and if ye wish to know whether the matter be so [or not], bring hither all your work, and bring hither also the mat of that brother, and light a fire and throw therein all your work"; [and when they had done so] everything was consumed except the mat of that brother. Now when the brethren saw this, they feared, and expressed their contrition, and from that time they held him to be an Abbâ.

537. They used to say that Abbâ Poemen never gave his mind to the Lord, and that his knowledge was superior to that of [any] one of the old men.

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538. Abbâ Ammon asked Abbâ Poemen concerning the impure thoughts that were born of a man, and [concerning] vain lusts; and Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "Shall the axe boast itself against him that wieldeth it?"

539. Abbâ Betimius asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, "If a man be angry with me, and I express my contrition, and he will not accept it, what am I to do?" the old man said unto him, "Take with thee two of thy friends, and express thy contrition [in their presence]." And the old man Betimius said unto him, "And if he will not be persuaded [to accept it] then? And Abbâ Poemen answered and said, "Take with thee five others"; and Abbâ Betimius answered and said, "And if he will not be persuaded by these?" Abbâ Poemen saith, "Then take with thee a priest"; and Abbâ Betimius said, "And if he will not be persuaded [then]?" Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "Without anger and without excitement pray unto God that He may put into his mind [the desire for peace], and straight-way thou shalt have no further care."

540. An old man used to say, "Tell me, brother, if thou hast acquired the seal of work, which is humility?" A holy man who saw another sinning wept bitterly, saying, "This man may sin to-day, but how many times shall I sin to-morrow? In whatsoever way a man may sin before thee, do not condemn him, but think in thy mind that thou art a greater sinner than he, even though he be a man in the world, and [re-member] besides that he is sinning greatly against God."

541. Certain brethren went to visit Abbâ Poemen, and whilst they were sitting with him, they praised a certain brother, saying, "He hateth evil things." Abbâ Poemen said unto him that spake unto him, "What is the hatred of evil things?" Now the brother was astonished, and he found nothing to say; and he rose up and threw himself before the old man, saying: "Do thou tell me what is the hatred of evil things." And the old man said unto him, "The hatred of evil things is for a man to hate his own sins, and to justify those of his neighbour."

542. A certain brother committed an offence in Scete, the camp of the monks, and when a congregation was assembled on this matter, they sent after Abbâ Moses, but he refused to come; then they sent the priest of the church to him, saying, "Come, for all the people are expecting thee," and he rose up and came. And he took a basket with a hole in it and filled it with sand, and carried it upon his shoulders, and those who went out to meet him said unto him, "What meaneth this, O father?" And he said unto them, "[The sands are] my sins which are running down behind me and I cannot see them, and I, even I, have come this day to judge shortcomings

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“which are not mine.” And when they heard [this] they set
“free that brother and said nothing [further] to him.

543. Abbâ Moses entreated Abbâ Zechariah, saying,
“Speak a word of consolation unto the brethren,” and 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.”

544. A brother asked Abbâ Alônîs, saying, “What is the
“meaning of a man despising himself?” The old man said unto
him, “It meaneth that thou must set thyself below all the
“beasts, for thou must remember that they will not be judged.”

545. And the same old man said also, “If a man accustom
“himself to be a teacher, this act belongeth to labour.”

546. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, “What is the
“right manner for me to live in my cell?” Abbâ Poemen said
unto him, “How a man should live in his cell is known to
“men, that is to say, he must work with his hands, and eat
“once [daily], and hold his peace always, and meditate on the
“Holy Scriptures; but for a man to gain profit inwardly (*or*
“secretly), he must bear the condemnation of himself whither-
“soever he goeth, and he must not neglect the times of ser-
“vice and of secret labour. And if it happen that thou hast
“made the time unprofitable, when thou goest into the con-
“gregation of service complete thy service without troubling
“thyself; by the fulfilment of these things, grasp to thyself
“an upright congregation, so that thou mayest draw nigh
“thereto, but keep thyself remote from the assemblies of evil
“things.”

547. On one occasion when Abbâ Arsenius was in his cell
the devils rose up against him and vexed him; and those who
used to minister to him came to him, and as they stood out-
side his cell they heard him crying out to God, saying, “O
“God, forsake me not. I have never done before Thee anything
“which is good, but grant, O Lord, according to Thy grace,
“that I may begin in the way.”

548. Now, when he was about to die Alexander and Zoi-
lus, his brethren and disciples, were greatly disturbed, and
he said unto them, “Why are ye troubled? The hour hath
“not yet come.” They said unto him, “We are not troubled
“about thee, father.” And he said unto them, “When the
“hour hath come I will tell you, for it will be for me to rise up
“against you before the throne of Christ if ye give my bones
“to any man.” Then they said unto him, “What shall we do
“then? For we do not know how to bury [thee].” The old man
said unto them, “Do ye not know how to throw a cord round
“my legs and to carry me outside the mountain?”

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549. And his word at all times was this, "Arsenius, because thou didst go forth"; and he used to repeat this saying, "That I have spoken I have many times repented; that I held my peace I have never repented."

550. On one occasion the governor of the country seized one of the inhabitants of his village, and the people entreated the old man to go and bring out him that had been seized; and the old man said unto them, "Leave me for three days, and afterwards I will go." Then Abbâ Poemen prayed to the Lord, and said, "Lord, if thou dost not grant me this act of grace the people will not allow me to live in this place"; and the old man went to entreat the governor, and the governor said unto him, "Yea, father, thou makest entreaty for a thief." And the old man rejoiced that he did not receive from Him this act of grace.

551. On one occasion certain old men went to visit Abbâ Anthony, and Abbâ Joseph was with them, and the old man wishing to try them spake a word from the Book, and began to question the youngest of them, saying, "What is the meaning of this word?" And each of them said, "I have never yet understood it," and last of all Abbâ Anthony said unto Abbâ Joseph, "And what dost thou say that this word meaneth?" Abbâ Joseph saith, "I do not know." And Abbâ Anthony said unto him, "In truth, Abbâ Joseph, thou hast found the way to say, 'I do not know.'"

552. Abbâ Muthues said, "In proportion as a man draweth nigh unto God, it is meet that he should regard himself as a sinner, for the Prophet Isaiah (chap. vi, 5), who saw the Lord, calleth himself wretched and unclean."

553. The old man used to say, "Who sold Joseph?" They said unto him, "His brethren," and the old man said unto them, "No, it was humility that sold him. For he never said, 'I am your brother,' and he never answered them, but held his peace. He sold himself by his humility, and this humility made him governor over the land of Egypt."

554. A brother came to Abbâ Muthues, and said unto him, "How is it that those who are in Scete do more than that which is written in the Book, for they love their enemies more than themselves?" Muthues said unto them, "I do not yet love even the man who loveth me more than I love myself."

555. There was a certain old man in Egypt before those who belonged to the company of Abbâ Poemen came there, and he possessed knowledge and great honour; and when those of the following of Abbâ Poemen went up from Scete, every man left [that old man] and came to Abbâ Poemen and those who

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were with him, and the old man was filled with envy, and he cursed the followers of Abbâ Poemen because of this. Now Abbâ Poemen heard of it, and he was vexed about it, and he said unto the brethren who were with him, "What shall we do for this old man? For the men who have forsaken him have cast us into vexation, and they have left that holy old man and turned their looks upon us, who are nothing. How then can we satisfy this old man?" Then he said unto the brethren who were with him, "Make ye some bread and boil a little food, and we will go to him, and will take with us also a vessel of wine, and we will eat with him, and perhaps by these means we shall be able to pacify him"; and they took the food and went to him. And when they had knocked at the door his disciple looked out and asked them, "Who are ye?" And they said unto him, "Tell the Abbâ that it is Poemen, and he wisheth to be blessed by him"; and when his disciple had told him this, the old man said, "Send them away," and he said, "I have not leisure [to receive them]." Then the disciple told them these things, but they stayed there lovingly, saying, "We will not go away unless we are held to be worthy of the blessing of the old man." Now, when the old man saw their humility and patient persistence, he repented, and opened the door to them, and when they were eating together, he said unto them, "Verily, the things which I have heard were in you are not in you, but indeed what I see in you is a hundredfold [greater than what I expected]"; and he became unto them a friend from that day.

556. On a certain occasion when Abbâ John was sitting before the church, the brethren surrounded him, and asked him about their thoughts, and when one of the old men saw him, he said unto him, "Thy repentance is full of sorceries." Abbâ John said unto him, "It is even so, and this thou sayest having only seen what is without, but if thou couldst see what is within what wouldst thou say?"

557. Muthues repeated the following:—"When I was a young man I used to say to myself, 'Perhaps thou wilt do something good'; but now that I am an old man I see that I have not done even one good work."

558. He used to say concerning Abbâ Macarius that, if the brethren drew nigh unto him in fear, as to a great and holy old man, he would not answer them a word, but if one of the brethren treated him with familiar contempt, [saying], "Father, if thou wert a camel wouldst thou not steal the natron and sell it, and would not the driver beat thee?" he would answer him. And if any man spake unto him in anger, or with words similar to these, he would answer any question which was put to him.

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Chapter xj. Of Fornication

A CERTAIN monk was engaged, on one occasion, in a war against fornication, and he had in his heart, as it were, a burning fire by day and by night; but he bore 559. this agony, and did not bring low his mind, and after a long time the war passed away from him, but he was unable to vanquish it in any way except by patient endurance, and straight-way light rose on his mind.

560. And another brother also was engaged in a war against fornication, and he rose up by night, and came to one of the old men and told him his mind, and the old man persuaded him [to endure], and he was helped, and went [back] to his cell. And again he came unto the old man, and again he helped him, and the brother went [back] to his cell; and the war came upon him the third time, and again he went back by night to the old man, and the old man did not cause him pain but spake with him for his benefit, and said unto him, "Give it no opportunity, but come hither whensoever the devil vexeth thee, and thou wilt expose him, and when he hath been exposed he will take to flight. For nothing vexeth the devil of fornication so much as that a man should hide his thoughts and not reveal them." Now that brother came to the old man eleven times and made accusations against his thoughts, for he wished to be helped; and when the old man spake unto him that devil took to flight, but when he came [back] to his cell the war came upon him. At length the brother said unto the old man, "Do an act of grace, father, and tell me a word [whereby I may live]." The old man said unto him, "Be of good courage, my son, and if God permitteth my thought it shall come to thee, and thou shalt bear it no longer, but thou shalt depart being innocent." He said this, and God did away the war of that brother.

561. And another brother was engaged in a war against fornication, and he bore it with very great self-restraint for fourteen years, and he guarded his mind against being subservient to lust, and at length he came to the church, and made known the matter unto all the people; and when they heard [it] they were pained, and they prayed for a whole week to God on his behalf, and afterwards He did away the war that was in him.

562. On one occasion Abbâ Moses of Pâtârâ was engaged in a war against fornication, and he could not endure being in his cell, and he went and informed Abbâ Isidore of it; and the old man entreated him to return to his cell, but he would not agree [to this]. And having said, "Father, I cannot bear it,"

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the old man took him up to the roof of his cell, and said unto him, "Look to the west," and when he looked he saw multitudes of devils with troubled and terrified aspects, and they shewed themselves in the forms of phantoms which were in fighting attitudes. Abbâ Isidore saith unto him, "Look to the east," and when he looked he saw innumerable holy angels standing [there], and they were in a state of great glory. Then Abbâ Isidore said unto him, "Behold, those who are in the west are those who are fighting with the holy ones, and those whom thou hast seen in the east are they who are sent by God to the help of the saints, for those who are with us are many." And having seen [these] Abbâ Moses took courage and returned to his cell without fear.

563. One of the old men said concerning the lustful thoughts which come into the heart of a man, and which are not carried into effect, that they are like unto a man who seeth a vineyard, and who desireth to eat the grapes thereof, but is afraid to go in lest he be caught and suffer death. If he be caught outside the hedge he will not die, because he hath neither gone into the vineyard nor hath eaten the grapes, but hath only desired; now he shall be beaten with few stripes, because he hath coveted, but he shall not die.

564. There was a certain old man, who lived in a cell, and his thoughts said unto him, "Go, take to thyself a woman"; then he rose up straightway and kneaded together some mud, and made the figure of a woman, and he said to himself, "Behold thy wife! It is necessary for thee to labour with all thy might that thou mayest be able to feed her." And he laboured with his hands and twisted many ropes. Then after a few days, he rose up and made a figure of a woman, and said unto his thoughts, "Behold, thy wife hath brought forth, it is necessary for thee to work harder to keep thy wife and to clothe thy daughter"; and thus doing he vexed his body sorely. And he said unto his thought, "I cannot bear [all] this work, and since I am unable to bear the work, a wife is unnecessary for me"; and God saw his labour, and did away his thoughts [of fornication], and he had peace.

565. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "As the sword-bearer standeth before the king, being always ready [to smite], so is it meet for the soul which is prepared to stand [ready] to resist the devil of fornication."

566. They used to say that Mother Sarah contended against the devil of fornication for seven years on the roof [of her house], before she vanquished him.

567. One of the old men said, "It is written concerning Solomon that he loved women, but every male loveth the fe-

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“males, and we must restrain and draw onwards our nature
“by main force to purity.”

568. A brother asked Abbâ Daniel, and said unto him, “Deliver to me a commandment”; [and he said unto him], “Never place thy hand in a dish and eat with a woman, and thou wilt be able to flee from the devil of fornication.”

569. They used to say that the great old man Abraham arrived at a monastery, and that he also saw there a youth, and that he refused to pass the night there; and the brethren who were with him said unto him, “Art thou also afraid, O father?” The old man said unto them, “Indeed, my sons, I am not afraid, “but of what use is a vain war to me?”

570. A brother asked an old man, saying, “What shall I do? For my thoughts are [fixed] always upon fornication, and they will not give me peace even for a moment; and thus is my soul vexed.” And the old man answered and said unto him, “When these thoughts spring up in thee speak not with them, for it belongeth to them to rise up with continual anxiety, and not to be sluggish, but they have no power to force thee, for it belongeth to thee either to accept them or not. Hast thou not seen what the Midianites did, how they adorned their women and set them up, but they forced no man to take them? those who wished to do so fell into them, and those who did not became wroth, and made a slaughter in their wrath. Even so is it with the thoughts.” Then that brother said unto him, “What then shall I do? For I am weak, and passion overcometh me.” The old man said unto him, “Consider thy thoughts well, and when they begin to speak to thee, answer them never a word, but rise up and pray, and meditate upon holy words.” And the brother said unto him, “Behold, father, I do meditate [on holy words], and the passion riseth not in my heart, but I do not know the power of the words”; then the old man answered and said unto him, “Thou canst only [continue] to meditate, but I have heard Abbâ Poemen and many fathers say this word: ‘The enchanter knoweth not the power of the words which he uttereth, but when the animal heareth them, it knoweth their power, and he becometh subservient, and submitteth itself [to him].’ Even so is it with us, for although we do not know the power of the words whereon we meditate, the devils know their power as soon as they hear them.”

571. The old men in Scete were asked concerning fornication, “When doth a man see a face in the passion stirred up in him?” And they said, “This matter is like unto a table which is loaded with meats of all kinds, and a man who seeketh and desireth to eat of them; but if a man putteth not forth his hand and

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“taketh not of the meats he becometh a stranger unto
“them.”

572. They used to say that Abbâ Isaac went out and found the footprint of a woman on the road, and he thought about it in his mind and destroyed it, saying, “If a brother seeth it he
“may fall.”

573. A brother asked Abbâ Agathon concerning fornication, and he said unto him, “Go, cast thy feebleness before God,
“and thou shalt find relief.”

574. A brother asked a father, and said unto him, “There is
“a war of fornication against me,” and the old man said unto him, “If it be a good thing, why goest thou away from it, but
“if it be a bad thing why dost not thou command it [to de-
“part]?”

575. A certain brother, being vexed by the spirit of fornication, went to a great old man, and entreated him, saying, “Do an act of grace, and pray for me, for I am disturbed by
“fornication,” and the old man made supplication unto God and entreated Him. And the brother came to him a second time, and said the same words as before, and the old man also was not neglectful in beseeching God on his behalf. Now when the brother had come to the old man, and troubled him in this way many times because he was disturbed by fornication, the old man afterwards entreated God, and said, “O Lord, reveal
“unto me the manner in which this brother liveth, and whence
“cometh the reason why I have entreated Thee so often on his
“behalf, and he hath not found relief.” Then God revealed unto him the affair of that brother, and he saw him dwelling with the spirit of fornication by him, and that brother lusting for it, and an angel was standing by [ready] to help him; and he was angry with that brother because he did not cast himself upon God, but was involving his mind therein. And straightway the old man knew that the cause lay with the brother himself, and he made him to undertand this, and he roused him up, and afterwards he took heed to himself.

576. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, “The body is
“feeble, but my passions are not weak”; the old man said unto him, “The passions make thorns to grow and burst into flower.”

577. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen concerning the passions of the body, and the old man said unto him, “They are like
“unto those who sang praises to the image of Nebuchad-
“nezzar, for if those who sang had not burned men [people]
“would never have worshipped the image; and in this wise the
“Enemy also singeth to the soul by means of the passions, so
“that he may perchance be able to make it commit sin through
“the passion of the body.”

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578. An old man used to say, "Salt is produced by water, but " if it falleth into water it becometh dissolved and is lost; " similarly monks are born of women, but if they fall into wo- " men they are dissolved and perish from God."

579. A certain father when he went out to become a monk was a virgin, and he did not even know that a whore existed among the children of men. And when he was dwelling in his cell the devils began to stir up in him the passion of fornication, and lifting up his eyes he saw the devils going round about him in the forms of Ethiopians, and they incited him to yield to the passion; then he rose up straightway and prayed, and said, " O Lord, help me," and when he had said these things immediately a stone fell from the roof, and he heard, as it were, a sweet voice, and he seemed to enjoy a short respite from the thoughts of fornication. And he rose up and came to one of the old men and related the matter to him, and the old man answered and said, " I know not what this meaneth"; and he sent him on to Abbâ Poemen, and that brother related the matter unto him also. Then the old man said unto him, " The stone which thou " didst see fall is the Calumniator, and that voice which thou " didst hear is lust. Take heed unto thy soul, and make suppli- " cation unto God, and behold, thou shalt be freed from this " war"; and Abbâ Poemen taught him how to contend against devils, and having prayed, he dismissed him, and that brother came to his cell. And he made entreaty and supplication unto God, and God granted him to attain to such a gift [of excellence] that, when that brother died, He was pleased that there should be revealed unto him whether it was well with his soul or not.

Now in another manuscript instead of the words, " He " rose up and prayed," it is thus written:—He saw the devils surrounding him in the forms of Ethiopians and they were inciting him to yield to the passion. And he said, " 'This natural " member which stablisheth man is like unto a spout in a tank " which letteth out water, and it is also like a conduit which " carrieth the water off a roof; similarly this member carrieth " off water from a man." And having said these words straight- way the stone fell, &c.

580. On one occasion a certain man went out to Scete to become a monk, and he took with him his son as soon as he had been weaned; and when the boy was grown up and had become a young man, the war of fornication attacked him, and he said unto his father, " I will go into the world, father, for I cannot " endure this striving against fornication." Then his father en- treated him to persevere, but at length the boy said to his father, " Father, I cannot bear it any longer, let me go"; and his father said unto him, " My son, hearken to me for this time only.

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“Take thee seven pairs of cakes of bread, and a few palm leaves, sufficient for forty days, [and get thee into the desert], and may God’s will be done.” And his son hearkened unto him, and he took [the bread and palm leaves] and departed, and he remained [in the desert] working, and twisting dry palm leaves into ropes, and plaiting mats, and eating dry bread, and he lived a life of seclusion for twenty days. And he looked, and behold, the work of fornication came and drew nigh unto him, and it stood up before him in the form of an Ethiopian woman whose smell was exceedingly foul; but he was unable to endure her smell, and he drove her away from his presence. Then she said unto him, “In the hearts of men I am a sweet smell, and a pleasant one, but because of thine obedience and labour God hath not permitted me to lead thee astray; but I have, nevertheless, made thee acquainted with my smell.” And the young man rose up, and came to his father, and said unto him, “I no longer wish to go into the world, for I have seen the matter of fornication, and I have smelled its foul odour”; now the father knew of a certainty that the young man had been satisfied in his mind on the subject, and he said to his son, “Hadst thou remained [in the desert] forty days and kept my commandment, thou wouldst most certainly have seen a vision which was far more excellent.”

581. On one occasion a brother came to Abbâ Poemen, and said unto him, “What shall I do, father, for I am vexed by fornication? And behold, I came unto Nebatiôn [Anicetus], and he said unto me, ‘It is not right that those thoughts should stay with thee so long.’” Abbâ Poemen saith unto him, “The labour of Abbâ Anicetus is high and exalted, and his thoughts are above with the angels, and he hath forgotten that I and thou are whoremongers; but if thou wishest, hearken unto me, and I also will speak to thee: If a monk can hold fast his belly, and his tongue, and his love for going about as a stranger, thou mayest be sure that he is able to become a monk in very truth, and that he will not die.”

582. A brother asked an old man, and said unto him, “What shall I do? For fornication is killing me.” The old man said unto him, “When a mother is about to wean her son she smareth aloes over her breasts, and when the child cometh to suck as usual, he shrinketh away and taketh to flight. Do thou also then put bitter aloes in thy heart, and straightway the wicked devils will fly therefrom.” And the brother said unto him, “What kind of bitter aloes is it right for me to place therein.” The old man saith unto him, “The remembrance of the death and punishment which are laid up in the world which is to come.”

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583. A brother asked an old man, "Whence come the temptations of fornication which attack me?" The old man said, "They come because thou eatest and drinkest largely, and because thou sleepest until thou art satisfied."

584. Abbâ John used to say, "Whosoever talketh as much as he can with a woman, hath already committed adultery with her in his mind."

585. On one occasion a certain brother came to Abbâ Muthues and asked him, saying, "Is calumny worse than fornication?" And the old man said, "Fornication is worse." The brother said unto him, "How can this be?" And the old man said unto him, "Calumny is a wicked thing, but it receiveth healing quickly, and the calumniator repenteth, saying, 'I have spoken evilly many times'; but fornication in the body is death in [its] nature."

586. There was in Scete a certain monk who strove hard [against sin], and the Enemy sowed in him the remembrance of a certain woman with a beautiful face, and he troubled him greatly through her. And by the Providence of God a certain brother who came down from Egypt went to visit him, and it came to pass that whilst they were conversing together the brother who had gone to visit him said, "Such and such a woman is dead"; now she was the very woman the remembrance of whom was being stirred up in the monk. And when the other brother heard this, he rose up, and took his headcloth, and went up by night to Egypt, and opened her grave, and he smeared himself with the filthy and putrefying matter of the dead body of the woman, and then went back to his cell. And he set that thing of filth before his mind at all times, and he did battle with his thought, saying, "Behold thy lust, and that which thou didst require! Behold, I have brought it unto thee; take thy fill thereof." And he used to torture himself with [the remembrance of] that filthy thing until the war which was in him was quieted.

587. One of the brethren asked Abbâ Zeno, now he had great freedom of speech with him, saying, "Behold, thou hast grown old, how is the matter of fornication?" The old man said unto him, "It knocketh, but it passeth on." Then one of the brethren asked him, "What is the meaning of 'It knocketh, but it passeth on?'" The old man said unto him, "Imagine now that one brought to thy mind the remembrance of a certain woman, and that thou didst say, 'Oh,' but that thou didst not allow it to go up in thy mind; [that is what 'It knocketh, but passeth on' meaneth]; now young men are excited by it."

588. A brother asked Abbâ Theodore of Scete, saying, "The

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“ thought of fornication cometh, and it troubleth and disturb-
“ eth the mind, but it is not able to commit the deed; and it
“ certainly cannot help, but it can hinder the course towards
“ spiritual excellence ”; and the old man said unto him, “ The
“ man who is wakeful and strenuous struggleth and casteth
“ it from him and standeth up to prayer.”

589. And again a certain old man from Parmis [spake] against this thought, saying, “ If we do not possess thoughts
“ we become the prey of the Enemy, for he, even like an
“ ordinary enemy, demandeth that which is his; therefore
“ let us, in the same manner, do what is ours to do. Let us
“ stand up in prayer, and straightway he will flee; be constant
“ in the service of God, and thou shalt conquer; strive, and
“ thou shalt be crowned.”

590. Against this thought of fornication a brother asked an old man, saying, “ What shall I do about the mind of fornication which vexeth me?” And Abbâ Copres the Alexandrian answered and said, “ If thou hast no minds (*or* thoughts) thou
“ wilt have no hope, so then their work is with thee; for he
“ who performeth their work hath no thoughts. Peradventure
“ thou hast the custom of talking with a woman?” And the brother said unto him, “ No, I have not, but they are thoughts of
“ former times and of recent times which trouble me.” The old man said unto him, “ Thou shalt not be afraid of the dead, but
“ fear the things which are living, and cast thyself down in
“ prayer before God. For if we have no thoughts we are mere
“ animals. As the enemy worketh for that which is his, even
“ so let us do for that which is ours. Let us stand up in prayer,
“ and let us have a care for doctrine, and let us endure, for
“ patient endurance is victory. Unless a man striveth he will
“ never be crowned. For there are in the world athletes who
“ though wounded conquer nevertheless, and however many
“ times one man may be wounded by two [others], if he can
“ endure the blows he will be able to conquer those who smote
“ him. Observe then what a degree of endurance is possessed
“ by such men for the sake of the merchandise of this world!
“ Do thou then endure, and God shall strive with thine enemies
“ on thy behalf whilst thou mayest remain quiet.”

591. Against the thought [of fornication] another old man who dwelt in the desert used to say, “ Thou wishest to live
“ whilst thou art asleep! Go, and labour. Go, and work. Go,
“ seek, and ye shall find. Awake and stand up. Knock, and it
“ shall be opened unto thee. For there are in the world athletes
“ who are called ‘pugilists,’ who smite each other, and who
“ are held to be worthy of the victory because they fight per-
“ sistently and endure; these men do not withdraw defeated

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“when they are wounded, for however many times one [of them] may be smitten by two [others], and however [many may be] the blows which he will suffer from them, he continueth to fight, and he conquereth and is crowned.”

592. Against the thought [of fornication] another old man said, “Such things will happen unto thee through negligence. For if it be certain to us that God dwelleth in us, we can never become a habitation for others, and we can never give our souls over to become vessels for the service of aliens. For our Lord Who dwelleth in us, and is found in us, is able to watch over our lives; and it is not right for us to neglect or to hold lightly Him for Whose sake we have put Him on, and Whom we see. But let us make ourselves pure even as He is pure. Stand up then upon a rock, and if the river be violently disturbed thou shalt not fear, and behold, thy building shall not shake; and sing with might, saying, ‘Those who put their hope in the Lord shall be like Mount Zion (Psalm cxxv, 1), and he who dwelleth in Jerusalem shall never be moved.’ The Enemy said unto our Redeemer, ‘I will send these who belong to me against those who belong to Thee that they may drive them back; and if they do evil to Thy chosen ones I cannot [help it], and I will trip them up, even though I can only do so in dreams of the night.’ Then our Redeemer said unto him, ‘If an abomination can inherit his father[’s possessions] this also shall be accounted as sin to My chosen ones.’”

593. Against the thought [of fornication] another old man spake, saying, “Be thou like unto a man who passeth through a street of tavern-keepers, and who smelleth the odour of boiling meats, or the whiff of something which is being roasted; he who wisheth entereth into [one of them] and eateth, and he who doth not wish [to do so] smelleth the meats as he passeth by and then goeth on. Drive away then from thee the fetid smell of evil thoughts, and stand up and pray, saying, ‘O Son of God, help me.’ The same thing is also to be said about other thoughts, for we are not the roots of the thoughts, but are those who strive against them.”

Excellent Counsels concerning Fornication by one of the holy old Men

NOW on thy account, O son of man, Christ was born, and the Son of God came that He might make thee to live. He became a Child. He became a man, being also God. He Who was the Lawgiver became a reader [of the Law], and He took the Book in the congregation, and He read, saying, “The Spirit of God is upon me, and for this reason He

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“hath anointed me, and hath sent me to preach the Gospel unto “the poor.” Like a servant He made a whip of rope, and He drove forth from the temple all those who sold oxen, and cattle, and doves, and other things. Like a servant He girded a napkin about His loins, and washed the feet of His disciples, and He commanded them to wash the feet of their brethren. Like an elder He sat among the elders, and taught the people. Like a Bishop He took bread, and blessed [it], and brake, and gave to His disciples; and He was beaten for thy sake, that is to say, for thy sake He was crucified, and for thy sake He died. Yet thou for His sake wilt not even endure insult! He rose as God. He was exalted as God. All these things for our sake, all these things by Divine Providence, all these things properly and in due order did He do that He might redeem us. Let us then be watchful, and strenuous, and constant in prayer, and let us do everything which will please Him, and will gratify His friends, so that we may be redeemed and live. Was not Joseph sold into Egypt, and did he not live in an alien land? And the three simple young men in Babylon, had they not men who opposed them? Yet, because they were fearing God, He helped them, and made them glorious.

595. An old man who had delivered himself unto God used to say, “The monk must have no will of his own, but he whose will is of God continueth to minister to Him unwearyingly; “for if thou doest thine own will, thou becomest weary, and “thou labourest, and God hearkeneth not to thee.” And the old man also said, “He who liveth in God liveth with Him, “for He saith, I will dwell in them, and I will walk in them, “and they shall be to Me a people, and I will be to them a “God” (Exodus vi, 7).

596. And the old man also said, “God saith unto thee thus:— “If thou lovest Me, O monk, do that which I ask, and do “not that which I do not desire. For monks should lead lives “wherein they act not in iniquity, and a man should not look “upon evil things with his eyes, nor hear with his ears things “which are alien to the fear of God, nor utter calumnies with “his mouth, nor plunder with his hands; but he should give “especially to the poor, and he should not be [unduly] exalted “in his mind, and he should not think evil thoughts, neither “should he fill his belly. Let him do then all these things with “discretion, for by them is a monk known.” The old man also said, “These things [form] the life of a monk: Good works, “and obedience, and training. A man should not lay blame “on his neighbour, and he should not utter calumnies, and he “should not complain, for it is written, The lovers of the Lord “hate wickedness.”

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597. A brother on several occasions troubled an old man, and said unto him, "What shall I do with the impure and wicked thoughts of divers kinds which force their way into me by various means?" The old man answered and said unto him, "Thou art like unto a cistern which hath been dug out, and which is sometimes full, but which, when a man cometh to draw water thereat, is found [to be dry]. Why dost thou not make thyself more like a fountain of water which is never without [water]? Persistence is victory, and victory is constancy, and constancy is life, and life is kingdom, and kingdom is God."

Here end the Questions concerning the Thoughts of Fornication, and the Answers thereto, and the Counsels of the Holy Old Men

Chapter xij. Of the Acceptance of Repentance, and of how it is right for us to Repent in Truth

TWO brethren were in restraint to the lust of fornication, and they went and took to themselves wives. At length, however, they repented, and said to each other, 598. "What have we gained by leaving the labour of angels, and coming to this [state of] impurity, since after the present life we shall be delivered over to fire and everlasting torture? Let us return to the desert and repent." And they went forth straightway, and came to the desert to the fathers, and they entreated them to offer up supplications on their behalf; now the outward appearance of both was the same, and they shut themselves up for one year, and they made supplications to God, and entreated Him to pardon them, and to each of the two brethren a like quantity of bread and water was given. Now after their period of repentance was fulfilled, they went forth from their seclusion; and the old men saw that the countenance of one was changed, and that it was exceedingly sad, whilst that of the other brother was cheerful and glad, and the fathers marvelled why, seeing that the two men had been partaking of the same amount of food, and had endured the same restraint, the face of one was so different from that of the other. And they asked him of the sad face, saying, "What didst thou think about in thy cell?" And he said, "On the evil things which I have committed, and I think about the torture which is to come, and by reason of my fear my flesh cleaveth to my bones." And they asked him whose appearance was cheerful, saying, "Do thou also tell us what thou didst think about in thy cell." And he said, "I gave thanks unto God, Who hath delivered me from the impurity of this world, and from everlasting punishment, and Who hath

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“brought me to this labour of angels, and with such things I remembered God and rejoiced.” Then the old men said, “The repentance of each is equal before God.”

599. An old man was asked by one who toiled, “Is the repentance of sinners accepted by God?” And the old man, after he had taught him with many words, said unto him, “Tell me, O my beloved one: if thy cloak were to be torn in rags, wouldst thou throw it away?” And he said unto him, “No, but I would sew up the rents, and then I could use it again.” And the old man said unto him, “If thou wouldst shew pity upon thy garment which hath no feeling, shall not God shew pity on that which He hath fashioned, and which is His work?”

600. A certain brother fell into temptation, and through tribulation relinquished the garb of monkhood; and he wished to begin to renew his ascetic life, but he saw the great difficulty of the matter, and he drew back, and said, “When shall I ever find myself in the same condition as I was formerly?” And through fear he did not begin his work, and he went and made the matter known to an old man, and the old man said, “The matter is thus: There was a certain man who possessed an estate, and he held it to be of no account and did not cultivate it, and it became full of tangled undergrowth and thorns. Now one day he remembered it, and he sent his son, and said unto him, ‘Go, clean the estate.’ And when he had gone and seen the abundance of the undergrowth he was afraid, and said to himself, ‘When shall I be able to clean away all this undergrowth?’ And he threw himself upon a bed, and lay down, and went to sleep, and thus he did every day. Then his father went forth and found that he was asleep, and that he had done nothing; and he said unto him, ‘How is it, my son, that no work whatsoever hath been done by thee?’ And he said to his father, ‘When I came to work and saw the abundance of the undergrowth, I was afraid and said, When shall I be able to clean all this away?’ And his father said unto him, ‘My son, work according to the measure of thy sleep each day, and it shall be sufficient for thee;’ and when he heard [this] the young man plucked up courage, and did thus, and in a short time he cleansed the estate. Thus also thou shalt not be afraid, but begin the work of thy rules, and God, by His Grace, will establish thee [among those in] the first rank.” Now when the brother had done thus he was helped.

601. A brother asked one of the old men, and said, “If a monk stumble and fall into sin, are many labours necessary for him, and if he doeth them will he be able to stand in the

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“grade wherein he was formerly? He who goeth forth from
“the world, and beginneth the cultivation of spiritual excel-
“lence, will find it easy to advance, for he who is occupied in
“labours, if it be that he is reduced from the grade wherein
“he stood by his stumbling, will be afflicted and grieved in his
“mind.” Then the old man answered and said unto him, “A
“monk is like unto a house which hath fallen down, and if he
“be awake in his mind (*or* thought), and if he be zealous and
“anxious to build that which was fallen down, he will find
“ample material which will be of use in his building among
“the remains of that which fell down before [he began to
“build]; for he will find the foundation stones, and the old
“stones from the walls, and other things, which were em-
“ployed in the old building, and out of these, if he be so
“disposed, he will be able to make his building to rear itself
“up better than the man who hath not yet dug the places for
“the foundations and laid the foundation stones, and who doth
“not possess the materials which are to be employed in the
“building, and who only beginneth to build with the hope
“that he will be able to finish. And thus is it with him that
“falleth from the practice of rules and works of the monkish
“life into temptation, for if he turn back, and repent, he will
“possess ample material from [his] former works of the ascetic
“life which he possesseth [to begin his building afresh], I
“mean to say, the training and the service of the work of the
“hands, which is the foundation [thereof]. Whosoever then
“hath gone forth from the world, and beginneth the cultiva-
“tion of ascetic excellence, when he hath done these things
“he will still be found standing in the front rank of the soli-
“tary (*or* monkish) life.”

602. One of the old men told the following story, saying:—
There was a certain monk who dwelt in the desert, and he
lived a life of strict and severe rule, and he was famous among
men, and he could even cast out devils and heal the sick. And
it came to pass that, through the agency of Satan, the pas-
sion of fornication was stirred up against him, and because he
was not sufficiently humble to reveal his war unto the old men
who were before him, in a few days' time he fell into fornication
with a woman who used to come to him continually for assist-
ance. Now having fallen, he despaired about himself, and he
rose up to go to the world, and he was sad and grieved con-
cerning his fall; and he meditated, saying, “I will go into
“the desert which is further away, and I shall not see any
“man, and I shall not be seen of any, and there I will die
“like the wild animals.” And when he had gone, and he
was wandering about in the desert and in the mountains,

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he used to cry out by night and by day, saying, "Woe is me! woe is me!" And he ceased not to weep and to groan. Now there was in that desert a certain solitary old man who dwelt in a cleft in the rock, and when he heard the sound of the weeping and lamentation, his mercy for him revealed itself, and he went forth and met him, and they saluted each other. And the old man answered and said unto him, "Why weepest thou in this fashion?" And the young man said, "Because I have angered God, and because I have fallen into fornication." Then was the old man astonished, and he said, "O how greatly did I fear and tremble at thy lugubrious voice. For I thought that thou hadst been entrusted with the governorship of the brethren, and that thou hadst governed unjustly, or that thou hadst squandered in an unseemly manner the work of the community. For the harlot repented, and for the unbeliever there is a foundation, and the thief is a son of the kingdom, but Ananias and Sapphira were slain because they stole the money of the community of the brethren, and thus is slain the soul of every one who with fraud or carelessness squanders the possessions of the religious houses. But be thou of good courage, O brother, and go back again to thy cell, and make thine entreaty to God as thou repentest, and He will stablish thee in thy former grade." Then the monk went back to his place, and he shut himself in, and never again undertook to talk with any man, except him that handed in to him his food through the little window of his cell, and there he remained until the end of his life, and he attained to a most exalted state of perfection.

603. Abbâ Ammon of Rîtheaôn asked Abbâ Poemen about the impure thoughts which are produced in a man, and the vain lusts; and Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "It belongeth to Satan to sow them, but it is our affair not to welcome them."

604. A brother asked Abbâ Ammon, saying, "Behold, there were two men, the one was a monk, and the other a son of the world; now the monk used to determine in the evening to cast away from him in the morning the garb of the monk, and the son of the world used to make up his mind that on the morrow he would take the garb of monkhood. Now it happened that both men died on the same night; how will they be regarded, and which determination will be reckoned to them?" The old man said unto him, "He who was a monk died a monk, and he who was a child of the world died as such, for as they were found [to be] so were they taken."

605. A brother asked Abbâ Siões, saying, "What shall I do, father? For I have fallen." The old man said unto him, "Rise up"; and the brother said unto him, "I did rise up, but

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"I fell again." The old man said unto him, "Rise up again"; and the brother said unto him, "I did rise up again, many times, and I fell [again]." The old man said unto him, "Rise up again"; and the brother said unto him, "Until when?" The old man said unto him, "Until thou advancest, either in good deeds or in falling; for in the road wherein a man advances he goeth, whether it be to death or to life."

606. It happened on one occasion that a brother in the monastery of Abbâ Hatîl (*or* Helît) was tempted, [and he fell,] and having been expelled from that place he went to the mountain, to Abbâ Anthony, and having remained with him for a long time, Abbâ Anthony sent him back to the monastery from which he had gone forth. Now when the sons of the monastery saw him, they cast him out, and he returned to Abbâ Anthony, and said unto him, "Father, they have refused to receive me"; and Abbâ Anthony sent them a message, saying, "A storm rose up against a ship on the sea, and destroyed the freight which she carried, but with the greatest difficulty she was saved [and brought] to land. Now what do ye wish to do? Do ye wish to drown him that hath been saved?" And when those monks [heard the words of] Abbâ Anthony, they sent to the brother, and welcomed him with gladness.

607. Abbâ Anthony used to say, "There are many who fall and who rise up to an attitude of rectitude, but there are some who fall from good deeds to polluted things; better is he who falleth and riseth up than he who standeth and then falleth."

608. Abbâ Poemen said, "If a man sinneth, and he saith, 'I have not sinned,' and thou chidest him, thou cuttest off his will; but if thou sayest unto him, 'Be not sorry about this, but guard thyself from sinning again,' by these means thou wakest his soul to repentance."

609. He also said, "I prefer a man who hath sinned, and done wickedly, and repented, to the man who hath not sinned and hath not manifested repentance; for the former possesseth a humble mind, and the latter esteemeth himself in his thoughts a just man."

610. Abbâ Sarmâtâ used to say, "I prefer a man who hath sinned, and who knoweth how to acknowledge his sins, to him that doeth righteousness, and who saith, 'I do what is fair.'"

611. Abbâ Theodore of Parmê used to say, "The man who is in [a state of] repentance is not bound by the Law."

612. They used to say that the thoughts of a certain old man used to say unto him, "Let to-day go by, and repent to-morrow"; but he would say, "Nay, not so, for I will repent to-day, and to-morrow shall be as God willeth."

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613. There was at one time among the brethren a certain man who at the beginning of his [ascetic] career took good heed unto his soul, but when a short time had elapsed, he began to treat the salvation of his life with contempt; and his Abbâ ordered him to strip off the garb of the monks, and to put on the apparel of men who are in the world, and to depart from among the brethren. Then the man fell down at his feet, and entreated him, saying, "If thou wilt forgive me this once only, thou wilt gain me henceforward, for I repent of these things which I have done through negligence." And having multiplied and prolonged his entreaties, and made many promises that he would in the future mend his ways, he was held worthy of forgiveness; and he struggled with all the power of his soul to such purpose as to become a pattern to great and small.

Chapter xiiij. Of [the Fathers who] wrought Wonderful Works

ABBÂ SISOES said: When we were in Scete, with Abbâ Macarius, seven of us went up to reap with him, and behold, a certain widow followed after us gleaning, and she ceased not to weep. And the old man cried to the lord of the estate, and said unto him, "What is the matter with the old woman who weepeth continually?" He said unto him, "Her husband took a deposit of money from a man and he died suddenly without saying with whom he had placed it, and the owner of the deposit wisheth to take her and her children as slaves." The old man said unto him, "Tell her to come to us at the place where we rest at the season of noon," and it was told to her. And at the season of noon the woman came to them, and the old man said unto her, "Woman, why dost thou weep continually?" And she said, "My husband is dead. He had taken a deposit from a certain man, and he died suddenly without telling us where he had laid it up." The old man said unto her, "Come [and] and show me where ye have laid him"; and he took the brethren with him, and went with her, and having arrived at the place where the man was laid, the old man said unto her, "Get thee now to thy house." And after [she had departed] and he had made an end of his prayer, the old man cried out to the dead man and said, "O Such-an-one, where hast thou laid up the deposit which belongeth to the stranger?" Then the dead man answered straightway, and said, "It is hidden in my house beneath the leg of the bed"; and the old man said unto him, "Sleep now until the Resurrection." Now when the brethren saw what had been done, they all fell down at his feet in fear; and the old man said unto them, "This hath not happened because of me, O my brethren,

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“nor is the matter a great one, but God hath wrought this thing for the sake of the widow and the orphans; but what is great is that God desireth a soul which is pure and sinless.” And when they had come they told the widow that the deposit was laid up in such and such a place, and then the old woman brought it up, and gave it to its owner, and set free her children from slavery. And every one who heard [of this] gave thanks unto God.

615. When Abbâ Miles (*or* Manilius) was passing through a certain place he saw a man holding a monk by force as if he had committed murder, and the old man drew nigh and questioned the brother, and when he learned that he was being wrongfully accused, he said unto those who had seized him, “Tell me where is the man who hath been murdered”; and they shewed him. Then the old man drew nigh to the murdered man, and said unto all who were standing [there], “Let us pray”; and when he had spread out his hands in prayer before God, the dead man rose up. And the old man said unto him before every man, “Tell us who it was that slew thee”; and he answered and said, “I went into the church and gave some money to the elder, and it was he who rose up and killed me, and he carried me out and threw me in the habitation of this monk. I entreat you that the goods which I have given to him may be taken back and given to my children.”

616. On one occasion a certain man in the world went to Abbâ Sisoës in the mountain of Abbâ Anthony, and he had his son with him, and as they were going along the road his son died; now the man was in no wise disturbed, but he took him up in faith and brought him to the old man, and he came with his son, and fell down before him with his son upon his knees as if he was entreating him to bless them; and the father of the boy went out and left his son [lying] dead at the feet of the old man. Now the old man did not know that the boy was dead, but he thought that he was making supplication and entreaty to him; and he answered and said unto him, “Arise, and go forth,” and straightway without any delay whatsoever, the youth rose up and went out to his father, who, when he saw him, marvelled; and his father took him and went in and did homage to the old man, and informed him about the matter. Now when the old man heard this he was troubled, for he did not wish this thing to happen because of the praise of men; and his disciple commanded them not to tell the story before any man until the day of his death.

617. One of the fathers used to relate that Abbâ Paule, who dwelt in Thebes, would take snakes, and scorpions, and horned snakes in his hands, and kill them. And the brethren made

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apologies to him, and said, "Father, tell us through what labour thou hast received this gift." And he said unto them, "Forgive me, O my fathers, if ye possess purity of heart, every living thing will be subject unto you as it was unto Adam before he transgressed the commandment of God."

618. On one occasion one of the old men of Thebes came to Mount Sinai, and having departed from there, one of the brethren met him on the way, and with a groan he said unto the old man, "We are distressed, O father, through the want of rain." And the old man said unto him, "Why do ye not pray and ask God for some?" And the brother said unto him, "We have prayed and made earnest supplication, and the rain hath not come." The old man said unto them, "Then ye did not pray with all your hearts; do ye wish to know that the matter is thus?" And after [this] the old man stood up in prayer, and he spread out his hands to heaven, and straightway, without any delay whatsoever, the rain came; and the brother saw, and feared, and he fell down and did homage to him. Now the old man took to flight, but the brother made known everything which had happened, and when [the brethren] heard [thereof] they all glorified God.

619. They used to say that, when on one occasion, Abbâ Moses of Scete was going into Patârâ, he grew weary through the length of the road, and he was afraid and said, "How can I bring water for myself into this place?" And a voice was heard by him, saying, "Go on, and fear not." Now one day a large number of the fathers came to him, and he had there only one vessel of water, and having boiled some lentiles the water came to an end; at this the old man was troubled, and went out and in, and prayed to God, and afterwards a great cloud came and poured down upon them much rain, and it filled all the vessels which he had with water. Then afterwards the fathers said unto him, "Abbâ Moses, tell us why thou didst come in and out"; and he said unto them, "I entered into judgement with God, who brought me hither because there was want of water, and because I had no water for His servants to drink; therefore I came in and out."

620. The old man Joseph used to say: "I went on one occasion to Abbâ Poemen and found many old men with him, and behold, a certain man had brought a youth who was a kinsman of Abbâ Poemen, and whose face had been turned backwards through the operation of the Evil One; and when his father saw the multitude of the old men who were coming to Abbâ Poemen, he took him and brought him outside the door of the monastery, and sat down there and wept. Now when one of the old men had ended his business, and was

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“going forth [from the building], he saw him, and said unto him, ‘Why weepeth thou, O man?’ The father of the youth said unto him, ‘I am of the family of Abbâ Poemen. A trial hath come upon this youth, but we are afraid to take him to him, for he refuseth to see us, and now, if he learneth that I am here, he will send and drive me away; but when I knew that ye were coming here, I ventured to come also.’ And he cast the youth down on the ground at his feet, and wept, saying, ‘If thou wilt, have mercy on me, and take this youth inside, and pray over him’; and the old man took him and carried him in with him to Abbâ Poemen. Now the old man acted wisely in the matter, and he did not take the youth at once to Abbâ Poemen, but beginning with the last of the brethren who was there, he brought the youth to each and every one of them, saying, ‘Make the sign of the Cross upon this youth’; and having brought him alike to all the brethren and to all the old men who were there, finally he brought him to Abbâ Poemen, but the blessed man refused to touch him. Thereupon a contention arose, and they all entreated him, saying, ‘Father, do thou even as we all have done’; then Abbâ Poemen sighed, and he rose up and prayed, and said, ‘O God, heal that which Thou hast fashioned so that it may not be destroyed by the Enemy,’ and he finished his prayer, and made the sign of the Cross over him, and straightway the face of the youth was made straight, and he was healed. And Abbâ Poemen gave him to his father made whole, so he took him and departed with rejoicing.”

621. They used to say that the face of Abbâ Pambô was like lightning, even as Moses received the glory of the likeness of Adam, and that his face shone, and that he was like a king who sitteth upon his throne; and thus was it also with Abbâ Silvanus and with Abbâ Sisoës.

622. They used to say about one of the old men that as he was in the light during the day, so also was he [in the light] in his cell by night, and that he used to work with his hands and read in the night time just as he did during the day.

623. One of the old men sent his disciple to draw water, now the well was a very long way off from their cell, and that brother forgot to take the rope with him; and being distressed [thereat] he bowed himself in prayer, and he prayed and cried out, saying, “O well, my father [saith], ‘Fill this vessel for me with water, and without delay’”; and the water came up, and the brother filled [the vessel], and as soon as he had done so the water descended to its place.

624. On one occasion Abbâ Moses came to the well to draw

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water, and he saw Abbâ Zechariah praying to the stream, and the Spirit of God was resting upon him like a dove.

625. On one occasion one of the brethren went to the cell of Abbâ Arsenius in Scete, and he looked through the window, and saw the old man standing up, and all his body was like fire; now that brother was worthy to see this sight. And having knocked at the door the old man came out to him; and seeing that the brother was marvelling at the sight which he had seen, he said unto him, "Hast thou been knocking a long time? Peradventure thou hast seen something?" and he said unto him, "No; [I have not]." And Abbâ Arsenius spake with him and dismissed him.

626. They used to say that a certain old man said, "Verily, as he who worketh gold, and as he who maketh beautiful work, cleanly and at peace, so thou also by thy beautiful thoughts must inherit the kingdom of God; but I who have passed the whole period of my life in the desert have not been able to overtake thee."

627. They used to say about a certain great old man, who lived in Pûrpîrînê, that when he lifted up his eyes to heaven he could see whatsoever was therein, and that if he gazed into the earth, he could see into the depths, and whatsoever was in them.

628. Abbâ John, who was cast out by the Marcionites, used to say:—On one occasion we went from Syria to Abbâ Poemen, and when we wished him to speak to us about hardness of heart [we found that] the old man did not know Greek, and there was no interpreter with leisure [to interpret there]. And the old man saw that we were troubled at this, and he began to talk to us in the Greek tongue, and at the beginning of his speech he said, "Water is by nature soft, and stone is hard, nevertheless if thou suspendest a vessel full of water above a stone, and wilt pour it out upon it drop by drop, it will wear away the stone. In the same way the Word of God is soft, and our heart is hard, but if it heareth continually the Word of God, the heart will be opened, and will turn to the fear of God."

629. A certain monk lived in the desert, and there was another brother who lived in a cell by his side, and when he visited him from time to time he used to see him praying and entreating our Lord that the wild animals might be at peace with him. And after the prayer a panther which was suckling her young was found by him, and that brother went down upon his knees and sucked with them. And on another occasion the blessed man saw that brother praying and beseeching God to make fire to be at peace with him; and he lit a fire, and knelt

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down in the middle of it, and prayed. And that old man used to say, "If thou wishest to become a monk, bring thyself into "subjection that thou mayest be in the congregation of the "community, and mayest enter the monastery; but if thou "canst not cast away from thee care concerning [all kinds of] "occupations and affairs, thou canst never dwell in the con- "gregation. All the power thou hast is over a bottle of water."

630. And there are also wonderful things which the blessed Bessarion performed. He made the waters of the sea sweet, and Saul his disciple drank [of them]; he crossed over the water of the river; he prevented the sun from setting in the heavens; and the rooting up of the temples of the idols was revealed unto him. As they were going to John the Theban his disciple became thirsty, and Bessarion prayed, and water bubbled up, and he gave him to drink; and he healed also the young man who was a paralytic, so that he ran to his father; and he cast out a devil from a young man who was always asleep, and whom his parents besought him to wake up. I have, however, written down all these things in the history of the holy man Bessarion, wherein it is written that he was sitting at the door of the monastery and weeping bitterly.

Chapter xiv. Of the Greatness of the Sublime Rule of the Solitary Life

THERE was a certain old man amongst the fathers who used to see visions, and this man testified, and said, "That power which I have seen existing in baptism, I
631. "have also seen in the apparel of the monks when they "take the garb of the monk."

632. An old man from Thebaïs used to say:—I was the son of a priest of idols, and when I was young I lived in the temple, and I have on many occasions seen my father go into the temple to perform the sacrifices to the idols. Once I went in secretly after him, and I saw Satan sitting [there], with his whole army before him, and, behold, one of his devils came and did homage to him. And Satan answered and said unto him, "Whence comest thou?" And the devil made answer, saying, "I was in such and such a country, and I stirred up "many wars and revolts, and I caused the shedding of blood, "and I have come to tell thee these things." Satan said unto him, "How long did it take thee to do this?" and the devil said "Thirty days." Then Satan commanded him to be beaten, saying unto him, "Is this all that thou hast done in so long a time?" And, behold, another devil came and worshipped him, and to him he said, "Whence comest thou?" And the devil answered and said, "I was in the sea, where I stirred up storms, and

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“sank ships, and drowned many men, and I have come that I may inform thee of these things.” Then Satan answered and said unto him, “In how much time hast thou done this?” and the devil answered and said unto him, “In twenty days,” and Satan commanded that he also should be beaten, saying unto him, “Why is it that in all these days thou hast only done [what thou sayest]?” And when he had said this, behold, a third devil came and worshipped Satan, who answered and said unto him also, “And where dost thou come from?” and the devil answered and said unto him, “I have been in such and such a city wherein there was a marriage feast, and I stirred up a war there, and caused the shedding of much blood, and the death of the bridegroom and the bride; and as soon as I had done this I came to inform thee.” And Satan said unto him, “In how many days hast thou done this?” and the devil said, “In ten days”; and Satan commanded that he should be beaten, saying, “In all these days thou hast only done this.” Then afterwards, behold, a fourth devil came and worshipped him, and Satan answered and said unto him, “And whence comest thou also?” And he who was asked answered and said unto him, “I have been in the desert for forty years striving with a monk, and to-night I have hurled him into fornication”; and when Satan heard this, he rose up straightway and embraced and kissed that devil, and he took the crown off his head, and placed it upon him, and he made him to sit by his side upon his throne, saying, “And so thou hast been able to do so great a work as this in so short a time! For there is nothing which I prize so highly as the fall of a monk.” And the old man went on to say:—When I saw these things I said within myself, “Yea, so great then is the army of the monks! And by the operation of God, Who desired my redemption, I came forth, and became a monk.”

633. In the time when Julian, the rebellious Emperor, was going down to the territory of the Persians, he sent a certain devil to go speedily to the country of the West, and to bring him from thence an account of what he had sent him [to do]. Now when that devil arrived at a certain place wherein dwelt a monk, he stopped and tarried there for a period of fifteen days without being able to move anywhere, and he was unable to travel onwards, because the monk did not cease from praying, either by night or by day; so he returned to the heathen who had sent him without having done anything. Then the wicked Julian said unto him, “Why hast thou tarried so long?” And the devil answered and said unto him, “I delayed in coming, and I have done nothing; for a monk, who continued in prayer, came in my way and I tarried with him

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“fifteen days, expecting that he would some time cease to pray and that I should be able to go on my way; but he never ceased from his prayer, and I was prevented from going on, and so I delayed in coming, and I have done nothing.” Then was the wicked Julian angry, and he said, “When I come back I will take vengeance upon him”; but before a few days were over, he was slain by Divine Providence. And straightway one of the eparchs who were with him went and sold everything which he possessed and gave [the money] to the poor, and he came to that monk, and himself became a chosen monk; and he died with a good ending, and with works which were pleasing unto God.

634. On one occasion Abbâ Pambô was travelling with some monks in the districts of Egypt; and seeing some worldly folk sitting down he said unto them, “Rise up, and salute the monks so that ye may be blessed, for they are always holding converse with God, and their mouths are holy.”

635. Abbâ John used to say, “The whole company of the holy men is like unto a garden which is full of fruit-bearing trees of various kinds, and wherein the trees are planted in [one] earth, and all of them drink from one fountain; and thus is it with all the holy men, for they have not one rule only, but several varieties, and one man laboureth in one way, and another man in another, but it is one Spirit which operateth and worketh in them.”

Book ij.

Chapter j. Questions and Answers on the Rule of Life of the Holy Men which they taught before the Multitude and in their Cells on every kind of Spiritual Excellence

TWO of the fathers entreated God to inform them as to the measure [of spiritual excellence] to which they had arrived, and a voice came to them which said, "In such and such a village of Egypt there is a certain man in the world who is called Eucharistos, and his wife Mary, and ye have not as yet arrived at the same measure as they." Now when the fathers heard [this] they marvelled, and they rose up and came to that village, and they enquired for and found the house and the wife of Eucharistos, and they asked her, saying, "Where is thy husband?" And she answered and said unto them, "He is a shepherd, and he is in the field pasturing sheep"; and she brought them into her house. And when the evening had come her husband came from the sheep, and seeing the fathers he rejoiced with great joy, and he prepared a table [for them], and brought water that he might wash their feet. Then the fathers answered and said unto him, "We will eat nothing, but tell us what is thy work"; and Eucharistos said unto them with great humility, "I am a shepherd, and this is my wife." Now the fathers entreated him to inform them concerning his life and works, but he concealed the matter, and refused to speak. Finally they said unto him, "God told us to come to thee," and when Eucharistos heard this he was afraid, and he told them, saying, "Behold, we inherited these sheep from our parents, and whatsoever God provideth as [our] income from them we divide into three portions; one portion [we devote] to charity, one portion to the love of strangers, and the remaining part serveth for our own use. Since the time when I took this woman to wife we have not defiled ourselves, and she is a virgin, and each of us sleepeth alone; at night time we wear sackcloth, and in the daytime we put it off and array ourselves in our [ordinary] attire, and no man hath known this thing until the present moment." And when the fathers heard [this] they glorified God.

2. They say concerning Abbâ Anthony that on one occasion, when he was praying in his cell he heard a voice which said unto him, "Anthony, thou hast not yet arrived [at the state of excellence] of a certain man who is a tailor and who dwelleth in Alexandria." Then Anthony rose up in the morning,

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and took a palm stick and departed to him, and when the man saw him, he was disturbed; and the old man said unto him, "Tell me what thou doest, and how thou livest," and the tailor said unto him, "I do not myself know that I do any good, and I know only that when I rise up in the morning, before I sit down to the labour of my hands, I give thanks unto God, and praise Him, and that I set my evil deeds before mine eyes, saying, 'All the men who are in this city will go into the kingdom of God, because of their alms and good deeds, except myself, and I shall inherit punishment for my sins'; and again in the evening, before I sleep, I do the same things." Now when Abbâ Anthony heard these things, he said, "Verily, as the man who worketh in gold, and who doeth beautiful work, cleanly, and in peace, even so art thou; through thy beautiful thoughts thou wilt inherit the kingdom of God, whilst I, who have passed the whole of my life in the desert, separated [from men], have never overtaken thee."

3. Abbâ Anthony received a revelation in the desert, saying, "In such and such a city there is a man who resembleth thee; he is a physician, and he worketh and giveth whatsoever he earneth to the poor and needy, and each day he, with the angels, ascribeth holiness to God three times a day."

4. When Abbâ Macarius was praying in his cell on one occasion he heard a voice which said, "Macarius, thou hast not yet arrived [at the state of excellence] of two women who are in such and such a city"; and the old man rose up in the morning, and took in his hand a palm stick, and he began to set out on the road to that city. Now therefore, when he had arrived at the city, and learned the place [of the abode of the women], he knocked at the door, and there went forth one of the women and brought him into the house. And when he had been sitting down for a little, the other woman came in, and he called them to him, and they came nigh and sat down before him. Then the old man said unto them, "On your account I have made this long journey, and have performed all this labour, and with great difficulty have come from the desert; tell me, then, what works do ye do." And they said unto him, "Believe us, O father; neither of us hath ever been absent from, or kept herself back from, her husband's couch up to this day; what work, then, wouldst thou see in us?" Then the old man made apologies to them, and entreated them to reveal to him and to show him their labour, and thereupon they said unto him, "According to worldly considerations we are strangers one to the other, for we are not kinsfolk, but it fell out that the two of us married two

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“men who were brethren in the flesh. And behold, up to this present we have lived in this house for twelve years, and we have never wanted to quarrel with each other, and neither of us hath spoken one abominable word of abuse to her companion. Now we made up our minds together to leave our husbands and to join the army of virgins, but, although we entreated our husbands earnestly to allow us to do so, they would not undertake to send us away. And as we were unable to do that which we wished, we made a promise between ourselves and God that, until death, no worldly word should go forth from our mouths.” Now when Macarius heard [this] he said, “Verily, virginity by itself is nothing, nor marriage, nor life as a monk, nor life in the world; for God seeketh the desire [of a man], and giveth the Spirit unto every man.”

5. They used to tell a story about certain brethren who were members of the household of Abbâ Poemen. Now whilst these men were dwelling in Egypt their mother wished to see them, but was unable to do so, and she watched for them as they were going to the church, and went out to meet them, but as soon as they saw her they went back to their cell and shut the door on themselves, and then their mother took up her stand by the door, and spake [unto them], and wept and sighed heavily. And when Abbâ Job heard her, he went in to Abbâ Poemen and said unto him, “What shall we do in respect of this old woman who is weeping by the door?” Then Abbâ Poemen rose up and drew nigh to the door and pressed himself against it and, hearing her speaking in the deepest sorrow, he said unto her, “Wilt thou, who art an old woman, cry in this fashion?” Now as soon as she heard his voice she wept the more, and she cried out, saying, “I want to see my sons. For what is this that I see in you? Peradventure I did not rear you? Peradventure I am not your mother? Peradventure ye did not suck at my breasts? Peradventure ye did not go forth from my womb? I am prevented by mine old age, but now that I have heard thy voice my bowels have been moved.” The old man said unto her, “Dost thou wish to see us here, or wouldst thou see us in that country [beyond the grave]?” She said unto him, “My sons, if I do not see you here I shall see you there.” And the old man said unto her, “If thou wilt compel thyself not to see us here, thou shalt, in very truth, see us there.” Then the old woman departed, saying, “Yea, my son, if I shall see you there I shall not seek to see you here.”

6. There was a certain old man who lived a life of such strict self-denial that he never drank wine. And when I arrived at

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his cell we sat down to eat, and one brought dates and he ate, and he took water and drank; and I said unto him laughingly, "So thou art angry with absinthe, O father? Since thou hast eaten dates and hast drunk water, why dost thou not drink wine?" And he answered and said unto me, "If thou takest a handful of dust and throwest it on a man will it hurt him?" and I said unto him, "No." And he said unto me, "If thou takest a handful of water and throwest it over a man, peradventure he will feel pain?" and I said unto him, "No." And he said unto me, "And again, if thou takest a handful of chopped straw and throwest it over a man, peradventure it will cause him pain? and I said unto him, "No." Then he said unto me, "But if thou bringest [them all] and dost mix them together, and dost knead them well, and dost dry them, thou mayest throw and hurl the mass on the skull of a man and thou wilt not break it"; and I said unto him, "Yea, father, [that is true]." And he said unto me, "The monks do not abstain from certain things without good reason, and thou must not listen to the men who are in the world who say, 'Why do they not eat this, and why do they not drink that?' Is there not sin in them? Such people know not. Now we abstain from certain things not because the things themselves are bad, but because the passions are mighty, and when they have waxed strong they kill us."

7. On one occasion the priest of Scete went to the Archbishop of Alexandria, and when he had returned to Scete he wanted to send the brethren [to Alexandria], and he said unto them, "I have heard you say that there is a large assembly of people in Alexandria. Verily, I say unto you that I who went there did not see the face of any man except the Archbishop." Now when they heard [this] they were disturbed, and said, "Have they sunk into the ground, then?" And he said, "Nay, not so, but my thoughts did not compel me to look at a man"; and when they heard [this] they marvelled, and they were greatly confirmed by these words [in their desire] to keep themselves from looking upon the vain things of the world.

8. One of the old men used to say: On one occasion the fathers were sitting and conversing together on the subject of ascetic excellence, and there was in their midst one of the old men who was a seer of visions, and he saw angels flying about over [the fathers]; but when they came to another subject of discourse, the angels departed, and he saw pigs rolling about among them and wallowing in the mire. And afterwards when the fathers renewed their conversation on spiritual excellence the angels came back and glorified God.

9. One of the fathers used to say that there were two

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brethren who were neighbours of his in the desert, and that one was a stranger and the other a native of the country; now the stranger was a man of little faith, but the native performed many works in the service of God. And it happened that the stranger died, and the old man, who saw divine visions, saw multitudes of angels bearing away in triumph his soul until it arrived in heaven. And an inquiry arose concerning this, and the old man heard a voice from heaven which said, "He was certainly a negligent man, but because of his being a stranger they opened unto him." And afterwards the man who was a native of the country died, and his kinsfolk came to him and buried him, and the old man saw that there were no angels with him, and he marvelled, and he fell on his face and entreated God to inform him how it was that the stranger who was a negligent man was worthy of glory, whilst the man who had all those labours [to his credit] was not granted the same thing. And he heard a voice which said, "When the native with all his works came to die, he opened his eyes and saw his kinsfolk weeping, and his soul was refreshed; but the stranger, although he was negligent, saw none of his kinsfolk, and he sighed and wept."

10. One of the fathers told a story, saying: There was a certain monk in the desert of Linopolis, and a man who was in the world ministered unto him; and there was in the city a certain rich and wicked man who died, and he was accompanied to his burial by the whole city, and by the Bishop, with lights and great honour. Now the man who ministered to the monk went forth to give him some bread, but he found him dead and eaten by the panthers; and he fell upon his face before the Lord and said, "My Lord, I will not rise up from this place until Thou makest me to know why this wicked man is buried with such great honour, and why this monk who served Thee by night and by day hath come to such an end." And an angel came and said unto him, "That wicked man did one good work, and he was rewarded here so that he might not find even one pleasure in the world to come; but this holy man, because he was a man who was adorned with divine virtues, although inasmuch as he was a man he possessed certain shortcomings, will receive these things in the world to come, so that there he may be found perfect therein." And having heard [this] he returned, and glorified God for His judgements because they are good.

11. A brother asked an old man, saying, "Is it the name or the work which maketh to live?" The old man said unto him, "I knew a certain brother who was praying on one occasion, and who thought within himself, saying, 'I wish

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“ ‘to see the soul of a righteous man, and the soul of a sinner
“ ‘when they are leaving the body’; and because God wished
“ ‘neither to make him grieve, nor to deprive him of his desire,
“ ‘whilst he was sitting in his cell a wolf went in to him, and
“ ‘laid hold of him by his clothes and dragged him outside, and
“ ‘then having pulled him along he carried him to the outside
“ ‘of a certain city, and then he left him there and departed.

“ ‘Now whilst he was sitting outside the city there was a man
“ ‘who lived in a monastery, and who had gained renown, and
“ ‘and concerning whom a report had gone forth that he was a
“ ‘monk of spiritual excellence; and this man was grievously
“ ‘sick, and was waiting for the hour of his departure [from
“ ‘this world]. And that brother looked on and saw the prepar-
“ ‘ations which they were making, and the things which they
“ ‘were putting ready for the event, namely, the wax candles,
“ ‘and the lamps which they were trimming and preparing, and
“ ‘he saw that all the city was weeping for him, and that his
“ ‘people were in grief, and saying, ‘By his hand God hath
“ ‘given us meat and drink, and by his hands He hath de-
“ ‘livered us, and hath kept us and the whole city alive; if
“ ‘anything happeneth to him we shall die.’ And when the time
“ ‘for this man to end his life had come that brother looked, and
“ ‘saw, and behold, the keeper of Sheol went in having in his
“ ‘hand a fork of fire with three prongs, and he heard a voice
“ ‘which spake [to the keeper], saying, ‘Thou shalt not give
“ ‘his soul any rest, even for a moment, and thou shalt not
“ ‘shew any compassion unto him when thou takest away his
“ ‘soul. Then he who had appeared to that brother went in, and
“ ‘he drove that fiery, three-pronged fork which he had in his
“ ‘hand into the heart of the dying man, and he tortured him
“ ‘for a long time, and then he carried away his soul. And after
“ ‘these things, when that brother was going into the city, he
“ ‘saw a certain brother who was a stranger, and who was
“ ‘lying sick in the market-place, and there was none to care
“ ‘for him; and he remained with him for one day, and at the
“ ‘time when his soul was departing the brother saw Gabriel and
“ ‘Michael come for his soul, and they sat down, one on his
“ ‘right hand, and the other on his left, and they stayed there
“ ‘entreating his soul and wishing to carry it away. And since
“ ‘his soul refused to leave its body, Gabriel said to Michael,
“ ‘Lift up his soul and take it, so that we may depart’; and
“ ‘Michael said unto him, ‘We were commanded by our Lord
“ ‘to bring it out without pain and without suffering, and
“ ‘therefore we cannot constrain it and do it violence.’ Then
“ ‘Michael cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘What dost Thou
“ ‘command concerning this soul which will not be entreated

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“ ‘to come forth, O Lord?’ And there came unto him a voice
“ ‘which said, ‘ Behold, I will send David and his harp, and all
“ ‘ those who sing with him, so that when the soul heareth the
“ ‘ sweetness of their voices it shall come forth’; and they came
“ ‘ down and surrounded the soul, and as they were singing
“ ‘ psalms and hymns the soul leaped forth, and it was rejoicing
“ ‘ in the hands of Michael, and was taken up on high with
“ ‘ gladness.’ ”

12. They used to say that a certain old man went on one occasion to a city to sell his handiwork, and it chanced that he sat down by the door of a house of a rich man who was dying, and whose death was very near at hand; and as he was sitting [there] he looked and saw black horses, with their black riders, who were exceedingly terrible, and they held in their hands staves of fire. And when they had come to the door of the house, they set their horses outside, and they went in together, and as soon as the sick man saw them, he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, “ O Lord, help me.” Then those who had been sent unto him said, “ Now that the sun hath set upon thee thou hast come to call God to remembrance; why didst thou not seek Him while it was yet day? Now thou hast neither a portion of hope nor consolation left.” Then they took away his soul and departed.

13. There were two brethren who lived in cells, and one of them was an old man who had persuaded the younger man, saying, “ My brother, let us dwell together,” but he said unto him, “ I am a sinner, and I cannot let thee be with me, O father.” Then the old man entreated him, saying, “ Yes, we can [live together]”; now that old man was pure in his thoughts, and he was not content to hear that there was in the young man the thought of fornication. And the brother said unto him, “ Father, leave me for one week, and we will speak [on the subject] again”; and when the week was ended the old man came and, wishing to try him, the brother said unto him, “ During the past week, O father, I fell into great temptation, for I went to a certain village on business, and I met a woman.” The old man said unto him, “ There is repentance”; and the brother said unto him, “ Yea, there is.” And the old man said unto him, “ I will bear the half of this sin with thee”; then the brother said unto him, “ We shall now be able to dwell together.” So they dwelt together until the end of their lives.

14. Certain brethren from the great monastery went forth and departed to the desert, and they came to one of the monks who received them with gladness; and when he saw that, as was usual with monks, they had come from labour, he pre-

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pared for them a table before the appointed season, and whatsoever he had in his cell he set before them, and refreshed them. Now when the evening was come they sang twelve Psalms, and they did the same thing during the night, but the old man left them to rest, and he departed that he might sing and pray by himself. And whilst he was keeping vigil, he heard the brethren conversing together and saying, "The monks who live in the desert live more comfortably than do we who are in the monasteries." And when they were making ready in the morning to go to an old man who was his neighbour, he said unto them, "Salute him for me"; and they said unto him, "Thou shalt not water the green herb," and when he heard [this], he understood the matter. And he kept them until the evening working and fasting, and when the evening had come they sang the great service through, and the brother said unto them, "To-day, because ye have come from toil, we have shortened the service somewhat," and he also said unto them, "We are not in the habit of eating every day, but because of you we will eat a little." And he prepared for them dry bread and salt, and he said unto them, "It is fitting that on your account we should this day make a feast," and he sprinkled a little vinegar in the salt, and they rose up to sing and pray until the morning, and he said unto them, "We are, on account of you, unable to perform the whole of the service as we are wont to do, for ye must rest a little, and ye are strangers." Now when the morning had come they wished to escape, but he entreated them, saying, "Spend a few days with us, especially that ye may live according to the custom of the desert, for we cannot let you go"; and when they saw that he did not want to send them away, they rose up and fled secretly.

15. On one occasion a certain brother came to Mount Sinai to visit Abbâ Sylvanus, and he saw the brethren working with their hands to supply their wants, and he said unto Abbâ Sylvanus, with boasting, "Ye toil for the food which perisheth; Mary chose a good portion for herself." Then Abbâ Sylvanus said unto Zechariah, his disciple, "Give him a book and take him to a cell wherein there is nothing." And when the time of the ninth hour had come, the brother looked this way and that way to see if they were going to send for him to come and eat, but no man came to seek him. Then he rose up and came to the old man and said unto him, "Father, have not the brethren eaten to-day?" and he said unto him, "Yea." And the brother said unto him, "Why have ye not called me?" The old man said unto him, "Thou art a spiritual man and hast no need of the meat which is for the body, but we are cor-

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“poreal beings, and we require to eat, and it is for this reason that we work. Thou hast chosen the [good] part; read all day, and do not seek after the food of the body.” Now when that brother heard [this] he expressed his contrition, and said, “Father, forgive me”; and the old man said, “Even Mary had need of Martha, for through the labour of Martha Mary triumphed.”

16. It happened on one occasion that a certain heathen priest came to Scete, and he visited the cell of one of the brethren, and passed the night there, and he saw the labours of his rule, and marvelled; and he said unto him, “Do ye labour so greatly and yet do not see visions from your God?” and the brother said unto him, “We do not see [visions].” The priest of idols said unto him, “When we perform the part of priests to our god he hideth nothing from us, and he revealeth unto us his mysteries, whilst ye who perform the labours of vigil, and abstinence, and silent contemplation, as thou sayest, see nothing. There must be in your hearts evil thoughts which separate you from your God, and it is for this reason that He doth not reveal unto you His mysteries.” Then the brother went and informed the old men of the word[s] of that priest of idols, and they marvelled and said, “It is thus, for the thoughts which are not clean alienate a man from God.”

17. One of the brethren said unto one of the great old men, “If I could find one of the fathers according to my desire, I would choose to die with him,” and the old man said unto him with a laugh, “Good, my lord,” and the brother said, “Such is my desire.” Now he did not understand the mind (*or* thought) of the old man. And when the old man saw that the brother was in truth speaking concerning himself that which he thoroughly believed, he said unto him, “If thou didst find an old man according to thy desire, wouldst thou be able to dwell with him?” And he said unto him, “Yea.” The old man said unto him, “Well hast thou said, ‘If I could find [an old man] according to my desire’”; and afterwards he said unto him, “Thou dost not wish to be subject to the will of the old man, but the old man must be subject unto thee!” Then the brother rose up, and made apologies to him, saying, “Forgive me, father; I have boasted greatly. I thought that I was saying that which was good, but I find that I possess that which is of no value.”

18. Abbâ Daniel used to say about Abbâ Arsenius that immediately he heard that the fruits were [ripe] on the trees, he would tell them in his desire to bring him some, and that he used to eat once a year of every kind of fruit, so that he might give thanks to God.

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19. Abbâ Abraham asked Abbâ Theodore, saying, "Father, "which is the better thing for me to do, [to give] praise or to "blame?" The old man said unto him, "I myself prefer to "perform the works of praise, and not of blame"; and Abbâ Abraham said unto him, "How is this?" And the old man said unto him, "If I perform good works, and I be praised there- "for, I find that I can bring an accusation against my mind "whilst I flee from the love of approbation, and I can say that "I do not deserve this praise, but blame belongeth to evil "works, and how shall I be able to comfort my heart, because "men are offended at me? It is necessary for us to do good "works, and to be praised, without receiving upon ourselves "the love of approbation, and not evil deeds, lest we be "blamed." And Abbâ Abraham said, "Thou hast said well, "O father; even so is it."

20. They used to say about one of the fathers who had lived in the world, that when he was in the desert he was occupied in fighting [his desire] to return to his wife whom he had married before [he became a monk], and when he related the matter to the fathers, they appointed him certain works, so that he might be kept back from the fight [within him]. Now because he was an obedient man and one who laboured, he performed these works in excess, and at length his body became so emaciated that he was unable to rise up from his place. And, by the operation of God, a certain father who was a stranger came to the place of Scete, and he passed by the cell of that monk and found it to be empty; and as he passed by he said in his mind, "How is it that no man hath come out to "meet me from this cell? And he went back there, and knocked, saying, "Perhaps he is sick"; and when he knocked the brother who was grievously sick went forth, and the father said unto him, "What is thy sickness, O father?" And the brother told him of all his suffering, saying, "I belonged to the world, and the "Enemy made war upon me through my wife, and I told the "fathers the story, and they imposed upon me severe labours; "and having performed these my body hath become ill, and "the war hath waxed stronger against me." Now when the old man heard these things, he was grieved, and he said unto him, "The fathers have imposed upon thee great labours as "if [thou hadst been] a mighty man, but if thou wilt hearken "to my feeble [voice] thou wilt relinquish those labours, and "partake of a little food, at the appointed time, and wilt sing "and pray a little, and wilt cast thy business upon God. For by "thy pains and sickness thou wilt not be able to conquer this "matter, because our body is like unto a garment; if thou take "care of it, it will last, but if thou neglect it, it will come to an

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“end.” Now the brother having heard these things acted thus, and in a few days the war passed away from him.

21. One of the fathers asked Abbâ Nastîr, the friend of the blessed Anthony, saying, “What is the best work for me to do?” And he said unto him, “Not all kinds of labour are the same. For the book saith that Abraham was a lover of strangers, and that God was with him; and Elijah was a lover of a life of silent contemplation, and God was with him; and David was a humble man, and God was with him; therefore whatsoever work thy soul wisheth to do, provided that it be of God, that do, and keep thy heart from evil things.”

And the brother asked him again, saying, “Father, tell me other things”; and the old man said, “Abbâ Anbastôn asked Abbâ Athrî, saying, ‘What shall I do?’ And he said unto him, ‘Go, make thy belly little, and the work of thy hands great, and be not troubled in thy cell.’”

And again the brother asked him, saying, “If there be a persecution, is it better to flee to the desert or to the habitation of men?” And the old man said unto him, “Go whosoever thou hearest that true believers are, and have no friendship with a youth, and do not dwell with one; and if thou art able so to do, dwell in thy cell, for this is good, and cleanse thy garden herbs. This is far better than going to a man and asking him questions.”

And again the brother asked him, “I wish to dwell in close friendship with a brother, and I want to live a life of silent contemplation by myself in my cell, and he must give me what I want, and I will give him the work of my hands.” The old man said unto him, “The fathers have never sought after a thing of this kind; and if thou dost not give bread to the poor Satan will not permit thee [so to live].”

22. Abbâ Daniel Parnâyâ, the disciple of Abbâ Arsenius, used to tell about a man of Scete, and say that he was a man of great labours but simple in the faith, and in his ignorance he considered and declared that the bread which we receive is not in very truth the Body of Christ, but a similitude of His Body. And two of the fathers heard this word which he spake, but because they knew of his sublime works and labours, they imagined that he had spoken it in his innocence and simple-mindedness; and they came to him and said unto him, “Father, we have heard a thing from a man which we do not believe, for he saith that this bread which we receive is not in very truth the Body of Christ, but a mere similitude.” And he said unto them, “It is I who have said this thing,” and they entreated him, saying, “Thou must not say thus, father, but according to what the Holy Catholic Church hath handed

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“down to us, even so do we believe, that is to say, this bread
“is the Body of Christ in very truth, and is not a mere simili-
“tude. As, in truth, God straightway took dust from the earth,
“and fashioned man in His image, [and no man is able to say
“that he is not the image of God], so also was it the case of the
“bread of which He said, ‘This is My Body,’ for it is not to be
“regarded as a merely commemorative thing, and we believe
“that it is indeed the Body of Christ.” And the old man said,
“Unless I be convinced by the thing itself I will not hearken
“[to this]”; then the fathers said unto him, “Let us pray to
“God for the whole week on this mystery, and we believe that
“He will reveal [it] unto us,” and the old man agreed to this
with great joy, and each man went to his cell. Then the old
man prayed unto God, saying, “O Lord, Thou knowest that it
“is not from wickedness that I do not believe, but in order
“that I may not go astray through ignorance, reveal Thou
“therefore unto me, O Lord Jesus Christ, this mystery”; and
the two other old men prayed unto God and said thus, “O Lord
“Jesus Christ, make Thou this old man to have knowledge
“concerning this mystery, and we believe that he will not
“destroy his labours.”

And God heard the entreaty of the two fathers, and when
the week was ended they came to the church, and the three of
them sat down by themselves on one seat, and the old man was
between the other two; and the eyes of their understandings
were opened, and when the time of the Mysteries had arrived,
and the bread was laid upon the holy table, there appeared to
the three of them as it were a child on the table. And when the
priest stretched out his hand to break the bread, behold the angel
of the Lord came down from heaven with a knife in his hand,
and he slew the child and pressed out his blood into the cup;
and when the priest broke off from the bread small members,
the old man drew nigh that he might partake of the Holy
Offering, and a piece of living flesh smeared and dripping with
blood was given to him. Now when he saw [this] he was afraid,
and he cried out with a loud voice, saying, “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, and he took it and gave thanks
unto God. And the old men said unto him, “God knoweth the
“nature of men, and that it is unable to eat living flesh, and
“for this reason He turneth His Body into bread, and His
“Blood into wine, for those who receive Him in faith.” Then
they gave thanks unto God for that old man, and because he
had not permitted Satan to destroy him from his labours, and
the three of them went to their cells in gladness.

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23. Abbâ Daniel used to say that Abbâ Arsenius told him a story, as if he were speaking of some other man, saying:— Whilst a certain old man was sitting in his cell, there came unto him a voice which said, “Come hither, and I will shew thee the works of the children of men”; and he rose up and went out. And the voice led him out and shewed him an Ethiopian cutting wood, and he made up a large bundle and wished to carry it away, but he was unable to do so. Then instead of making the bundle smaller, he went and cut down some more wood, and added thereto, and this he did many times. And when he had gone on a little further, the voice shewed him a man who was standing by a pit drawing up water, which he cast in a certain hollowed out place, and when he had thrown the water therein it ran down again into the pit.

And again the voice said unto him, “Come, and I will shew thee other things.” Then he looked, and, behold, there was a temple, and two men, who were riding horses, were carrying a piece of wood as wide as the temple was, and they wanted to go in through the door, but the width of the wood did not permit them to do so, for they would not humble themselves to go in, one after his companion, and to bring it in end-wise, and therefore they remained outside the door. Now these are the men who bear the yoke of righteousness with boasting, and they will not humble themselves to make themselves straight and go in the humble way of Christ, and therefore they remain outside the kingdom of God. And the man who was cutting wood is the man who laboureth in many sins, and who, instead of repenting and diminishing from his sins, addeth other wickednesses thereunto. Now he who was drawing water is the man who doeth good works, and who, because other things are mingled in his good works, destroyeth his works thereby. Now it is meet that a man should be watchful in his labour, lest he toil in vain.

24. On one occasion Abbâ Macarius was going from the wood to his cell, and was carrying [with him] some palm leaves, and Satan met him on the road holding a scythe [in his hand]; and when Macarius sought to wound him, Satan was afraid, and he fell down and did homage to the blessed man. Then the old man fled from that place, and he related to the brethren everything which had happened, and when they heard [it] they glorified God.

25. An old man used to say, “Be like a camel when thou bearest thy sins, and be thou tied closely to him that knoweth the way.”

26. An old man used to say, “Become not a lawgiver unto thyself, and judge no man, for thou art not under the Law,

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“but under grace; but give thou everything to Him that is able to do everything, for thou art unable to do anything. Judge then [in] this [way], and do not sin at any time.”

27. He also said, “He who wisheth to dwell in the desert should become a learner, and he should not practise doctrine lest he suffer loss; and his occupation should be with a man who loveth God.”

28. Unto one of the old men Satan appeared in the form of an angel of light, and said, “I, even I, am Gabriel who have been sent unto thee”; and he said unto him, “Hast thou not been sent unto another? for I am a sinner”; and when Satan heard this he did not again appear. And the old man said, “If in very truth an angel appeareth unto thee, say, ‘As unto whom [hast thou come in coming] to me? I am not worthy.’”

29. When Abbâ Gregory was dying he said these [words]:—“God demandeth three things from the man who hath been baptized, true faith from the soul, and truth from the tongue, and chastity from the body.”

30. The old man said, “God seeketh nothing from Christians except true faith, and [belief] that the things which are spoken shall come to pass in deed, and that we should be persuaded by the orthodox fathers.”

31. An old man was asked, “How can a man find God? By fasting? By works? By watching? By mercy?” And he said, “By means of these certainly when they are mingled with discretion, but I say that there are many who have afflicted their bodies without discretion, and they have departed vainly, having gained nothing. Our mouth becometh foul through thirst, and we repeat the Scriptures with our mouth, and we go through all the Psalms of David in our service, but that which God requireth, and which is necessary we have not, that is to say, a good word for each other. For as a man cannot see his face in troubled waters, so the soul, unless it be cleansed from alien thoughts, is not able to appear before God in prayer.”

32. A certain monk was going along the road and he met some nuns, and he turned aside out of the path, and she who was leading them said unto him, “Hadst thou been a perfect monk thou wouldst never have regarded us as women.”

33. Abbâ Anthony used to say, “A man’s life or death cometh from his neighbour; if we benefit our brother we benefit ourselves, and if we offend him we sin against God.”

34. A certain brother came to Abbâ Theodore, and he began to talk and to speak about the things which he had not done; and the old man said unto him, “So far thou hast not found a

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“ship, and thou hast not let down in it thy possessions, and
“before thou hast embarked thou hast gone to the city where-
“to thou wishest to go. First of all do the work, and then
“thou shalt arrive at that concerning which thou art now
“talking.”

35. A brother asked Abbâ Anthony, saying, “What [com-
“mandment] shall I keep so that I may please God?” And
he answered and said unto him, “That which I command
“thee observe. Set thou God before thine eyes continually,
“wheresoever thou goest; whatsoever thou doest make to it
“a witness (*or* testimony) from the Scriptures; and in what-
“soever place thou dwellest be not easily moved therefrom,
“but abide therein persistently. Observe these three things,
“and thou shalt be saved.”

36. They used to say about a certain old man that when-
soever he sat in his cell toiling in the contest, he saw
the devils face to face, and that he treated them with con-
tempt and despised them through his contest. Now when
Satan saw that he was being overcome by the old man, he ap-
peared unto him in human form, and said unto him, “I am
“Christ.” And when the old man saw him, he winked his
eyes and made a mock of him. Then Satan said unto him,
“Why dost thou wink thine eyes? I, even I, am Christ.” And
the old man answered and said unto him, “I do not desire to
“see Christ here”; and when Satan heard these things he de-
parted from him and was no more seen.

37. Abbâ John used to say, that he saw in a vision one of
the old men in a state of stupefaction, and behold, three monks
were standing on the shore of a lake, and a voice came to
them from heaven (*or* from the other shore of the lake), which
said, “Take ye wings of fire and come to me”; and two of
them took wings of fire and flew over to the other side, even
as it was told them. Now the third remained behind, and he
wept abundantly, and cried out, and at length wings were
given to him also, but they were not of fire like those of his
companions, for they were weak and feeble wings, and it was
only with the greatest difficulty, and after dropping down into
the water, and with most painful exertions that he reached
the [opposite] shore. And even so is it with this generation,
for although it taketh to itself wings, they are not the powerful
wings of fire, but it forceth itself to take weak and feeble
wings.

38. An old man used to say, “Every wickedness which is
“not perfect is not wickedness, and every righteousness which
“is not perfect is not righteousness; for the man who hath
“not good and evil thoughts is like unto the land of Sodom,

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“which is salted, and which bringeth forth neither green herb nor fruit. Now good ground produceth wheat and expelleth tares from itself.”

39. Certain brethren came and asked Abbâ Anthony a question about the Book of the Levites, and the old man went forth to the desert, and Abbâ Ammon, who knew his habit, followed him secretly. And when the old man had gone some distance, he cried out with a loud voice, and said, “O God, send Moses unto me, and let him teach me [the meaning of] this verse”; and straightway a voice was heard holding converse with him. Now Abbâ Ammon heard this voice, and said, “I heard the voice which spake with him, but the force of the verse I never learned.”

40. On one occasion when Abbâ Poemen was a youth, he went to an old man to ask him [concerning] three matters, and having gone into his presence he forgot one of them, and he turned to go to his cell; and as he put the key [in the door] to open [it], he remembered the matter which he had forgotten, and straightway he left the key in the door and returned to the old man, and the old man said unto him, “Thou hast returned quickly, brother.” And Abbâ Poemen told him the story thus:—“When I put the key [in the door] to open [it], I remembered the matter which I wanted to know, and I did not open the door because I came back hither speedily.” Now the rocky ground which [he had traversed] in the interval was of no inconsiderable length. And the old man said unto him, “Thy name shall be spoken about throughout all Egypt.”

41. A brother said unto an old Abbâ, “Behold, I have entreated the old men, and they talk to me about the redemption of my soul, but I can lay hold upon nothing in their words; what is the use, then, of making them toil when I can do nothing [with what they say], for I am wholly in a state of uncleanness?” Now there were there two basins, and the old man said unto him, “Go, bring me one of these basins, and pour some oil into it, and rinse the basin round with it, and then empty it out”; and he did so twice. Then the old man said unto him, “Bring now the two [basins] together”; and the brother did as he told him. [And the old man said, “Look and see which basin is the cleaner,” and the brother said unto him], “That into which the oil hath been poured is the cleaner.” The old man said unto him, “And thus also is it with the soul, for even if it layeth hold of nothing through that which it asketh, it is cleaner than if it had never asked a question at all.”

42. A brother asked Abbâ John, and said unto him, “How is

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“it that the soul which hath blemishes in itself is not ashamed
“to speak about its neighbour, and to calumniate it?” And the
old man spake unto him a word concerning calumny, saying,
“There was a certain man who was poor, and he had a wife, and
“he saw another woman who hearkened unto him, and he took
“her to wife also; now the two women were naked. And when
“there was a fair in a certain place the two women persuaded
“him to take them to it, and he took his two wives, and put
“them in a boat, and when he had gone up out of the boat he
“arrived at a certain place. Now when the day had waxed
“hot, and every man was resting, one of the women looked
“out and saw that there was no man outside, and she leaped
“up and went forth to a heap of waste rubbish, and chose
“therefrom some old rags and made a girdle for herself, and
“then walked about boldly. Meanwhile her companion was
“sitting down naked, and she said unto her husband, ‘Look
“‘at that harlot going about naked and without shame’;
“then her husband, with sadness, said unto her, ‘The thing
“‘to be wondered at is that, whilst she hath, at least, covered
“‘her shame, thou art entirely naked, and dost speak these
“‘words without being ashamed.’ Now a calumny [uttered]
“against a neighbour is like unto this.”

43. They used to say that one of the old men asked God that he might see the fathers, and he saw them [all], with the exception of Abbâ Anthony; and he said unto him that shewed [them] to him, “Where is Abbâ Anthony?” And he said unto him, “Wheresoever God is there is Anthony.”

44. Abbâ Poemen used to say, “This is what is written, “‘As the hart crieth out for the water-brooks, even so crieth
“‘out my soul unto Thee, O Lord’ (Psalm xlii, 1). For the
“harts in the desert swallow many serpents, and when the
“poison of these maketh them hot within, they cry out to
“come to the water-brooks, but as soon as they have drunk
“the burning which cometh from the serpents inside them is
“cooled. And thus is it with the monks who are in the desert,
“for they are burnt up by the envy of evil devils, and they
“wait for the Saturday and Sunday that they may come to
“the fountain of water, that is to say to the body of Christ,
“and they sweeten and purify themselves from the gall of the
“Evil One.”

45. On one occasion when the brethren were sitting with Abbâ Moses, he said unto them, “Behold, this day have the
“barbarians come to Scete; rise up and flee.” And they said
unto him, “Wilt thou not flee, father? He said unto them, “I
“have been expecting this day to come for many years past,
“so that might be fulfilled the command of our Redeemer,

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“Who said, ‘Those who take the sword shall perish by the sword’” (St. Matthew xxvi, 52). And they said unto him, “We then will not flee, but will die with thee.” He said unto them, “This is not my affair, but your own desire; let every man look after himself in the place where he dwelleth.” Now the brethren were seven in number. And after a little he said unto them, “Behold, the barbarians have drawn near the door”; and the barbarians entered and slew them. Now one of them had been afraid, and he fled behind the palm leaves, and he saw seven crowns come down and place themselves on the heads of those who had been slain.

46. The brethren asked an old man, saying, “How is it that God promiseth in the Scriptures good things to the soul, and that the soul desireth them not, but turneth aside to impurity?” And he answered and said unto them, “It is my opinion that it is because it hath not yet tasted the good things which are above, and therefore the good things which are here are dear unto it.”

47. Abbâ Arsenius used to say, “The monk is a stranger in a foreign land; let him not occupy himself with anything [therein], and he will find rest.”

48. They used to say that on one occasion when Abbâ Macarius the Great went up from Scete, and was carrying palm leaves, he became weary and sat down; and he prayed to God, and said, “God, thou knowest that I have no strength,” and straightway he found that he was by the side of the sea (or river).

49. There was a certain old man in the mountain of Athlibâ (Athribis), and thieves came to attack him, and he cried out; and when his neighbours heard [his cry] they hunted down the thieves, and they sent them to the governor, who shut them up in prison. And the brethren were sorry, and said, “They were delivered into our hands”; and they rose up and went to Abbâ Poemen, and informed him about the matter. Then he wrote to that old man, and said unto him, “Thou must understand whence hath come the first betrayal, and then thou wilt perceive how the second betrayal arose; for if thou hadst not been betrayed first of all by those that were within thou wouldst never have effected the second betrayal.” Now when the old man heard the letter of Abbâ Poemen, who was famous throughout all that country, and who kept himself strictly secluded in his cell, and never went out, straightway he rose up and went into the city, and took the thieves out of prison, and thus the assembly set them free.

50. On one occasion Abbâ Macarius, wishing to rebuke the brethren, said unto them, “There came here a young man with

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“his mother, and he was under the power of a devil, and he said unto his mother, ‘Rise up, let us depart from here’; and she said unto him, ‘I cannot walk.’ Then the young man said unto him, ‘I will carry thee myself.’” And Abbâ Macarius marvelled at the wickedness of that devil, and sought to drive them away.

51. On one occasion five brethren came to visit a great old man, and he asked the first one, saying, “What kind of work doest thou?” And he said unto him, “I twist palm leaves into ropes, father”; and the old man said unto him, “God shall plait a crown for thee, O my son.” Then he said to the second brother, “And what dost thou do?” And he said unto him, “I make mats, father”; and the old man said unto him, “God shall give thee strength, O my son.” And he said unto the third brother, “And what dost thou do?” And he said unto him, “[I make] sieves, father”; and the old man said unto him, “God shall preserve thee, O my son.” Then he asked the fourth brother, saying, “What dost thou do?” And he said unto him, “I can write well.” And the old man said unto him, “Thou knowest.” Then he said unto the fifth brother, “And what dost thou do?” And he said unto him, “I weave linen.” Then the old man said, “I am not near,” and he said also, “If the twister of palm-leaf ropes be watchful with God He will plait him a crown for him; mat[-making] requireth strength because there is labour therein; and God must protect him of the sieves because he hath to sell them in the villages; as to the scribe, he must be humble in heart, for there is in his business exaltation of spirit, as regardeth the linen weaver, I am not near (i.e., concerned) to speak, for he is a merchant and he tradeth. But if a man seeth a brother afar off carrying palm branches, or palm-leaf mats, or sieves, he saith, ‘This man is a monk, for grass is the work of our hands, and he is avoiding the burning of the fire’; and if he seeth a man selling linen, he saith straightway, ‘Behold, the merchants have come, for the [selling of] linen is the work of this world, and it doth not benefit many.’”

52. Abbâ Jacob used to say, “It is not only words which are required, for in this [life of] time many have abundance of words, but it is work which is required, and it is necessary to have it, and not words wherein there is no work.”

53. One of the old men used to say, “That which is hated by thee do not unto thy companion; if it be hateful to thee for him to calumniate thee, do not thou calumniate any man; if it be hateful to thee to be accused, accuse thou no man; if it be hateful to thee for a man to revile thee, or to treat thee with contempt, or to pluck thee away, or to do any such

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“ thing unto thee, do not thou do unto any man anything of the kind. He who is able to perform this commandment is able to redeem his own soul.”

54. “ On one occasion I went to Abbâ Muthues, and when I was about to return, I said unto him, ‘ I wish to go to the ‘ Cells’; and he said unto me, ‘ Salute Abbâ John for me.’ Now when I came to Abbâ John, I said unto him, ‘ Abbâ ‘ Muthues saluteth thee’; and the old man said unto me, ‘ Behold, Abbâ Muthues is indeed a man of Israel in whom ‘ there is no guile.’ And after one year I went to Abbâ ‘ Muthues, and I told him the greeting of Abbâ John; and the ‘ old man said unto me, ‘ I am unworthy of the old man’s ‘ words, but know, if ever thou hearest an old man praising ‘ his companion more than himself, that he hath attained ‘ unto a great measure of perfection, for it is indeed obe- ‘ dience for a man to praise his companion more than ‘ himself.’ ”

55. A brother asked an old man, and said unto him, “ My brother abuseth me, and I cannot bear him any longer; what shall I do? Shall I rebuke him, or shall I speak evil words to him?” The old man said unto him, “ Both things are bad, whether a man rebuke him, or whether a man speak unto him evil words”; and the brother said unto him, “ And what shall I do? For I cannot endure either.” The old man said unto him, “ If thou canst not bear both things, speak to him, but do not rebuke him; but if thou speakest unto him with words of evil, and he listeneth, thou wilt be able to quiet him, saying, ‘ I did not say such and such a thing, and ‘ it will be possible for the matter which is between you to ‘ be healed; but if thou rebuke him to his face, thou wilt ‘ make a sore which will be incurable.’ ”

56. Certain brethren came to Abbâ Anthony that he might tell them about the visions which they used to see, whether they indeed came from devils [or not]; now they had with them an ass, and he died on the road as they were coming, and when they had gone into the presence of the old man, he said unto them straightway, “ How was it that your ass died on the road?” And they said unto him, “ Whence doth the Abbâ know that our ass is dead?” And Abbâ Anthony said unto them, “ The devils shewed me [the matter].” Then they said unto him, “ We have come to ask thee questions because we have seen phantoms, and also because on several occasions they have actually become real things, and we want to learn whether we have erred or not”; and the old man shewed them that such phantoms which arise through certain devils cannot be inquired into.

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57. They were saying that Abbâ Sylvanus used to sit in secret in a cell with a few chick peas, and he made of them one hundred bundles; and behold, a man came from Egypt leading an ass loaded with bread, and having knocked at the door of his cell, he went in, and set down [the bread], and the old man took these bundles, and loaded them upon the ass, and sent him away.

58. They used to say that when Abbâ Zeno dwelt in a cell in Scete he went forth one night from his cell as if for a purpose, and wandered about; and when he had passed three days and three nights in travelling, being exhausted by toil and hunger, and ready to die, he fell upon the ground. And behold, a youth stood before him carrying some bread and a pitcher of water, and he said unto Abbâ Zeno, "Arise, and eat bread"; and the old man rose up and prayed, thinking that the youth was a phantom. Then the youth answered and said unto him, "Thou hast done well"; and again Abbâ Zeno prayed twice, and three times, and the youth said unto him, "Thou hast done well"; and the old man took the bread and ate. Then afterwards the youth said unto him, "How is it that thou hast gone so far from thy cell? But arise and follow me"; and immediately he found himself in his cell. The old man said unto him, "Come, enter into the cell with me, and make thy prayer," and as he was going on in front he was swallowed up from his sight.

59. They used to say that a certain brother had such an attack of blasphemy that he was ashamed to speak, and wherever he heard that there were great old men he used to go to them wishing to tell them [about it]; but whenever he had come to one of them he was ashamed to speak to him. Now having gone to the fathers several times, on one occasion Abbâ Poemen saw him, and he perceived that he was full of thoughts, and he was sorry for him; but when the brother would not reveal the matter to him, and he made as if he would pass him by, as soon as the brother had gone a little way from him, the old man said unto him, "How often hast thou come hither to tell me the thoughts which thou hast in thy mind! Yet, when thou comest here, thou findest it hard to tell me. How long wilt thou go on in this manner and be vexed by such thoughts in thy mind? Tell me, my son, what is it that aileth thee?" Then that brother answered, and said unto him, "I am fighting against the devil of blasphemy of God, and though I have often sought [to tell thee] I have been ashamed to do so." And when he had told him the matter, the face of Abbâ Poemen broke into a smile, and he said unto him, "Be not vexed, O my son, for when this thought cometh to thee,

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“speak thou to it, saying, ‘I have nothing to do with this thought, and my soul desireth it not; let this blasphemy be upon thee, Satan, for nothing in [my] soul desireth it, for ‘the time is short.’” And when that brother heard these things he departed rejoicing.

60. A brother asked an old man, saying, “How is that the soul is obstinate, and that it wisheth not to fear God?” The old man said unto him, “The soul wisheth, O my son, to fear God, but there is no time, for the fear of God belongeth to perfection.”

61. One of the old men used to say, “Be not thou asking for one thing after another, but ask concerning the matter of the war wherein thou art at the time engaged, and when thou hast eradicated that then ask concerning something else; but if when there is in thee one passion, thou settest it aside and askest about another, the former passion will never be eradicated from thee.”

62. A brother asked one of the old men, saying, “What shall I do? for my thoughts wish to wander and go round about by reason of the sight of the fathers.” And the old man answered and said unto him, “If thou seest that thy thoughts wish to go forth by reason of the strictness of the restraint, or through need, make unto thyself a division in thy cell, and thou wilt henceforward seek not to go out; but if thou seest that they wish to go out for the benefit of the soul, go out.”

63. There was a certain brother in the Cells, who, when the service in the church was ended, used to remain until the last and to wait for some one to lead him home; one day, however, when the church was being dismissed, he went out before any one else and ran to his cell, and the priest saw him and marvelled. And when the brother came on the following day, the priest said unto him, “Tell me truly why thou, who hadst been in the habit of going out last, dost now go forth first of all?” and he said, “Up to the present I made a distinction by not boiling any food [on the First Day of the week], and I waited that, peradventure, some one might take me to his cell; on that day, however, before I came [to the church] I boiled a few lentiles, and therefore I departed quickly.” And when the priest heard this he gave a commandment to the brethren in the church that before each man came to the service in the church, he should on the First Day of the week boil some food, by way of making a distinction.

64. The brethren used to tell about a certain old man who had a disciple who, when he sat down to eat, used to put his feet on the table, and although the old man had suffered this

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war for many years he did not rebuke him. At length, however, he went to another old man, and told him about the brother, and the old man said unto him, "Complete thy love, and send him to me." Now when the brother came to that old man, at the appointed time for the meal the old man rose up and made ready the table, and as soon as they had seated themselves the brother straightway put his two feet on the table; and the old man said unto him, "Father, it is not good for thee to set thy feet on the table"; and he said unto him, "Forgive me, O my son. Thou hast well said, for it is a sin." And the brother returned to his master, and told him about [it], and when the old man had learned this he perceived that this matter had been corrected in his disciple. And from that time the brother did not put his feet on the table.

65. A brother asked Abbâ Muthues, saying, "Speak unto me a word whereby I may live." He said unto him, "Go, entreat God to give thee mourning and meekness of heart, and consider at all times thy sins, and do not judge other people, and make thyself lower than every other man, and have no love for a boy, and no acquaintance with a woman, and no friendship with heretics, and put aside from thee all freedom of speech (*or* boldness), and restrain both thy tongue and thy belly, and guard thyself somewhat against wine, and if a man speak with thee concerning any matter whatsoever, do not quarrel with him, but if he saith that a thing is good, say 'Yes,' and if he say that it is bad, say, 'Thou knowest.' This is a meek spirit."

66. A brother came unto Abbâ Poemen and said unto him, "I have very many thoughts, O father, whereby I am vexed"; and the old man took him out into the air, and said unto him, "Spread out thy skirt, and catch the winds," and the brother said unto him, "I cannot do this." The old man said unto him, "Thou canst not do this, neither canst thou prevent thy thoughts from coming, but it belongeth to thee to stand up against them."

67. The brethren were on one occasion gathered together to Abbâ Joseph, and as they were sitting and asking him questions about their thoughts he said unto them, by way of [affording] them consolation, "This day am I a king, for I have controlled my passions."

68. A brother asked Abbâ Ammon, saying, "Why is it that a man laboureth in prayer and maketh petitions, and that for which he asketh is not given to him?" The old man said unto him, "Hast thou never heard how Jacob wearied himself for her whom he took to wife, and that he did not obtain her whom he sought, but her whom he did not seek, and how

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“afterwards he worked and toiled more, and finally received her whom he loved? Thus is it with the monk also, for he shall fast and keep vigil, and yet shall not receive that which he asketh; and again, he shall labour with fasting and vigil, and shall receive the gift of grace which he asketh.”

69. One of the old men asked Abbâ Sisoës, saying, “Did Satan persecute the men of olden time as he doth those of to-day?” Sisoës said unto them, “He persecuteth the men of this age especially, because his time hath come.”

70. Abbâ John the Less, who was a young man, and had an elder brother, used to say, “I wanted to be without any care whatsoever, and to be like the angels of God, who do nothing except sing and pray to Him.” And straightway he cast from him the garments which he had on, and went forth to the wilderness, and when he had passed one week there, he returned to his brother; now when he knocked at the door his brother did not answer it, but asked him, “Who art thou?” And John said unto him, “I am John,” and his brother answered and said unto him, “John hath become an angel and is no longer among men”; and John entreated him, saying, “I indeed am John,” but his brother left him outside in affliction, and did not open the door until the morning. And when he came to open the door he said unto John, “If thou art indeed a man, it is necessary for thee to work so that thou mayest live.”

71. Abbâ Pûrtê said, “If God wisheth me to live, He knoweth how to lead me, and to strengthen me, and to provide for me; but if He desireth it not unto whom shall I go to live?” And he would accept nothing from any man, not even when he was lying upon his bed, “For,” he used to say, “if a man maketh an offering of any kind to me, and not for the sake of God, I myself have nothing whatsoever to give him, and he will receive nothing from God, for I am not in the place of God, so therefore he who offereth will suffer loss.”

72. Abbâ Poemen used to say, “Everything which ariseth through passion is sin”; and he used to say also, “Every [exercise of] power which is for God’s sake, is thanksgiving (or confession).”

73. An old man used to say, “Acquire silence, and take no care for any earthly thing, and examine closely thy meditations, and when thou sleepest and when thou risest up, be with God, and fear not the attack of the wicked.”

74. On one occasion a brother came to a father, and said unto him, “Abbâ, I sow a field, and I reap the harvest therefrom, and I give alms also thereof”; and the old man said unto him, “Be strong, my son, for thou doest well.” So the brother went away rejoicing in this desire. And Abbâ Job said

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unto Abbâ Poemen, "Since thou hast spoken unto that brother "in this fashion, [I know that] thou dost not fear God." Then, after two days, Abbâ Poemen sent and called that brother, and said unto him whilst Abbâ Joseph was listening, "What didst thou say to me when thou camest to me, for my mind was "occupied in another place?" The brother said unto him, "I sow a field, and I reap the harvest therefrom, and I give alms "also thereof"; and Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "I thought "in my mind that it was thy brother, who is in the world, of "whom thou wast speaking when thou didst tell me that he did "these things; but if it be thou thyself who doest them [I must "say] that it is not the work for monks." And when the brother heard these [words] he was grieved, and he said, "I cannot do "without sowing, for I know not how to do any other work "but this." Now when that brother had departed, Abbâ Job expressed his contrition to Abbâ Poemen, and said unto him, "Forgive me." Then Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "I also "knew that this work was not the works of monks, but, "according to the measure of his desire, I gave him that where- "with I knew he would be edified, and I knew that he would "thus abound in love; but now he hath departed in sorrow."

75. Mother Sarah said, "If I were to pray to God that all "men might be built up through me I should be found express- "ing contrition at the door of each one of them; but I pray to "God especially that my heart may be pure with Him and with "every man."

76. Certain brethren, whilst talking to an old man about the thoughts, said unto him, "Our hearts are hard, and we are "not afraid of God; what shall we do that we may fear God?" The old man said unto them, "I think that if a man have "knowledge in his heart about Him that will rebuke him, it "will bring him to the fear of God." Then the brethren said unto him, "What is the rebuke?" The old man said, "In every "matter a man should rebuke himself, saying, 'Remember that "'thou art about to go forth to meet God.' And he should also "say, 'What do I require from man?' And I think that if a "man remain in these things the fear which is in God will come "to him."

77. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "An evil will is a wall of brass "between a man and God; but if a man would set it aside he "must also say, 'By [the help of] my God I will leap over a "'wall' (Psalm xviii, 29)—God Whose way is without blemish "—but if that which is seemly lendeth help to the thought, a "man is not easily turned aside."

78. They used to say that on one occasion, when Abbâ Alônîs was singing the service, and the old men were sitting [close

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by], these old men watched him [performing the] service, and that they praised him; but when he heard them he answered them never a word. Then a certain man spake unto him aside and privately, saying, "Why dost thou not make answer to the old men who have praised thee?" Abbâ Alônîs said unto them, "Because if I made answer to them I should be as one who had accepted the praise."

79. An old man used to say, "If a word of the Book goeth up in the heart of a brother when he is sitting in his cell, and if he pursue that word before it hath arrived at its maturity, not being driven by God, the devils will demonstrate the word before it [become complete] according to their desire."

80. Abbâ Sarânîs used to say, "I have worked during the whole period of my life in reaping, and in twisting ropes, and in sewing mats, and notwithstanding these things, if the hand of the Lord had not fed me I should not have had enough to eat."

81. An old man used to say, "Spread abroad the Name of Jesus in humility, and with a meek heart; shew thy feebleness before Him, and He will become strength unto thee."

82. Abbâ Macarius said unto Abbâ Zechariah, "Tell me, what is the work of monks?" He said unto him, "Dost thou ask me, father?" The old man said unto him, "I beseech thee, my son, Zechariah, for there is something which is right I should ask thee." And Abbâ Zechariah said unto him, "Father, I give it as my opinion that the work of monks consisteth in a man restraining himself in everything."

83. An old man also said, "He who constraineth himself in everything, for God's sake, is a confessor." And again he said, "He who constraineth himself for the sake of the Son of God will not be forgotten by the Son of God." And he also said, "Him who hath made himself a fool for the sake of God, God will make him to be wise."

84. An old man used to say, "If when thou art sitting down, or standing up, or when thou art doing anything else, God be set before thine eyes continually, no [act] of the Enemy can terrify thee; if this thought abide with a man, the power of God will abide with him also."

85. An old man also said, "The man who hath his death before his eyes continually will overcome littleness of soul."

86. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "Hunger and slumber have not allowed me to notice these small matters."

87. Abbâ Theodore said, "Many men in this age are desirous of life before God giveth [it] to them."

88. He used to say also, "Be a free man, so that thou mayest not be crafty in thy words."

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89. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "Keep thyself aloof from every man who is contentious in speech."

90. An old man said, "In all [thy] trials blame no man except thyself, and say, These have happened me for my sins."

91. An old man said, "In the sluggard and the useless man God hath no pleasure."

92. A brother asked Abbâ Timothy, saying, "I wish to guard my soul from things that will hurt it"; and the old man said unto him, "How can we guard our soul when the door[s] or our tongue and belly are open?"

93. They used to say that a certain man asked Abbâ Sisoës about Abbâ Pambô, saying, "Tell us about his life and conduct"; the old man made answer to him, saying, "Abbâ Pambô is great in his works."

94. Abbâ Joseph related that Abbâ Poemen said, "The meaning of the words which are written in the Gospel, 'Whosoever hath a garment, let him sell it, and buy a sword' (St. Luke xxii, 36), is, 'Let him that hath a life of ease relinquish it, and lay hold upon [a life of] toil.'"

95. They used to say that [on one occasion] when certain of the old men were sitting with Abbâ Poemen and were discussing some of the fathers, and were [asking each other] if they remembered Abbâ Sisoës, Abbâ Poemen said, "Quit talking about Abbâ Sisoës, for he hath surpassed the measure (or limit) of all histories."

96. On one occasion a father came to Abbâ Theodore of Perâmê, and said unto him, "Behold, O father, such and such a brother hath gone back to the world"; and the old man said, "Dost thou wonder thereat? Marvel not at this, but thou mayest marvel when thou hearest that a man hath been able to flee completely from the world."

97. An old man related of Moses that when he slew the Egyptian he looked on this side and on that, and saw no man, and explained the meaning of the passage as being that Moses did not see his thoughts. And when he saw himself, and that he was doing no evil thing, and that that which he was about to do was for God's sake, he then slew the Egyptian.

98. An old man also said concerning the verse of the Psalms wherein it is written, "I will place his hand in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers" (Psalm lxxxix, 25), that it was spoken concerning our Redeemer, Whose left hand is on the sea, that is to say the world, and Whose right hand is in the rivers, that is to say, the Apostles, who water the whole world with faith.

99. A brother asked one of the old men, saying, "What shall I do? For I am troubled about the works of my hands: I love

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“making mats, but I am unable to make [them] here.” The old man said unto him, “Abbâ Sisoës used to say, ‘It is not the work which is easy for us that we ought to do, but that which befitteth the place, and a brother should labour according to what it will cost to keep him.’”

100. Abbâ Joseph used to say, “When we were sitting with Abbâ Poemen he made mention of Abbâ Agathon, and we said to him, ‘He was a young man, why dost thou call him ‘Abbâ?’ Abbâ Poemen said unto him, ‘His mouth made him to be called Abbâ.’”

101. One of the old men used to say, “Wheresoever the bee goeth it maketh honey; and thus also it is with the monk, for wheresoever he goeth he doeth the work of God.”

102. An old man used to say, “Satan is a twister of cords, and as long as thou givest him threads he will plait them”; now he spake this concerning the thoughts.

103. Abbâ Sisoës shewed us the cave of Abbâ Anthony, and said, “Thus in the cave of a lion a fox dwelleth.”

104. They used to say of those who were in Scete that no pride was found among them, because they surpassed each other in spiritual excellences. They fasted so much that one would only eat [once] every two days, and another [once] every four days, and another [once] every seven days; another would eat no bread, and another would drink no water, and to speak briefly, they were adorned with every spiritual excellence.

105. They used to relate that a certain old man entreated God and made supplication unto Him that the devils might appear to him, and it was revealed to him that “It is not necessary for thee to see them”; but the old man made entreaty, saying, “Lord, Thou art able to hide me in Thy grace.” Then God opened his eyes, and he saw them like bees surrounding a man, and they were gnashing their teeth upon him, and the angels of God were rebuking them and driving them away from men.

106. A man asked a certain old man from Thebes, and said unto him, “Tell me how I may be redeemed”; and the old man said unto him, “Three things [thou must do]. Sit in thy cell and keep silence, and consider attentively thy sins, and keep thyself wholly from judging any man, and accept no gift from any man, and let thine hands be sufficient to find thee thy food. And if thou art unable to give alms of thy work at least supply all thy needs by thine own hands.”

107. They used to say that one day when Abbâ Sisoës was sitting down he cried out with a loud voice, and said, “O my feebleness”; his disciple said unto him, “What aileth thee, O

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“father?” And the old man said unto him, “I wish to speak to a certain man, and I am unable [to do so].”

108. They used to say that when the barbarians came the brethren took to flight, and that Abbâ Daniel, who was in Scete, said, “Unless God taketh care for me, why should I live?” And he passed through all the barbarians, and they saw him not. Then afterwards he said in himself, “Behold God hath cared for me, and I am not dead, I also will do as a man doeth, and I will flee as the [other] fathers have fled.”

109. When Abbâ Sisoës was about to die, and the fathers were sitting about him, they saw that his face was shining like the sun; and he said unto them straightway, “Behold, Abbâ Anthony hath come”; and after a little while he said also, “Behold, the company of the prophets hath come”; his face shone again, and he said, “Behold the company of apostles hath come”; and again his face shone with twofold brightness, and he became suddenly like unto one who was speaking with some one. Then the old men who was sitting [there] entreated him, and said, “Show us with whom thou art talking, father”; and straightway he said unto them, “Behold, the angels came to take me away, and I besought them to leave me so that I might tarry here a little longer, and repent.” And the old men said unto him, “Thou hast no need to repent, father”; the old man said unto them, “I do not know in my soul if I have rightly begun to repent”; and they all learned that the old man was perfect. Then again suddenly his face beamed like the sun, and all who sat there were afraid, and he said unto them straightway, “Look ye, look ye. Behold our Lord hath come, and He saith, ‘Bring ye unto Me the chosen vessel which is in the “desert”’; and straightway he delivered up his spirit, and he became [like] lightning, and the whole place was filled with a sweet odour.

110. Abbâ Paphnutius, the disciple of Abbâ Macarius, used to say, “I entreated him, saying, ‘Father, tell me a word’”; and he said unto me, “Do no harm to any man, and condemn no man; observe these [words], and thou shalt be redeemed.”

111. A brother asked a certain old man, saying, “In what form doth the fear of God dwell in the soul?” The old man said unto him, “If a man possess humility, and practise abstinence, and judge no man, in this manner doth the fear of God dwell in the soul.”

112. Abbâ Hilarion of Syria came to the mountain to Abbâ Anthony, and Abbâ Anthony said unto him, “Hast thou come, O star of light, who shinest with the morning?” And Abbâ Hilarion said unto him, “Peace be to thee, O pillar of light, who sustainest creation!”

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113. Certain of the fathers used to say, "God bringeth not young men to monasteries, but Satan, so that he may turn back the mighty men."

114. A brother said unto Abbâ Anthony, "Pray for me, father"; the old man said unto him, "I cannot help thee, and God will not, if thou wilt not abolish thyself and ask Him thyself [to do so]."

115. They used to tell of a certain old man who had passed fifty years [of his life] without eating bread or drinking water; and he used to say, "I have slain fornication, and the love of gold, and the love of glory." Now Abbâ Abraham heard [of him], and came to him, and said, "Didst thou say these things?" and he said, "Yea." Abbâ Abraham said unto him, "If thou wert to go into thy cell, and find a woman on thy mat, wouldst thou be able to keep from thinking that she was a woman?" And the old man said unto him, "No, but I should struggle against my thoughts so as not to touch her." Abbâ Abraham said unto him, "Behold, then, thou hast not slain it (i.e., the lust for fornication), but the passion is still alive, though fettered. Behold, also, if thou wert traveling along a road and thou didst see lying thereon some potsherds and among them a talent of gold, would thy mind be able to look upon the money in the same way as the potsherds?" The old man said unto him, "Nay, but I should contend against my thoughts in such wise as not to take it." Then Abbâ Abraham said unto him, "Behold, the passion [of love of money] is still alive, though fettered. Behold now, if thou didst hear of two brethren, one of whom was esteeming thee highly and praising thee, and the other was hating thee and reviling thee, if these men came to thee wouldst thou be able to regard each of them with equal friendliness?" And the old man said unto them, "No, but I would strive against my thoughts in such a way that I would treat him that cursed me as well as I did him that loved me." Then Abbâ Abraham said unto him, "Behold, then, the passions are still alive, but they are fettered in the saints."

116. There was a certain old man who was a monk, and who dwelt in the desert far away, and he had a kinswoman who with difficulty discovered after very many years where he was living, and then, by the operation of Satan, she rose up and came to the road to the desert, and she found camels which were going to travel on that road, and she entered [the desert] with them. Now she was [driven to do this] by the devil. And as soon as she had come to the cell of the old man, she began to give him proofs about herself, saying, "I am indeed thy kinswoman," and she remained with him. Now there was

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another monk who lived in the neighbourhood of men, and he filled a vessel full of water, and set [it] down, and at the season when he ate, being urged by the operation of God, he meditated within himself, and said, "I will arise and will go into the desert, and will learn from that old man what this is." Now as he was travelling along the way, the night overtook him, and he went into a house of idols which was on the road, and passed the night there, and he heard the devils saying to each other, "This night we have cast down such a monk by fornication." Now when he heard this he marvelled, and he came to the old man, and found him sad, and he said unto him, "Father, what shall I do? For I filled a vessel with water, but when I came to eat my meal I found that it had been spilled." And the old man said unto him, "Hast thou come to ask me about a vessel of water which hath been spilled? What am I myself to do? For this night I have fallen into fornication." The monk said unto him, "I know it also; hold thy peace." The old man said unto him, "How knowest thou?" And the monk said unto him, "Last night when I was sleeping in a house of idols which is on the road, I heard the devils say [so] to each other, and I was distressed [thereat]." And the old man said unto him, "Henceforth I will go to the world," but the monk persuaded him, saying, "Nay, father, but stay in thy place, and send the woman away, for this is a temptation of the Enemy"; and the old man hearkened unto him, and sent her away, and he himself continued in his ascetic works, and he mourned, and made supplication unto God with abundant tears, until at length he arrived at his former state of ascetic excellence.

117. A brother asked one of the fathers, saying, "What shall I do, for I am disturbed in mind when I go up to perform the office of the deacon?" And the old man said unto him, "It is not good for thee to be disturbed when thou goest up to minister, but if thou art, and thou art disturbed in thy cell, thou must labour, and give thanks, and receive the hire of which thou art worthy." Then that brother said unto him, "If I can find a man who will minister for me for a gift, and I cheat him not, may I [let him] do so?" The old man said unto him, "If thou canst find a man who is in the world who can perform thy ministration, and will take his hire, yes, but if he be a monk, no."

118. A brother said unto Abbâ Poemen, "Can a man rely upon any one work of spiritual excellence [for salvation]?" The old man said unto him, "John the Less said, 'I should wish that a man should take to himself a little of each kind of spiritual excellence.'"

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119. These are the words which Abbâ Moses said to Abbâ Poemen, and the first word which was spoken by the old man was :

120. "It is better for a man to put himself to death rather than his neighbour, and he should not condemn him in anything."

121. "It is good for a man to die unto every work which is evil, and he should not vex a man before his departure from the body."

122. "If a man doth not put himself in the attitude of a sinner, his prayer will not be heard before God." A brother said unto him, "What is a sinful soul?" And the old man said, "Every one who beareth his own sins, and considereth not [those] of his companion."

123. The old man also said unto him, "If works do not correspond to prayer he who prayeth laboureth in vain." And a brother asked him: "What is the equality of works with prayer?" The old man said unto him, "He who prayeth that he may receive the remission of sins must not henceforth be negligent, for if a man relinquisheth his own will, he will be accepted by God rightly."

124. A brother asked an old man, saying, "Fasting and praying which spring from men, what do they effect?" The old man said unto him, "They make the soul to be humble before God, for it is written, 'Look upon my subjugation, and my labour, and forgive me all my sin' (Psalm xxv, 18). For if the soul be afflicted it will receive mercy from God."

125. A brother said unto an old man, "What shall a man do in every temptation which cometh upon him, and during every thought of the Enemy?" The old man said unto him, "It is right for a man to weep before the grace of God so that He may help him, and he shall speedily find relief if he make his supplication with knowledge, for it is written, 'The Lord is my Helper, I will not be afraid what man shall do unto me'" (Psalm cxviii, 6; Hebrews xiii, 6).

126. The perfection of all spiritual excellences is for a man not to judge his neighbour. For when the hand of the Lord slew the first-born of Egypt, there was no house wherein there was not one dead person. Then a brother said unto the old man, "What is the meaning of these words?" The old man said unto him, "If we allow ourselves to view closely our own sins we shall not see those of our neighbour. It is folly for a man to forsake his own dead and to lament over that of his neighbour."

127. And in respect of the words "A man should put his own

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“soul to death rather than [that] of his neighbour,” they mean that a man should bear his own sins, and should be remote from the anxiety of all men. And he should not say, “This is good, and this is bad”; and he should not do harm to any man; and the wickedness of thy neighbour should not be remembered in thy heart; and thou must not hold in contempt the man who hath done wickedness to thy friend; and thou must not deliver thy will over to him that doeth evil to thy neighbour; and thou must not rejoice in that which causeth evil to thy neighbour. This is the meaning of the words that a man “should die rather than [his] neighbour.” And thou shalt not speak evilly of a man, but say, “God knoweth every man”; and thou shalt not take pleasure in evil converse, and thou shalt not deliver thy will over to him that revileth thy neighbour. This is the meaning of the words, “Judge not that ye be not “judged.” And thou shalt not make enmity against any man, and thou shalt not make any enmity in thy heart, and thou shalt not hate him that worketh enmity against his neighbour, and thou shalt not judge his enmity, and thou shalt not keep wrath against a brother who keepeth wrath against his neighbour. For this is peace.

128. Now the conclusion of all these things is that whatsoever thou hearest thou must speak, but this is not the opinion to which I incline, and I am a sinner; for because of these things God will give thee rest. When thou risest up in the morning each day, lay hold upon a governor who will suit every kind of spiritual excellence, and every command of God with abundant long-suffering, and in humility of soul and of body, and with patience and tribulations, and with thoughts and prayers, and supplications, and with groanings, and with the cleansing of the tongue, and with watching of the eyes, in suffering abuse without being angry and maintaining peace, in not rewarding evil for evil without discretion. And thou must not regard the lapses [of others], and thou must not measure thine own [excellence], but thou must be the lowest thing in creation through alienation from the things of the body and multitudinous affairs, through the agony of the cross, and poverty of spirit, and good desire, and spiritual self-abnegation, and fasting, and repentance, and tears, through the strife of war, and discretion, and purity of soul, through noble patience, and vigil by nights, and hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and cold, and labours. And thou must keep hold upon thy grave as if thou wert already dead, and as if death were thy neighbour every day, in the mountains, and in the caves, and in the holes of the earth; and take heed that thou dost not become merely a hearer of the Word and not a doer of it. For those who do these things are

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indeed they who are clothed in the wedding garments, and they it is who have worked with the talents.

129. A brother asked an old man, saying, "Father, what answer shall I return unto those who abuse us and say that we do not return to the world because of our laziness, and that by the work of our hands and the labour of our souls we do not relieve strangers?" The old man said unto him, "Although we have from the Law and from the commandments of our Lord many things wherewith we could make answer concerning the crown of perfection, yet we must make answer, with humility, in this wise: Beloved, when the Ninevites were in need of repentance, which of them did these things for the necessity of the world and the rights thereof? Did not even the king himself refrain from this thing and take the same course as the men of olden time, and those of the later time, and those who were before them? And he kept silence and was quiet, even according to all the characteristics of the world, and up to the present no [men] have described the punishment which befitted them. Thus also it is with us, and because we have sinned against and transgressed the natural and written law we bring to naught all [the characteristics] of the world until we shall perceive that reconciliation hath come, and the penalty of the rights of olden time and of the commandments hath been dissolved. And did not Paul also teach us this, [when he said], 'He who wageth a strife keepeth his mind [free] from everything else?' (Compare 1 Corinthians ix, 24, 25.) And a man must not rest until the Lord blot out seed from Babel."

130. A brother asked an old man, saying, "What shall I do with my mind which fighteth [against me]? For it is better and also a greater thing for me to go into the world and to teach and convert many, and to become like unto the Apostles." The old man said unto him, "If there be in thy mind no fear that thou hast fallen short in the matter of any of the commandments, and if thou hast also felt that thou hast arrived at the haven of rest, and if thou hast no feeling about anything in thy mind, then go; but if thou hast not all these things together in thee, [the desire] is due to the operation of wickedness which urgeth thee on, so that it may cast thee down from thine integrity."

131. On one occasion the brethren were eating together in Scete, and John Kolob was with them, and a great priest rose up to give them a pitcher of water, but no man would accept it from him except John Kolob; and they all marvelled and said unto him, "How is it that thou who art the least among all of us hast been so bold as to take the pitcher from him,

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“and drink, whilst none of us dared to do so?” Then Abbâ John said unto them, “When I stand up I rejoice that every man should take [the pitcher] from me and drink, so that I may have a reward, and I considered on this occasion also, and I took [the pitcher] and drank so that there might be a reward to him, and that he might not be grieved because no man accepted [water] from him, and that his [good] will might not be wronged.” And when he had said this the fathers marvelled at his intelligence, and they all obtained benefit by his word[s].

132. A brother asked Poemen, saying, “I observe my soul, so that wheresoever I go I may find help”; the old man said unto him, “Even those who bear swords have a God, Who hath mercy upon them in this life. If then we were to find ourselves in islands of terror God would deal with us according to His mercy.”

134. Abbâ Poemen used to say that Abbâ Ammon said, “One man spendeth the whole period of his life holding an axe in his hand [ready] to cut down a tree, and never findeth the opportunity of wielding it; and another man, who knoweth well how to fell trees, heweth with three axes, and wieldeth them [against trees]. Now,” he said, “the axe [in this case] is discretion [or discernment].”

135. Abbâ Poemen also said that Abbâ Anthony said concerning Abbâ Pambô, “This man feared God so greatly that he made the Spirit of God to dwell in him.”

136. Abbâ Poemen used to say, “The fear of God teacheth a man all spiritual excellences.”

137. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, “Why do my thoughts persuade me to esteem myself and compare myself with one whose rule of conduct is more excellent [than mine], and to despise that man as much as if he had been my inferior?” The old man answered and said, “The blessed Apostle spake concerning this, saying, ‘In a large house there are not only vessels of gold and vessels of silver, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware. If now a man will cleanse his soul from all these things, he shall become a vessel which is suitable and convenient for the honour of his Lord, and he will be ready for every good work’” (2 Timothy ii, 20, 21). That brother said unto him, “How are these matters to be explained?” And the old man said unto him, “They are to be explained thus. The house is the world and the vessels are the children of men. The vessels of gold must be taken as representing the perfect, and those of silver are the men who are inferior to them in the measure of ascetic deeds, and the other vessels of wood and earthen-

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“ware are those who possess a little ascetic excellence. If now
“a man will cleanse his soul from all the things which are out-
“side what is right, he will become a pure vessel of honour
“suitable for the use of his Lord, and be ready for every good
“work.”

138. A brother also asked Abbâ Poemen, “Why is it that
“I am not allowed to be free in my thoughts like the other
“old men?” The old man said unto him, “John Kolob used to
“say, ‘The Enemy doth not rejoice in anything so much as in
“‘those who do not reveal and lay bare their thoughts to
“‘their fathers.’”

139. Abbâ Poemen used to say, “Men are wont to speak
“great and perfect things, but in their deeds they draw nigh
“unto the things which are little and inferior.”

140. An old man used to say, “Neither shame nor fear con-
“firms sin.”

141. An old man used to say, “As the company of the monks
“is more excellent than and superior to the children of the
“world, so it is meet that the monk who is a stranger should
“be a mirror to those who are found in a monastery which is
“devoted to the ascetic life.”

142. A brother asked an old man, saying, “What shall I
“do?” The old man said unto him, “Go, and love the con-
“straint of thyself in everything.”

143. The same old man said unto him, “Reveal and shew
“forth thy gift”; and the brother said unto him, “My thoughts
“will not permit me [to do so].” The old man said, “It is
“written, ‘Call upon Me in the day of affliction, and I will
“‘deliver thee, and thou shalt praise Me’ (Psalm 1, 15); call
“then upon Him, and He shall deliver thee.”

144. An old man used to say, “Teach thy heart to keep and
“to take heed unto the things which thy tongue speaketh.”

145. An old man used to say, “If a man teacheth and per-
“formeth not he is like unto the large basin which receiveth
“the water for the assembly, which watereth and cleanseth
“many, but cannot itself be cleaned, and is full of dirt and
“impurity.”

146. Abbâ Jacob used to say, “As a lamp illumineth a dark
“chamber, so doth the fear of God, if it abide in the heart of
“a man, illumine him, and teach him all the excellences of
“the commandments of God.”

147. Abbâ Muthues used to say, “I would rather have the
“man with a little work, which abideth and is constant, than
“him who at the beginning laboureth severely, and soon
“ceaseth altogether.”

148. On one occasion Abbâ Theodore went to Abbâ John,

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who was an eunuch from his mother's womb, and as they were talking together about spiritual excellences, he said, "When we were in Scete the cultivation of the soul was our labour, and we worked with our hands only in the ordinary way, and we only did work of this kind when it came [in the way]; to-day, however, the cultivation of the soul is made our ordinary work, which is performed whensoever it happeneth to come [in the way], and the work of our hands, which was always regarded as a common matter, hath become unto us a serious matter and an object of earnest solicitude."

149. A brother asked an old man, saying, "What is the cultivation of the soul like? And what is the labour of the hands like?" The old man said unto him, "Whatsoever happeneth for God's sake is the cultivation (*or* labour) of the soul; but whatsoever a man doeth for himself, or whatsoever he gathereth together for himself, is the labour of the hands." That brother said unto him, "Father, teach me a proof of this matter which I do not understand." The old man said unto him, "It is as if a man were to say, Behold, thou hearest that I am sick, and thou sayest in thyself, Now I have a piece of work to do, shall I leave [it], and go and visit him, or shall I finish it first and then go? And however many times thou art prevented [from going] for some reason or cause, and however many times the brother saith unto thee, Come, take me, and help me, thou sayest within thyself, Shall I leave my work and go and help him? But if thou goest not, behold, thou hast abrogated the commandments of God, which are for the cultivation of the soul, because of the work of the hands. If then a man ask thee, go with him, since this is a work of God, for He said, 'If a man compel thee to go a mile with him, go two'" (St. Matthew v, 41).

150. A brother asked Abbâ Marcianus, saying, "What shall I do so that I may live?" And the old man answered and said unto him, "He who looketh above seeth not what is below; he who is occupied closely with the things which are below hath no knowledge of what is above. And he who understandeth the things which are above is not concerned with what is below, for it is written, 'Turn ye, and know that I am God'" (Psalm xlv, 10).

151. Abbâ Poemen said that Abbâ John cultivated all spiritual excellences.

152. A brother asked one of the old men, saying, "If I am being tempted, and a temptation come upon me, and I have no one in whom I have confidence to tell about it, what shall

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“I do?” The old man said unto him, “I believe in God, and that He will send His Grace, and will comfort thee, and give thee strength if thou wilt ask Him in truth and wilt make supplication unto Him. For I have heard that a matter like unto this took place in Scete, where there was a man whose rule and conduct were excellent, and he fell into temptation, and he became oppressed in his mind, and because he had no man in whom he had confidence to reveal the matter to, and none to bid him be of good courage, he made himself ready to depart. And behold, the grace of God appeared unto him by night in the form of a virgin, and she comforted him, saying, ‘Depart not, but dwell here with me, for not one of the things of which I have heard shall be performed’; and straightway his mind was healed, and he was consoled and strengthened.”

153. A certain brother used to say, “I knew an old man who dwelt in the mountain who would never agree to accept anything from any man; now he possessed a little water, and with it he used to care for and water a few garden herbs which he had. And he lived this life for fifty years, and he never went outside the fence of his cell. He was exceedingly famous because of the numerous cures which he wrought daily upon those who came to him. He died in peace, leaving in his place five brethren.”

154. There was a certain old man in Scete who toiled in the works of the body, that is to say, in fasting and in standing up; and in his thoughts he was a simple man, and he was neither keen in intellect nor learned. And he went to Abbâ John Kolob to ask him about his thoughts, and when the old man had spoken to him he returned and went to his cell, and forgot what the old man had said to him. And he came a second time to the old man, who told him what he had already said unto him, and when he had departed he forgot it again; and though he did this several times he always forgot what had been said to him. Then, after these things, he went unto the blessed man once more, and said unto him, “Thou knowest, O father, that I forgot [thy words] again; but I did not come to thee because I did not wish to weary thee.” Abbâ John said unto him, “Go, and light a lamp”; and he went and did as he commanded him. And Abbâ John said unto him, “Bring several lamps, and light [them all] from it”; and he lit [them] as he had told him. And Abba John said to the old man, “Is the lamp wherefrom thou hast kindled the many lamps in any way the worse?” and he said unto him, “No.” And the old man John said unto him, “If all Scete were to come unto him John would not be the worse for it, neither would the gift of

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“the grace of Christ be impeded thereby. Whensoever then “thou wishest, and art in doubt, come [to me].” Thus by the patient endurance of both of them he removed and did away error from that brother. For this was the work of those who were dwelling in Scete, and they devoted themselves, and delivered over their wills to compel those who were engaged in [spiritual] war to inherit the good things (*or* virtues) each from each.

155. There was a certain old man who was sick, and as he possessed nothing which he required for his wants, the Abbâ of the coenobium received him [there], and said to the brethren, “Exert yourselves a little to relieve this sick man.” Now the man who was sick had a pot full of gold, and he dug a hole below where he was [lying] and buried it; and it happened that he died without confessing and revealing the matter. And after he was buried, the Abbâ who had taken him in said unto the brethren, “Remove this bench from here,” and whilst they were rooting it out they found the gold. Then the Abbâ said, “Since he confessed not about this when he was alive, he “cannot reveal the matter when he is dead”—now he knew that the sick man’s hope had been in it—“but go ye and bury “it with him.” And fire came down from heaven, and it continued above his grave for many days in the sight of every man, and all those who saw it marvelled.

156. A certain brother came on one occasion to the cell of Abbâ John at the time of evening, and he was in a great hurry to depart; and they talked about spiritual excellences [for a long time] without knowing [it], and when he went forth to set him on his way, they tarried talking together until it was the sixth hour of the night. Then Abbâ John made him go back to his cell, and they ate together, and then he sent him away, and he departed.

157. Abbâ Ammon said:—On one occasion I and Abbâ Betimius went to visit Abbâ Akhîlâ, for we had heard that he was meditating upon the passage, “Fear thou not, O Jacob, “to go down to Egypt” (Genesis xlvi, 3), and that he was repeating these words several times; and when we knocked he opened unto us, and he asked us, saying, “Whence are ye?” And being afraid to say, “[We come] from the cells,” we made answer that we were from the Mountain of Nitria, and he brought us in, and we found that he was working by night at plaiting palm leaves, and we asked him, saying, “Speak a word “unto us.” Then he answered and said, “Between the evening “and the morning I have twisted twenty branches, but in very “truth I have no need for all this, only [I am afraid] lest God “be angry with me, and He chide me, saying, ‘Though thou

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“wast able to work thou hast not done so”; therefore I toil and
“I work with all my might.”

158. Certain of the fathers used to tell a story about a holy man who was indeed a great man, and if people came to ask him a question he would say unto them with wisdom, “Behold, “I take upon myself the face (*or* Person) of God, and I sit “upon the throne of judgement; what now dost thou wish me “to do for thee? If thou sayest, ‘Have mercy upon me,’ God “saith unto thee, ‘If thou wishest Me to have mercy upon “thee, thou also must have mercy upon thy brother, and then “I will have mercy upon thee; and if thou wishest Me to for- “give thee, thou also must forgive thy brother, and then I will “forgive thee.’ Can any blame rest upon God? God forbid! But “the cause resteth with us, and if we wish we are able to live.”

159. On one occasion a certain brother departed into exile from the countries and places wherein dwelt Abbâ Poemen, and he went to a monk who used to live in that country where-to he was going; now this man was one who possessed love, and many folk thronged to him—and the brother related unto that monk stories concerning Abbâ Poemen, and when he heard about his spiritual excellences he longed to see him. And the brother came back again to Egypt, and after some time the monk [unto whom he had gone], who lived in that country, came to Egypt to him, for the brother had already told him where he lived, and when the monk saw the brother he rejoiced greatly. Then the monk said unto the brother, “Do [me an act “of] love, and take me so that I may go to Abbâ Poemen,” and he took him to Abbâ Poemen, and the brother told him the story of the monk who was with him, saying, “He is a great “man, and is much beloved, and he hath no small honour in “his own country. I related unto him stories concerning thy holi- “ness, and he greatly desired to come and see thee”; and Abbâ Poemen received him with gladness, and having saluted each other they sat down. Then the stranger began to converse with Abbâ Poemen from the Scriptures concerning spiritual and heavenly things, but Abbâ Poemen turned away his face and returned him no answer whatsoever. And when he saw that Abbâ Poemen would not speak unto him, he was grieved, and went outside, and said unto the brother who had brought him, “In my opinion I have toiled in vain in coming all this long “journey to see the old man, for behold, he refuseth to speak to “me.” Now when the brother went in to the old man Poemen, he said unto him, “Father, this great man, who is so greatly “praised in his own country, came on thy account; why didst “thou not speak with him?” Poemen said, “He spake about “the things which are above and concerning heavenly matters,

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“but I can only talk about things which are below and about the things of earth; had he spoken to me about the passions of the soul I would have given him an answer; but since he talked about spiritual things, I know nothing about them.” Then that brother went forth to the monk and said unto him, “The old man is not one of those who wish a man to talk to them from the Scriptures, but if thou wilt converse with him about the passions of the soul he will return thee answer.” And straightway the monk repented, and he came to the old man, and said unto him, “Father, what shall I do so that I may bring into subjection the passions of the body?” Then the old man looked upon him gladly, and said unto him, “Now thou art welcome! Open now thy mouth on such matters as these, and I will fill it with good things.” And the monk, having been greatly helped, and having gained benefit, said, “In very truth this is the way of truth”; and he went back to his country, giving thanks to God that he had been held worthy of such converse with the holy man.

160. Abbâ Poemen said concerning Abbâ John that he cultivated spiritual excellences of every kind.

161. Abbâ Muthues used to say that there were three brethren who were in the habit of coming to Abbâ Anthony, and that two of them used to ask him questions about the thoughts, and about life, and redemption, and the discretion (*or* intelligence) of the soul, whilst the third one held his peace continually. And after a long time Abbâ Anthony said unto him, “Brother, thou comest here each year, and askest nothing!” And he answered and said unto the old man, “It is sufficient for me to see thee.”

162. Abbâ Sisoës asked Abbâ Poemen about filthy thoughts, and the old man said unto him, “The matter is like unto a box of clothes: if a man leaveth the clothes inside it for a long time without being turned, they will become eaten up in process of time and destroyed. And thus also is it with the thoughts, and if a man doth not drive them out from his body they will be destroyed and perish.”

163. Abbâ Joseph asked Abbâ Poemen about the wicked and vain thoughts which a man produceth, and the old man said unto him, “It is as if a man were to take a snake and a scorpion, and throw them in a vessel (*or* cloth), and close (*or* wrap) them up tightly for a long time, when they would die owing to the period [which they have been shut up]; even so do the evil thoughts, which spring up in the mind through the workings of devils, decay and become destroyed through patient endurance.”

164. Abbâ Elijah used to say, “What is sin able to do where

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“repentance is found? And what will love profit where there is pride?”

165. One of the fathers said, “The early [fathers] did not depart from their places except for the three following reasons:—First: If one of them was vexed with his neighbour, and it was impossible for him to make clean his heart in respect of him. Secondly: If the abundant approval of the children of men was gathered together to him. Thirdly: If the temptation of fornication clung to him. Whensoever they saw these three reasons they departed.”

166. On one occasion when he saw him pouring some water over his feet, Abbâ Isaac said unto Abbâ Poemen, as one who possessed freedom of speech before him, “How is it that, whilst the fathers exercised themselves in such stern labours and mighty deeds of asceticism that they oppressed their bodies, behold, thou art washing [thy feet]?” Abbâ Poemen said unto him, “We have not learned to be slayers of the body, but slayers of the passions.”

167. This same Abbâ Isaac heard the voice of a cock, and he said to Abbâ Poemen, “Are there such things as fowls here, father?” And he answered and said unto him, “Isaac, why dost thou force me to speak to thee? It is only people who are like thyself that hear such sounds as these; he who is strenuous concerneth not himself with matters of this kind.”

168. An old man used to say, “Wisdom and simplicity form the perfect order of the Apostles and of those who examine closely their rules of life and their conduct, and to this Christ urged them, saying, ‘Be ye harmless as doves and subtle like serpents’ (St. Matthew x, 16). And the Apostle [Paul] also admonished the Corinthians to the same effect, saying, ‘My brethren, be not childish in your minds, but be ye as babes in respect of things which are evil, and be ye perfect in your minds’ (1 Corinthians xiv, 20). Now wisdom without simplicity is wicked cunning, and it is the subtlety of the philosophers among the pagans of which it is said, ‘He catcheth the wise men in their own cunning’ (Job v, 13; 1 Corinthians iii, 19), and again, ‘The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain’ (Psalm xciv, 11; 1 Corinthians iii, 20). And simplicity without wisdom is the foolishness which is prone to error, and concerning this also the Apostle spake, and he wrote unto those who possessed it, saying, ‘I fear lest, even as the serpent led Eve into error by his craftiness, so your minds also may be destroyed in respect of your simplicity which is towards Christ’ (2 Corinthians xi, 3). For they accepted every word without testing

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“it, even as it is said in the [Book of] Proverbs, ‘The simple “man believeth every word”’ (Proverbs xiv, 15).

169. They used to say that one of the old men in Scete had been a slave, and that he came each year to Alexandria, and brought with him a gift for his owners from [the results of] labour, and they received him, and paid him homage. And the old man [formerly] poured water into a basin, and brought it so that he might wash the feet of his owners, but they said unto him, “Nay, father, thou shalt not honour us [thus].” Then he said unto them, “My lords, I acknowledge that I am “your slave, and that I have received from you an act of grace “in that ye have let me become a free man to serve our Lord, “and if I may not wash your feet accept at least my gift”; but they objected to this, and would not accept [it]. And he said unto them, “Since ye refuse to accept it I shall dwell here, “and be subject unto you”; then they allowed him to do what he wished, and they sent him away with great gifts of various kinds, so that he might do acts of kindness on their behalf to the brethren who were in need, and because of this he became famous in Scete. Now he conducted himself with great humility towards every man.

170. There was a certain man who was a slave and he became a monk, and he persisted in a life of self-abnegation for five and forty years, and bread, and water, and salt, were sufficient for his food; now after some time the man who had been his master repented, and he also made himself to be remote from the world. And when the time came for him to depart from this world, he said unto his slave, who was now his Rabbâ, “I see the hosts of wickedness surrounding me, but “through thy prayer they are going back from me.” And when the call came for that slave one stood on his right hand, and the other on his left, and he heard them saying unto him, “Dost thou wish to come, O father, or shall we go and leave “thee?” And he said, “I desire not to remain, take my soul”; and thus he ended [his life].

171. A certain man made himself remote from the world, and he had a wife and also a daughter, and the latter died before she had been baptized by the disciples; and her father distributed among the poor the portion which came to her, and also that of his wife; but he never ceased to make entreaty to God on behalf of his daughter who had departed from the world without being baptized. And a voice was heard by him as he was praying, which said, “I have baptized thy daughter, have “no sorrow”; but he did not believe. And that voice, which was hidden, spake again unto him, saying, “Uncover her “grave, and look [in], and thou wilt not find her”; then he

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went to her grave, and dug it up, and he found her not, for she had departed, and had been laid with the believers.

172. The old man Macarius used to say, "These are the three principal things, and it is right that a man should set them before him at every season. The remembrance of his death should be before him at every hour, and he should die to every man, and he should be constant always in his mind towards our Lord. For, if a man have not the remembrance of his death before him at all seasons, he will not be able to die to every man, and if he die not to every man he will be unable to be constantly before God."

173. The old man Macarius used to say, "Strive for every kind of death, for the death of the body, that is to say, if thou hast not the death which is in the spirit; strive for the death of the body, and then shall be added unto thee the death which is in the spirit. And death of this kind will make thee to die to every man, and henceforward thou wilt acquire the faculty of being constantly with God in silence."

174. The same old man also said, "If thou hast not the prayer of the spirit, strive for the prayer of the body, and then shall be added unto thee the prayer in the spirit. If thou hast not humility in the spirit, strive for the humility which is in the body, and then shall be added unto thee the humility which is in the spirit. For it is written, 'Ask, and ye shall receive'" (St. Matthew vii, 7; xxi, 22).

175. A brother asked an old man, saying, "Why do I keep my sins in remembrance without being pained about them?" The old man said unto him, "This happeneth unto us through contempt and negligence. When a man wisheth to boil some food for his need, and he findeth some small sparks of fire in his fireplace, he desireth to take care of them, and preserve them, and to kindle therefrom a large flame; but if he neglecteth them they become black and die out. And thus also is it with ourselves, for if, according as God hath bestowed upon us, we remember our sins, and we desire and come to the life of silence, and we possess persistence in remembering our sins, we shall acquire great grief in our hearts; but, if we hold them in contempt and do not even remember them, we shall be rejected."

176. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, "Who is a hypocrite?" The old man said unto him, "The hypocrite is he who teacheth his neighbour to do a certain thing which he himself hath not performed, and to the doing of which he hath not attained; for it is written, 'Hypocrite! why dost thou look at the mote which is in the eye of thy brother, and behold there is a beam in thine own eye? And how canst

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“ ‘thou say to thy brother, Let me take out the mote from
“ ‘thine eye, seeing that thou hast not first taken the beam
“ ‘out of thine own eye?’ ” (St. Matthew vii, 5.)

177. A brother asked Abbâ Chronius, saying, “ ‘What shall I
“ ‘do in respect of the error which leadeth captive my mind?
“ ‘For I do not perceive it until it bringeth me to the committal
“ ‘of sin.’ ” And the old man said unto him, “ ‘When the Philis-
“ ‘tines took captive the Ark of the Lord because of the evil
“ ‘deeds of the children of Israel, they dragged it along and
“ ‘carried it until they had brought it into the house of Dagon
“ ‘their God, and then Dagon fell down on his face in that
“ ‘place’ ” (1 Samuel v, 3). The brother said unto him, “ ‘What
“ ‘[meaneth] this word?’ ” The old man said unto him, “ ‘If the
“ ‘unclean devils take captive the mind of a man by their own
“ ‘means, they lead it on until they bring it to invisible and un-
“ ‘known passion; but if, on the spot, the mind turneth and
“ ‘seeketh God, and remembereth fervently the judgement of
“ ‘the world which is to come, straightway the passion depart-
“ ‘eth, and is destroyed. For it is written, ‘When ye repent
“ ‘and groan, ye shall be redeemed, and ye shall know in what
“ ‘condition ye are.’ ”

178. Again a brother asked Abbâ Chronius, saying, “ ‘In what
“ ‘manner doth a man come to humility?’ ” The old man said
unto him, “ ‘In my opinion a man doeth this by restraining and
“ ‘withdrawing himself from everything, and by devoting him-
“ ‘self to the labour of the body, and as far as he hath the power
“ ‘so to do he should remember his departure from the body,
“ ‘and the awful judgement of God.’ ”

179. Abbâ Anthony used to say, “ ‘Behold a time shall come to
“ ‘the children of men when they shall become silly, and they shall
“ ‘turn aside and depart from the fear of God, and if they see a
“ ‘man who is neither as mad nor as silly as they are, they
“ ‘shall rise up against him, saying, ‘Thou art both mad and
“ ‘silly,’ because he is not like unto them.’ ”

180. Abbâ Ammon of Nitria went to Abbâ Anthony, and said
unto him, “ ‘I see that the labours which I perform are greater
“ ‘than thine, how then is it that thy name is more renowned
“ ‘among men than mine?’ ” Abbâ Anthony said unto him, “ ‘Be-
“ ‘cause I also love the Lord more than thou.’ ”

181. When Abbâ Poemen heard that Abbâ Nastîr was dwell-
ing in the coenobium he desired greatly to see him, and he
told his Abbâ that he ought to send him to go and visit him,
but he refused to send him by himself, and he would not let
him go. Now a few days afterwards the steward of the coeno-
bium, who had certain thoughts, persuaded Abbâ to send him
to Abbâ Nastîr, and he dismissed him, saying, “ ‘Take this

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“brother with thee, and send me an old man because of him; and because I could not trust myself to send him alone I did not send him at all.” Now when the steward had come to the old man Nastîr, he told him his thoughts, and Abbâ Nastîr healed him. And afterwards the old man asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, “Whence hast thou gotten such humility that whensoever it happeneth that there be trouble in the coenobium thou dost not speak, and dost not interfere to put an end to contention?” And the old man having pressed the brother, Abbâ Poemen answered and said unto him, “Forgive me, father! When I first entered the coenobium I said unto my mind, I and the ass are one. As the ass is beaten and speaketh not, and is cursed and maketh no answer, so also act thou, according to what the blessed David said, ‘I was a ‘beast with Thee’” (Psalm lxxiii, 22).

182. On one occasion Saint Theophilus, Archbishop of Alexandria, came to Scete, and when the brethren were gathered together they said unto Abbâ Pambô, “Speak a word to the Bishop, so that we may be built in this place”; the old man said unto them, “If by my silence [we] are not helped, [we] shall not be builded by my word.”

183. One of the brethren entreated Abbâ Sisoës, saying, “Do an act of love, father, and do thou thyself speak to me a word”; and he answered and said, “He who holdeth with knowledge [the belief] that a man should not esteem himself fulfilleth the whole Book.”

184. An old man used to say, “This is what is written: Because of two, and because of three transactions of Tyre, yea, because of four, I will not turn back from them” (Amos i, 9); [that is to say,] to be content with wickedness, to fulfil a thought, and to utter it; and the fourth is to carry a thought into effect. For at such a thing as this [last] the wrath of the Lord turneth not back.”

185. They used to say concerning a great old man who dwelt in Scete that, whenever the brethren were building cells in Scete, he would go out and lay the foundation, and would not depart until [the building] was completed. Once, however, when he went forth to build, he was exceedingly sad, and very sorry, and the brethren said to him, “Why is it that thou art thus grieved and sorry?” And he said unto them, “My sons, this place shall be laid waste. For I have seen a fire kindled in Scete, and have seen that the brethren took palm leaves and beat upon it until they extinguished it; and it broke out again, and the brethren took palm leaves and extinguished it; but it broke out a third time, and it filled all Scete, and the brethren were never again able to ex-

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“tinguish it. It is for this reason that I am grieved, and sad, and sorry.”

186. An old man used to say, “It is written, ‘The righteous man shall blossom like the palm tree’ (Psalm xcii, 12). Now these words make known that the soul acquireth height, and straightness of stature, and sweetness from beautiful deeds. But there is another quality which is found in the palm, that is, a single, white heart, which is wholly suitable for work (*or* useful for being worked). And this must be found in the righteous man, for his heart must be single and simple, and it must be accustomed to look towards God only. Now the heart of the palm tree is also white by reason of that fire which it possesseth naturally, and all the service of the righteous man is in his heart; and the hollowness and the evenness of the tops of the leaves [typify] the setting up of sharpness of the soul of the righteous man against the Calumniator.”

187. Another of the fathers used to say, “The eyes of the pig are so arranged by nature that they look always on the ground, and the animal can never look upwards to heaven. And thus is it with the soul which hath once been swallowed up in the gratification of the lusts, for it is caught henceforward in the filthy mire of the gratification of the passions, and it is only with difficulty that it is able to look towards God, or to meditate upon any of the things which are worthy of praise.”

188. The fathers prophesied concerning the later generation, saying, “What manner of work will they do?” And one of them, whose conduct was exalted, and whose name was Isôkhôrôn, said, “We perform the commandments of God”; and the others answered and said unto him, “And those who will come after us, what manner of work will they do?” And he said, “They will attain to the half of our service.” And again they answered and said, “What manner of work will those who come after these do?” And he said, “Those who are in that generation will possess no work of any kind, for many trials are about to come upon them, and those among them who are found to be chosen men will be found to be greater than ourselves and our fathers.”

189. An old man was [once] asked, “How is it that thou art never dejected?” And he said, “Because each day I hope to die.”

190. A brother asked an old man, “Why is it that, when I happen to go out by myself at night, fear attacketh me?” The old man said, “Because the life of this world is still dear to thee.”

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191. An old man was asked, "What is the work of monks?" And he said, "To cultivate [all] the virtues, to make themselves strangers to all wickedness, and to be watchful against judging and condemning others; prayer, and obedience, and the cultivation of the virtues are the mirror of the monk. For his soul is a fountain, and if it cast forth from it the things which are abominable it shall be made pure; but if he dig a pit, God is not wicked that He should lead us out from one house of bondage and carry us into another."

192. An old man used to say, "Do nothing without prayer, and afterwards thou wilt never be sorry."

193. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "The work of the monastic life is poverty, and trouble, and separation; for it is written, 'If there be there these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, as I live, saith the Lord (Ezekiel xiv, 14). Noah must be taken [as representing] the personification of self-abnegation, and Job as representing labours, and Daniel as representing separation; if then a man possess these three rules of conduct the Lord dwelleth in him.'"

194. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, "Which is the better, to speak or to keep silence?" The old man said unto him, "He who speaketh for God's sake is a good man, and he doeth well, and he who holdeth his peace for God's sake doeth well."

195. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen about pollutions and impurities of all sorts and kinds, and he said unto him, "If we stablish in ourselves a portion[only] of the work of our soul[s], a man may seek for impurity or uncleanness and it shall not be found."

196. An old man used to say, "We saw in Abbâ Pambô three virtues which appertained to the body, namely, fasting from one evening to the other, and silence, and abundant work of the hands."

197. Abbâ Pambô asked Abbâ Anthony, saying, "What shall I do?" The old man said unto him, "Put no confidence in thine own righteousness, and regret not nor cogitate upon a matter which is past, and be persistent in restraining thy tongue and thy belly."

198. An old man was asked, "What is it right for a man to do that he may live?" Now the [old man himself] used to plait palm leaves into mats, and he never lifted up his head from the work of his hands, but he occupied himself at all times therewith. And the old man answered and said unto him that asked him, "Behold, what thou seest."

199. The old men used to say, "There is nothing worse than a man passing judgement upon his neighbour."

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200. And the old men used to say, "From those who are beginners in the monastic life God demandeth nothing except work, and the vexing of the body, and that a man should be obedient."

201. An old man used to say that separation was the most excellent of all spiritual virtues.

202. Abbâ Arsenius used to say, "Thou shalt not depart from a place without great labour, and thou shalt do none of the things which, evilly, thou desirest, and thou shalt do nothing without the testimony of the Scriptures."

203. Abbâ Arsenius used to say, "If we seek God He will be revealed unto us, and if we lay hold upon Him, He will remain with us."

An old man used to say, "If we seek God He will be revealed unto us, and if we lay hold upon Him, He will remain with us."

204. Abbâ Poemen used to say to Abbâ Job, "Turn away thine eyes from beholding what is vain, the lust for which destroyeth souls."

205. The old man used to say also, "It is impossible for him who believeth rightly, and who worketh in the fear of God, to fall into the impurity of the passions, and into the error of devils."

206. Abbâ Macarius used to say, "If we remember the wickedness of men we destroy the power of the memory, but if we remember how the devils act wickedly we shall remain uninjured."

207. On one occasion Abbâ Macarius went up from Scete to Therenuthum, and at eventide he came upon a certain place wherein he went that he might refresh himself and rest; and there were there some old bones, and bodies of the dead, and he took some of them and placed them under his head that he might lie down and rest a little from the labour of the road. Now when the devils which dwelt there saw his confidence and courage, they were smitten with envy, and wishing to disturb him they cried out and shouted from one to another the name of a woman, saying, "O So-and-so, O So-and-so, come with us, and let us go to the bath." And another answered from out of the bones which were under the head of the blessed man, and said unto him that called him, "There is a stranger who is lying upon me, and I am unable to come"; but the blessed man was not moved, neither was he astonished, but with confidence and great courage he knocked upon the bones, saying, "Rise up, and get thee into darkness backwards." Now when the devils heard this, they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Thou hast conquered us"; and they fled away ashamed.

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208. Abbâ Anthony used to say, "Let us put God before our eyes continually; remember death and Christ our Redeemer; hate the world and everything which is therein; hate the world and all bodily pleasure; die unto this life, so that thou mayest live unto God, for God will require it of thee in the day of judgement. Be hungry, and thirsty, and naked; weep and mourn; watch and groan in thy heart; examine thyself [and see] if thou art worthy of God. Love labour and tribulation, so that thou mayest find God, and treat with contempt and despise the body, so that thy soul may live."

209. An old man was asked, "What is the straight and narrow way?" And he answered and said, "The straight and narrow way is for a man to constrain his thoughts, and to restrain his desires for God's sake, and this [is intended to be understood when] it is said, 'Behold, we have left every thing and followed Thee.'"

210. Abbâ Poemen asked Abbâ Joseph, saying, "What am I to do when passions rise up against me, wishing to make me quake? Shall I stand up against them, and drive them away, or shall I allow them to enter?" The old man said unto him, "Let them shake thee, and do thou strive with them." But to another brother who had come from Thebes, and gone down to Scete, and asked the same old man the same question, he spake differently; and when he returned from Scete to Thebes, he said before all the brethren, "I went to Abbâ Joseph, and I asked him, saying, 'If passions draw nigh unto me, shall I drive them away so that they may not make me shake, or shall I permit them to enter into me?' And he said unto me, 'Thou shalt not let them draw nigh to thee in any way, but cut them off quickly.'" Now when Abbâ Poemen, who happened to be there, heard that Abbâ Joseph had spoken differently to that Theban, he rose up and went again to Abbâ Joseph, and said unto him, "Abbâ, I have believed in thee as in God, and I have revealed unto thee my thoughts, and behold, thou hast spoken unto that Theban in one way, and to me thou hast declared the opposite." The old man said unto him, "Dost thou not know that I love thee?" And he answered and said unto him, "Yea, I do." The old man said unto him, "Didst thou not say unto me, Tell me as if thou wast telling thyself? If, then, thoughts enter into thee, and thou art mingled with them, and thou givest and takest, and art not injured, they prove thee to be one who is tried and chosen especially. Now I spake unto thee as I would unto myself. But there are others whom the passions cannot even approach or touch, nevertheless it helpeth them to cut them off quickly."

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211. Abbâ John Kolob used to say, "I am like unto a man who is sitting under a great tree, and who seeth multitudes of wild beasts and creeping things coming towards him, and because he is unable to stand up against them, he runneth and goeth up the tree, and is delivered. In like manner I sit in my cell, and I see evil thoughts coming against me, and because I cannot stand against them I flee and take refuge in God by prayer, and I am delivered from the enemies, and I live for ever."

212. Abbâ Hilarion was asked, "How can it be right for a strenuous brother not to be offended when he seeth other monks returning to the world?" The old man said, "It is meet that he should consider the hunting dogs which follow after hares, for as one of these dogs giveth chase to the hare so soon as he seeth it (now the other dogs which are his companions look at that dog as he runneth, and although they run with him for a certain time, they at length become exhausted and turn back, whilst he continueth his running by himself, and is not impeded in his headlong course, and he striveth to advance, and neither resteth nor ceaseth from running because of those who have remained behind, but he runneth until he hath overtaken that which he seeth, even as I have already said, and he feareth neither the stones which come in his way, nor the thorny brambles and briars, and passeth on among the thorns, and though often torn and lacerated thereby he neither resteth nor ceaseth from his course), so also for the brother, who wisheth to follow after the love of Christ, is it right to fasten his gaze upon the Cross until he overtaketh Him that was crucified, even though he see others who have begun to turn back."

213. A brother asked an old man, saying, "What work ought the soul to do in order to produce fruits of excellence?" The old man said unto him, "In my opinion the work of the soul is as follows: To live in silence, persistent endurance, self-denial, labour, humility of body, and constant prayer. And a man should not consider the shortcomings of men, but his own lapses; if now a man will persist in these things the soul will after no great time make manifest the fruits of spiritual excellence."

214. An old man used to say, "Strife delivereth a man over to anger, and anger delivereth him over to blindness of the mind, and the blindness of the mind maketh him to do everything which is bad."

215. Abbâ Elijah used to say, "I am afraid of three things: When my soul shall be about to go forth from the body; and when I am about to go forth to meet Christ; and when the

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“sentence of doom shall be about to be sent forth upon me.”

216. Abbâ John used to say, concerning the soul which wisheth to repent, thus: There was a certain harlot in the city who had many lovers, and a certain judge came and said unto her, “Consent to lead a good life, and I will marry thee”; and she agreed, and he took her and brought her up to his house. Now when her lovers wanted her, they said, “A judge hath taken her up to his house, and if we go to his door, and he learn about it he will punish us. But let us come behind the door and whistle to her, and she will recognize the whistle and will come down to us, and we shall be blameless.” And when the harlot heard the sound of the whistling, she sealed up the hearing of her ears, and she jumped up and went into the inner bed-chamber, and shut herself in. Now the harlot is the sinful soul, and the lovers are the passions, and the judge is Christ, and the house is the wakeful mind, and those who whistle to the soul are the wicked devils; but the soul always fleeth to God.

217. They used to tell a story of a certain great old man, and say that when he was travelling along a road two angels cleaved to him and journeyed with him, one on his right hand and the other on his left. And as they were going along they found lying on the road a dead body which stank, and the old man closed his nostrils because of the evil smell, and the angels did the same. Now after they had gone on a little farther, the old man said unto them, “Do ye also smell as we do?” And they said unto him, “No, but because of thee we closed our nostrils. For it is not for us to smell the rottenness of this world, but we do smell the souls which stink of sin, because the breath of such is nigh unto us.”

218. Abbâ Anthony besought God to inform him why young children died whilst so many old men lived, and why upright men were poor whilst the wicked were rich, and why some were blind and others had their sight, and why the righteous suffered from illness whilst the wicked were healthy, and a voice came, which said, “Anthony, take care of thine own self, for these matters are the judgements of God.”

219. Whilst Abbâ Sylvanus was sitting down and the brethren with him, he dropped into a stupor which was of God, and he fell upon his face; and after a long time, when he was standing up, he wept, and the brethren entreated him, saying, “What aileth thee, O father?” But he held his peace, and they continued to press him to tell them what [ailed him]. Then he answered and said unto them, “I have just been snatched away to the place of the judgement of God, and I have seen many who belonged to our order, that is to say, Christians, going

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“to punishment, and many men who have lived in the world “going into the kingdom”; and the old man mourned and refused to come out of his cell. And he covered his face with his cloak, saying, “Why should I seek to see the light of time “wherein there is no profit?”

220. On another occasion his disciple Zechariah came to him, and found him in the stupor of prayer, and his hands were raised up to heaven, and he went out and closed the door; and he came [again] at the ninth hour, and found him in the same attitude, and when he came again about the tenth hour, and found him still in the same attitude, he knocked at the door, and then went in and found him in a state of silence. And he said unto him, “What hath happened unto thee to-day, O “father?” And the old man said unto him, “My son, I felt “weak and ill”; but the disciple laid hold upon his feet, saying, “I will not leave thee until thou tellest me what thou hast “seen.” The old man said unto him, “Swear to me that thou “wilt not reveal the matter unto any man until I go forth from “the body, and then I will tell thee”; and the disciple entreated him, and the old man said, “I was snatched up into the heavens, and I saw the glory of God, and I remained there until “now, when I was dismissed.”

221. On one occasion Abbâ Macarius went to Abbâ Anthony in the mountain, and he knocked at his door, and he went out unto him, and said unto him, “Who art thou?” And Macarius said unto him, “I am Macarius,” whereupon Abbâ Anthony closed the door and went inside, and left him outside, but when he saw the patient endurance of Macarius he opened the door to him, and said unto him with a smile, “O Macarius, I have been wishing to “see thee for a long time past, for I have heard about thee”; and having welcomed him he made him rest and refresh himself, through his love for strangers, for Abbâ Macarius had [come] from great toil. Now when the evening had come, Abbâ Anthony soaked a few palm leaves in water for himself, and Abbâ Macarius said unto him, “Give the command, and I will “soak some for myself,” and Abbâ Anthony said, “Soak “[some]”; and he made up a large bundle for himself, and soaked it in water, and they sat down from the evening [until the morning], and they talked together about the redemption of souls as they plaited the palm leaves, and they threw their work into the cave through the window. And when the blessed Anthony went into the cave in the morning, and saw the heap of palm-leaf work of Abbâ Macarius, he marvelled, and he seized his hands and kissed them, saying, “Great strength “hath gone forth from these hands.”

222. Abbâ Poemen said, “If a man will throw himself be-

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“fore God, and will not esteem himself, and will cast his pleasures behind his back, [he will find that] such things are the instruments of the work of the soul.”

223. The same old man also said, “If a man observeth his grade he will not be troubled.”

224. The same old man also said, “Make thou the desire of thy lust of no effect through the remembrance of God, and thou shalt find rest.”

225. He also said, “A certain brother went to Abbâ Sîmôn to ask him for a word, and although he remained with him for seven days the old man returned him no answer; but as he was making himself ready to go away he said unto him, “Go, and take good heed unto thyself, for at present my sins have become a dense wall between myself and God.”

226. Abbâ Alônîs said, “If I had not hidden (*or* suppressed) myself wholly I should not have been able to build myself.”

227. The same old man said, “A man is not able to know outside himself the thoughts which are in him, but when they resist him from within, if he be a warrior, he will cast them out from him.”

228. The same old man also said, “A man, wheresoever he cleaveth, is built up; look not upon thy mind.”

229. The old man often said, “Esteem not thyself, but cleave thou to him that leadeth a good life.”

230. He also said, “[In] this [life] we do not discern matters, and it doth not permit us to profit by the things which are good.”

231. The old man said, “If a thought about some bodily need come to thee and thou cast it forth once, and it come to thee a second time, and thou drivest it away, if it come to thee a third time, look not upon it, because it is war.”

232. A father who was about to die said to his sons, “Dwell ye not with heretics, and have no converse with a brother who hath a sister, and have no business with the Government, and let not thy hands be spread out to gather in, but to give to the poor who are in need.”

233. On one occasion Abbâ Evagrius said unto Abbâ Arsenius, “Since we are without learning according to the world, and we have no wisdom whatsoever, [how is it that] these Egyptian villagers possess such spiritual excellences?” Abbâ Arsenius (*or* Abbâ Macarius) said unto him, “We possess nothing whatsoever of the learning of the world, but these Egyptian villagers have acquired spiritual excellences through their labours.”

234. On one occasion Abbâ Arsenius asked an Egyptian old man about the thoughts, and afterwards another brother said

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unto Abbâ Arsenius, "How is it that whilst thou hast so much learning, both Greek and Latin, thou askest questions about the thoughts of this villager?" Then Abbâ Arsenius said unto him, "With Greek and Latin learning I am well acquainted, but I have not yet learned the alphabet of this villager."

235. Now on one occasion when the Archbishop wished to go to visit him, he sent a message to this effect to him, and the old man sent him [back] word, saying, "If thou comest I will open unto thee, and if I open unto thee I must open unto every man, and if I open unto every man I cannot remain here." And when the Archbishop heard these things, he said, "If I would drive him away I must go to the old man, therefore I will not go."

236. On one occasion a brother entreated him to let him hear a word from him; and the old man said, "As far as it lieth in thy power, lead an ascetic life; and work thou that secret work which is within, if it be for God's sake, [for] it shall vanquish [thy] passions which are external."

237. Abbâ Poemen said, "If there be three [brethren] together, and one leadeth a fair life of silent contemplation, and the other being a weak man giveth thanks, and the other singeth and prayeth with a lowly mind, all three are performing work [of equal merit]."

238. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, and said unto him, "Tell me: what meaneth it that thou dost not reward evil for evil?" Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "In this perception there are four divisions; the first is of the heart, the second is of the sight, the third is of the tongue, and the fourth is that in actions a man returneth evil for evil. If now thou art able to overcome the heart, thou wilt not come to the sight, but if thou comest to the sight, take heed that thou dost not speak with the tongue; but if thou speakest cut it off immediately, so that thou mayest not actually reward evil for evil; and this is the first of the four which a man may cut off, and the tongue is the second, and the third is the sight, and the fourth is the heart."

239. The old man Anthony used to say also, "If the baker did not put a covering over the eyes of [his] animal, it would turn round and eat up its hire, and in like manner we also have received a covering by the operation of God, so that we may first of all be working good deeds without seeing them, so that we may not ascribe happiness to ourselves and so destroy the hire of our labour. Therefore are we left from time to time in unclean thoughts, and we see these only so that we may condemn ourselves, and those filthy

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“ thoughts may become a covering of the few good things which we perform. For when a man blameth himself he will not destroy his hire.”

240. Abbâ Moses asked Abbâ Sylvanus, saying, “Is it possible for a man to make a beginning each day?” And he said unto him, “If he be a man who is a worker it is possible for him to make a beginning every day.”

241. A brother asked Abbâ Sisoës, “Why do my thoughts not depart from me?” He said unto him, “Because thy things are within thee; give them their pledge and they will depart.”

242. A brother asked Abbâ Theodore, and said unto him, “If an earthquake were to take place suddenly wouldst thou not be afraid, O father?” The old man said unto him, “Even if the heavens were to cleave to the earth Theodore would not be afraid”; now he besought God formerly that trembling might be removed from him, and it was because of this fact that he who put the question to him asked him.

243. They used to say that when Abbâ Theodore was a deacon in Scete he refused to perform the ministrations of deacon, and that he fled to several places [to avoid doing so], but the old men would bring him back again, saying, “Thou shalt not forsake thy place.” Abbâ Theodore said unto them, “Permit me to make a request unto God, and if He permit me I will stand up in my place”; and when he made his petition to God, he said, “If it be Thy will, O my Lord, for me to remain, permit me [so to do].” Then there appeared unto him a pillar of fire [which reached] from earth to heaven, and a voice said unto him, “If thou art able to be like unto this pillar, go and perform thy ministrations”; but although he heard these things he would not consent to minister. And when he came to the church the brethren fell down before him and entreated him, saying, “If thou refuseth to minister, at least hold the cup,” but he refused and said, “If ye will not allow me [to be] here [as I am], I will depart from these places”; and so they left him [there].

244. They used to tell a story about Abbâ Macarius the Great, who became, as it is written, an earthly God, for as God overshadoweth the world so also did Abbâ Macarius cover over the shortcomings which he saw as if he did not see them, and the things which he heard as if he heard them not.

245. On one occasion a maiden came to Abbâ Macarius to be healed of a devil, and a certain brother arrived from a monastery which is in Egypt, also, and the old man went out by night and saw that the brother was committing sin with that woman, but he did not rebuke him. And he said, “If God

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“Who fashioned him seeth [him], and is long-suffering, for if He so desired He could consume him, who am I that I should rebuke him?”

246. I heard that the blessed man Anthony used to say, “God doth not permit wars to wax as fierce in this generation as as He did in the generations of old, for He knoweth that men are [more] feeble [now], and that they could not bear [them].”

247. Abbâ Macarius used to say to the brethren concerning the desert of Scete, “Whensoever ye see cells which are turned towards the wood, know that the fall thereof is near; and whensoever ye see trees planted near the doors, [know] that it is near the door; and whensoever ye see young men dwelling therein, then take up your possessions and depart.”

248. Abbâ Muthues used to say, “Satan knoweth not by means of what passion the soul may be conquered, but he soweth, not knowing whether he will reap; but with the thoughts of fornication, and of calumny, and of all the passions towards which he seeth the soul incline doth he fight against it, and fetter it.”

249. When, on one occasion, I was sitting with a certain old man at Oxyrhyncus, now this old man used to make great alms and oblations, a widow came to him and demanded a little wheat, and he said unto her, “Go and bring a measure, and I will measure out [some] for thee.” And when she had brought it, and he took the measure in his hand he said unto her, “This is too large”; and he put the widow to the blush. And when she had gone, I said unto the Abbâ and priest, “Wast thou selling the wheat to the widow?” and he said, “No; I gave it to her in charity.” Then I said unto him, “If thou didst give all this wheat to her in charity, why didst thou act harshly with her, and measure it, and [so] put her to shame?”

250. Three of the fathers came on one occasion to an old man at Scete, and one of them spoke to him, saying, “I repeat the Old and the New Testaments by heart”; and the old man answered and said unto him, “Thou hast filled the air with words”; and the other father spoke to him, saying, “I have copied the Old and New Testaments”; and the old man said unto him, “Thou hast filled the cupboards with quires of paper”; and the third father answered and said unto him, “In my fire-place the grass groweth”; and the old man answered and said unto him, “Thou hast also driven away the love of strangers from thee.”

251. Abbâ Poemen used to say that Abbâ Isidore used to twist into ropes a great bundle of palm leaves each night, and [on one occasion] the brethren entreated him, saying, “Rest

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“thyself a little, for thou hast worked too much.” And he said unto them, “If we were to burn Isidore and to scatter his ashes to the winds, he would win happiness, for the Son of God came to the Passion because of us.”

252. A brother said to Abbâ Poemen, “If I stumble and commit a few minor sins my mind afflicteth me, and blameth me, and maketh accusations against me, saying, ‘Why didst thou fall?’” The old man said unto him, “Every time a man falleth into any shortcoming or folly, if he saith, ‘I have sinned,’ immediately God will receive him.”

253. Abbâ Poemen used to say, “It is not right for a man to be persuaded to the thought of fornication, or to utter calumny against his neighbour; and he should not in any way whatsoever incline towards these two thoughts, and he should not utter them, and he should not meditate upon such things in his heart. And if he desireth to think about them and to turn them over in his heart, he will not benefit thereby, but will rather suffer damage; but if he will act against such with ferocity, he will subsequently find rest.”

254. One of the brethren asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, “Father, what shall I do when the thoughts of fornication bestir themselves in me, or any other of the evil passions which are injurious to the soul?” Abbâ Poemen said unto him, “The first time they come upon thee, flee; and the second time they come upon thee, flee also; and the third time they come, set thyself against them like a sharp sword.”

255. The same old man used to say, “Unless Moses had been gathering together sheep into the fold he would never have seen Him that was in the bush.”

256. On one occasion the brethren saw that Abbâ Joseph was sad, and that he was greatly distressed, and they asked him to tell them about his sorrow, and what was the cause thereof, but he was unable to speak to them; and they began to say each man among them to his companion, “What are the suffering and grief which possess the old man, for behold, we have dwelt with him for many years, and we never before saw him in such grief and suffering as this? Perhaps we have in some way offended him.” Then they threw themselves on their faces before the feet of the old man, saying, “Peradventure we have offended thee in some matter, O father, [and if we have] forgive us for Jesus’ sake.” And the old man made answer to them in a state of grief, saying, “Forgive ye me, O my brethren, for I am not offended by you, but I am grieved by myself, because I see that I am going backwards rather than forwards, and that I am the cause of offence and loss, not only to myself but also unto all the others. For I see

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“that at this present we are trafficking, and are losing in respect of our souls very much more than we ever gained at any time of the profit of the fear of our Lord, because shamelessness and fearlessness have gained dominion over us. For in times past when the fathers were gathered together to each other they were wont to form bands and ascend into the heavens, but we are lax folk, and are dead in our sins. Whensoever we draw nigh to each other we come to speak that which is hateful about one another, and one by one we are raised up that we may descend to the bottom of the deepest abyss. And we do not make to sink ourselves and each other only, but also the fathers who come to us, and the strangers who gather together to us, and also the people who are in the world who visit us as if we were solitary monks, and as if we were holy men, and to these last we become a cause of stumbling and loss.

“For thus also did Abbâ Sylvanus and Abbâ Lôt say unto me: ‘Let us not abide here any longer.’ And when I asked them, ‘Why do ye depart from us?’ they spake to me as follows: ‘Up to this day we have benefited by our abiding with the fathers, but from the time of Abbâ Pambô, and Abbâ Agathon, and Abbâ Petra, and Abbâ John, the commandments of the fathers have been held lightly, and we do not observe the ordinances and the laws which our fathers laid down for us. And by assemblies together we suffer loss over and over again through the useless things which are spoken among us. And when we sit down at table, instead of doing so in the fear of God, and with gratitude, and eating that which God hath prepared for us with praise and thanksgiving, we occupy ourselves by conversing together and telling insipid stories; and as we sit at table in this fashion we become so much changed that we do not even hear what is being read to us on account of the noise of the profitless talk which we hold with each other. And besides this, after we have risen up from eating, we converse together with empty talk. What benefit is it to us to live in the desert, seeing that we profit nothing thereby?’ And Abbâ Lôt said, ‘Many times have I heard from brethren who are strangers, and from the people who live in the world, and who come to visit us, that we hold the commandments of the fathers lightly, and they have said of us, “We should never have thought that they were monks!”’ And one of the brethren who were strangers said, ‘I have come to the fathers on several occasions, and [I see that] year by year they certainly observe less and less the early rules and conduct of the fathers.’ What now do ye wish? Will ye correct your

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“lax behaviour, and observe carefully the commandments of our fathers, or must I also depart from you?”

And it came to pass that when the brethren heard these things, they beat the board for assembling the monks, and the whole brotherhood gathered itself together, and Abbâ Joseph spake unto them all the words which are [written] above. And when all the brethren heard the words of Abbâ Joseph, and learned the reason of his pain and grief, and that he wished to depart from them, they cast themselves down upon their faces weeping, and they expressed their contrition to him, saying, “Forgive us, O father, for the sake of Jesus. We have made God angry by our deeds, and we have caused thy holiness grief.” Then each of the fathers said, “Would that thou hadst rebuked us on the very first day wherein thou didst hear [about us] from the fathers, and that they had not departed from us! And would, too, that we had roused ourselves up from our slumber and sluggishness! But what are we to do? For the old men and the holy men do not teach us, and they do not even take their proper places in our congregations, or when we sit at meat. Very many of us wish to hear the histories and commandments of the fathers read, either whilst we are sitting at table or between one sitting and the next, but we are never able to hear a word of their talk.” And Abbâ Elijah said, “Abbâ Abraham and Abbâ John spake much at table, and at the time of reading, and at the time of the service; and they began to become excited against each other, and the one said, ‘Father, such and such a man is excited,’ and the other said, ‘Such and such a man maketh us excited.’ Now when Abbâ Joseph saw that the whole brotherhood was stirred up, he made supplication unto them, and besought them, saying, ‘I beseech you, O my brethren, to cease from your commotion, for God hath called us to peace, and I therefore beg you to come and pray, and to make supplication unto God that He may make to pass by us the legions and the host of the enemy. For, behold, I see them standing up in wrath and anger, with their swords drawn, and they wish to destroy us all if God doth not stand up to help our wretchedness.’”

And when he had said these things he was able, with some difficulty, to quiet them, and Abbâ Joseph himself began to sing the words of the harpist David, saying, “Their swords shall enter their own hearts, and their bows shall be broken, and God shall make them like a wheel and as dust before the wind. And God shall arise and all His enemies shall be scattered. O God, deliver me, O Lord, remain to help [me]” (Psalm xxxvii, 15; lxxxiii, 13; lxxviii, 1; vii, 1). And when they

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had recited the Psalms of the spirit altogether, and had made an end of the service, they said, "O holy God, O holy mighty One, O immortal holy One, have mercy upon us"; and they all knelt down in prayer. And as they were praying they heard the voices of the devils in the air, and the sounds of armour and of horses, and of many horsemen, and they also heard the voices of the devils who were saying to one another, "Ye shall not have mercy upon them." And again they said, "O luckless monks, why do ye stand up against us?" If we were to do [what we could do] to you not one of you would be found on the face of the earth! We will never be absent from you, and we will never cease from you."

And after the filthy legion had been driven away by the secret power, and the wicked devils rested from their wickednesses, all the fathers rose up from the earth whereon they had been poured out in prayer, the earth having been adorned by their tears, and they all offered repentance unto Abbâ Joseph, saying, "Forgive thou us, and pray for us that the Lord may forgive us, for we have sinned and have provoked Him to wrath." Then Abbâ Joseph said unto them: "Rouse ye yourselves, O my brethren, and take good heed unto your souls, for, behold, ye have heard with your ears the sound of the chariots of the Adversary, who threateneth us and seeketh to destroy us. Let every man be reconciled to his neighbour, and forgive ye every man from his heart the offence [which he hath committed]. And bind ye yourselves with the love of our Lord, with an urgent mind, and a pure heart, to the Lord and to each other. And draw nigh unto God that He may draw nigh unto you, and stand up against the Adversary, who is Satan. If ye wilt observe the commandments of the fathers, I will become a surety (*or* pledge) for you that Satan shall not be able to injure you, and that the Barbarians shall not come hither; but if ye will not observe them, believe me, O my beloved, this place shall be laid waste."

And they offered repentance each to the other, and they became reconciled to each other, and lived in love and in great peace; and they laid down ordinances among themselves on that day to the effect that no man should henceforth conduct himself with negligence and without absence of fear; and that they should neither do nor say anything at the table which was alien [to their mode of life]; and that if any man be found hereafter despising and holding lightly the commandments of the fathers in such a way that he become an occasion of offence and a cause of loss, first to himself, and next to those who dwell with him, and then also to the strangers who come to us, he shall know that he is bringing a punishment upon him-

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self, and that he shall become an alien to all the brotherhood. And Abbâ Joseph sent a brother to bring back Abbâ Sylvanus and Abbâ Lôt, and when these fathers knew what had taken place among the brethren, and that they had laid down ordinances to keep the commandments of the fathers, they praised God, and they rose up, and came, and [when] they saw Abbâ Joseph they saluted him and wept; and Abbâ Joseph told them everything which had taken place, and they glorified God Who had not rejected those who feared Him. And as regardeth the canons and the ordinances which they had laid down among themselves, the brethren observed and performed them all the days of their life; and they died at a good old age, [after] living lives which were well-pleasing unto God.

257. Abbâ Ammon used to say, "I have spent fourteen years in Scete in making supplication unto God by day and by night that He would grant me to overcome anger."

258. An old man used to say, "Be like unto a camel when thou art loaded with thy sins, and be tied unto and cleave unto him that knoweth the way."

259. One of the old men used to say, "Formerly, whensoever we met each other we used to speak words of profit about each other, and we formed companies, and were lifted up into the heavens; but now when we are gathered together, we come to hateful converse concerning each other, and we drag each the other down to the bottom of the deepest abyss."

260. Abbâ Achilles came on one occasion to the cell of Abbâ Isaiah, and found him eating; now there were in the basin [from which he ate] water and salt, and the old man saw him hide the basin behind a mat. Then Abbâ Achilles said unto him, "Tell me, what wast thou eating?" And Abbâ Isaiah said unto him, "Forgive me, I was cutting some palm leaves, and I went up in the heat, and placed in my mouth a morsel of bread and salt; and my throat was dry by reason of the heat, and the food did not go down, and I was pained thereby, and I threw a little salt and water into my mouth, so that I might be able to eat. But forgive me." The old man said unto him, "Come ye and see Abbâ Isaiah who eateth food which stinketh in Scete; if thou seekest to eat stinking food, get thee to Egypt."

261. There was a certain monk who had a brother that lived in the world, and this brother was poor, and whatsoever the monk earned by the labour of his hands he used to give to his brother, but in spite of this the brother became poorer still. Then the monk went to one of the old men and told him the matter, and the old man said unto him, "If thou wilt hearken

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“unto me thou wilt not give him any more, but wilt say unto him, ‘My brother, whilst I have anything to give I give it ‘unto thee, but now thou must bring me some of what thou ‘earnest by thy labour’; and whatsoever he bringeth unto thee, that take from him, and where thou knowest there is a stranger, or a poor old man, give it unto him”; and he entreated them to offer up prayer on his behalf. Then the monk went and did thus, and when his brother who lived in the world came to him, he spake unto him even as the old man had told him to do; and the brother went to his house with a sad mind. And on the first day he brought [to the monk] as the result of his labour a few garden herbs, and the monk took them and gave them to the old man, and entreated them to pray for him; and he was blessed and departed. And the old man who was in the world returned on another occasion and brought the monk bread and garden herbs, and his brother took them, and did [with them] as he did at first. Then he came a third time, and brought many costly gifts, and wine, and fish, and his brother saw [this] and wondered, and he called the poor and relieved them therewith. And the monk said unto his brother who was in the world, “Peradventure thou art in need of a little bread, O my brother?” And he said unto him, “Nay, my lord, whilst I took from thee that which used to enter into my house, I spent everything I had; but since I ceased to take anything from thee, God hath blessed me and hath had mercy upon me.” Then the monk went and informed the old man everything which had taken place, and the old man said unto him, “Knowest thou not that the labour of a monk is fire, and that wheresoever it entereth it consumeth? But it is beneficial for him to shew mercy from his own toil, and prayer from the holy men shall be upon him, and thus he shall be blessed.”

262. On one occasion whilst Abbâ Macarius was passing through Egypt with certain other brethren, he heard a child saying to his mother, “My mother, a rich man loveth me, but I hate him; and a poor man hateth me, and I love him”; and when Abbâ Macarius heard [this] he marvelled. And the brethren said unto him, “What is the [meaning of] these words, father?” The old man said unto him, “Verily our Lord is rich, and He loveth us, and we do not desire to hear Him; our Enemy, Satan, is poor, and he hateth us, and we love his hateful things.”

263. On one occasion, whilst Abbâ Zechariah was dwelling in Scete, there appeared unto him a vision from God, and he rose up and came to his father, Abbâ Kîrîôn, and the old man was perfect, and did not take pains to boast of these things.

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And he rose up [and smote him, and said unto him, "They "are of devils"; and when he had thought about the matter a long time, he rose up] and went by night to Abbâ Poemen, and informed him about the matter, and how his thoughts were burning in his heart. Then the old man knew that the matter was of God, and he said unto him, "Get thee to such "and such an old man, and whatsoever he saith unto thee "that do." And having departed to that old man, before he could tell him anything, the old man said unto him, "The "vision is of God; but do thou go and be subject unto thy "father."

264. A certain old man from Scete was dwelling in the mountain of Pîlîsîôn, and there came unto him a man from the palace who had a devil, and he healed him, and the man who had had the devil offered him a bag which was full of gold, but the old man refused to accept it. Now when he saw that he was offended, the old man took the bag itself, which was empty, and he said unto him, "Go [and] distribute the "gold among the poor and the wretched," and he made the bag into a colubium, and wore it; now it was made of hair, and was very stiff, and he wore it for a long time so that he might vex his body.

265. Abbâ Longinus asked Abbâ Lucius three things, saying, "I wish to become a stranger"; the old man said unto him, "If thou dost not hold thy tongue, where wilt thou go? "Wilt thou not become a stranger? Hold thy tongue here, "and behold thou art a stranger." And Abbâ Longinus said unto him also, "I wish to lead a twofold life"; and the old man said unto him, "If thou dost not bend thy neck like a "hook thou art nothing; purify thy wicked thoughts." Abbâ Longinus said unto him, "But I wish to flee from men"; and the old man said unto him, "If thou canst not set thyself "straight first of all with men, thou wilt never be able [to live] "by thyself."

266. A brother asked Abbâ Joseph, saying, "I want to go "out from the monastery, and live a solitary life"; the old man said unto him, "Where thou seest that thou wilt find rest for "thy soul, there dwell." And the brother said unto him, "I "am content to live in the monastery, and I am content to "live alone; what shall I do then?" The old man said unto him, "If thou art content to live in the monastery, and art "[equally] content to lead a solitary life, do this: Weigh thy "thoughts as it were in a balance, and the thought which out- "balances the other, that fulfil."

267. An old man used to say, "What beast is as mighty as "the lion and yet for the sake of his belly he falleth into the

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“snare, and all his strength is made weakness? in this wise
“also shall we fall if we be overcome by our bellies.”

268. An old man also said, “When the fathers of Scete were
“eating bread and salt they said, ‘We must not afflict our-
“selves overmuch with bread and salt’; and living in this wise
“they became valiant in the works of God.”

269. Whilst Abbâ Sylvanus was living on Mount Sinai
brother Zechariah went to the work of the service [i.e., sing-
ing and prayer]; and when he had gone the old man said unto
him, “Open out the water [courses] and water the garden.”
Then he went forth straightway, and covered his face with his
cloak, and he could see only his feet; and during the time when
he was watering [the garden], a brother came to him, and he
perceived what he was doing, and he went in to him, and made
an apology, and entreated him, saying, “Tell me, O father,
“why thou didst cover thy face with thy cloak and didst in
“this manner water the garden?” The old man said unto him,
“My son, [I did so] that mine eyes might not look upon the
“trees, and that my mind might not be distracted in its work,
“and become buried in the trees.”

270. They used to say that, [on one occasion], when a cer-
tain old man was sitting in his cell, a brother happened to
come by night to go in to him; and when he arrived at the
door, he heard his voice raised in a dispute, saying, “It is
“sufficient; how long? Get ye gone forthwith.” And again he
said, “Come, come to me, my friends.” And when the brother
had gone in to him, he said unto him, “With whom wast thou
“speaking, O father?” He said unto him, “I was driving away
“my evil thoughts, and calling my good thoughts to me.”

271. There was a certain old man who had a disciple who
dwelt in the desert, and the old man took a piece of dry wood,
and planted it, and he said to his disciple, “Pour a basin of
“water over it every day until this piece of wood beareth fruit.”
Now the fountain of water was so far away from them that a
man would set out for it in the evening and return the next
morning. And the disciple did as he had been told, and after
two or three years that wood became alive, and bore fruit, and
the old man took the fruit thereof, and brought it to the church,
and said unto the brethren, “Take ye, and eat the fruit of
“obedience.”

272. A certain brother on one occasion found on the road a
piece of wood which had dropped from camels, and he came
to the cell of his Rabbâ bringing it with him; and his Rabbâ
said, “Whence hast thou this piece of wood?” And the brother
said unto him, “From the road.” The old man said unto him,
“If it be of the things which are taken from the road bring it

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“inside; but if not, go and put it in the place wherefrom thou didst take it.”

273. They used to say that Zechariah, the disciple of Abbâ Sylvanus, took certain brethren, and without [the knowledge of] Abbâ Sylvanus, they broke through the fence of the garden, and enlarged the garden, and then built up the fence again. And when the old man learned this, he took [his cloak], and wrapped himself up therein, and went forth, and he said to the brethren, “Pray ye for me.” Now when they saw him, they fell down at his feet, saying, “Tell us, father, what hath happened to thee”; and he said unto them, “I will neither go inside [my cell], nor unwrap myself from my cloak until ye bring the fence back to its former position”; and [when they had done so] straightway the old man went into his cell.

274. They used to say that when the old man Rabbâ Magatîs went forth from his cell, and the thought rose up in his mind that he would depart from the place, he returned not to his cell; now he possessed nothing whatsoever of the things which are required in this world. But he took pleasure in the work of splitting up the palm leaves which he twisted into ropes, for he performed sufficient labour each day to provide him with the very small amount of food which he needed.

275. A brother asked an old man, saying, “If a certain brother cometh to me, and saith, ‘Perform an act of love, and ‘come with me here, or go [with me] to a certain place,’ and ‘I am inconvenienced by the command, what am I to do?’” The old man said unto him, “If thou knowest that without offence thou canst fulfil the commandment, go, and it shall be accounted unto thee as an acceptable sacrifice; but if thou knowest that there will be some offence, thou shalt not go. And if thou dost go, take good heed to thy soul.”

276. A brother asked an old man, saying, “How is it that there are at this present men who labour, but who do not receive grace as the early fathers did?” The old man said unto him, “Formerly love existed, and one brother was raised up by the other; but now love hath grown cold, and we each drag the other down, and in consequence we do not receive grace.”

277. They used to say that when Abbâ Theodore dwelt in Scete, a devil came and wanted to go into him, and the old man perceived that he wanted to go into [his cell], but he kept him fettered outside. Then another devil came to go in, and the old man fettered him also, and a third devil also came, and finding the other two fettered by the door, he said unto them, “Why do ye stand outside here?” They said unto him, “He who dwelleth within will not permit us to go in”; and the

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third devil stirred up strife, and, holding Abbâ Theodore in contempt, made so bold as to go in. Now when the old man saw him he fettered him also, and being afraid of the prayers of the old man, they entreated him, saying, "Set us free." And the old man accepted their petition, and released them, saying, "Get ye gone"; and then they departed being ashamed.

278. They used to say that a certain old man had a young man living with him, and that he one day saw him doing something which was not beneficial for him; and he said unto him once, "Thou shalt not do this thing," but the young man hearkened not unto him. Now when the old man saw that he would not hearken unto him, he let him alone, and troubled no more about him; and the young man shut the door of the place where the bread was kept, and departed from the cell, and left the old man without bread for three days, and when he went back, the old man did not say unto him, "Where hast thou been?" or, "What hast thou been doing outside?" Now the young man treated the old man in this fashion, like a beast. Then afterwards, when one of the old man's neighbours perceived the delay of the young man, he boiled a little food, and let it down to the old man from the wall, and made him eat it; and when, by chance, his neighbour said unto him, "The young man tarrieth a long time," the old man said unto him, "He hath not tarried, but when he is disengaged he will come."

279. A certain brother made a second key and opened the cell of one of the old men and took his money out of the cupboard, and the old man wrote on a piece of paper, saying, "Do me an act of love and leave me one half of my money, for I have need of it for my necessities"; and he divided the money (*or* oboli) into two parts, and laid the paper upon them. And the brother who stole the money came as usual, and he tore up the paper and took all the money. Now two years later that brother was forced to die, but his soul was not permitted to go forth from him, and then he called the old man, and made entreaty unto him, saying, "Father, pray on my behalf; it was I who took thy money." Then the old man said unto him, "Why didst thou not confess this before the light became black to thee?" And the old man prayed and set free the spirit of that brother, and he sold his Book of the Gospel and made a memorial for him.

280. A certain man used to relate that an old man from Scete went up to the Thebaïd to dwell there, and according to the custom with those who are from Scete he made bread sufficient for his wants for several days. And behold, the men of the Thebaïd came to him, saying, "How is it that thou

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“dost not keep the word of the Gospel which commanded men not to care for the morrow?” The old man said unto them, “What is your custom?” And they said unto him, “We work day by day with our hands, and we sell [what we make], and buy food for ourselves in the market.” The old man said unto them, “My market is my cell, and whensoever I have need I lay down the work of my hands, and take up food for myself.”

281. An old man used to say, “Discretion is the most excellent thing of all.”

282. They used to say that certain men came to plead a case for judgement before Abbâ Ammonius, and the old man paid no attention to them, but behaved as if he did not hear them; and behold, a woman said unto her companion, “This old man hath no stability.” And the old man heard her speaking thus to her companion, and he called her, and said unto her, “How many labours have I performed in the desert so that I might acquire this instability! Yet, through thee, I have destroyed this day.”

283. An old man used to say, “Do not eat before thou art hungry, and do not lie down before thou art sleepy, and do not speak before thou art questioned.”

284. A brother asked an old man, saying, “Do I eat too many garden herbs?” The old man said unto him, “It will not benefit thee [to do so], but eat bread and a few vegetables, and thou shalt not go to thy kinsfolk for the sake of things [to eat].”

285. An old man used to say, “It is meet that a monk should be like the Cherub—all eyes.”

286. An old man used to say, “For a man to attempt to teach his neighbour, when he hath not been required [so to do], is the same as offering him a rebuke.”

287. Abbâ Poemen used to say, “Why doth a man distress himself to build the house of others, and to overthrow his own?”

288. He also used to say, “Why is it necessary for a man to enter by cunning, and not to learn [how to do so] properly?”

289. He also used to say, “Everything which is immoderate is from the devils.”

290. The old men used to say, “God demandeth nothing from Christians except that they shall hearken unto the Divine Scriptures, and shall carry into effect the things which are said in them, and shall be obedient unto their governors and the orthodox fathers.”

291. An old man used to say, “Whensoever I have been able to overtake my soul when I have transgressed, I never stumbled a second time.”

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292. An old man used to say, "The man who setteth death before his eyes at all times easily overcometh dejection and littleness of soul."

293. An old man used to say, "Take heed, with all thy might, not to do anything which deserveth blame, and do not take pleasure in making thyself acceptable."

294. Abbâ Theodore used to say, "There is no spiritual excellence so sublime [as that which consisteth in] not despising a man and treating him with contempt."

295. An old man was asked, "How, and by what means can the soul acquire humility?" And he made answer, saying, "By examining and enquiring into its own wickednesses only."

296. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "All the spiritual excellences have entered into this monastery, with the exception of the one without which in labour [no] man standeth"; and they asked him, saying, "Which spiritual excellence is that?" and he said, "That which maketh a man blame and despise himself."

297. The disciple of a certain old man and Rabbâ was attacked by the lust for fornication, and he went into the world, and betrothed to himself a wife; and the old man, being greatly grieved, prayed to God, and said, "O Lord Jesus Christ, do not Thou permit Thy servant to be defiled." And it came to pass that when he was shut up with the bride in the bedchamber he yielded up his spirit, and he was not polluted with the union of marriage.

298. An old man used to say:—"If temptation come upon a man, and attack him on all sides to such a degree that his mind falleth into despair, and he murmureth, all his friends will turn away their faces from him as if by reason of the temptation"; and he related the following story (in illustration of this statement) and said: "There was a monk in a cell, and temptation came upon him, and all his friends and beloved ones who met him refused even to salute him, and not one of them would allow him to enter into his cell. If he lacked provisions, and wanted a man to lend him some, none would lend him, and he was compelled by reason of his tribulation to go and work in the harvest field; and when he came back he did not find any bread in his cell. Now it was the custom among the holy men that every man who went to work in the harvest field should on his return eat in the church, but when that brother came on the Sabbath no man took him and gave him refreshment in the usual way, and he went to his cell, and he gave thanks unto God without complaining. Now when God saw his patient endurance, He abated the temptation in him, and straightway a man came

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“and knocked at his door; and he had with him a camel carrying bread which had been sent to him from Egypt; then he began to smite himself and to weep, saying, ‘I am not ‘worthy [of this].’ And the temptation having departed, all the fathers took him, and gave him refreshment, and they persuaded him to let them take him to their cells, and through his patient endurance he found great benefit.”

299. On one occasion certain Greeks came to give gifts of grace in the city of 'Estarkînâ, and they took with them the stewards of the city that they might show them what it was necessary for them to give them, and they took them to a certain brother who had elephantiasis, but he refused to accept anything, saying, “Behold, I have these few palm leaves, I will work at them, and weave ropes, and will eat bread.” Then they carried them to a certain widow, and they knocked at the door, and her daughter answered from inside, for she was naked, now her mother had gone out to work, for she was washing clothes and lived by her labour. And when they saw that the maiden was naked, they gave her clothes and money, but she refused to accept them, saying, “My mother will come, and say unto me, ‘My daughter, God hath willed [it], and I have found some work to-day, and again we have sufficient food for this day.’” Then when the mother came, she refused [to accept the apparel and money], and said unto them, “O ye men, I have One Who provideth for me, that is, God, and ye seek to take away from me this day Him that hath provided for me all my days”; and when they saw her faith they glorified God.

300. A certain man offered gold to one of the aged fathers, saying, “Take [it] and let it be to thee for expenses, because thou hast grown old”; now the old man was an Arian, and he answered and said unto him that had given [the gold] to him, “Hast thou come to take away from me Him that hath reared me for sixty years? For it is sixty years since I have been in this sickness, and I have wanted for nothing because God fed me and provided for me”; and he would not consent to accept anything.

301. One of the fathers told the following story, saying, “I was in the room for receiving strangers, and some poor folk came to receive charity at eventide on the Sabbath, and there was among them only one man who had a mat to lie upon when they lay down; and he threw it down under him, and then reclined upon it. Now it was exceedingly cold, and he took a half of the mat from under him and covered himself over therewith, and he reclined on the other half. And I went out during the night and heard him complaining about

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“ the cold, and then the man turned to himself and said, ‘ I
“ ‘ give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, because how many are the
“ ‘ rich men, and the owners of possessions who are at this
“ ‘ present moment lying in irons, and in afflictions, and in
“ ‘ prisons, and there are, moreover, others whose feet have
“ ‘ been put in the stocks, who are unable to turn round to any
“ ‘ side, whilst I, like a king, can spread out my feet and lie
“ ‘ down, and besides this, I can go whithersoever I please.’
“ And when he had said these things, now I was standing up
“ listening to him, I went in and told them to the brethren,
“ and they benefited by the words of that poor man.”

302. An old man used to say, “ Let me think first, and pray
“ next, and then let us begin the work, and afterwards let us
“ boast ourselves in God.”

303. A certain brother asked an old man, saying, “ Why is
“ it that I feel disgusted when sitting in my cell, and why am
“ I sluggish in respect of works of spiritual excellence?” And
the old man answered and said unto him, “ Because thou dost
“ not keep in mind the rest which those who labour expect,
“ and the torments which are laid up for the lazy. For if, in
“ very truth, thou wert seeing these things, thou wouldst be
“ watchful and strenuous in thy labour.”

304. An old man used to say, “ The man who maketh a boast
“ of the Name of God, and who doeth not the works which
“ are suitable to that Name, is like unto a poor man who,
“ when a feast cometh, borroweth some clothes and putteth
“ them on, and who, when the feast hath passed, strippeth
“ them off himself because they are not his own, and giveth
“ them to their owners.”

305. Abbâ Ammon used to say concerning Abbâ Paphnu-
tius the Simple, who was from Scete, “ When I went down
“ there I was a young man, and he would not allow me to
“ dwell there, saying, ‘ In my days I will not permit the faces
“ ‘ of young men, which resemble those of women, to dwell in
“ ‘ Scete, because of the war of the Enemy against the holy
“ ‘ men.’ ”

306. Abbâ Poemen (*or* Ammon) used to say, “ If Nûzardân
“ (Nebuzaradan), the chief of the warriors, had never come to
“ the land of Judea, he would never have burnt down the tem-
“ ple of God which was in Jerusalem with fire”; [now the mean-
ing] of these words is, that if the pleasures of the lust of the
belly had never entered in on the soul the mind would never
have been vanquished in the war of the Adversary.

307. A certain man asked Abbâ Sisoës, saying, “ Hast thou
“ not even yet arrived at the measure of Abbâ Anthony, our
“ father?” And the old man answered and said, “ If I had even

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“one thought like unto Abbâ Anthony, the whole of me would become like unto fire; but I know one man who, even with great labour, is able to bear his thoughts.”

308. Abbâ Abraham asked Abbâ Agathon, saying, “How is it that the devils make war upon me?” And Abbâ Agathon said unto him, “Do the devils make war upon thee? But they do not make war against us so fiercely as we ourselves do with our own wishes, though they do make war against us in proportion as our wishes do. Our desires become devils, and they force us to fulfil them. Now if thou wishest to see against whom they have made war, [it is] against Moses and those who resemble him.”

309. A brother asked an old man, saying, “In what condition is it meet for a monk to be?” And he said, “Even as I myself am, if one may [compare] one man with another.”

310. And an old man was also asked, “Why am I afraid when I go about in the desert?” The old man said unto him, “Because thou art still alive.”

311. A brother asked an old man, saying, “Why doth my spirit go round and round violently?” And he said unto him, “Because thou hast not yet seen the storehouse of life.”

312. And he was also asked, “What is it meet for a monk to do?” And he said, “Let him perform all kinds of good works in very deed, and let him acquire remoteness from every evil thing.”

313. And he was also asked, “What is a monk’s work?” And he said, “He must possess discretion.”

314. An old man said, “Unto every thought that riseth up in thee say, “Art thou of us, or of our enemies?” And the thought will always make confession unto thee.

315. Abbâ Agathon used to say, “The crown of the monk is humility.”

316. Abbâ Isidore said, “When I was a youth and was living in a cell, I possessed not the capacity for the service [of prayer and praise], for by night and by day there was service to me.”

317. He also said, “For forty years, I neither leaned upon anything nor lay down.”

318. He also said, “I was standing forty nights, and did not lie down.”

319. He also said, “For twenty years I continued to fight against one thought—that I might see all men of one mind.”

320. An old man was asked, “Why is it that whilst I am sitting in my cell my heart wandereth about?” The old man said to his questioner, “Because thine external lusts feel the motions which are in hearing, and in breathing, and in

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“taste, for from these, if it be possible for a man, there is
“pure labour, and he should make them to be healthy and
“satisfied within.”

321. An old man was asked, “How is it possible for a man
“to live so that he may be seemly in God’s sight?” and he
said to him, “[It is possible if a man have an] equable
“[mind].”

322. An old man also said, “Our labour is wood which
“burneth away.”

323. Abbâ Benjamin said unto his disciples, “Do these things
“and ye shall be able to live. Rejoice at all times, and pray
“without ceasing, and give thanks for everything.

324. He also said, “Abstinence in respect of the soul con-
sisteth in making straight its ways and habits, and courses
“of action, and in cutting off the passions of the soul.”

325. He also said, “Travel in the path of the kingdom, and
“count the miles, and thy spirit shall not be sad in thee.

326. An old man said, “Thou must be in the same state of fear
“as a man who is going to endure tortures.”

327. An old man used to say, “A man shall not trouble, but
“let him like a life of silent contemplation, and hide himself,
“for these meditations (?) are the begetters of purity.”

328. An old man used to say also, “Thou shalt desire to be-
“come a eunuch, for this will help thee.”

329. He also said, “The giving of thanks maketh entreaty
“on behalf of the feeble before God.”

330. An old man used to say, “I do not as yet carry all my
“body so that I may fulfil all my desire.”

331. Abbâ Sisoës said, “Exile consisteth in a man living a
“silent and solitary life.”

332. One of the fathers said, “I once asked Abbâ Sisoës and
“besought him to speak a word of life to me, and the old man
“answered and said, He who taketh care to guard himself
“against esteeming himself, and against comparing himself
“[with other men] in every work of understanding (*or* discretion),
“is he who fulfilleth the Book.”

333. And I asked him also, “In what doth the power of exile
“consist?” And he said unto me, “Wheresoever thou dwellest
“hold thy peace; and about whatsoever thou seest, be it good
“or be it evil, say nothing; and if thou hearest anything from
“a man which befitteth not the upright conduct of the ascetic
“life, say, ‘This concerneth me not; I have to do with myself,
“‘and myself only.’ This is [the power of] exile.”

334. One of the old men said, “The love of the work of the
“hands is the ruin of the soul; but the stablishment thereof is
“rest and peace in God.”

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335. Abbâ Theodore said, "If I did not cut off my soul from the friends of this world they would not let me be a monk."

336. He also said, "If we seek God He will reveal Himself unto us, and if we lay hold upon Him He will protect us."

337. On one occasion certain of the old men were sitting and talking about the thoughts, and one of them said, "They would not appear to be a great matter if a man were to see his thoughts from a distance."

338. Another [old man] said, "I have never allowed error to have dominion over me even for an hour."

339. Abbâ Poemen said, "As long as the food which is being boiled is on the fire the flies will not approach it, but as soon as it is taken off they cluster round it"; the meaning of this is that as long as our hearts are fervent in the spirit impure thoughts will not approach us, but that if we are negligent and make ourselves to be remote from the converse (*or* occupation) of the spirit they will then gain dominion over us.

340. An old man used to say, "It is necessary to make enquiries concerning spiritual works, for through them we advance in excellence; for it is great labour for us to go forth from the body in such wise that we do not perform the works of the body."

341. An old man used to say also, "Affliction and poverty are the instruments wherewith a monk cultivateth his handiwork."

342. Certain of the old men used to say, "Whosoever hath not the instruments of the craft of labour cannot remain long in his cell, whether they be the instruments of the craft of the labour of spiritual beings, wherewith he findeth comfort from God in his inner man in the spirit, or the instruments of the craft of human labour. He who possesseth not the one or the other class of instruments cannot remain very long in his cell."

343. The spirit of God rested upon Abbâ John because of the fear in which he held God; for it is the fear of God which teacheth a man all good works.

344. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "Abbâ Paphnutius was exceedingly great and mighty, and he ran at all times to minister unto shortcoming."

345. An old man was asked by a brother, "How should a monk dwell in his cell?" The old man said unto him, "Let him dwell by himself, so that his thoughts may be with God."

346. And a brother also asked him, saying, "What shall I do, for when I am by myself I am greatly afflicted by the multitude of evil thoughts of all kinds which crowd upon me, and by the weight of the disgust which troubleth me?" The

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old man said unto him, "Give thy soul work, that is to say, "have a care to pray and have love towards God, and straight-
"way the spirit of Satan will flee from thee."

347. An old man used to say also, "If thou doest something
"which is good, and thou art praised for it, destroy it; guard
"thyself against the thoughts which praise thee, and which
"hold thy neighbour in contempt."

348. Abbâ Isidore's thoughts praised him, saying, "There
"is none like unto thee among the fathers"; and he said, unto
them, "Am I like Anthony or Abbâ Agathon?" And the devils
said unto him, "After all the labours which thou hast per-
"formed thou wilt go to torment"; and he said unto them,
"And ye also will be below me. For a thief through one word
"inherited the kingdom." And Judas also, who wrought mighty
deeds with the Apostles, in one night lost all his labour, and
he went down from heaven to Sheol; therefore let not him that
conducteth himself uprightly boast himself. For all those who
have been over confident about themselves have fallen among
the devils of greed. Retard thou then [thy desire], saying,
"Thou hast had enough; wait a little," and eat thou tem-
perately and slowly. For he who hasteth in his eating is like
unto him that seeketh to eat much.

349. An old man saw sitting among the brethren a brother
who pretended not to be of them, and he said unto him, "How
"canst thou walk in a country which is not thine?"

350. They used to say that Abbâ Poemen never wished to
magnify his word over that of any old man, but in everything
he praised his and belittled his own.

351. There was a certain monk who led a life which was
full of severe ascetic labours, and the Devil laid many plans
and schemes to make him abate them, and to make him to des-
ist therefrom; but the monk would not give him a hearing in
any way whatsoever, but, on the contrary, he played the man
more strenuously than ever, and resisted his wiles and crafts.
Now when the Devil had spent much time in this strife against
him, another devil came to help him; and having enquired of
his companion what manner of war and battle he should set
in array against him, and how it was that the holy man was
abating and making an end of all the things which he was
making [against him], the accursed devil who had come last,
answered and said by the counsel of the Evil One, "Do not
"lift up thyself below him, but raise up thyself above him, and
"in this way thou shalt be able to be stronger than he."

352. An old man asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, "What shall
"I do, father, with my son Isaac, who hearkeneth unto me
"with pleasure?" Abbâ Poemen said unto him, "If thou wish-

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“est to be of benefit to him, shew him [an example] by deeds
“and not by words, lest through observing words only he
“be found useless; for if thou wilt shew him by deeds, the
“deeds themselves will abide with him, and he will profit.”

353. Certain of the fathers said to Abbâ Macarius the Egyptian, “Whether thou eatest or whether thou fastest, thy body
“hath already dried up”; and the old man said unto them,
“A piece of wood which hath been burned and consumed by
“the fire burneth wholly, and thus also the heart of a man, if
“he be purified by the fear of God, consumeth the lusts from
“his flesh, and drieth up his bones.”

354. Abbâ Theodore used to say, “If God imputeth to us
“carelessness in prayer, and the snare in [His] service wherein
“we have been captured, we shall not be able to stand.”

355. They used to say of one of the old men that he had
passed twenty years in the church, and had never lifted his
eyes and seen the roof thereof.

356. There was a certain monk whose name was Paul, and
his rule of life and conduct was such that he did not approach
the excessive labour of the work of the hands, nor any traffick-
ing whatsoever, except such as was sufficient to provide for
his small amount of daily food; but he performed one sort of
work of excellence, that is, he prayed continually and ceased
not, and he laid down the rule for himself that he should pray
three hundred prayers each day, and he placed sand in his
bosom, and at every prayer which he prayed, he would lay one
grain of sand in his hand. Now this man asked Saint Macarius,
saying, “Father, I am greatly afflicted”; and the old man
pressed him to tell him the cause of his affliction. Then he
answered and said, “I have heard about a certain virgin who
“hath led an ascetic life for thirty years, and Father Piôr related
“concerning her that every week she went forth and recited
“five hundred prayers in the day. Now when I heard these
“things I despised myself greatly, for I am not able to recite
“more than three hundred prayers.” Then the holy man
Macarius answered and said unto him, “I have led an ascetic
“life for sixty years, and I make fifty prayers a day, and I
“work sufficiently to provide myself with food, and I receive
“the brethren who come to me, and I say unto them what it
“is seemly to say, and I pay my debts, and my mind doth not
“condemn me as one who hath treated [God] lightly; but thou
“who makest three hundred prayers in the day, art thou con-
“demned by thy thoughts? Perchance thou dost not offer
“them with purity [of heart], or thou art able to do more, and
“dost not do it!”

357. I used to know a certain holy man whose name was

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Aurelius, and he laboured so hard that he might have been thought to be a shadow because of his disposition to work; during the Forty Days' Fast he used to pass whole weeks [without eating], and in respect of the other days he would eat only once every two or three days.

358. An old man was asked [by a brother], "If I see the sin of my brother am I to despise him?" And the old man said, "If we hide [the fault] of our brother God will also hide our [faults]; and if we expose our brother's [faults], God will also expose ours."

359. An old man was wont to say, "There was a brother whose name was Timothy, and he used to lead a life of silent contemplation in a religious house; and a temptation came upon one of the brethren of that house, and the head of the house asked Timothy, saying, 'What shall I do to this brother?' Timothy said unto him, 'Expel him'; and when he had expelled him, the temptation of that brother was sent upon Timothy, and he cried out to God, saying, 'I have sinned, O my Lord, have mercy upon me.' And he passed the whole night in a grave of dead men, crying out and saying, 'I have sinned, O my Lord, forgive me,' and the temptation was upon him until he was greatly exhausted. And a voice came to him, saying, 'Timothy, do not imagine that these things have happened unto thee for any other reason than because thou didst offend thy neighbour in the time of his trial.'"

360. A brother asked an old man, saying, "How shall I be able to avoid despising my brother?" The old man said unto him, "We and our neighbour are two faces. Now if we provide the mirror of prayer we shall see the beam in our own eye, and we shall also see in the mirror the face of our brother polished and pure."

361. A brother asked an old man and said, "What shall I do? For there is no feeling in my soul, and I have no fear of God." The old man said unto him, "Seek thou out a man who feareth God, and then cling closely to him, and from him thou shalt learn to fear God."

362. Abbâ Poemen said that Abbâ Athanasius used to say, "Unless a man possess good works before God giveth him a gift because of himself, it is well known that no one can be made perfect through the weariness which cometh to him through himself; but if he reveal [it] to his neighbour, he will then receive the gift because of his neighbour, and be gratified."

363. A brother asked an old man, saying, "Shew me a word whereby I may live." The old man said unto him, "Work with thy hands with all thy power, and give alms."

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364. They used to say that Abbâ Copres attained to such a measure [of perfection] that even when he was sick and wanted something, he would cut off his desire from that which his soul asked him [to give it]; and he would give thanks unto God and endure his sickness with joy and without complaint.

365. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, "What is the meaning of these words which the Prophet spake, 'My heart shall re-joice in those that fear Thy name?'" (Psalm xxxiii, 21.) And the old man answered and said, "The Holy Spirit spake this word to man even unto death, and [unto] to-day also."

366. An old man also said, "If a man were to make new heavens and new earth he would not be able to be free from care, because the wickedness of the devil is hidden behind them; but for a man to have no care either for his raiment or his food is possible."

367. A [brother] also asked an old man, "What shall I do in respect of that which I love, but which is not profitable to me?" The old man said unto him, "Approach it not, and touch it not, and it will of its own accord become an alien thing unto thee. For David the Prophet wrote unto Joab the captain of the host, and said unto him, 'Hold fast on the war, and fight mightily against the city until thou dost subdue it' (2 Samuel xi, 25). Now in this case the city is enmity."

368. Anthony said, "The greatest might of a man is to bring upon his soul his transgression at all times before God, and he must expect temptation until the end."

369. An old man used to say, "This is the rule of conduct which God gave to Israel, that he should remove himself from that which is outside nature, that is to say, anger, and wrath, and envy, and hatred, and evil-speaking, and a man must not judge his neighbour, together with all the other commandments of the olden time."

370. On one occasion certain of the brethren came to Abbâ Sisoës in order that they might hear some profitable words, and when they had spoken much with him, he said nothing unto them about whatsoever they had said, but only, "Forgive me." Then they saw that he was plaiting palm leaves, and they said unto Abraham his disciple, "What are ye doing with these palm-leaf ropes and mats?" And he said unto them, "We send them out here and there." Now when the old man heard this he said, "Sisoës eateth here and there." And when they had heard [these things] they were greatly profited, and they departed in great joy because they had seen his humility.

371. Abbâ Copres said, "Whosoever loveth the gratifying of his own will more than the gratification of the will of God hath no fear of God."

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372. A brother asked Abbâ Amônîs, saying, "How ought a man to act when he wisheth to begin some [kind of] work, or when he wisheth to go or to come, or to go from one place to another, so that action may be according to the will of God, and may be free from the error of devils?" The old man said unto him, "He must first consider in his mind and see the motive of that which he wisheth to do, and whence it cometh, and if it be from God or Satan, or from the man himself, and then let him do the work [which he contemplateth], but let him flee from going and coming, and from going from one place to another. If he [acteth] not [thus] he will finally become a laughing-stock for the devils. But afterwards let him pray and beseech God that that work which is His he may do, and then let him begin the work, and afterwards he may boast in God."

373. He also said, "Bear with every man in such a way that God may also bear with thee."

374. The disciple of Abbâ Ammon told the following story:—One night the old man came out and found me lying down in the courtyard of the cell, and he stood up above me, and with lamentation and tears said, "Where is the mind of this brother who can thus lie down (*or* sleep) without care?"

375. There was a certain priest in Thebaïs whose name was Dioscurus, and he was the spiritual father of many monks, and at the time when they were about to receive the Holy Mysteries he used to say to the brethren, "Take thought and see lest any man among you have been snared by the phantom of a woman during the night, and he be so bold as to receive the Holy Mysteries. Now the emissions which occur as the result of a phantom are not caused by the desire of a man, but take place independently thereof, for they happen naturally, and are due to the excess of matter [in the body], and they do not, therefore, lead [a man] into subjection to sin. But the phantoms which arise from the desire are the sign of an evil wish. For it is meet that the monk should be superior to the law of nature, and that he should not be found with the smallest impurity of body, but that he should waste the body and humble it, and should not permit any superfluity of matter to be found therein. Work out plans, then, that thou mayest cut off [the superfluity of] matter by means of a long period of fasting, for if we do not thus it will incite the other lusts to come upon us; and it is not meet that a monk should be occupied with the lusts which rise up in him daily. And if we do not thus, in what way are we different from those who live in the world? For we have observed that men of this kind often make themselves to be remote from

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“the desires of their lust, either for purposes of bodily health, or for other reasons which are not worth mentioning; how very much more, then, should it thus be especially a care to the monk for the sake of the health of his spirit, and of his soul, and of his body!”

376. They used to say that Abbâ Macarius the Alexandrian at one time dwelt in a cave in the desert, and that beyond his cave was another wherein dwelt a panther; one day when he opened the door of his cave the panther came in and did homage to the blessed man, and she drew nigh and took hold of the corner of his garment, and dragged him along gently and went outside. And the old man answered and said, “What can this animal want?” And he went with her until she arrived at her cave, and she left him outside, and went in and brought out her young, which were blind, and dropped them at his feet; and when he saw them, he prayed, and spat in their eyes, which were opened straightway, and the panther gave them suck, and took them and went inside. And on the day following the panther came bringing a sheepskin, and she approached and placed it before him; then the old man smiled to himself at the discernment and knowledge which the animal had shewn, and he took the skin and slept upon it, until it was quite worn out.

377. Now on another occasion, when the door of his cell was shut, and the old man was sitting in his courtyard, that panther leaped down into the courtyard from the wall and came to him carrying one of her young in her mouth; and when the old man saw that the little panther was blind, he spat in its eyes, and they were opened, and its mother took it and departed. And one day later she brought to the blessed man a sheepskin, and the blessed woman Melania told me, saying, “I received this same skin from the hands of the old man as a gift.”

378. A brother asked an old man, saying, “What shall I do if when I have given to my brother a little bread or money, the devils pollute it, as if [it were given to gain] the approbation of men?” The old man said unto him, “Even though the adulation of men may come, we must give to our neighbour that which is necessary,” and the old man adduced a proof of this statement, and said, “Two men dwelt in a certain city, and one sowed [a field] and produced a crop of somewhat dirty grain, but the other sowed [no field] at all, and produced no crop of any kind, neither clean nor dirty; in the time of tribulation which of these two men would live [and not die] of hunger?” And the brother said unto him, “He who produced the crop of dirty grain”; and the old man said unto him, “Let us then produce a few [good actions], even

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“though they be defiled, so that we may not die in the time of famine.”

379. An old man used to say, “Dainty meats remove [a man] from heavenly honours. For satiety, and luxurious living in this world, and the multitudes of lustful habits shut the door in our face and prevent us from entering into the happiness of God. Consider now the history of the rich man and Lazarus; what was it that carried Lazarus into the bosom of Abraham? Was it not the immeasurable troubles among which he had been brought up? And what brought the rich man to Gehenna? Was it not the pleasures and lusts which were flaming within his body? Each one of us, then, according to his measure, by the nod of the fire of his person which is found with him, shall receive his deserts in the world which is to come; and each one of us, unless he be watchful, shall be shaken up with the wood, and the straw, and the stubble. And since it is necessary for us to extinguish carefully the lusts which bestir themselves in us, we have need [to drink] water, and not wine.”

380. An old man used to say, “True obedience is like unto a chaste woman who is betrothed, and who is not drawn aside after strange voices; and the ear which turneth away, ever so little, from the truth, is like an adulterous woman who turneth away from her husband; and the mind which is led by every doctrine of error is like unto a harlot, who obeyeth every one who calleth her. Let us then rebuke the wandering mind which is corrupted by strange voices, and which loveth the voice of its seducer instead of that of the true bridegroom; for it hath accepted to be called by the name of a stranger, and not by that of Christ.”

381. An old man used to say, “If thou hast prayed for thy companion thou hast also prayed for thyself, but if thou hast prayed for thyself only thou hast impoverished thy petition; and if thou hast shown that thy brother hath offended thee, thou hast also shown that thou hast offended thyself. Those prayers, which have not taken their mind with them when they have ascended and gone up, stand outside the door, and it is love which openeth the door before them. The prayer which possesseth not the wings of the spirit to [mount up] on high standeth before the mouth of him that prayeth it, and thinking that it hath flown away he doth not perceive that it remaineth [near him]. Offer with thine offering salt, as it is written (Leviticus ii, 13). Let the love of thy Lord be salt for thy sacrifice, for the sacrifice which hath not salt through His love is despised and rejected before Him.”

382. One of the holy men used to say thus:—“I have passed

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“the whole period of twenty years in striving so that a strange thought might not enter into my heart, and I have seen Satan, until the ninth hour, with his bow stretched ready to shoot an arrow into my heart; and when he could not find an opportunity, he was filled with disgust, and he would depart each day, having been put to shame.”

383. An old man said, “If thou art a [true] penitent thou hast nothing whatsoever to do with these who are in the world.”

384. There was a certain holy man in Egypt who dwelt in the desert, and a little way beyond him was an elder (*or* priest), who was a Manichean; and this Manichean was obliged to make a journey and to go to one who was of the same faith as himself, and as he was going along the road, he arrived at eventide at the place where the holy man lived, and the Manichean was in great distress, for he had no place near at hand wherein to enter. Now he was afraid to go to the holy man, for he thought that he would recognize him, and would not allow him to enter [his cell]; nevertheless, being sore pressed, and not knowing where [else] to go, he knocked at the door of that holy man; and he opened the door, and the Manichean went in, and the holy man received him with gladness, and he knew who he was, and he urged him to pray, and he relieved all his wants, and the Manichean slept, and was refreshed. And it came to pass during the night that the Manichean came to himself, and said, “How is it that there is nothing which it was seemly to do which this blessed man hath not done for me? Verily this is a man of God.” Then he rose up and fell down at his feet, and said, “From this day onwards I shall believe as thou believest”; and he turned to the truth, and he became a friend of the holy man and lived with him always.

385. I have heard that Abbâ Isaac said concerning Abbâ Muthues his Rabbâ, now they both arrived at the dignity of the episcopacy, that first of all Abbâ Muthues built his monastery in the country of the Harbêlâyê (Herakleians), but that being much troubled by the multitudes who came to him, he left that place, and departed, and went to another spot in order that he might find quietness, and he built a monastery for himself there. And by the operation of Satan as it were, he found there a certain brother with whom he was at enmity, and he afflicted him greatly; and the old man saw [this], and he rose up and departed to his village, so that the man might not be vexed through him, and there he built a monastery, and shut himself in it. Now after a time, the fathers of that place wherefrom Abbâ Muthues had departed gathered together, and they took that brother who was aggrieved, and they went to him in order

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to entreat him and to bring him to his monastery; and when they had arrived at the place where Abbâ Sôrîôn used to dwell, they left their cloaks there, and the aggrieved brother was with them. And when the fathers had knocked, the old man brought forward a ladder, and he recognized them, and said unto them, "Where are your cloaks?" And they said, "They are here "with us, with such and such a brother." Now when the old man heard the name of that brother, in sheer joy he took an axe and opened the door, and he ran to the place where that brother was, and the holy man fell at the feet of the saint, and he made entreaty to him, and he kissed him, and saluted him, and he brought him and the fathers to his cell, and he refreshed both him and them for three days; and he made ready a meal, which he was not in the habit of doing, and he rose up and went with them with great joy. Now afterwards he was called to the office of Bishop, and he became a worker of signs and miracles, and he also made his disciple Abbâ Isaac a Bishop, and he continued to lead a life of spiritual excellence until the end of his life.

386. They used to say of Abbâ Serapion, the Bishop, that whensoever a man came to him to receive the monastic garb, he said these words to him, "When thou prayest say, 'Lord, " "teach me to do Thy will.'"

387. On one occasion Abbâ Paphnutius was living in a remote desert, and it happened that a certain brother came to him and found him sick, and the brother took him, and washed him, and of the food which he had with him he boiled a little, and brought it to him to eat. And when he saw [this] he answered and said, "In very truth it had passed from my mind "that this gratification for the children of men existed"; and he brought him a cup of cream. Now when the old man saw him, he wept, and said, "I never expected that, even to the "day of my death, I should drink wine."

388. One of the fathers told a story, saying: "On one occasion two brethren according to the body came to the desert "to a certain monk, and they conducted themselves in an excellent manner, and they were praised by the whole brotherhood. And it came to pass that one of them fell into a sickness which lasted not a few years, and his brother ministered "unto him, and certain fathers came to visit him, and they "began to praise him that ministered unto him, saying, 'Thy " "willingness and thy abstinence profit the whole brotherhood.' "And he answered and said unto them with great humility, " "Forgive me, O my fathers, for I have not as yet begun to " "lead a life of rule, but it is my brother who doeth the works " "of excellence, and that ye may indeed learn that such is the

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“ ‘case, come after me and see.’ ” Then he took them in to his brother in the cell wherein he lay, and he said unto him, “Father, where is the axe which I gave thee yesterday?” And he began to seek for it. Then he said unto him, “See, O my brother, do an act of grace and seek for it with me,” and the sick brother took it upon himself to be asked for that which he had not taken. And having profited [by his example] the fathers departed from that place.

389. An old man used to say, “Flee from that love which subsisteth by means of the things which are corrupt, for with them a man also passeth away and is destroyed.”

390. Abbâ Elijah used to say, “The love which a man possesseth for his neighbour, and which is caused by some temporal matter is, in the process of time, turned into fierce enmity.”

391. And he also said, “Whatsoever hath its being for God’s sake endureth and abideth for ever with those who are true.”

392. On one occasion the priest of Pîlîsîôn heard that certain of the brethren were idle and lazy, and that they were constantly in the city, and that they swam in the baths, and neglected the works of excellence which belong to the life of the monk, and when they came to the congregation he took their monkish dress from them; and having done [this] he was sad at heart, and repented, and he went to Abbâ Poemen and informed him about them. And the old man said unto him, “Hast thou nothing of the old man about thee?” [And he said “Yea.” And the old man said unto him], “Therefore thou thyself art like unto them, and thou art nigh unto sin.” Then the priest went and expressed his sorrow to them, and he put on them the dress of monks [once more]. Now they were twelve in all.

393. On one occasion tribulation came upon the monks in a certain place where they were living, and they wished to forsake it and come to Abbâ Ammon; and behold, he was travelling in a boat, and he saw them going along by the side of the river, and he ordered the boatmen to bring [the boat] close to land. Then he called these brethren and said unto them, “I am Ammon to whom ye wish to go”; and he entreated them to go back to their place, and he comforted them, and told them to endure patiently, for there was in the matter no loss to the soul, but only human vexation.

394. On one occasion an old man went up from Scete to the brethren in the mountain, and when they saw that he was a man of great ascetic labours, and that he practised stern self-denial, they entreated him to let them make a meal for him, and they brought him a little wine to drink. Now the people

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of the country heard about him, and they brought him a man who was afflicted with a devil that he might heal him; and when the devil saw him, he began to revile him, saying, "Hast thou brought this winebibber to me?" And the old man did not wish to cast him out because of the praise of men, but, because the devil had reviled him, he said unto him, "I believe in Christ, and I shall not have drunk [this] cup of wine until thou hast gone forth"; and as he began to drink that devil cried out, and said, "Thou art consuming me": and before the old man could drink that cup [of wine] the devil went forth by the grace of Christ.

395. They used to say that a certain father who was a recluse had a brother, according to the body, who lived in another cell, and that this brother fell ill, and sent to him a message to come and see him before he died; and his brother said, "I am unable to go out for the sake of my brother in the flesh." And his brother sent him another message, saying, "Come, if it be only in the night, that I may see thee"; and the recluse said, "I cannot do so, for if I did my heart would not be pure before God." So the brother died, and they did not see each other.

396. They once wanted to make Abbâ Isaac priest in Scete, and when he heard [this] he fled to Egypt, and he went into a field and hid himself among the crop because the fathers were pursuing him, and when they came to that field they began to weary a little; and they turned the ass which they had with them out to feed, but he left the whole field, and went and stood up in that place where Abbâ Isaac was hidden. And in the morning they went out to look for the ass, and they found the ass and the old man [together] and they marvelled; and when they wished to make Abbâ Isaac take an oath [not to run away] he would not allow them [to do so], and he said unto them, "I shall not flee again, for it is the will of God, and whithersoever I flee I shall come to this thing, for this is a consecration by God."

397. Abbâ Macarius asked Abbâ Arsenius, saying, "Is it good for a man not to have any pleasure at all in his cell? I know a brother who used to have a few garden herbs in his cell, and to prevent himself from having any gratification therefrom, he pulled them up by the roots"; and Abbâ Arsenius said unto him, "This is good, but every man [must do] as he is able, and if he hath not strength to persist in this perhaps he should plant others."

398. The old men who were in Egypt told Abbâ Elijah that Abbâ Agathon was a great man. And the old man said unto them, "Considering his youth he was a great man in his

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“generation, but he was very far removed from the men of old. “I saw in Scete an old man who was able to hold back the sun “in his course in the heavens like Joshua, the son of Nun”; and when they heard [this] they marvelled and praised God.

399. A certain brother asked Abbâ Poemen about fornication, and he answered and said, “[It cometh upon a man] because “our eyes will not allow us to see the help of God which “surroundeth a man, for a man is constrained to humility and “to the fear of God at all times, even as he is constrained [to “draw] the breath which goeth forth from his mouth.”

400. An old man used to say, “If thou wishest to learn to “know [thy] neighbour praise him more than thou rebukest “him.”

401. They used to say that whensoever one of the fathers wished to sleep a little, he would sit down in his cell at some distance from the wall, so that whenever he nodded his head he became wide awake.

402. And whensoever another of the old men lay down he used to hold up a book above him, and when he dropped off to sleep the book would fall down and wake him.

403. Abbâ Besarion said, “I stood up for forty nights and did “not sleep.”

Abbâ Anthony said, “I do not fear God, on the contrary I “love Him.”

404. One of the old men whilst exhorting the brethren to work of spiritual excellence used to say, “Troubles are hard “unto those who are not accustomed to them. Troubles are like “unto dogs; for as dogs bite those who are not familiar with “them and wag their tails at those who are, so also are “labours, because they give pain to those who have no ex- “perience of them, and they are pleasing unto those who are “trained in bearing them. This exception must, however, be “made: lusts are wont to produce troubles and adversities, “but troubles are the cause of pleasure and delights.”

405. On one occasion Abbâ Ammon came to cross the river, and he found that they were making ready a boat to take [some] men over, and he sat down in it; and behold, there was another boat which was going to take over some women, and they cried out to him, “Come thou, father, and cross over “with us.” And he answered and said unto them, “If I had “not been going to cross over in the public boat I could “not cross [with you].” Now he had with him a bundle of palm leaves, and he sat down and plaited mats until that boat was ready, and then he crossed over the river [in it]. And the brethren expressed their regrets, saying, “Why hast thou “done thus?” Then the old man said unto them, “Because I

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“do not at all times travel in great haste, and because my thoughts are not always in a turmoil.” Now this is a proof that a man should travel on the path of God with a well ordered mind.

406. One of the old men came to one of the fathers [and asked him] to go and visit Abbâ Joseph, and he said to him, “Tell thy disciple to go with us”; and the father said, “Call him, and whatsoever thou commandest him, he will do.” The old man said unto him, “What is his name?” and the Rabbâ of the disciple said, “I know not.” The old man said unto him, “And how long hath he been with thee? Dost thou not know his name?” And the father said, “Behold, he hath been with me for two years”; then the old man answered and said, “If he hath been with thee for two years, and thou hast not learnt his name, how can I learn it in one day?”

407. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, and said, “On one occasion I was distressed, and I begged one of the holy men to lend me a certain thing, and he gave it to me as a free gift; now if God prospereth me shall I give it to another man, or shall I return it to him that gave it to me in the time of my tribulation?” The old man saith, “The gift was most certainly from God, and it is meet for thee to return it to Him, for it belongeth to Him.” And that brother said unto him, “Supposing that I carry it to Him, and He refuse to take it, and say unto me, ‘Get thee gone, and give it as a free gift to anyone at thy pleasure,’ what am I to do?” The old man said, “The thing still belongeth to Him. For if a man bringeth thee something of his own accord and thou hast no knowledge about it, in this manner the thing is his; but if thou hast borrowed something, either from a monk or from a man in the world, and he refuseth to take it back, it belongeth to thee and thou mayest do what thou pleasest with it.”

408. Abbâ Joseph related that Abbâ Isaac said, “I was on one occasion sitting with Abbâ Poemen, and I saw that he was in a state of great stupefaction, and because I possessed some influence over him, I offered entreaty to him, saying, ‘Father, where is thy mind?’ And after I had pressed him greatly, he answered and said, ‘My mind was in the place of the Crucifixion, where the holy woman Mary, the God-bearer, was standing and weeping by the Cross of our Redeemer, and I was wishing that I might at all times feel thus.’”

409. They used to say that Abbâ Sisoës the Theban was wont to dwell among the reeds of Arsânîâ, where there was, at some distance from him, an old man who was sick; and

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when he heard [of it] he was distressed, for he fasted two days at a time, and that day was the day on which he ought not to eat. And he said in his mind, "What shall I do? For perhaps the brethren will compel me to eat, and if I wait [to go to the old man] until to-morrow perhaps he will be dead. I can only do this. I will go, but will not break the law and eat"; so he went, and he ate not, and he did not break the rule of life which [he observed] for God's sake.

410. They used to say that Abbâ Netîrâ, who was the disciple of Abbâ Sylvanus, and who dwelt in his cell in Mount Sinai, trained his body, and exercised it in ascetic labours with moderation; but when he was called by force to the episcopacy, he afflicted himself with stern and laborious works. And his disciple said unto him, "Abbâ, when we lived in the desert thou didst not lead such a life of abstinence and self-denial as thou now doest"; and the old man said unto him, "There I had the desert, and silence, and poverty, and I only had to direct my body in moderation so that it might not become ill; but here I have the world, and I must vex my body so that it may not be caught by any lust whatsoever, and that I may not lose my labours."

411. They used to relate that Abbâ Poemen and the brethren at one time worked with their hands, but he could not sell their work; and they were distressed because they had no one to buy their work; and one of the brethren, who was a friend of theirs, went to a certain believing merchant and informed him of the matter. Now Abbâ Poemen [always] refused to accept anything from any man, so that he might not be entreated [for alms] by the multitude. And when the merchant heard [about their need], because he wished to do something for the old man, he made the excuse that he was in need of [the kind] of work [which they did], and he bought a camel and carried away the work as if he had been in need of the same; and the brother who had told the merchant came to Abbâ Poemen, and hearing that the merchant had come and carried away what they had to sell, he said before Abbâ Poemen, "Verily, O father, the merchant hath taken [the work] away, although he did not want it." Then Abbâ Poemen said to Abbâ Job, his brother, "Arise, stop the camel, and bring him back, for if thou dost not do so Poemen will not dwell here with you. For I do not wish to wrong any man by making him unnecessarily to suffer loss on my account, and to take my profit." And the brother departed and brought the camel back with great difficulty, and then Abbâ Poemen was persuaded to stay with them, and when he saw [the camel] he rejoiced as one who had found a great treasure.

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412. A certain stranger came to Scete, and brought there much gold, and he entreated the priest that it might be given to the brethren, and the priest said unto him, "It is useless to them"; and having entreated him many times, and the priest not consenting [to this], the man laid the gold down openly at the door of the church. And the priest said, "My brethren, if any man hath need let him take [some]," but they refused to touch it, and some of them would not even look at it. Then the priest said unto him, "God hath accepted thy gift, go, and give it to the poor"; and having been greatly helped he departed.

413. On one occasion the steward of Scete went up to Constantinople, and the Emperor seeing him asked him how the fathers in Egypt were; and the steward did homage, and answered and said to the Emperor, "Behold, they eat each other, and live." Now when the Emperor heard this, he marvelled, and asked him, "What is the meaning of 'They eat each other?'" And the steward said, "The meaning of 'They eat each other' is this:—When it happeneth that one of them is going to die, he commandeth that whatsoever he hath shall be given to various men according to their needs; and similarly when a man worketh he bringeth [the results of] his labour, and refresheth all the brethren therewith, and in this way they live." The Emperor said unto him, "Verily blessed are ye, for ye are saved and freed from the cares of the world, and also from the judgement of Gehenna. We, on the other hand, are troubled by the cares of the world, and Gehenna is prepared for us because of our sins."

414. They used to say of Abbâ Betimius that, when [the brethren] were coming down from the harvest to Scete, they brought down as a gift for the brethren who were there a jar of oil, which contained the measure of a *kestâ*, and was sealed with plaster. And at the return of the period the year following when they were going to the harvest, they brought everything which was of benefit to the church; and Abbâ Betimius made a small hole with a needle in the vessel of oil, and poured out a little for himself, and thought that he had done some great thing in not having consumed the whole of the oil which was in the vessel. And when the brethren brought their vessels with the plaster coverings intact and the vessels themselves unopened, whilst his vessel had been perforated, he stood there full of shame, just like a man who thinketh that he hath been found [committing] fornication.

415. There was a great and holy man who used to dwell in the inner desert, in a state of glorious ascetic excellence, and the gifts of casting out devils and of healing the sick had been given to him by God, and he used to work great miracles in

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the Name of Christ, and the beasts also made themselves subject to him at his command. For it chanced on one occasion when he was journeying in the desert that he saw a herd of wild asses feeding, and he said unto them, "In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, let one of you come hither"; and one of them came, and crouched before him very gently, and the blessed man mounted him and sat upon him, and the animal carried him whither he wished to go.

416. One day when the blessed Anthony was sitting in the desert with the brethren about him, suddenly there fell upon him a state of stupor, and he became exceedingly sad and sorry, and he bent his knees and prayed; and when, after a long time, he stood up, he wept and groaned, and the old man began to pluck out his hair, and to throw it away. Now when the brethren saw him weeping they entreated him to tell them what he had seen; and he answered and said unto them, "A great pillar hath fallen this day from the church." Now he spake concerning that holy man who had fallen from his rule of life. And he sent to him straightway two brethren to see what had happened and to comfort him, and when the holy man saw them, he wailed and cried, and took dust and cast it upon his head, and he fell down before them, saying, "Go ye and say to Abbâ Anthony, 'Pray for me that ten days may be given me 'to live, and I believe that I shall repent''"; but he died before five days had passed, and did not remain long enough to offer up repentance for his sin.

417. There was a certain man of noble rank who sold everything which he had, and divided [the money] among the poor and the strangers, and he shaved his head and went and dwelt in a monastery; now there remained to him a remnant of his possessions sufficient for his wants. And after a little time, when he had obtained freedom of speech, he began to be proud and to exalt himself above the other brethren, saying, "They lack education, and the knowledge of learning"; and the blessed Mâr Basil, the Bishop, sent him a message in a letter, saying, "Thou hast lost the great name which thou hadst in the world, for thou wast called 'nobleman', and thou hast not become a monk."

418. Abbâ Gregory made an answer against the thoughts and said to the brethren, "My brethren, inasmuch as we have passed the measure of children, let us cease from the mind of children, that is to say, let us free ourselves from the careless habits of filthy lusts; for it would be a shameful thing for us if, since childhood hath passed from us, and old age hath come upon us, the things of shame had not also passed away from us."

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419. They used to say that when Abbâ Macarius was walking in the desert, he went and found a beautiful spot which was like unto the Paradise of God; and there were in it fountains of water, and numerous palm trees, and trees of various kinds which bore fruit, and when he had come and told the brethren about it, they begged and entreated him to go and settle them there. Then the old men, the aged members of the congregation, who led lives of stern labour, entreated them not to leave their place, and they said, "If pleasure and delight be found in that spot, and if a man may live therein without vexation and labour, what pleasure and delight do ye expect to receive from God? Nay, it is right for us to endure the hardness of this place wherein we dwell, and to suffer tribulations so that we may enjoy pleasure in the world to come." And when he had said these things the brethren were restrained and departed not.

420. There was a certain holy man who used to see visions, and he told the following story, saying, "Once when I was standing up in prayer, I heard a devil complaining in the presence of his companion, saying, 'I am [suffering] great labour and trouble.' And when the other devil asked him so that he might learn from him the cause of his trouble, he said to him, 'This is the work which hath been handed over to me. When I have carried these monks, who are in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood, to Mount Sinai I have to bring those who are in Mount Sinai to Jerusalem, and I have no rest whatsoever.'"

421. There was a monk who lived in a cell, far away in the desert, and this monk had a brother who lived in the world, and whose end was nigh, for he had to die; and he sent a message to the monk, saying, "For God's sake do an act of grace, and come that I may see thee before I die." And when the monk heard [this], he shut the door of his cell, and set out to go to him, and as he was travelling through the desert, he saw an old man sitting on the wayside mending nets; now this old man was the Calumniator, who was making ready his snares to catch in them those who were journeying on the road of spiritual excellence. And he was exceedingly anxious to overthrow that brother, and to trip him up by his snares, for he had not only never allowed his foot to become entangled in the meshes of his nets, but he had also slit in pieces and destroyed his pitfalls through the remembrance of God. Now the monk did not know that the man who was sitting by the roadside mending his nets was Satan, and he said unto him, "Why art thou sitting here in this parched desert? And what art thou doing here?" The Calumniator said unto him, "I

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“ am mending my nets wherewith I wish to catch the gazelle which are in the desert.” And the monk said unto him, “ Make me a net also, for I want to catch with it the gazelle which go into my garden and lay it waste.” Then that devil said unto him, “ Get thee on thy journey, and I will make a net for thee which shall be better than that which thou now seest.” And when the monk had gone to his brother, he saw him, and remained with him for two days, and on the third day his brother died; and he wrapped him up in his grave-clothes, and buried him with the honour which is due to believing men. And as he was lying there in his brother’s house, his brother’s wife rose up by night, and came and lay down by his side through the agency of the Calumniator, and she began to say unto him thus:—“ God hath sent thee hither to provide for thy brother’s children, and to bring them up; take me, then, to wife, and take care of thy brother’s house and of his children, and stay here in peace in thine own house.” And when the monk had heard what she said to him, he was moved to wrath against her, and he said to her, “ Fie upon thee, O woman! Get thee behind me, Satan!” And he rose up straightway, and took his staff, and set out to go through the desert to his cell, and as he was journeying along the way, he saw that old man sitting in his place and mending his nets; and the monk said unto him, “ Art thou still sitting here, O old man? Hast thou prepared for me that net concerning which I spake to thee?” Then Satan became furious, and he looked at him in fierce anger and said, “ Get thee forth from my presence. Yea, thou hast indeed broken the net which I made for thee. Didst thou not know that thou wast breaking and slitting in pieces during the past night that other net which was better than the first one? I am not able to make a net which [will catch] thee.” And as he was speaking he changed himself into a great serpent. Now when the monk saw this he understood that it was Satan who had appeared unto him; and he fled from the place in fear, and went to his cell, and he gave thanks unto God Who had delivered him from the snare of Satan, who had wished to snare him and to drag him down into his net through his brother’s wife.

422. A certain brother had recently received the garb of a monk, and he went and shut himself up in a cell, and said, “ I am a desert monk.” And when the fathers heard [this], they came and took him out of his place, and made him to go about to the cells of the brethren, and to make apologies to them, saying, “ I am not a desert monk, and I have only just begun to be a disciple.”

423. On one occasion Abbâ Abraham went to Abbâ Arêâ,

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and whilst they were sitting talking, a certain brother also came to Abbâ, and repeated the following:—There was a certain rich man in Jerusalem who had become rich by means of fraud, and avarice, and oppression, and wicked acts of various kinds; and when this man came to himself, and understood that there was judgement to come, he drew nigh to a certain teacher, and said unto him, “I beseech thee [to hearken unto me]. My mind is led captive by worldly care, and by anxieties which are of the earth; make me whole then, so that I may not perish.” And the teacher gave him to read the Book of the Wisdom of Solomon, and as he was reading [it], he found a verse which said, “He who hath compassion upon the poor, lendeth to God.” Then he shut the book, and gave it to the teacher, saying, “Who is there that is more sure and more to be trusted than God, Who if I shew compassion upon the poor, will give me back both principal and interest?” Then he went immediately, and sold everything which he possessed and divided it among the poor, and he left nothing whatsoever of it to himself except four dînârs, which were to be [spent] in burying him; and he fell into want, and became exceedingly poor, and he went about begging, but no man either shewed compassion upon him or gave him food. Finally he meditated within himself, and said, “I will go to the Lord my God, and will enter into judgement with Him because He led me astray and made me scatter all my possessions.” Now as he was returning to Jerusalem, he saw two men fighting with each other, and each was striving to take from his companion a certain stone of great excellence, which had fallen from the ephod which was on Aaron, the high priest; now the men did not know what the stone was. Then the man said unto them, “Why are ye fighting and contending with each other?” And they answered and said unto him, “We have found a stone, and we do not know what its value is”; and he said unto them, “Give it to me, and take four dînârs,” and they gave him the stone gladly. Then the man went into Jerusalem and shewed the stone to a goldsmith, who, as soon as he saw the stone, said unto him, “Where didst thou find this? For behold, because [of the loss] thereof all Jerusalem hath been in an uproar for the last three days. But go, and give it to the high priest, and he will make thee a rich man.” Now when he had gone into the temple, the angel of the Lord appeared unto the high priest, and said unto him, “Behold, a man hath come unto thee, and he hath with him the stone which was lost; give him, then, gold and silver, and precious stones according to his desire, and rebuke him and say unto him, ‘Have no doubt whatsoever in thy mind, and restrain

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“not thyself from lending to God as if thou wert not a believer and a true man, for, behold, I have given unto thee twofold in this world [for what thou didst lend Me], and in the world to come life everlasting.”

424. And the fathers also said:—There was a rich philosopher in a certain city and he never gave anything to any man, and the Bishop of the city said unto him, “Dost thou know, O my beloved brother, that when we came into this world we brought nothing in with us, and that we shall not be able to carry anything out with us? But from that which Christ hath given unto thee thou shouldst lend in this world, and in the next He will reward thee several times over.” Then the philosopher said unto the Bishop, “Wilt thou be surety to me that if I lend [money] unto Him He will reward me?” And the Bishop answered and said, “Yea, I will be surety to thee”; and the Bishop having become surety to him, straightway the rich man began to scatter his possessions, and whensoever he gave alms to any man he used to write thus: “Behold, I have lent to Christ such and such things, Bishop So-and-so being security for the same”; and he did thus until he had scattered all the riches which he possessed. Now when the day arrived for him to go forth from the world, he commanded his household, saying, “I make you to take an oath by Christ, in Whom I have trusted, that this paper shall be laid with me in the grave”; and they took the oath even as he made them to do. And after many days the Bishop came to the city, and he went to the kinsfolk of the philosopher, and he comforted them and said unto them, “Did he not give you any commands? And did he not make a will?” And they said unto him, “When he was dying he made us swear that the paper of indebtedness should be laid with him [in the grave], and we did even as he said.” And the Bishop said unto them, “Come ye and shew me his grave,” and when he had gone and entered into the grave, he saw the paper laid on the breast of the philosopher, and he took it, and opened it, and found that there was written in it thus, “I, the philosopher So-and-so, have gone to Christ, and everything which I lent unto Him He hath returned unto me many times over; and henceforward I have no claim whatsoever upon Him, except for tranquillity and peace.” And every one who saw and heard [this] praised God, unto Whom all things are easy.

425. There was a certain rich man in Alexandria whose name was Dômyânôs, and he fell sick of a grievous disease, and being afraid that he was going to die he divided thirty pounds' weight of gold among the poor; and it happened that he recovered, and then he repented of what he had done. Now he had a rich

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friend, who was a chaste and excellent man, and he revealed to him everything about which he repented, and the friend answered and said unto him, "Be not sad, O my brother, for "it is meet that thou shouldst rejoice, because thou hast made "an offering unto God of thy gold"; but the rich man did not agree with him. Then he said unto him, "I will give thee "thirty pounds' weight of gold, and thou must not be vexed, "but come with me to the temple of Mâr Mînâ, the martyr, "and say thus: 'It is not I who have given these alms, but " 'this man,' and take that which is thine and go." And having done this, he took thirty pounds' weight of gold, and went to go forth by the door of the church, and the angel of the Lord smote him and he fell down straightway, and died. Then the priests who were in the temple of Mâr Mînâ gathered themselves together, and they said to the friend, "Take thy "gold, and be gone." And he said unto them, "God forbid "that I should take anything from Christ, for I have offered "it to Him, and it is His, but if it seem [fit] to you let it be "divided among the poor"; and it was divided according to his command, and every one who heard feared and glorified God. My brethren, let us admire the excellence of that friend, and let us not be sad when we offer alms and oblations unto God, for we [only] offer unto Him that which is His. And He Himself hath written that He is the debtor and the borrower, and hath promised a reward even for a cup of cold water, saying, "Whatsoever ye do unto one of these little ones, ye do "unto Me" (St. Matthew x, 42; xxv, 40); may He make us worthy to do His will. Amen.

Here follow the counsels which belong in order to the old man who spake against the thoughts of fornication, saying, "Be like unto a man who passeth through a street of taverns, "etc." (see No. 593, Book I).

426. O man, for thy sake was Christ born, and the Son of God came that He might make thee to live; He became a babe, He became a child, and He became a man, being [at the same time] God in His Nature, and the Son of God.

427. He Who was the Lawgiver became a reader, and He took the Book in the synagogue, and read, saying, "The Spirit of "the Lord is upon Me, and therefore He hath anointed Me, and "hath sent Me to preach the Gospel to the poor" (St. Luke iv, 18).

428. Like a subdeacon He made a whip of cord, and drove out from the temple all those who sold oxen, and rams, and doves, *et cetera*.

429. Like a servant He girded a napkin about His loins, and washed the feet of His disciples, and He commanded them to wash the feet of their brethren.

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430. Like a priest He sat among the priests and taught the people.

431. Like a Bishop He took bread, and blessed [it], and brake, and gave unto His disciples. He was beaten for thy sake, He was crucified for thy sake, and He died for thy sake, yet for His sake thou wilt not even bear disgrace! He rose as God, and He ascended as God. He wrought all things for us, fittingly and in order, that He might redeem us. Let us, then, be watchful, and zealous, and constant in prayer; let us do all things which are pleasing unto Him, and which gratify those who love Him, so that we may be redeemed and live. Was not Joseph sold into Egypt, and was he not in a strange land? And the three Holy Children in Babylon, peradventure they acquired knowledge with man and stood in front of them [of themselves]? Nay, it was because they feared God that He helped them, and made them glorious.

432. An old man, who hath delivered himself unto God, used to say, "The monk hath no will of his own. Now he who abideth in ministering unto the will of God never wearie, but if thou performest thine own will thou becomest weary and exhausted, because God doth not support thee."

433. The old man also said, "When a soldier entereth the battle he taketh care for himself only, and so also is it with the huntsmen; let us then be like unto these, for riches, and kinsfolk, and wisdom are dung without a correct rule of life and conduct."

434. The old man also said, "God dwelleth in the man who worketh with God, for He said, 'I will dwell in them, and I will walk in them, and they shall be to Me a people, and I will be unto them a God.'"

435. The old man also said, "God saith unto thee thus: If thou lovest Me, O monk, that which I wish do, and do not what I desire not. The life of a monk consisteth of:—Good works, obedience, training, not to blame his neighbour, not to calumniate any man, and not to complain, for it is written, 'The mercy of the Lord hateth evil things.'"

436. The same old man used to say, "The life and conduct of a monk are these:—He must not act iniquitously, and he must not look upon evil things with his eyes, and he must not hearken with his ears unto things which are alien to the fear of God, and he must not utter calumnies with his mouth, and he must not seize things with his hands, but must give especially to those who are in need, he must neither be exalted in his mind nor meditate with wicked thoughts, and he must not fill his belly. All these things he must perform with intelligence, for by them is a monk known."

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437. A certain brother vexed an old man several times by saying unto him, "What shall I do in respect of the wicked and filthy thoughts of all sorts and kinds which go through me?" And the old man answered and said unto him, "Thou art like unto a stagnant pool which is at one time filled with water, and which at another, when water hath been drawn up from it, runneth dry. Why canst thou not rather be like unto the spring which never faileth? Patient persistence is victory, and victory is constancy, and constancy is life, and life is kingdom, and kingdom is God."

438. Abbâ Epiphanius used to say, "Whatsoever food thou wishest to eat with pleasure desire not to give to thy body, especially when thou art not sick, and that food for which thou lustest thou shalt not eat. When, however, thou art eating the things which are sent unto thee by God, give thanks unto Him at all times, and be grateful unto Him. We have received pleasures and delights because of the name of monastic life, but we perform not the works of monks, and it shall be that thou art not a monk. What then? Wilt thou not play the man that, peradventure, thou mayest be clothed in the apparel which is alien unto thee? Tell me, O brother, how can a man possess the seal of service unless he possesseth humility? For the humble man who seeth another sinning weepeth bitterly, saying, 'This man may perhaps sin to-day, but how many times shall I sin to-morrow?' But, if any man sin before thee, no matter who he may be, condemn him not, but consider thyself to be a greater sinner than he is, even though he be both a child of this world, and make people to sin against God."

439. He also used to say, "Know thyself, and thou shalt never fall. Give work unto thy soul, that is to say, constant prayer, and the love which is in God, before another can give it evil thoughts; and pray ye that the spirit of error may be remote from you."

440. He also used to say, "Whatsoever thou doest successfully, and makest a boast of, that destroy, for it is not right for a monk to boast about his good deeds, and if he boasteth he will fall."

441. "When thou prayest say with a hidden voice unto God, 'Lord, how am I to acquire Thee? Thou, even Thou knowest that I am a beast, and that I know nothing. Thou hast brought me to the highest point of this life, O redeem me for Thy mercy's sake. I am Thy servant and the son of Thine handmaiden. O Lord, by Thy wish make me to live.'"

442. The old man is falsehood, and the new man is truth. Truth is the root of good works, falsehood is death.

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If the liar, and the thief, and the calumniator, knew that they were to be exposed and made known to all at a subsequent period they would never commit their offences, and it is even thus with those who commit adultery.

443. The sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the Lord, but they feared not God, and they and all their house perished.

444. He who layeth hold upon, and bindeth, and taketh to himself the remembrance of evil things, is like unto the man who burieth fire within chopped straw.

445. If thou wouldst talk to a man concerning life, and if thou wouldst say a word unto him with suffering, and with repentance, and with weeping, speak unto him that heareth and doeth; and if thou dost not [do this] speak not at all, lest thou die, and depart without profit from the words wherewith thou didst wish to vivify others. For unto the sinner God saith, "What are the Books of My commandments unto thee, for thou hast taken My covenant in thy mouth?"

446. Abbâ Epiphanius said, "When the thought cometh to fill thy bosom, that is to say, thy heart, with vainglory or pride, say thou unto it, 'Old man, behold thy fornication.'"

447. And he also said, "If we do evil things God will be unmindful of His longsuffering; but if we do good things it will not help us greatly, for in order to increase the profit of freedom, and that the merchandise of the will may not be spoiled, a man must rejoice in contending."

448. On one occasion the brethren entreated Rabbâ Epiphanius, saying, "Speak to us, father, something whereby we may live, even though thou speakest and we keep not the seed of thy word because our ground is a salted thing." And the old man answered and said unto them, "He who doth not receive all brethren, and who maketh distinctions between them, he who doth this, I say, cannot be perfect."

449. If a man revile thee, bless him, and if he accept the blessing it shall be good for both of you; and if he doth not, he shall receive the reward of his reviling, and thou of the blessing.

450. It is right for a monk to live even as Abbâ Arsenius lived. Take care each day to stand before God without sin, and draw nigh unto Him with tears as did the sinful woman; and pray thou unto the Lord God as if He were standing before thee, for He is near and looketh at thee carefully.

451. He who wisheth to dwell in the desert must be a teacher by his own knowledge, and he must not be in need of being taught, lest, peradventure, he be harmed by devils, and lest he scrutinize his understanding too closely, and lest, in some form

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or other, he become a laughing-stock to the beings who are above, and to those who are below.

452. The correct rule of conduct for him that loveth God is to be without blame.

453. A certain old man returned an answer against evil thoughts, and said unto the brethren, "Now I beseech you, "O my brethren, that we cease from the ascetic life and its "labours, and that we also desist from the anxieties of evil "thoughts. For what are we? A sound which cometh from the "fine dust, or a sound which cometh from the dust of the "ground. Joseph of Râmâh, having asked to [be allowed to] "take away the body of Jesus, removed it and swathed it with "swathings of fine linen, and then laid it in a new grave. "Now the pure heart is the new grave of the new man."

454. The devils said unto one of the old men, wishing to lead him astray, "Dost thou wish to see Christ?" And he said unto them, "My curse be upon you, and on that which ye say, for "I believe in Christ Who said, 'If they say unto you, Behold, "'here is Christ, or, Behold, there is Christ, believe them not'" (St. Matthew xxiv, 23); and immediately the devils disappeared.

455. What is [the meaning of] the word which the Apostle spake, "To the pure all things are pure?" (Titus I, 15.) The old man said unto him, "If a man cometh to this word, and "arriveth at this measure, he will see that he himself hath "more shortcomings than any other creature, and that he is "inferior to every being." The brother said unto him, "How "is it possible for me to consider myself more imperfect than "a murderer and inferior to him? Is it possible for me to con- "sider the murderer and the fornicator, whose actions are abo- "minable, better than myself?" And the old man answered and said unto him, "If a man attaineth unto this word, and he "seeth his neighbour committing a murder, or doing some- "thing else which is not good, he will think within himself, "saying, 'This is [only] one sin, and this man hath only com- "'mitted this one sin, but I am at all times a murderer through "hatred and a wicked will."

456. A brother asked Abbâ Job, the brother of Abbâ Poemen, concerning a word which the Apostle spake, saying (Philip- pians ii, 3), "Esteem every man to be more excellent than thy- "self." And the old man answered and said, "If a man hath "arrived at this measure, and he seeth the offence of his "brother, he will conceal it as if it had never happened."

457. An old man used to say, "I never take a step without "first learning where I am about to put my foot, but I stand "up and look about me carefully, and I am not careless, and

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“I do not let [my foot go] until God guideth me, and leadeth me on the path to the place which pleaseth Him.”

458. An old man used to say, “God giveth a man the opportunity to repent as long as he wisheth to do, and in proportion as he wisheth, for it is written, ‘Speak first thy sins, and thou shalt be justified.’”

459. An old man used to say, “Silence is filled with all life, but in the speech which is abundant death is hidden.”

460. And the old man also said, “Lying and sin are wont to lie in ambush in the words which are long and broad.”

461. An old man used to say, “Humility never becometh angry, and never provoketh a man to wrath.”

462. Abbâ Joseph said unto Abbâ Lôth, “Thou art unable to become a monk, but thou mayest become wholly like a flame which burneth and blazeth fiercely.”

463. An old man was asked, “What is humility?” And he said unto him that asked the question, “If thy brother offend thee, and thou forgive him before he can repent and entreat thee [that is humility].”

464. An old man also said, “Keep thy conscience with thy brother, and thou shalt find rest.”

465. Abbâ Paphnutius used to say, “He who esteemeth himself as nothing, whithersoever he goeth, or wheresoever he dwelleth, he shall find rest.”

466. The same old man said, “During all the days of the life of the old men I used to go and visit them twice each month, and my cell was distant from them twelve miles, and in respect of every thought about which I asked them, they never said to me anything except, ‘Wheresoever thou goest esteem thyself as nothing, and thou shalt find rest.’”

467. One of the old men used to say, “Love knoweth not how to keep a storehouse [full] of possessions.”

468. The same old man also said, “I do not know the actual thing whereby, on two occasions, the enemies led me into error, and into the committing of sin, and into the transgression [of the Law].”

469. Certain old men asked John the Less, saying, “When thou wast in Crete with the fathers, how didst thou see them conducting themselves?” And he said unto them, “By night and by day they were performing with all their might the work of God, that is to say, [they were reciting] the service, and they prayed, and read, and were anxious with divine solicitude, and instead of being idle they worked with their hands.”

470. On one occasion Abbâ Ammon came to the brethren, and they, whilst expressing regret [for troubling him, asked

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him] to say some words of excellence to them; and the old man answered and said unto them, "It is right that we all " should travel the path of God with well-ordered [minds]."

471. Abbâ Anthony used to say, "When we rise up in the " morning each day let us think that we shall not abide until " the evening, and when we come to lie down also let us think " that we shall not abide until the morning; for we know not " the days of our life, but they are known unto God. If we do " this each day we shall not sin, and we shall do nothing " wicked before God, and we shall not lust eagerly for any- " thing belonging to this world, and we shall not be angry " with anyone, but in everything we shall be regarding our " souls, even as men who await death."

472. And he also said, "As fish die when they are drawn " out of the water, even so do monks, who have forsaken the " world, become sluggish, when they remain with the children " of this world or dwell with them; it is then meet for us to " hasten to the mountain even as fish haste to the water."

473. Now they used to say that Abbâ Anthony was wholly [illuminated] by the appearance of the light of the spirit, and that he could see what was happening from a distance; now on one occasion he saw the soul of the blessed Ammon being taken up into heaven by the hands of angels, although he was distant from him ten stages.

474. One of the brethren asked him once about the thoughts, and the old man answered and said unto him, "Do not carry " them into effect, but let them settle down and down until " they breed worms and perish."

475. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "If a man pass a hundred " years in the cell he will not understand his departure from " this world and become a monk, unless he attribute sin to " himself at all times, and make himself to be remote, both in " his mind and in his actions, from those things which he " knoweth will separate him from God, and make supplication " unto God at all times through suffering and tears."

476. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, "What is the " repentance of sins?" And he said unto him, "The repentance " of sins consisteth in a man not committing the sin again " from the moment wherein he repenteth of it; and on account " of this the righteous were called 'spotless,' and because they " had forsaken [their] sins, and had cleansed themselves from " them."

477. And another brother also asked him, saying, "Shew " me a word whereby I may live"; and the old man said unto him, "The first thing of all which the fathers have given us " [to do] is to mourn."

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478. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "The passions are four heads"; and a brother said unto him, "What are they?" The old man said unto him, "Worldly grief which cometh about many things, the love of money, vainglory, and fornication; and it is meet that we should be on the watch against these before all other passions."

479. He said also, "If a monk hateth two things he is able to free himself from the world, and these are," said he, "the gratifications of the body, and vainglory."

480. The same old man also said, "Wrath is a natural thing in man, it is his nature, but it must be used to cut off evil passions. Hunger is natural in a man, but it must be employed [in satisfying] the want of the body, and not [to gratify] the feeling of eager lust [to eat], even as the blessed David said, 'With him whose eye is lofty and whose heart is greedy I have not eaten' (Psalm ci, 5; cxxxii, 1). Sleep too is natural in man, but [it must not be indulged] to satiety."

481. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, "Tell me, why is it that when I offer repentance to a brother who is wroth with me I do not see him pleased with me?" The old man said unto him, "Tell me truly: when thou offerest to him repentance hast thou not the opinion that thou art not doing it because thou hast sinned against him, but because of the commandment?" And the brother said unto him, "It is even thus." The old man said unto him, "Because of this God doth not permit him to be pleased with thee, and because thou dost not offer repentance to him in fulfilment of thine own desire, but as if thou hadst not sinned against him, but he had sinned against thee."

482. They used to say that when the disciples of Abbâ Agathon were building a cell he remained with them for a period of four months, and when they had finished it, on the first Sabbath on which they dwelt in it, the old man saw in it something which did not afford him profit, and he said unto his disciples, "Arise, let us go away from here." And when they heard [this], they were greatly troubled, and they answered and said unto him, "If thou hadst this thought to depart, why have we done all this work and built the cell? Moreover, men will be offended with us, and will say, 'They have left this place because they can abide nowhere.'" Now when the old man saw that their souls were grieved, he said unto them, "If some men be offended at us, there are others who will be edified by us, and they will say, 'These blessed men departed for God's sake, and they considered nothing [else].'" However, let him that wisheth to come with me come, for I

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“shall certainly depart.” Then they threw themselves on the ground, and entreated him to let them go with him.

483. Abbâ Agathon also used to say, “The monk’s cloak is a sign of the absence of wickedness”; and he also said, “God asketh from those who begin the service of the works of the fear of God nothing except that they shall order their bodies by obedience to the commandments against the passions of the lusts.”

484. Abbâ Agathon also said, “He who removeth from before his eyes accusations, and disgrace (*or* insult), and loss (*or* belittlement) is able to live.”

485. A brother said unto Abbâ Agathon, “Father, I had the order to dwell in a certain place, and I have war there, and I want to depart; I would fulfil the command, but I am afraid of the war.” The old man said unto him, “If it were Agathon, he would keep the command, and overcome the war.”

486. The same old man also said, “If the inner man be watchful he will be able to guard the outer man also; but if he be not, let us guard the tongue by every means in our power.”

487. The old man Benjamin was asked by a brother, “Of what consisteth the life of a monk?” And he answered and said, “A mouth of truth, a holy body, and a pure heart.”

488. They used to say concerning a certain old man that, on account of the great humility which he possessed, God gave him the gift of becoming a seer of visions, and he could see beforehand when anyone was coming to him, and it was revealed to him concerning it; now the old man was sorry and did not wish for this thing, and he made supplication unto God that it might be taken away from him. And he went to an old Rabbâ, and entreated him, saying, “My brother, labour for me, so that this gift may be removed from me”; then each of them sat down in his cell and made entreaty unto God concerning this matter, and a voice was heard by that old man, saying, “Behold, I remove the gift from thee, but whensoever thou wishest it is thine.” And he went straightway to the old Rabbâ and shewed him what had been said unto him, and when he heard [it] he gave thanks unto God.

489. The fathers once asked Abbâ Sylvanus, saying, “What work of ascetic excellence hast thou performed that thou didst receive the wisdom which thou dost possess, and the gift with which is endowed thy face?” And the old man answered and said unto them with great humility, “[I received these things] because I never left in my heart a thought which could provoke God to wrath.” And they used to say that the

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face of the old man Sylvanus shone so brightly, even as did the face of Moses, with the glorious splendour which he had received from God, that no man was able to look upon it with his eyes wide open.

490. Zeno, the disciple of Abbâ Sylvanus, said on a certain occasion, "Dwell not in a place which is famous, and abide not with a man who hath a great name for ascetic excellence."

491. One of the brethren asked an old Rabbâ, saying, "Abbâ, what shall I do? For whensoever I see the face of a woman the war of fornication is stirred up against me." And the old man answered and said, "My son, guard thine eyes against looking on a woman, and behold, henceforth thou wilt have no fear." The brother said unto him, "Behold, how very often doth a man meet women by chance, without expecting to do so!" The old man said unto him, "As far as it is possible for thee to do so keep thy watch carefully, both within and without; and as concerning that which happeneth by chance, and a man meeting women without thinking about it, [in that case] passion will have no power to bestir itself. But take good heed to thyself that such a thing doth not happen unto thee of thine own will, for it is this which the Holy Book condemneth, saying, 'Every man who looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.' For if when thou art not thinking about them thou meetest women, and the passion stirreth itself up against thee, lift up thy mind immediately to God, and He will help thee." Then wishing especially to strengthen that brother, he answered and said unto him, "Behold, my son, know thou that thou hast been with me for two years, and that I have not as yet seen what manner of face thou hast, whether it be good, or whether it be bad, and it was this [fact] which urged me to tell thee to guard thine eyes from the sight of women." And afterwards he made a prayer over him, and sent him away to depart to the coenobium, for that brother used to dwell in the church.

492. They used to say about one of the old men that when the church was dismissed, he fled straightway and departed to his cell, and [they said] that he had a devil, but the holy man was [only] fulfilling the work of God.

493. An old man used to say, "Without prayer thou shouldst do nothing, and afterwards thou wilt not be sorry."

494. A brother asked an old man, saying, "If I am in a clean place, and the time for service hath arrived am I to return?" The old man said unto him, "Who, when he remembereth riches, will return to poverty?"

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495. The old man Theodotus used to say, "Constant hunger maketh monks to be emaciated and driveth them mad."

496. Abbâ Daniel used to say, "Constant vigil especially drieth up and maketh the body to diminish."

497. Abbâ Ammon asked Abbâ Sisoës, saying, "When I read in the Book my mind wisheth to arrange the words so that there may be an answer to [my] question." The old man said unto him, "This is unnecessary, for only purity of heart [is required]." From this it ariseth that a man should speak without overmuch care.

498. Abba Theonâ used to say, "Because we put ourselves out of the sight of God we are led captive by the passions of the body."

499. Abbâ Poemen used to say, "Temptations are a sure sign whereby a monk may be known."

500. Abbâ Agathon once fell sick, and another of the old men with him, and as they both were lying in the cell a brother read the Book of Genesis to them; and when he came to the place where Jacob said unto his sons, "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye would take Benjamin away that ye may bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to Sheol," the old man answered and said, "Were not the ten other sons sufficient for thee, O Jacob?" And Abbâ Agathon said, "Hold thy peace, old man, if God holdeth a man to be innocent, who shall condemn him?"

501. One of the fathers came to Abbâ Theodore of Pirmê, and said unto him, "O father, behold, brother So-and-So hath gone back to the world." And the old man said unto him, "Dost thou marvel at this? Wonder not at this, but be surprised when thou hearest that a man hath been able to flee wholly from the world."

502. If a man thinketh filthy thoughts, doth he himself become defiled? Some of the old men said, "Yes, he is defiled," and others said, "He is not defiled, for if he doth it is impossible for simple folk like ourselves to live at all; but [the truth] is that a man must not carry his filthy thoughts into deeds."

503. A certain brother went to a strenuous and tried old man, and asked him about this matter, and the old man said unto him, "Every man is required [to do] according to his ability." Then a brother entreated the old man, saying, "For our Lord's sake explain these words to me." The old man said unto him, "Behold, supposing that some very desirable thing were placed here, and that two brethren came in, one being of great stature and the other of little stature. If now the mind of him that was of full strength were to say, 'I

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“ ‘wish to possess that thing,’ and he did not carry his soul’s desire into effect, but straightway cut it short, the man would not be defiled; if then the man of lesser strength were to desire the thing, being incited thereto by his thoughts, and he took it not, he also would not be defiled. But, if he desiring it were to take it, he would be defiled.”

504. The old man said, “If thou seest a young man going up to heaven of his own will, lay hold upon his leg, and sweep him away therefrom; for thus will a man help him.”

505. The same old man used to say, “If thou criest unto God in prayer with a pure heart thy prayer shall not return unto thee fruitless.”

506. The same old man used to say, “As two words cannot be uttered [at the same time] by one voice, and be recognized and understood, so is it with the mixed prayer which is uttered by a man before God.”

507. He also said, “If thou seest the wings of ravens stretched out in flight, even so is the foolish prayer of the mind which is lifted up.”

508. He also said, “If thou art earnest in asking God for things, but wilt not pay back as far as thou art able, thou must hear the words, ‘Thou shalt ask and shalt not receive, because thou didst accept a loan and didst not pay it back.’”

509. He also said, “The words of the mouth of him that prayeth purely before God are a fetter wherewith he shall be able [to bind] the devils beneath his feet like a sparrow; and, as prisoners tremble before him that is their master, even so will they quake at the words of his prayer.

510. He also said, “As the rain when it falleth upon the earth taketh the place of a key in the lock thereof, and openeth [it] and bringeth forth to sight the growth of the seeds and roots which are in it, so are the soul and the mind of him that receiveth and tasteth the heavenly droppings, for by the words of his lips shall be made known unto man his hidden conduct before God, I mean to say, that when a man’s request and entreaty about everything are made within the words of his pure prayer, he openeth the door of the treasury of the Trinity, Who is the Lord of treasures, and bringeth out therefrom the treasures which are hidden for those who are worthy of them.”

511. Concerning Abbâ Anthony they used to say:—There was a man with an unclean spirit which sought to cast him into the water, and the monks who were with Abbâ Anthony came and entreated him to pray over the man who was thus troubled, but he excused himself [from doing so]. And when the demoniac had remained with him for a long time, he smote the

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blessed man on his cheek, whereupon the old man made ready the other cheek; and having done this that evil spirit took to flight.

512. A brother asked Abbâ Muthues, saying, "What shall I do? for my tongue vexeth me. Whensoever I sit among the brethren I am unable to restrain myself, but I condemn them in every good work, and treat them with contempt. What shall I do, then?" The old man answered and said unto him, "If thou art not able to restrain thyself, get thee away, and stay by thyself, for this is a disease. Now, he who sitteth among the brethren must not possess four corners, but he must be altogether round, so that he may move smoothly in respect of every man." And the old man said unto him also, "I myself do not dwell alone as an example of spiritual excellence, but as an emblem of feebleness, for mighty men are those who are among the brethren."

513. When the brethren were talking to an old man about the thoughts they said unto him, "Our hearts are hard, and we do not fear God; what are we to do so that we may come to fear God?" The old man said unto them, "I think that if a man will lay hold in his heart upon that which rebuketh him, it will bring to him the fear of God." And they said unto him, "What is the rebuke?" The old man said unto him, "In every act a man should rebuke his soul, and say unto it, 'Remember that thou hast to go forth to meet God.' And let him say also, 'What do I seek with man?' I think that if a man remain in these things the fear of God will come to him."

514. Abbâ Timothy said unto a certain brother, "How art thou?" The brother said unto him, "I destroy my days, O father." And the old man said unto him, "My son, my days also are destroyed, and I give thanks."

515. An old man used to say, "The Shunammite woman received Elisha because she had no human promise with man; and they spoke of the Shunammite woman [as] a person of the soul, and of Elijah [as] a person of the Spirit of God; when the soul maketh itself remote from commotion and trouble, the Spirit of God abideth on it, and then it is able to bring forth, though hitherto it hath been barren."

516. Abbâ Ammon used to say, "I said unto Abbâ Poemen, 'If I go to my neighbour's cell, or he cometh to mine concerning any matter whatsoever, are we two to be ashamed to speak, lest some alien subject of discourse appear between us?' The old man said unto him, 'Thou wilt do well, for youth hath need of care and watchfulness.' And I said unto him, 'What do the old men do?' And he said unto me, 'The

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“old men have been skilled, and have had experience, and
“they have arrived at the measure for speech, for in them
“there is nothing alien which they can speak with the mouth.’
“And I said unto him, ‘And supposing that I have the neces-
“sity to talk with a neighbour, wouldst thou that I should
“speak with the words of the Scriptures, or with the words of
“the old men?’ And he said unto me, ‘If thou art not able to
“hold thy peace it is better for thee to use the speech of the old
“men rather than that of the Scriptures, for there is danger
“in a man employing the speech of the Scriptures.’”

517. Abbâ Daniel used to say that a man of business once came to Abbâ Arsenius, and brought him a testament of a certain kinsman who had left him a very large inheritance, and having received the deed he wished to tear it to pieces. Then the man of business fell down at his feet, and said, “I beseech thee, do not tear it up, for if thou dost I shall die.” And Abbâ Arsenius said unto him, “I died before he did, though he hath only now died, but shall I live?” And he sent the man of affairs away without having taken anything.

518. A monk went to a nunnery to visit his sister, for she was sick; now she was a woman who was great with God, and a firm believer, and she never allowed herself to see the face of a man, not even that of her brother, lest through her he might go in among the women. And she sent him a message, saying, “Go, my brother, and pray for me, that Christ, by His grace, may make me worthy to see thee in that world of the kingdom of heaven.”

519. A brother asked an old man and said unto him, “What is the best thing for me to do, so that I may do it and live thereby?” And the old man said unto him, “God [alone] knoweth which is best; but listen. One of the old men said that the mind which rebuked a man was his [best] adversary, for it resisted a man who sought to carry out his desires in the flesh, and to rebel against God, and not to be obedient unto Him, and it would also deliver a man over to his enemies.”

520. An old man also said, “It is meet that the soul should be occupied in the service [of God] by day and night, even like Huldah, the prophetess, who used to sit in the house of the Lord with supplication and ministrations; and also like Hannah, who never ceased in her ministrations during a period of eighty years.”

521. A brother asked an old man, saying, “What shall I do, father? For my belly vexeth me, and I am unable to restrain it, and therefore I am leading a life of luxury.” The old man said unto him, “If thou dost not throw on it the fear of fasting

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“thou wilt never be able to straighten the path. Place before it the following parable. A certain man had an ass, and as he was sitting upon it and journeying along, the animal would not go straight, but went first to this side of the road and then to that; and he took a stick and smote it. And the ass said, ‘Beat me not, and henceforward I will go straight.’ Now when he had gone a little further on, the man alighted from the ass, and placed the stick in [his] cloak-bag which was on it, but the ass knew not that the stick was on his back. And when the ass saw that its master was not carrying the stick, he began to hold him in contempt, and he walked among the crops; thereupon his master ran after him, and took the stick and beat him with it until he went straight. Now the belly of the body is even like unto the ass.”

522. A brother said to Theodore of Parmê, “Speak a word to me, for behold, I am about to perish.” And with great labour the old man said unto him, “I stand in danger myself, and what have I to say to thee?”

523. Abbâ Kêrîôn used to say, “I have performed more bodily labours than my son Zechariah, but I have not reached his measure of humility and silence.”

524. Abbâ Macarius used to say, “Guard thyself against freedom of word and deed, for it is meet for a monk not to permit his thought to be his judge in anything whatsoever.”

525. Mother Sarah used to say to her brethren, “It is I who am a man, and ye who are women.”

526. A brother asked Abbâ Poemen, “How can it be right for me to take good heed to my ways when I am sitting in my cell?” The old man said unto him, “For a season I was a man who had fallen into the mire up to my shoulders, and a basketful of gall hung from my neck, and I was crying out to God, ‘Have mercy upon me.’”

527. They used to say of the men who were in the cells “that their rules were so strict that during the night they slept four hours, and assembled for service four hours, and worked for four hours; that during the day they worked with their hands until the ninth hour, and that after that they prepared the small quantity of food which they ate, and if any man had anything to do in his cell he then did it. In this way they filled up their day.”

528. A brother asked Abbâ Sisoës, saying, “Why do not the passions depart from me?” The old man said unto him, “Because their possessions are in thee; give them their pledge (or security), and they will depart.”

529. On one occasion the fathers were summoned by the Archbishop Theophilus, and they went to Alexandria to him

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so that he might make a prayer and cleanse a house of idols; and as they were eating with him, flesh of a calf was set before them, and they ate it in simplicity, doubting nothing. And the Archbishop took a piece of meat and gave it to an old man who was near him, saying, "Behold, this piece of meat is very good, father"; and they all answered and said unto him, "Behold, up to the present we have been eating herbs, but if it be flesh, we do not eat flesh," and not one of them ate anything more.

530. They used to tell a story of a brother who was the neighbour of an old Rabbâ, and say that he would go into the cell of the old man, and steal whatsoever he found there, and though the old man saw him he never rebuked him, but worked with his hands and wearied himself the more, saying, "Perhaps that brother is in need"; and the old man suffered much tribulation at the thought, and ate his food in sadness. And when the old man was about to die, the brethren sat round about him, and when he saw in their midst the brother who used to steal from him, he said unto him, "My son, come near to me"; and when he had drawn nigh to him, he kissed his hands, saying, "My brother, I am grateful to these hands, for through them I shall enter the kingdom of heaven." Now when that brother heard these things he was sorry, and he also repented, and he became a well-tried monk through the things which he had seen in that old man.

531. On one occasion, when Abbâ Agathon was travelling, and some young men were with him, one of them found a small bag on the road, and he said to him, "Father, dost thou wish me to take this little bag?" and the old man looked at him in wonder, saying, "My son, didst thou place it there?" And the young man said, "No." Then the old man said unto him, "If thou didst not place it there, how canst thou desire to take it?"

532. Abbâ Joseph, the priest of Ascalon, told us the following story, saying: There was a certain merchant in Ascalon who borrowed from other people much money, and he hired a ship for himself and put out to sea; and a fierce storm rose up against him, and he lost everything which he had with him; but he himself was saved. And when he returned to the city those to whom he owed money seized him, and they took everything which he had in his house, and sold it, and shut him up in prison; but they left him his wife as an act of charity, so that she might beg for him and feed him. And the woman went about from door to door, and she herself begged for bread for her husband; and one day as she was sitting and eating bread with her husband, one of the chief men of the

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city went in to give alms to the prisoners who were there, and he saw the woman and lusted for her, for she was beautiful. And he sent his servant to call her, and she came thinking that he wished to give her alms; but he took her aside, and said to her, "Why hast thou come here?" And she related unto him the whole matter. Then he said unto her, "If I pay "one-third of thy husband's debt wilt thou lie with me this "night?" And that chaste, free woman said unto him, "I have "heard that the holy Apostle said, 'A woman hath no power "over her body, but her husband.' I will first ask my hus- "band, and whatsoever he commandeth me that will I do." And having come she told her husband, and he was grieved; and he wept, and said unto her, "Go, and say unto him, 'I "have told my husband, and it hath not pleased him, and "I have hope in God that He will not forsake us.'" Now there was in the prison-house a certain thief who had been a highway robber, and he was shut up [in a room] inside beyond them, and at that moment he happened to be sitting at a window which faced them, and he heard everything which they were saying; and with tears he said unto himself, "Woe "is me! For although these people are in such great trouble, "they are not willing to deliver over their freedom, and accept "money, and go forth from this place, but they hold their "chastity to be more valuable than riches. What then shall I, "the wretched one, do? For the thought that there is a God "hath never entered my mind, and I never remember that my "evil deeds will be judged, and I have committed many "wickednesses, and many awful murders. And I know that "when the judge cometh here he will kill me without asking "a question, as is just." And he answered and said unto the woman and her husband, "Because I see that ye preserve the "purity of your bodies for Christ's sake, and that ye have "chosen to remain in great tribulation and not to destroy "your chastity, God hath put it into my heart to do unto you an "act of grace which ye deserve, and perhaps God will shew "me mercy through you on the day of judgement. Go ye to "the northern side of the city wall, and dig there in a certain "place, and behold, ye shall find there a large earthen pot, "beneath which is a vessel full of gold. Take it, and pay your "debt, and may a great blessing abide with you so that you may "live upon it; but I beseech you to pray for me continually, "that I may find mercy before God in the day of judgement."

And after three days the judge came to the city, and he ordered them to cut off the head of that thief without [asking any] questions, and after he had been slain, that noble woman said unto her husband, "Wilt thou command me to go and

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“see if that which the thief said is true?” And he said unto her, “Go.” And she went at the time of evening, and by the indications which the thief had given her, she found the place, and having dug a little she found the money, even as he had told her, and she took it and went to her house, giving thanks unto God. And she brought it out little by little, and she gave it to the creditors, who thought that she brought it to them as the result of her begging, a little from here and a little from there; then when she had paid her husband’s debt, he came forth from prison, thanking and glorifying God.

Then Abbâ Joseph said unto us, “Behold these men, O my brethren! Because they chose to live in affliction, and refused to despise the command of God, God multiplied His grace unto them without delay. For even if the woman had hearkened unto that lascivious man he might not, perhaps, have given her what he promised her; but because they preserved their chastity which is pleasing to God, God rewarded her with the whole amount of their debts, and brought them to a greater state of prosperity than [that which they enjoyed] at first. And, my beloved, I think thus concerning Adam when he was in Paradise. Had he kept that little command, honour greater than that which he had at first would have come to him; but when he transgressed the command of his Lord, he fell from and was driven out of the delight and pleasure wherein he lived. May our Lord make us worthy to keep His commandments! Amen.”

533. On one occasion when Abbâ John and the brethren who were with him were going up from Scete, he who was guiding them lost the way, and the brethren said unto Abbâ John, “What shall we do, father? For this brother hath lost the way, and peradventure we shall die in wandering about.” Abbâ John said unto them, “If ye tell him he will be grieved and feel ashamed. But behold I will feign to be sick, and will say that I am not able to go on any further”; and the brethren said, “Father, thou hast well said.” And they acted thus, and decided that they would stay where they were until the morning, rather than rebuke the brother who was guiding them.

534. Abbâ Serenus used to say, “I have passed the whole period of my life in cutting and twisting and sewing palm leaves, and in spite of it all, had not the hand of the Lord fed me I should not have had enough to eat.”

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Demonstrations which are suitable to Lazy Men and Sluggards, and to all those who take no care for their Souls

535. Those who are in despair, and who have delivered themselves over to the filthy work of their abominable lusts, and who make loose their ways at all times, and who love the lusts which harm them, are like unto the sterile land, and the arid desert, and a house laid waste, and a vineyard without grapes, and an empty vessel, and a body without a soul, and eyes without light, and a dead body without a voice, and hands which are cut off, and knees which are bowed, and a paralytic lying on a bed, and a vessel filled with stinkingness.

536. AGAINST THOSE WHO LOVE VAINGLORY, AND THOSE WHO BOAST OF THEIR ALMS. Those who love vainglory, and those who boast of their fair works and life, are like unto a broken cistern, and a bag with a hole in it, and a tree without fruit, and a naked man, and a moth-eaten garment, and a worm-eaten beam of wood, and unto other things which are consumed by their [false] glory.

537. AGAINST HIM THAT IS NOT CAREFUL (or WATCHFUL) IN RESPECT OF HIS TONGUE. He who is not watchful in respect of his tongue is like unto him whose house door is open, and whose riches are plundered by every man, and he is like unto an uncovered vessel (or unrolled garment), and like that which is unsealed.

538. AGAINST THOSE OVER WHOM EVIL THOUGHTS HAVE DOMINION, AND IN WHOSE MIND WICKED COGITATIONS RISE UP. Those who through their sluggishness give a hand to the thoughts which make a mock of them, and by their negligence help filthy devils to have dominion over them, are like unto an abode which is full of snakes, and a house which is full of evil-smelling things, and a ship which is tossed by the waves, and a poor piece of land which is full of briars and brambles, and unto the thorns that choke it, the end of which is burning.

539. AGAINST HIM WHO DOTHT NOT SUPPRESS IN HIMSELF WRATH AND ANGER, AND WHO KEEPETH HIS HATRED AGAINST HIS BROTHER. He who doth not suppress in himself wrath and anger, and who keepeth his hatred against his neighbour, is like unto a savage animal which cannot be tamed, and which goeth along every road, and wandereth about in an erring manner, and unto the man who burieth fire in chopped straw, and like the man who putteth in his bosom the spawn of serpents, and like a den which is full of enraged serpents, and like a cleft in the rock which is full of reptiles which shoot out venom, and a mad dog that barketh at every man, and a wild boar that

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gnasheth his teeth as soon as he seeth a man, and like the evening wolf which goeth about with his mouth wide open to destroy the simple lambs, and the panther which leapeth upon the gazelle in the desert, and the ship which saileth on the sea with an evil spirit for her steersman, and the savage beast which cannot be subdued, and which walketh on every road and wandereth about in error without discernment. These [words] are [directed] to those who are not humble, so that they may correct themselves and their savage habits, and to those who are lifted up against their brethren in their pride, and who do not wish to travel in the path of the humility of Christ.

540. AGAINST THE CHANGE OF THE EVIL WILL OF THOSE MEN WHO DENY THE GRACE WHICH IS PERFORMED TOWARDS THEM. One of the teachers said, "If thou hast made thyself humble, they despise thee without discernment. If thou hast made thyself angry, they hate thee without understanding. If thou hast made thyself pleasant, they swallow thee, and thou disappearst. If thou hast made thyself bitter (*or* cruel), they reject thee, and thou art reviled. And if thou hast mingled with folk they hold thee to be a liar fair[-spoken], and wandering. If they have fallen ill, they command thee, and if they are despised, they judge thee; if they be visited, they abuse thee; and if thou art whole, they leave thee; and if they are reclining, they drive thee away; and if aught be required from them, they curse thee; and if mercy be shown unto them, they oppress thee. Neither grace (*or* goodness), nor justice will ever please those who belong to every evil of every kind."

Chapter xvi. Questions by the Pupils and the Answers [to the same] by the holy Fathers and Monks

BROTHER. How is love (*or* charity) acquired by men of understanding?

541. OLD MAN. True and pure love is the way of life, and the haven of promises, and the treasure of faith, and the interpreter of the kingdom, and the herald of that which is hidden.

542. B. I do not know the power of the word.

O.M. If a man loveth not God, he cannot believe in Him, and His promises are not true [to him], and he feareth not His judgement, and he followeth Him not. Now because love is not in him [he cannot] be free from iniquity, and await the life which is promised, but he performeth at all times the plans of sin; and this [happeneth] because the judgement of God is [too] ex-

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alted in his sight. Therefore let us run after love, wherewith the holy fathers have enriched themselves, for it is able to pay back [what is due] to its nature and its God. This then is praise.

543. B. How doth wisdom dwell in man?

O.M. Now when a man hath gone forth to follow after God with a lowly mind, grace bestoweth itself upon him, and his conduct becometh strengthened in the spirit, and when he hateth the world he becometh sensible of the new conduct of the new man, which is more exalted than the impurity of the human abode; and he meditateth in his mind the humility of the rule of the life which is to come, and he becometh a man of greater spiritual excellence.

544. B. How is love made known?

O.M. By the fulfilment of works, and by spiritual care, and by the knowledge of faith.

545. B. What are the works?

O.M. The keeping of the commandments of the Lord with the purity of the inner man, together with the labour of the outer man.

546. B. Is he who is destitute of work also destitute of love?

O.M. It is impossible that he who is of God should not love, and it is impossible for him that loveth not to work, and it is impossible to believe that he who teacheth but worketh not is a true believer, for his tongue is the enemy of his action, and though he speaketh life he is in subjection unto death.

547. B. And is he who is in this state free from retribution?

O.M. Such a man who speaketh the things of the spirit, and performeth the things of the body, and supplieth his own wants, is not deprived of reward, but he is deprived of the crown of light, because the guidance of the spirit refuseth to rule him.

548. What are fasting and prayer?

O.M. 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 first 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 transgression of the command, and service is constant supplication to and praise of God.

549. B. Are these able to redeem the soul?

O.M. When internal things agree with external, and manifest humility appeareth in the hidden works which are from within, verily, a man shall be redeemed from the weight of the body.

550. B. And what is internal humility?

O.M. The humility of love, peace, friendship, purity, rest-

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fulness, tranquillity, subjection, faith, remoteness from envy, and a soul which is free from the heat of anger, and is far from the grade of arrogance, and is redeemed from the love of vainglory, and is full of patient endurance like the great deep, and whose motion is drawn after the knowledge of the spirit, and before whose eyes are depicted the fall of the body, and the greatness of the marvel of the Resurrection, and the demand for judgement which shall come after the revivification, and its standing before the awful throne of God. [If the soul hath these things] redemption shall be unto it.

551. B. Is there any man who fasteth that shall not be redeemed?

O.M. There is one [kind of] fasting which is from habit, and another from desire, and another from compulsion, and another from sight, and another from the love of vainglory, and another from affliction, and another from repentance, and another from spiritual affection; for although each of these seems to be the same as the other in the mind externally, yet in the word of knowledge they are distinct. Now the way in which each is performed by the body is the same, and the way in which each is to be undertaken is wholly the same by him who travelleth straightly on the path of love, and who beareth his burden with patient endurance spiritually, and who doth not rejoice in his honour.

552. B. Who is the true [monk]?

O.M. He who maketh his word manifest in deeds, and beareth his passion with patient endurance; with such a man life is found, and the knowledge of the spirit dwelleth in him.

553. B. Who is the pure habitation?

O.M. He who is destitute of the good things of the body, and who rejoiceth in the love of his neighbours in the love of God; for spiritual relaxation is produced in proportion as need ruleth over the soul.

554. B. With what is a man able to overcome lust?

O.M. With spiritual remembrance. If the desire for the delights which are to come doth not obliterate that of the things which are here, a man cannot conquer; for if the ship of the merchant did not arrive over and over again by means of hope, he could not endure the storms, and he would go on his way of tribulation.

555. B. How doth a man go forth from the world?

O.M. By forsaking entirely the gratification of desire, and by running to the utmost of his power in the fulfilment of the commandments; for he who doth not act in this way falleth.

556. B. Behold, through what have the men of old triumphed?

O.M. Through the fervour of their supernatural love, and

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through the death of the corruptible man, and through the contempt for pride, and through the abatement of the belly, and through the fear of the judgement, and through the promise of certainty; through the desire for these glorious things the fathers have acquired in the soul the spiritual body.

557. B. How can I conquer the passions which trouble me when they are fixed in me by nature?

O.M. By thy death to this world; for if thou dost not bury thy soul in the grave of persistent endurance the spiritual Adam can never be quickened in thee. When a dying man hath departed from this temporary life he hath no consciousness of this world, and all his perceptions are at rest and are abated. Now if thou forsakest that which is of nature naturally, and thou dost not perform it voluntarily in thy person, thou art dead; but if thy desire dieth in repentance, the whole of [thy] nature ceaseth from this temporary life by the death of the spirit just as do the motions of the body at the natural end of time.

558. B. To what extent is a man held capable of revelation?

O.M. To the same extent as a man is capable of stripping off sin, both internally and externally. For when a man dieth by spiritual sacrifice, [he dieth] to all the words and deeds of this habitation of time, and when he hath committed his life to the life which is after the revivification, Divine grace bestoweth itself upon him, and he becometh capable of divine revelations. For the impurity of the world is a dark covering before the face of the soul, and it preventeth it from discerning spiritual wisdom.

559. B. Is he who loveth money able to believe the promises?

O.M. No. If he believeth, wherefore doth he possess [riches]? Perhaps our hope is [set] upon gold, or perhaps the hand of the Lord is too small to redeem [us]? The body of our Lord is given unto us for [our] happiness, and His blood is the drink of our redemption, and He withholdeth from us the loaves of bread and the apparel which groweth old. He who loveth money is divided in his mind concerning God, and he prepareth for himself pleasures before God giveth them unto him; and though he rejoiceth in the promises in [his] word, he maketh them to be a lie by his deed. True indeed is the word of our Lord which He spake, "It is as difficult for the rich man "to enter the kingdom of heaven as it is for a camel to go "through the hole of the needle"; it is impossible to possess in one dwelling both God and mammon. Monks should, then, not belong unto the things which are seen.

560. B. Who is indeed the man of excellence?

O.M. He who crieth out always that he is a sinner, and asketh mercy from on high, whose word is laden with the

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feeling of discernment, and his senses with the watchfulness of deeds, and who, being silent, yet speaketh, and who, though speaking, holdeth his peace, and whose actions are wholly good fruits for the life of time, and the revelation of Christ.

561. B. What is the way of life?

O.M. The going forth of a man from this world on his entrance into another. But if a man forsaketh his childhood of humility and cometh to the old age of this world in his love, he revealeth the way of life. To go forth truly from this world is to be remote from it.

562. B. And what shall I do in respect of the world which troubleth me?

O.M. This world troubleth thee because its care is in thy mind, and the love of it is in thy body, and its pleasures are in thy heart; forsake the world and it will depart from thee, and root up from thyself all its branches, and behold, the war thereof will die down in thee. For as long as thy body seeketh its gratifications, and its lust is of this world, thou art not capable of life.

563. B. What is pure prayer?

O.M. Pure prayer is little in speech and great in deeds, for if it were not so work would be more excellent than supplication. . . . For if it be not so why do we ask and yet not receive, seeing that the mercy of God aboundeth? The method of penitents is, however, something different, as is also the labour of the humble, for the penitents are hirelings, and the humble are sons.

564. B. From what is the love of money produced?

O.M. From desire, for unless a man desireth he doth not possess. When a man desireth he possesseth, and when he possesseth he hath fulfilled his desire; and when he hath fulfilled his desire, he becometh greedy; and when he hath become greedy he committeth fraud, and when he hath committed fraud his possessions have become many. When his possessions are many his love diminisheth, and when his love hath diminished the remembrance of God is removed from his heart. And when the remembrance of God hath been removed from his heart, the mind becometh darkened, and his understanding is blinded; and when his understanding hath become blinded the power of discernment is darkened, and when the power of discernment hath become dark, the soul loseth its sight. And when the soul hath lost its sight good is rooted out therefrom, and wickedness entereth in, and sin taketh up its rule; and when sin hath taken up its rule the thought of God is blotted out, and the passions of the body are stirred up, and they seek to satisfy their needs. And having taken that which they

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sought for, it is necessary for much money to be collected, and when money is multiplied, the gratification of the body is fulfilled, and it eateth and drinketh, and committeth adultery and fornication, and it lieth and worketh fraud and oppression, and it transgresseth the covenant, and destroyeth the Law, and treateth the promises with contempt, and the lust for the things which are seen is fulfilled. Let money be an abominable thing in our sight, and let us not love it; but if we perform the lust of the flesh it is an absolute necessity to love money; for money belongeth to the flesh and not to the spirit, even as saith the Apostle, "The flesh hurteth the spirit, and the spirit "the flesh, and both are opponents each of the other" (Galatians v, 17).

565. B. What is the kind of prayer which is not acceptable before God?

O.M. The destruction of enemies, and asking for evil things [to come upon] those who do harm to us, and the health of the body, and a multitude of possessions, and abundance of offspring—prayers for these things are not acceptable before God. But if God beareth with us whilst we are sinners and commit offences against Him, how much more is it right that we should bear with each other? It is not right for us to ask for the things which belong to the body, for the wisdom of God provideth all things.

566. B. What is purity of soul?

O.M. Remoteness from anger and from the error of the remembrance of evil things, and being weaned from the bitter nature, and reconciliation with our enemies, and peace which is beyond troubling, and simplicity of love which is above this world; with these things is the inner man cleansed, and he putteth on Christ and is redeemed.

567. B. What is envy?

O.M. Hatred towards the virtues of other folk, and wickedness towards the good, and a bitter mind towards the innocent, and anger against those who are prosperous in this world, and the cloaking of the upright conduct of those who repent, and vexation with the peace of the lovers of God.

568. B. How ought we to pray before God?

O.M. For the return of sinners, and the finding of the lost, and the bringing near of those who are afar off, and friendliness towards those who wrong us, and love towards those who persecute us, and a sorrowful care for those who provoke to wrath; if a man doeth these things verily there is repentance in his mind, and sinners will often live, and their soul[s] be redeemed in life. For the prayer which our Lord delivered unto us for the need of the body is a word which covereth the

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whole community, and was not uttered solely for those who are strangers to the world, and who hold in contempt the pleasures of the body. For he in whose dwelling the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof are found lacketh nothing, even when he asketh [not].

569. B. What is remoteness from the world?

O.M. The thought (*or* mind) which overcometh the love of the body; for if the body be not trampled upon by the feeling of patient endurance a man cannot conquer in his strife.

570. B. Is the soul of a man, which is held fast in the lust of the things which are seen, fair in the sight of God?

O.M. Who is able to live chastely when the body is making demands upon him? Or, in what soul is found the love of our Lord which bestoweth itself upon the things which are seen and which are corruptible? A servant cannot serve two masters, and the soul cannot please God with spiritual excellence so long as the memories of the things which are corruptible are in its mind, for the mind of the flesh cannot please our Lord; and except the world die in the heart humility cannot dwell therein, and except the body be deprived of its lusts, the soul cannot be cleansed from thoughts.

571. B. Why is the mind disturbed at meeting women?

O.M. Because they make use of the lust of nature. For, when the sight hath fallen upon the construction for the production of children and the gratification of the body, that old poison layeth hold upon it, and the law of the desire is confounded; now desire conquereth nature, not by the stirring up of the passions, but by the will, [and] by the fulfilling of works of humility, which, by the might of our Lord, conquer everything by their love, and by the patient endurance of the merit of Christ.

572. B. Who is the mighty man, he who is remote from the world, or he who dwelleth therein?

O.M. The mighty man conquereth in every place, whether he be in the world or without. Nevertheless, the fathers departed to the wilderness, the place which is preserved from the uproar of those who are afraid that as long as they dwell in the body the passions which give trouble will cleave to them. Now, for those who have ended the great strife of their conflict in the world Divine grace hath worked with its power, and it still worketh for the remembrance and benefit of the community, and truly great is the crown of those whose spiritual ship hath not sunk to the bottom of the tossed and troubled sea of this world, and hath not ceased its course heavenwards by the straight road which is full of fear.

573. B. Is it helpful to the soul to make oneself a stranger?

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O.M. With perfect thanksgiving it doth help, provided that the soul beareth chastely afflictions, and rejoiceth in our Lord who giveth pleasure; but if it doth not, its good seed is made of no effect because it doth not give fruit beloved of God, and if it endureth and uttereth blessing it hath a reward, but if it lack these things it becometh a mere wandering of the mind, and a sight which is without profit. The best thing of all is the quietness of the mind which is akin to God.

574. B. Since all the creatures of God are holy, why do the fathers make the sign of the blessed Cross over the things which they eat?

O.M. It is true that all the creatures of God were pure [when they came from] Him that created them, but because sin gained dominion everything became polluted; but the advent of our Lord came, and sin was abrogated and righteousness had its rule, and everything was made holy, whether it was in the heavens or on the earth. But because the blessed fathers knew the wiles of Satan, and that they would certainly bring upon them that which would do them harm by means of such things as are employed as food, they signed what they ate with the holy sign of the Great Cross so that they might slay all the craftiness of the Calumniator.

575. One of the fathers said, "On one occasion I was lying down at night, and I thirsted for water to drink; now there was near me one of the holy men who lived in a holy manner, and he saw that I took up the vessel to drink without having made over it the [sign of] the Cross. And he said unto me, 'Wait, master, wait'; and he made the sign of the Cross over it, and straightway the Calumniator fell from the vessel in the form of a flash of fire, and both he and I saw it. And we wondered at the great might of our Redeemer, and at the marvellous symbol of His merit."

A variant [reads]:—One of the fathers said, "I was lying down one night, and I thirsted for water to drink. And there was with me a certain widow who lived a chaste life, both when she was with her husband, and afterwards, and she said unto me, 'Wait, master, wait,' and she made the sign of the holy Cross over the vessel of water, and straightway there fell from it the Calumniator in the form of a flash of fire, and both she and I saw him. And we wondered at the might of the Redeemer, and at the marvellous symbol of His merit."

These things were indeed told to us by the blessed mouth which is remote from falsehood; therefore it is required of us necessarily to do this [i.e., make the sign of the Cross] for the protection of our life. Now the Enemy used to wage war openly

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against that widow who did these things, even as I have learned from the chosen ones of our Lord, and one of the holy men who heard [this] from her own mouth spake thus:—The blessed woman said as follows:—One day I went to the house of God, and Satan drew nigh, and said unto me, “Why dost thou pray like a man, and say, Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost?” And I said unto him, “How then shall I pray?” Then Satan said unto me, “Thou shouldst pray in this wise, and say, Glory be to thee, Mary, mother of Christ.” Then I answered and said unto him, “There is dust in thine eyes, Satan. Why should I forsake the Lord and worship a handmaiden?” And he disappeared from me.

576. And the blessed man said unto me also:—The same old woman said in my presence:—And again I went to the church according to [my] custom, and I entered in and prayed, and then the Enemy came and made blind my eyes, and I could not see, and I called one of the women, and she carried me to my house. And after three days he departed from before my eyes, and he began to go in front of me; then I said unto him, “There is a thing which thou must do for me. Go thou to where thou didst first seize upon me.” And we went to the church, I and he. And I left him where he had seized me, and went away a short distance, and turning round I looked for him, and I saw him standing like a shadow; then I went a little further, and I turned round again, and I [still] saw him. And I shut the door of the church and went out, and then I opened it again and went in, and I saw him still standing there, and he ceased to practise his wiles upon me. Such were the great things which happened to the blessed old woman. For the monk must not boast himself over the man who is in the world, for in it are mighty men; and if such things as these are to be found in Eve, how much more ought they to be found in the Adam which hath been redeemed by [the second] Adam?

577. One of the fathers said, “Whilst I was sleeping one night, the Enemy came and smote me, and said unto me, ‘Go to the world and work righteousness; why dost thou shut thyself up like a beast in a cave?’ And knowing the wickedness of the Enemy, who regarded me with an evil eye, I made the sign of the Cross, and he fled from me. Then, having waited a few days, he came and smote me on the neck in a bantering fashion, saying, ‘Now that thou hast become a righteous man, go to the world that I may not destroy thee;’ and when I prayed and made the sign of the Cross over my face he departed from me. And after a short time he came again, and he took up a seat upon my neck, and then I bade

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“my soul to be of good cheer, and stood up, and made the
“sign of the Cross, the symbol of merit, before him, and he
“disappeared again, for he was not able to stand before me.”
Now these things took place and happened in this wise in very
truth, and we may therefore know and understand the conduct
wherein God rejoiceth, and there is, even as this [story sheweth],
no reason for fearing the devils and all the evil spirits. Who-
soever holdeth in contempt humility, and penitence of the mind,
and the subjugation of the body, and remoteness from the care
for the things which are seen, falleth into the inclination of the
world, and despiseth the good riches of the fear of God, and
his hope for the inheritance of holy men is cut off, and for the
delights of heaven which neither pass away nor are dissolved.
May we, through the grace and mercy of Christ, be held to
be worthy of these things! Amen.

Chapter xviii. Questions and Answers on the Vision of the Mind

A BROTHER asked an old man, saying, In what man-
ner ought a monk to dwell in silent contemplation in
his cell? The old man said, He should have no re-
578. membrance of man whatsoever whilst he is dwelling in
the cell.

579. B. What kind of labour should the heart perform?

O.M. The perfect labour of monks is for a man to have his
gaze directed towards God firmly and continually.

580. B. In what way should the mind persecute abominable
thoughts?

O.M. The mind is unable to do this of itself, and it hath
not the power [to do it], nevertheless whensoever a thought [of
evil] cometh against the soul, it is required of it to flee imme-
diately from the performance thereof, and to take refuge in
supplication [to God], and that shall dissolve the thoughts even
as wax [is dissolved] before the fire, for our God is a consum-
ing fire.

581. B. How did the fathers who dwelt in Scete give
answers to their enemies?

O.M. That service also was great and excellent, but there
was labour therein, and not every man was able to stand firm
therein, and there was in it, moreover, wandering of the
understanding.

582. B. How?

O.M. When a thought hath come against the soul, and the
soul hath, with great difficulty, been able to drive it out,
another thought maketh ready to come, and in this manner the
soul is occupied the whole day long in a war against the

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thoughts, and it is unable to occupy itself with the sight of God, and [to enjoy it] continually.

583. B. With what intent, then, should the mind flee towards God?

O.M. If the thought of fornication rush upon thee, seize thy mind and carry it to God immediately, and raise it upwards with strenuousness, and delay not, for to delay is to be on the limit of being brought low.

584. B. If a thought of vainglory rise up in my mind, and it maketh me think that I can be free from the evil passions, is it not necessary that I should contend against it?

O.M. Whensoever thou contendest against it, it will become exceedingly strong against thee, and will act cruelly and sharply, and thou wilt not, as thou imaginest, become strengthened by the Spirit of God; for it is better able to contend against thee than thou art able to contend against it, and thou wilt [not] find thyself, apparently, sufficient of thyself to resist the passions of the thoughts. For as it is with the man who hath a spiritual father, that giveth to him his every desire, and who is without any care whatsoever, and who hath, therefore, no judgement with God, so also is it with him that hath committed his soul to God, for it is, henceforward, unnecessary for him in any way whatsoever to fall into care concerning the thoughts, or to allow a thought to enter into his heart. But if it should happen that a thought hath entered, lift it up strenuously towards thy Father, and say, "I myself know nothing; behold, my Father knoweth." And whilst thou art raising up thy mind, the thought itself will leave it and take to flight half way, for it cannot ascend upwards with thee, and it dare not stand with thee there. There is no service which is superior to this, for it belongeth to confidence, and it hath no care in all the Church.

585. B. How is it that the fathers who dwelt in Scete made use of answers against their enemies, and pleased God thereby?

O.M. Because they worked in simplicity and in the fear of God, and because of this God helped them, and afterwards the service of the vision of God rose upon them, with His help, because of their works of excellence, and because of the mercy of God, and that old man who taught in this wise said, "Once I went to Scete to visit an old man there who had become aged in ascetic labours. And having saluted each other we sat down in silence, and that old man made [me] no answer whatsoever. Then, whilst I was sitting down, my mind became occupied with a vision of God, and that old man continued to sit there and to make baskets of palm leaves, and he neither lifted up his gaze to me, nor did he tell me to eat,

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“and for six whole days I ate nothing whatsoever. Now that old man was occupied with his work of basket-making the whole day long, and when the evening came he soaked some palm leaves in water, and worked the whole night through. And on the following day, after the ninth hour, he answered and said unto me, ‘Brother, when hast thou the power to perform this work of the spiritual vision?’ And I answered and said unto him, ‘Yea, father, and whence hast thou the power [to work thus]? We have accustomed ourselves to learn this from our youth.’ And the old man said unto me, ‘I have never received teaching of this kind from my fathers. But as thou seest me now, even so have I been all [my] days. A little work and a little meditation, and a little singing of the Psalms, and a little prayer; I have cleansed my thoughts according to my power, and I resist [as far as I can] the thoughts which rush upon me. And in this manner, afterwards, there dawned upon me the spirit of visions, as I learned this [faculty], and I knew not that any man possessed this gift.’ Then I answered and said unto him, ‘I have learned this from my youth up.’”

586. B. How ought a man to see the order of the divine vision?

O.M. The Scriptures have shown [him how].

587. B. How?

O.M. Daniel saw Him as the Ancient of Days. And Ezekiel saw Him on the chariot of the Cherubim. And Isaiah saw Him upon a lofty and glorious throne. And Moses persisted in being with Him Who cannot be seen, as if he saw Him.

588. B. And how can the mind see that which cannot be seen?

O.M. A king cannot be seen, as far as his exact image is concerned, when he is sitting on the throne.

589. B. And is it right for a man to depict God in this manner?

O.M. And what is the better for a man to depict God in his mind in this manner, or to bow himself down to many abominable thoughts?

590. B. Peradventure this is accounted as sin?

O.M. No. Only thou must hold according to what the Scriptures have shown [thee], and the fulfilment of the matter will come of itself, even as the Apostle said, “Now, as in a miracle, we see in parable, but then face to face,” the meaning of which is as if a man were to say, “When the mind hath been made perfect, then it will be able to see with ease and freedom.”

591. B. And is there no confusion in the mind in respect of this?

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O. M. If a man performeth his strife in truth there will be no confusion in the mind, "For," said the old man, "I have passed a whole week of days without a remembrance of any human thing having entered my heart." And another old man said, "I was once journeying along the road, and behold, I saw two angels close to me, one on this side, and one on the other, and they walked along with me, and I did not look at them."

592. B. Why?

O. M. Because it is written, "Neither angels nor powers shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans viii, 39).

593. B. Can the mind be occupied with, and stay with the divine vision continually?

O. M. Although the mind cannot be occupied with and stay with the divine vision continually, still when it is pressed by the thoughts it can fly to God, and it shall not be deprived of the divine vision. But I say unto thee that if the mind be made perfect in this respect, it shall be easier for thee to move mountains than to bring it down from above. For as the blind man who is shut up in darkness, if his eyes be opened and he go forth into the light, will be unwilling for the darkness to overtake him again, so the mind having begun to see the light of its own person, hateth the darkness, and is unwilling to remember it again. And one of the fathers also said, "I wished to look upon my mind, saying, Perhaps if I allow my mind to do so it will go and wander about in the world; but when I set it free it stood still, and was silent, and did not know where to go. And again, I lifted it up on high, for it knew that if it departed and wandered about I had to admonish it; quietness and prayer make strong this class of service." And the same old man said, "If a man prayeth continually it will bring correction to the mind immediately."

594. B. How is it possible for a man to pray continually? For the body becometh ill through constant prayer.

O. M. The standing up of a man in his prayer [once] is not said to be prayer, but [he must do so] continually.

595. B. How is [prayer to be made] continually?

O. M. Whether thou art eating, or drinking, or even travelling on the road, or if thou art doing some piece of work, thou shalt not let prayer be remote from thy heart.

596. B. But suppose I be talking with some one, how is it possible for me to fulfil the command, "Be ye praying continually"?

O. M. Now concerning this the Apostle spake, "In [all your] prayers, and in [all your] supplications, pray ye at all

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“times in the spirit; and when it would be unseemly for thee
“to pray, because thou art speaking with another man, pray
“thou through supplication.”

597. What manner of prayer is it necessary for a man to pray?

O. M. The prayer in the Gospel which our Lord taught His disciples.

598. B. What limit ought there to be to prayer?

O. M. No measure hath been laid down to prayer; because He said, “Pray ye at all times, and continually,” He did not lay down any measure to prayer. For if the monk only really prayeth when he standeth up in prayer, he who is thus doth not pray with the heart but with the mouth only. Now the old man said, “It is necessary for the man who is thus to look
“upon all [men] in the same way, and he must be remote from
“all calumny for the love of Christ; to Whom be glory for
“ever! Amen.”

599. In another manuscript I have found the following:—A certain monk who was a foreigner, and was chaste in his conduct, and who came from the city of Antioch, from the monastery which is called Kawsyân, went once to pray in Jerusalem, and to see the holy places wherein our Lord Jesus Christ went about, and after he had lived there for a long time, and had worked a way which was full of every excellence, he wished to return to his country in peace. Now he lacked food for the journey and the money which was necessary for his wants, and he knew not what to do; and when he had gone in to pray in the great temple of the Resurrection of our Lord, he prayed, and sat down in sorrow, and he was troubled about his departure, and the lack of that which he needed. And having sat down, he dropped into slumber, and slept, and he saw in his dream our Lord Jesus Christ, Who bade him be of good cheer, saying, “Arise, be not sorrowful, but go in to the steward
“of My house of the Resurrection, and say unto him, ‘Jesus
“‘hath sent me unto thee so that thou mayest give me the one
“‘dînâr of which I am in need, and when He cometh He will
“‘give it [back] to thee for me.’” Now when the monk had awoke from his sleep, he arose, and prayed first and believed the vision which had appeared to him, and he rose up and went to the steward [of the Church] of the Resurrection, as he had been commanded to do, and he spake to the steward, as he had been told in the vision. Then the steward said unto him, “When will Jesus come and repay me?” And the monk said unto him, “I have told thee what I have heard from Him, and
“as for thee, thou must do what thou wishest.” And the steward said unto the monk, “Give me a paper in thine own

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“handwriting for the dînâr, and take [it] and go”; and the monk sat down and wrote thus: “I, John the monk, the “stranger, from Antioch, a city of Syria, and from the holy “monastery of Kâwsyân hereby testify that I have received “from the steward one dînâr for food by the way, and I have, “of mine own free will, set my handwriting thereto saying that “when Jesus cometh He will pay him for me.” And after the monk had taken the dînâr and departed, the steward saw that same night in a vision of the night, that a man of splendid appearance came and said unto him, “Take the dînâr which “thou gavest to that monk, and give me the written paper “which he gave thee.” And the steward said in the vision, “My Lord, the monk said unto me, ‘Jesus will come and re- “pay me, and will take from thee the paper which I have “written.’” And the man said to the steward, “I, even I, am “Jesus; take thy dînâr, and give Me the writing which the “monk gave thee. Or, wouldst thou take anything more from “him?” Then the steward took the dînâr from Him, and he laid it in his hand, and gave Him the written paper, and He tore it up.

Now when the steward awoke from his slumber he found the dînâr in his hand, but the written paper had disappeared; and he marvelled and wondered, and praised God. Then he sent some of his people to bring back the monk wheresoever he might be found, and having gone they found him praying, and they said unto him, “Come with us; behold, the steward of the “Church of the Resurrection seeketh thee.” And when the monk heard [this], he feared greatly, and said in his heart, “Peradventure he wisheth to take back the dînâr”; and he went with them being troubled and sorrowful. Now when the steward saw him, he said unto him, “For the love of Christ I “entreat thee to eat with me this day,” and whilst they were eating, the steward said unto him, “What hast thou done with “the dînâr?” and the monk said, “Behold, it is still with me.” The steward said unto him, “Mâr Abbâ, take thou as many “dînârs as thou wishest, only give me the paper which thou “didst write [saying] that Jesus would come and repay me.” And the monk said unto him, “My lord, forgive me, but I have “received nothing else from thee, for that which I did take was “sufficient for me.” Then the steward related unto him that which had appeared unto him, saying, “The dînâr hath been “paid back to me, and the paper which thou didst write hath “been taken by our Lord Jesus Christ from me”; and the steward entreated the monk, saying, “Take from me, if thou “wishest, ten pounds of gold, only write me [a paper, saying], “‘Jesus will come and pay thee for me,’ and do thou, my lord,

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“depart in peace.” And the monk said unto him, “Master, “verily I say unto thee, thou shalt not receive from me another “jot, and I will not take anything else from thee.” And all those who heard [this story] praised God Who neglected not those who call upon Him in truth.

600. AN ADMONITION OF THE HOLY FATHERS. Be thou an enemy unto all folly and sin. Dejection driveth away the fear of God, captivity [to sin] driveth away the virtues from the soul. There are three excellences which illumine the mind always; a man must not see the vices of his neighbours, and he must do good unto those who do evil to him, and he must bear with gladness all the trials which come upon him. And these produce three (*sic*) other excellences, namely, a man must not look upon the vices of his brother, and this excellence produceth love; and he must bear the trials that come upon him, and this excellence produceth self-denial. There are three excellences of which the mind hath need, and a man should observe them always: He should lean away from follies, and he should not be lax in his service, and he should make strong his heart. There are three excellences, the which if a man see them with him he knoweth within himself that he is delivered from devils, namely, knowledge whereby he will be able to understand and to discern between thoughts, and the sight of everything before it cometh to pass, and the power of not becoming entangled with evil thoughts of any kind. There are three things which gain dominion over the soul until it arriveth at great weakness, captivity [to sin], and dejection, and sickness, and these contend against every man's soul, and from them are produced evil thoughts, and when a man buildeth up they overthrow [what he hath built]. There are three excellences which benefit and strengthen the soul: mercy, the absence of lust and long-suffering, and besides these three excellences the mind hath need to pray without ceasing continually, and a man must fall down and cry out before God, and hate all evil passions.

601. And he also said:—The fear of God driveth away all evil things, but dejection (*or* lowness) driveth away the fear of God from a man; the wandering of the thoughts driveth away good works from the soul. There are four things which are good:—Silence, the keeping of the commandments, humility, and tribulations. There are four good things which protect the soul:—Love towards every man, absence of lust, long-suffering, and a man severing from himself wickedness. And the soul hath need of the four following virtues at all seasons:—A man must pray without ceasing, and he should pour himself out before God continually, and he should declare his own de-

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fects in his heart, and he should judge no man, and his own mind should be tranquil. The four following things help a young monk:—Doctrine, the repetition of the Psalms at every moment, and he should not be lax in obedience to fasting, and he should esteem himself to be of no account whatsoever. Through four things the soul is corrupted:—For a man to walk about through the city without guarding his eyes, for a man to have anything to do with women, for a man to have friendship with the rich men of the world, and for a man to love empty talk. Of four things fornication is begotten, namely, by eating and by drinking overmuch, by sleeping overmuch and by idleness, by laughter and by silly words, and by the arrangement of the apparel. By four things the mind is darkened: by a man hating his neighbour, by hating his brother, by crying out evil things, and by uttering them. By four things is the soul laid waste: by a man not keeping silent (*or* tranquil), by loving the works of the world, by trafficking in material things, and by the evilness of the eye. Through four things anger cometh: By a man giving and taking (i. e., buying and selling) in the world, by doing his own will, by loving to teach, and by thinking in himself that he is a wise man. There are three virtues which a man acquireth by weariness (*or* exhaustion): by mourning always, by observing his sins, and by having his death before his eyes every day. He who taketh care to keep these virtues shall be able to be saved by the mercy of God and, to speak briefly, these are necessary for the man who seeketh to live: Faith, and hope, and love, and love of God, and obedience, and humility, and patient endurance, and self-denial, and fasting, and constant prayer, and vigil, and service, and going into exile, and voluntary poverty, and absence of evil passions, and the silence of discretion, and deprivation of various meats. For if a man doth not believe, he can neither hope nor love, nor have affection, nor be obedient; and if he be not obedient, he cannot either be humble, or endure patiently; and if he cannot endure patiently, he cannot practise self-denial, and if he cannot practise self-denial, he cannot draw nigh to fasting. And if he cannot fast, he cannot pray continually, and if he hath no prayer, he cannot keep vigils; and if he keepeth not vigil, service will not be found in him, for he will say and sing the service in a hurried manner. And he who possesseth these things only in a little degree cannot go into exile and become voluntarily poor, and without the love of these things he cannot deprive himself of meats; and a man cannot acquire the silence of discretion when all these things are remote from him. Let us, then, take care to perfect all these things in ourselves with all our might,

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through the help of God, to Whom be glory for ever and ever!
Amen.

602. AN EXHORTATION. Now therefore I have written down for thee all these things so that thy soul may not become sluggish, and so that thou mayest not become the cause of [others] being like unto thee. And because of this I counsel thee to take the yoke of pleasantness upon thy neck, for it will help thee to sit by thyself in silence, and to withdraw thyself from human intercourse, and from cares about the things of this world which will hinder thee. And make thyself as the dust in [thy] humility towards every man, knowing [at the same time] that there is hope [for thee]. And let not weeping cease from thine eyes, for there is the occasion of tears. And make thy cell a hall of judgement of thyself, and a place for striving against devils and evil passions, and let there be depicted therein the kingdom [of heaven], and Gehenna, and death and life, and sinners and the righteous, and the fire which never is quenched, and the glory of the righteous, and the outer darkness, and the gnashing of the teeth, and the light of the righteous, and their joy in the Holy Spirit, and the Passion of our Lord, and the memorial of His Resurrection, and the redemption of creation. And let thy habitation be free from superfluous things, for one of two things will happen unto thee; either through thinking of them thou wilt suffer injury, or in withdrawing thyself from them thy war will be added to and become fiercer. And take heed lest, through [holding in] honour and sparing other folk, thou bring thyself to evil case in the war; whatsoever belongeth to lust and is of the eyes thou shalt not possess, for the wars of thy passions are sufficient for thee. Heal thou and make whole in thy habitation those in whom God hath pleasure; it is He Who knoweth thy sitting down, and thy coming in, and thy going forth. And in all thy conduct be constant in prayer, especially in the night seasons, for [night] is the acceptable time for prayer, as it is written, "Be thou like unto thy Lord, Who prayed to God "continually throughout the night until the rising up of the "Sun." When all voices are quiet do thou fill thy mouth with praise, and thy tongue with glorifying, and whilst others are lying like dead men on their biers do thou depict in thyself the waking of the Resurrection. The night which is darkness unto other folk shall be to thee bright as the day, and instead of filling thyself with wine as other men do, fill thou thyself with the love of God; and in the night season, when silver and gold are stolen, do thou steal the kingdom [of heaven] like a thief. In the night season, when sinners perform their evil deeds to their own injury, do thou labour for the benefit of thine own

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soul, and take care, continually of all excellences. Then He Who is merciful in His gifts, and rich unto every one who calleth upon Him, will come unto thee quickly and will help thee, and thou shalt smite the Evil One, and shalt bring to naught his crafty acts. And thou shalt make thy mind to shine, and the Lord of All shall place in thee the innocent thoughts of uprightness, and He shall comfort thy mind; then shall the rugged ground become smooth before thee, and the difficult ground shall be as a plain, and thy ship shall anchor in [its] haven. And thou shalt lead beforehand the life which is to come, and thou shalt fulfil the Will of God, according to His Will, both in heaven and on earth; and thy knowledge shall grow and thy joy increase in proportion to thy spiritual conduct, and thou shalt be held to be worthy of the sight of the righteous by the grace and mercy of Christ our Lord, to Whom, with His Father, and the Holy Ghost, be glory now, and always, and for ever and ever! Amen.

603. AN ADMONITION OF ABBÂ MÂR JOHN. Now thou wilt not be able to find a more excellent way than this: He who would repent to Christ of his sins and follies must fall on his face many, many times, [and be sorry for] the sins which he hath committed, and he must make supplication and entreaty to the mercy of God. Moreover, our other fathers have incited [us] to kneel down, and he who continually kneeleth down and prayeth rejoiceth in God. Woe is me, me the man of negligence! Now he who sigheth, and weepeth, and sheddeth tears in prayer, possesseth all excellences together; for if we do not keep watch on and remember always our feebleness, whilst despising ourselves, and holding ourselves in contempt, the devils will lead us astray. Wake thyself up, O my beloved one, and keep in thy remembrance always three moments, and forget them not; the first is the moment of death, with its sorrow, and grief, and trouble, which is immeasurable, that overtaketh every man, when [a man shall stand] before the awful throne of Christ; the second moment is the moment of fear and quaking when men and angels shall rise up, when a man doth not know what command shall come forth concerning him, whether it shall be for life everlasting or for torment everlasting; and the third moment is that when the penalty (*or* decree of doom) shall come forth upon us, with its repentance of soul which shall last for ever, and shall be with us afterwards in the years which shall have no end. At the [remembrance of] these three moments all men fear and quake; may God in His compassion save us from Gehenna and its endless torments! Amen.

I am an apostle, and I cast out devils, and I perform

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mighty deeds, but how am I to know that the end of Judas may not be mine, and how am I to know that I shall [not] inherit hanging, and be called by our Lord "Satan" and "son of perdition"? If thou seest, moreover, a man who is a murderer, and a thief, and an adulterer, and a shedder of blood, thou mayest think whence I shall know [this]; for if this murderer at the end confesseth Christ, he will precede me in the kingdom of heaven, and thou shalt think thus concerning every man. If thou, O man of God, whithersoever thou goest, thinkest these and suchlike things continually, and if thy humility be in proportion to the greatness of thy power, thou shalt never fall. But if a man be neglectful, even for the twinkling of an eye, of his humility, and if pride be mingled in his negligence, he shall be cut off quickly from the height of the love of God, and he shall fall, even as quickly as a glass vessel full of water, which is suspended by a thread of a spider's web, would fall if that thread were to be severed. Now the conduct of humility is thus. If at the beginning, or in the middle, or at the end, or wheresoever it may be, a man first of all layeth hold upon perfect humility, and upon complete contempt of himself, the devils will be unable to approach him, on the contrary, they will flee before him, like flies before smoke, both they and their thoughts; but if a man [doth not] acquire humility, either at the beginning, or in the middle, or at the end of his career, there is nothing which [can stand up] against the strife and contest. As the holy man Evagrius said, "After the vanquishing of [all] the other passions, there still remain two which will wage war against the perfect man until death, namely, vainglory and pride." And John, the seer of Thebais, used to say, "He against whom the devil of vainglory still fighteth, wandereth without measure, and is divided [in his mind] to a boundless degree." The Teacher used to say, "Humility possesseth two characteristics which are superior to the other excellences of the spirit, for it seeth to what degree it can abase itself to the lowest depth, and grace also exalteth humility to God, [and] to the height which is above; and because grace exalteth it continually towards God, it acquireth faith at all times, and strengtheneth confidence. And the second characteristic of humility is that it feareth not that which opposeth it, that is to say, it feareth neither devils, nor wild animals, nor evil men, even as the holy man Evagrius said, 'The man who is proud and wrathful is a timid man, but the humble man is without fear.' And he said, 'Humility by itself vanquisheth both passions and devils, and the labours of the body, and the contests of the mind only serve to strengthen

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“‘humility the more.’” Therefore there is never a time when the monk hath not need of humility. Now it is right for him that dwelleth in silence wishing to arrive speedily at purity of heart, and to take care of [his spiritual] splendour, to guard the three following things:—he must guard his hearing against listening to any word which may strike him and may rouse him up to anger; and he must guard his tongue, not only against rebuking and chiding any man, even though he be a man of no account whatsoever and a man of ignorance, and he must not [attempt] to teach or to admonish. But if a man ask him for a prayer, he must esteem himself to be the servant of him that asketh him, and he must kneel down before the cross and say, “O Lord, provide for my brethren according to Thy Will, and according to Thy design, and according as it may be beneficial for them before Thee, and make me, a sinner, worthy of Thy mercy through my prayers”; let him pray after this example, and it shall suffice. Do not think in thy mind, which may lead thee astray, that thou wilt be able to acquire even one spiritual excellence, no matter which it may be, without afflictions and troubles, whether with or without the desire; for no man who feedeth his body daintily on lusts is able to enter through the door, even as the camel cannot go through the narrow hole of the needle.

Now the pleasures of the body come into being because of unbelief, because the wretched body doth not believe in those good things which are promised unto the hungry, and in the woes which are prepared for those who are filled with food and who live delicately. Therefore he, who believeth in the promises and threats, goeth hungry, and he denieth himself, and he watcheth in prayer, and he humbleth himself, and he layeth hold upon abstinence, and restraineth himself from the gratification of his pleasures, and he inheriteth the purity which is promised to those who are blessed. But if he leadeth a life of sluggishness and pleasure, from it he shall inherit the impurities and the punishments which are prepared for him in Gehenna. Now the desire of the Holy Spirit is thus:—Remoteness from the habitation of men, continual quiet, weeping and sorrowful cries, joyful hymns, the singing of the Psalms, and praises, fasting, and abstinence, and vigil, poor apparel, a humble gait, the cloaking of the thoughts of the passions, the hidden prayer of the mind; know ye that such are the things in which those who are in the desire of the spirit wish to walk, and they never wish to perform the lusts of the flesh. And to speak briefly unto you, O my brethren, fasting, and service, and standing up, and vigil, and abstinence from meats, are the constituent parts of a fair rule of life and conduct, and

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those who perform them will receive a reward from the true God if they perform them in truth, and if there be no alien pretence in their service. But hearken, O my brethren, for this is the true work of the monastic life, the binding of the understanding which is in God, and the suppression of the alien thoughts which enter his heart; and whosoever hath his heart [set] upon God acquireth for his soul pleasure, and the life which is everlasting. Amen and Amen.

Here end the Histories & the Narratives of the Triumphant Acts of the Holy Fathers and Monks which were composed by the holy and excellent Palladius, Bishop of the City of Helenopolis, & which he wrote to Lausus the Prefect. To God be glory, and honour, and adoration, and worship, and exaltation, for ever and ever! *Dea* and Amen.

Appendix

Questions of the Brethren, and Answers of the Fathers, which are exceedingly fair and beautiful

THE brethren said:—There were two brethren who were the sons of a merchant, and their father died, and they divided their inheritance between themselves, and unto
604. each one there came five thousand *dînârs*. And one of the brethren divided his inheritance among the churches, and the monasteries, and the poor, and he himself became a monk, and he chose for himself a life of continual silence, and fasting, and prayer; now the other brother built a monastery for himself, and gathered brethren to him, and he took care of the strangers, and the poor, and the sick, whom he received and relieved. When the two brothers were dead there was questioning among the brethren about them, and they went to Abbâ Pambô and asked him, “Which manner of life and conduct was the more excellent and exalted?” And having learned from God, he said unto them, “They are both perfect, and in my sight they appear to be of equal merit.” Explain to us now the old man’s words, for how can the man who is destitute, and the man who hath possessions be equal [in merit]? The old man said, “Since the whole conduct of these brethren was to God, and since whatsoever they did they did it for God, with an upright aim, and since the aim of each was the same, they appeared to be in the old man’s opinion of equal merit before God.”

605. The brethren asked Abbâ Nastîr, “What rule of life and conduct should a man follow?”

The old man said, “All rules of conduct are not alike.

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“ Abraham was a lover of strangers, David was a humble man,
“ Elijah loved silence, and God accepted the work of all of them.
“ Whatsoever work is of God, if thy soul desireth it, that do,
“ and God be with thee.”

606. The brethren said:—Abbâ Pambô said, “ If there be
“ three monks in one place, and one of them live in silence [it
“ is] well, and if another be sick and he give thanks in his
“ weakness, and if another minister to men and relieve them,
“ all three of them are in the same service.” Reveal to us now
the mind of this holy man.

And Abbâ Pambô said, “ If a man dwell in silence for God’s
“ sake, and not for the sake of vainglory, or any other human
“ thing; and if another, who is sick, give thanks to God for
“ his sickness, and he endure him that ministereth unto him
“ with longsuffering, he becometh like unto him that is in
“ silence; and if he who ministereth unto men doeth it not for
“ a reward of this world, but for God’s sake, and if he con-
“ straineth himself in everything, and doeth the will of those
“ who are ministered unto by him in love and gladness, he
“ thus becometh like unto him who shutteth himself up in
“ silence, and like unto him that is sick, and in this way the
“ work of all three is of equal merit. For Abbâ Joseph and
“ Abbâ Poemen divided the perfect ascetic life into three
“ classes, and therefore Abbâ Nasir said to that brother, ‘ If
“ ‘ thou conduct thyself according to any one of the three thou
“ ‘ shalt be perfect.’ And this is well known from that which
“ Abbâ Anthony said, ‘ Many have afflicted themselves with
“ ‘ labours and tribulations, and because they had not in them
“ ‘ the power of discernment, they did not know the way of
“ ‘ truth.’ And again he said, ‘ One man might live in a cell
“ ‘ for a hundred years, and yet not know how to dwell therein
“ ‘ [rightly] for one day, because he humbleth not himself, and
“ ‘ accounteth not himself a sinner, and a feeble man, and igno-
“ ‘ rant, but he justifieth himself, and blameth others; never-
“ ‘ theless it is right that we should know that, even though
“ ‘ some are sick, and others relieve the wants of men and
“ ‘ minister unto them with an upright aim, those who lead a
“ ‘ life of silence lead a superior life, and follow a line of con-
“ ‘ duct which is more excellent than all the rules of life which
“ ‘ are followed among brethren. And this life is superior in
“ ‘ the same way that the Spirit of God is more exalted than
“ ‘ the holy angels, according to what we have learned from
“ ‘ the history of the holy men Abbâ Arsenius and Abbâ Moses
“ ‘ the Ethiopian. For when one of the brethren went to the
“ ‘ blessed Arsenius [to enquire of him] concerning the love of
“ ‘ a silent life of contemplation, he neither set a table for him

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“nor gave him refreshment; then he went to the blessed Abbâ Moses and he both welcomed him and gave him refreshment. And when one of the great fathers heard [this], he entreated our Lord to reveal to him this matter, saying, “How is it that one fleeth for Thy Name’s sake, and another welcometh and giveth refreshment for Thy Name’s sake?” And there appeared unto him on the river two ships, in one of which were Abbâ Arsenius, and the Spirit of God Who was travelling along in silence, and in the other was Abbâ Moses, who was travelling with holy angels that were feeding him upon honey, with the comb thereof. And by this the fathers understood that the life of silent contemplation was as greatly exalted above alms and ministrations as was the conduct of Matthew the Evangelist above that of Zacchaeus the tax-gatherer.”

607. The brethren said: The brethren asked Abbâ Pambô, saying, “Supposing that a man who liveth in the world hath a wife and children, and supposing that he giveth much alms, and setteth free slaves, and redeemeth those in captivity, and visiteth the sick, and relieveth those who are afflicted, and fulfilleth all the things which are proper for him [to fulfil], is not such a man equal in labour to one of the three classes of monks, that is, to the man that dwelleth in silence, or him that is sick, or him that ministereth unto the poor?”

And the old man said, “Not altogether.”

And the brethren said, “Wherefore?”

And the old man said, “Because, although the man who is in the world leadeth a life of righteousness, his whole conduct is outside the body, but all the labour of the monks is inside the body, that is, fasting, and prayer, and vigil, and hunger, and thirst, and the constraint of the will at every moment, and wars, both secret and manifest. And it is well known and manifest that the men, who are in the world and who are exceedingly excellent in their conduct, are not equal to the monks in their labours; for our Lord Jesus Christ surnamed the monks ‘sons of light,’ and those who are in the world ‘sons of the world.’ Now the monks with their members, and with their thoughts, and with their bodies, and with their conduct serve God perfectly with stern labours and afflictions, and they offer themselves up to God as a living, and rational, and holy sacrifice, with rational and spiritual service, and they are crucified unto the world, and the world is crucified unto them, according to the word of our Lord, Who said, ‘Whosoever wisheth to come after Me, let him take up his cross, and follow Me,’ that is to say, Let him not

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“ fulfil his own will, but let him do My will only, and bear
“ tribulations of all kinds. And monks shall leave father, and
“ mother, and brothers, and sisters, and kinsfolk, and coun-
“ try, and in return for these they shall receive a hundredfold,
“ and shall inherit everlasting life. And to the men who are
“ in the world, He said, ‘ Acquire for yourselves friends of the
“ ‘ mammon of unrighteousness, so that when it hath come to
“ ‘ an end they may receive you into their everlasting habita-
“ ‘ tions.’ For as men who are in the world receive monks
“ into their houses, so shall the monks receive those who have
“ lived in the world into the kingdom of heaven; and by this
“ our Lord shewed that all the good things of God and His
“ kingdom belong to the monks who, from their youth even
“ to their old age, have laboured to God in the excellent works
“ of the ascetic and monastic life. But it is right that we should
“ know to what degree the soul is superior to the body. The
“ life which is led by the monks in silent contemplation, and
“ the works thereof, are as much superior to the life which is
“ led by righteous men in the world, as the life and conduct
“ of the angels are superior to those of men. And the life and
“ conduct of the monks are superior to those of men who are
“ in the world, because the latter please God because of their
“ love for men, whilst the monks do so because of their love
“ for God.”

608. The brethren said, “ Into how many orders have the
“ fathers arranged the monastic life?” And the old man said,
“ Into three orders.”

609. The brethren said, “ What are they?” And the old man
said, “ The perfect, those who are half perfect, and the beginners.”

610. The brethren said, “ Whence canst thou prove to us
“ that this is so?” The old man said: “ From the words of our
“ Lord in the Gospel. For he said, ‘ The sower went forth to
“ ‘ sow. And some [seeds] fell on the roadside, and others fell
“ ‘ on the rock, and others among thorns’ (St. Matthew
“ ‘ xiii, 3 ff.) Now these three [kinds of] seed are those who are
“ in the world. And as concerning the other seed of which He
“ spake, saying that it fell on good ground, and gave fruit,
“ some thirtyfold, and some sixtyfold, and some a hundred-
“ fold, these are the grades of monks, for the seed which
“ yielded fruit thirtyfold is the beginners, and that which
“ yielded sixtyfold is the half-perfect, and that which yielded
“ one hundredfold is the perfect.”

611. The brethren said, “ And supposing a man in the world
“ conducteth himself in a wholly perfect manner, and accord-
“ ing to what is right, is not his labour equal unto that of a
“ beginner?” The old man said, “ No.”

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612. The brethren said, "Why [not]?" The old man said, "Although the monk is little and is a beginner, he is still more excellent than the man in the world who keepeth every just [demand] of righteousness."

613. "Why did Abbâ Anthony say unto Paule, his disciple, 'Go and dwell in silence that thou mayest receive the temptations of devils?'" The old man said, "Because the perfection of the monk ariseth from spiritual conduct, and spiritual conduct is acquired by the conduct of the heart, and purity of heart ariseth from the conduct of the mind, and the conduct of the mind from prayer which is unceasing, and from strife with devils; but unceasing prayer, and the contendings with devils, both in the thoughts and in visions, have no opportunity for existence without silence and solitariness."

614. The brethren said, "What is the meaning of that which Paphnutius and James the Lame said to Mâr Evagrius, 'Every lapse which taketh place through the tongue, or through lust, or through an action, or through the whole body, is in proportion to the measure of pride which a man possesseth'? Now what is the lapse which cometh through lust? And what is the lapse which cometh through an action? And what is the lapse which cometh through the whole body? Enlighten us about these [various] kinds of lapses." The old man said, "The lapse through lust is the fall which taketh place inwardly through pride, even as the blessed Macarius said, 'Thou shalt not be lifted up in thy heart and in thy mind through the knowledge of the Scriptures, lest thou fall into a spirit of blasphemy in thy mind.' And the lapse through the tongue resembleth that into which one of the monks once fell through his pride, and he reviled the holy man Evagrius and the fathers who were in the desert of Scete. And the lapse through an action resembleth that into which another monk fell when he became lascivious and abominable; and the lapse through the whole body resembleth that when, through his pride, one of the brethren was abandoned to the hands of thieves, and they burned him with fire."

615. The brethren said:—Palladius said, "Once the blessed man Diocles said, 'The mind which falleth from God is either delivered over to the devil of wrath, or to the devil of fornication.' And I said unto him, 'How is it possible for the human mind to be with God uninterruptedly?' And he said, 'In whatsoever work of the fear of God the soul [is engaged], provided that the soul hath due care, its mind is with God.' What is the meaning of the action of which the old man spake?"

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The old man said, "He calleth [a man's] care concerning God's promises 'action of the fear of God,' wishing to say thus: —If thou art unable to bind thy thought continually in various ways to God, though thou thinkest about His Majesty, and His power, and His grace, and thou prayest to Him without ceasing and without wandering [in thy prayer, thy mind cannot be with Him]; but if thou reducest thine understanding by means of the constant labour of prayer and by the thought which is on God, and more particularly through the war with devils that [accompanieth] this work, bring down thy mind by degrees from the thought which is about God, and from prayer, and fetter it with the thought which is lower than this, and meditate on the promises of God, and think upon His commandments and the correction of thyself. And set not free thy mind from spiritual care, and do not make it wander and think the thought of passibility, but fetter thy mind to some thought of excellence, which will make it gain profit. And when it hath rested somewhat, then raise it up on high, and make it to labour in the thought which is of God, and in pure prayer which hath no wandering therein. For as the growth of the capacity of those who are as yet in the grade of bodily prayer and the reading [of the Scriptures] still existeth, even when they are exhausted by standing up, and by the singing of the Psalms, and they rest their bodies for a little by sitting down and by meditation upon the reading, and when they have rested their bodies and their mind hath become enlightened through the reading, they stand up for service and prayer, so also it is right for those who have arrived at a correct conduct of the mind, and who think continually about God, and who pray to Him without wandering, when they are exhausted by this severe labour, to bring down their minds from time to time, and to relieve it by means of thought concerning some profitable subject which is less exalted than the thought about God. And this thought must take the place to them of reading, and they must meditate upon God's promises and commandments, and upon their straightness which is in God; and if some abominable thought knock [at the door of their minds] they must quickly make their minds to enter into prayer and into the thought which is upon God. And if there stir in their heart a thought of passion, as soon as they have refreshed themselves by means of thinking about some profitable subject, they must make their mind to enter into the height of prayer, and they must pray without ceasing, and meditate upon God. And from this we know that when the soul meditateth with understanding upon some profitable

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“subject, or upon some profitable action, its mind is with God, even as the blessed man Diocles said. Similarly, whensoever a monk thinketh about the passions of sin, or about deeds connected with the world, his mind is with Satan.”

616. The brethren said, “Why is it that the Divine Light did not shine in the hearts of all the monks until a long time after they had been cleansed by labours and contests? And why is it that the light of grace did shine upon some men before they went forth from the world and came to the ascetic life, as it did in the heart of Abraham Kindônâyâ through the Divine revelation on the day of his feast, and straightway he left his feast, and went forth from the world?” The old man said, “Whosoever this light riseth in its order in the hearts of men, according to what the fathers say, it cometh in this wise. First of all Divine Grace maketh a man hot with the love of God, and he hateth all the glories and honours of this world; and next he cometh in a state of poverty to this rule of life, and Divine Grace itself first giveth him the love of labours, and it maketh the things which are hard easy to him. And it protecteth him from the fierce attacks of the war of devils, so that they may not, whensoever they wish and will, assault him, but only according to his strength, and his capacity, and as is convenient for his growth. And thus after many labours and contests, his heart is purified with abundant humility, and he shineth with the light of grace, and he is held to be worthy to see Christ in a revelation of light. And the fathers also said, that in proportion as the monk himself travelleth along the path of ascetic excellences to meet our Lord by means of labours and contests, so doth our Lord advance to meet him with light until they meet each other, and then the monk remaineth in our Lord by means of labours, and our Lord remaineth in him by means of his light, even as Abbâ Isaiah said in his interpretation of that which our Lord said, ‘Remain in Me and I in you.’ Thus thou seest, O my brother, that He wisheth us to remain in him first of all by the labours of righteousness, and then He will remain Himself in us in purity and in light. And the words, ‘The monk travelleth along the path of ascetic excellences until he seeth Him and is illumined by Him,’ explain the verse, ‘My soul thirsteth for Thee, the Living God,’” *et cetera.*

617. The brethren said, “Why is it that though the holy fathers incite us continually to the labours of excellence, and to the contending against passions and devils, Abbâ Isidore restrained Abbâ Moses the Ethiopian from works, and from contests with devils, saying, ‘Rest thee, Moses, and quarrel

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“not with the devils, and seek not to make attacks upon them, for there is a measure [i.e., moderation] in every thing; doth this apply also to works and to the labours of the ascetic life?”

The old man said, “Because at the beginning Abbâ Moses was ignorant of the rule of the ascetic life, and because he was healthy of body, he worked overmuch, and he thought that he would be able to prevail mightily against devils by the multitude of his works alone, and that he would be able to vanquish them. Therefore, because the devils perceived his object, they attacked him more severely with frequent wars, both secretly and openly, but Abbâ Isidore, wishing to teach him the truth, and to make him to acquire humility, said unto him, ‘Without the power of the Spirit which our Lord gave us in baptism for the fulfilling of His commandments, the which is confirmed in us each day by the taking of His Body and Blood, we cannot be purified from the passions, and we cannot vanquish devils, and we cannot perform the works of spiritual excellence’; thereupon Abbâ Moses learned these things, and his thoughts were humbled, and he partook of the Holy Mysteries, and the devils were conquered, and they reduced their war against him, and from that time forward he lived in rest, and knowledge, and peace. Many monks have imagined that their passions would be healed, and that they would acquire soundness of soul merely by their labours and strenuousness, and therefore they were abandoned by grace, and fell from the truth. For as he who is sick in his body cannot be healed without the physician and medicines, however much he may watch and fast during the time he is taking the medicine, so he who is sick in his soul through the passions of sin, without Christ, the Physician of souls, and without the partaking of His Body and Blood, and the power which is hidden in His commandments, and the humility which is like unto His, cannot be healed of his passions, and cannot receive a perfect cure. Therefore, whosoever fighteth against the passions and the devils by the commandments of our Lord is healed of the sickness of the passions, and acquireth health of soul, and is delivered from the crafts of the devils.”

618. The brethren said, “With what object did those two monks say to Abbâ Macarius, ‘If thou art not able to become a monk like us, sit in thy cell, and weep for thy sins, and thus thou shalt be like us?’” The old man said, “Because they knew that, if a man was able to be a solitary in his body, and a dweller in silent contemplation, and a worker both in his soul and in his body, who made himself humble

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“and who wept each day for his sins, and who cut off from himself all memories of every kind of passion and anxious thought, and who meditated only upon God and upon his own correct behaviour, such a man was a monk (*or* solitary) in very truth, even as the blessed Evagrius said, ‘The monk who is remote from the world is he who hath cut off from himself all the motions of his passions, and hath fastened unto God all the mind of his soul.’”

619. The brethren said, “Why is it that certain of the Fathers were called Mēshannayânê [i.e., men who transferred themselves from one place to another], since they were recluses, and never departed from their cells?” The old man said, “Because after much silent contemplation, and unceasing prayer, and watching of the mind, they were worthy to depart from the earth in their minds, and to ascend unto heaven to Christ the King. And they did not do this on occasions only, but continually, for whensoever they wished, or whensoever they sang the Psalms, or prayed, or meditated upon God, straightway their mind was exalted to heaven, and stood before our Lord. But there were other [kinds of] ‘Mēshannayânê,’ that is to say, those who lived with wild beasts in the deserts, such as Abbâ Bessarion, and others who were like unto him.”

620. The brethren said, “What is [the meaning] of the fact that when one of the monks saw a brother in the mountain he fled from him, and was unable to bear the smell of the children of men?” The old man said, “The monk fled because he saw that the brother was carrying silver. And when the brother saw that the monk fled, he cast off his garments and pursued him. And when the monk saw that he had cast off his garments, he waited for him, and welcomed him gladly, saying, ‘Since thou hast cast off the matter which is of this world I have waited for thee. I was not able to bear [the sight thereof] because I myself am naked.’ I looked beyond my rule of life and saw that he was carrying a burden upon his shoulder like a man who was in the world.”

621. The brethren said, “Why did the monk not permit that brother who came to him to dwell in the cave by his side, but did say unto him, ‘Thou art not able to bear up against the attack of devils?’” The old man said, “Because he knew his manner of life and works, and also that he possessed not the labours and the strenuousness which were sufficient to make him strong to resist the fierce assault of the savage nature of the devils which make war against the monks. For according to the labour of every man, and according to his striving, and his rule of life and strenuousness, and accord-

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“ing as he is able to bear, so much the greater are the ferocity, and the wickedness, and the bitterness, and the craftiness of the devils who make war against him. Similarly, when one of the brethren entreated Abbâ Apellen to allow him to live with him in the desert, he said unto him, ‘Thou art not able to bear the temptation of the devils.’ Finally, when the brother urged him [to let him do so], he commanded him to dwell in a cave by his side. And the devils came against him in the night and sought to strangle him, until Abbâ Apellen came, and surrounded the cave with the sign of the Cross, after which the brother was able to live in the cave. For not all monks are able to fight against the devils, but only such as are perfect and humble.”

622. Why is it that the two Romans who went to Abbâ Macarius, did not, during the whole period of three years which they lived [near him] come to him and ask him, or any other aged man, questions about the thoughts? The old man said, “Because the elder brother was exceedingly wise, and perfect and humble. Had he gone to Abbâ Macarius, or to one of the other old men, his perfection would have been revealed, and he would have [received] praise throughout Scete from the Fathers, who would have wondered, saying, ‘How is it that a young man hath become perfect in three years’? It is, however, not right for us to make ourselves like unto these two brethren, and to neglect the doctrine of the old men. As for the two brethren, the elder was perfect, and the younger was humble, and learned from him.”

623. The brethren said, “The history of the triumphs of Bessarion saith that during all the days of his life he dwelt in waste places, and in the desert and in the mountains, and among the rocks. Once having come to a certain monastery, he stood up by the door like a wandering beggar, and then sat down weeping and crying out, even as one who had been rescued from a storm. And when the brethren entreated him to go in and rest with them, he said, ‘Before I find the possessions of my house which I have lost I cannot endure being under a roof; for thieves fell upon me on the sea, and a storm reared itself up against me, and I have been robbed of the riches which I once possessed, and from being a man of high estate I am become of no account.’ Now what were the riches which [he inherited] from his parents and lost? And what does this [story] mean? Who are parents? What does he refer to by the words ‘sea, and storms, and waves’? Who were the thieves? Are these words spoken of himself or of the other persons? The old man said, “These things are said of all the monks who are still striving and contending

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“against passions and devils, and who are lacking at the present time purity of heart, and fruits of the spirit, and visions of our Lord, and they are not spoken of men who are perfect as he was. The word ‘sea’ he applieth to the sea of the mind whereon the monk saileth with works of spiritual excellence, wherefrom he entereth the haven of impassibility, even as the blessed Macarius saith, ‘He who wisheth to cleave the ‘sea of the mind, maketh himself longsuffering.’ And he calleth temptations ‘storms,’ and the passions ‘waves,’ and the ‘thieves’ are devils, and his ‘parents’ are the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, One God, in Whose image and likeness we are made, even as our Creator said, ‘Come, let ‘us make man in our image and likeness,’ and also as ‘our Lord said, ‘Be ye like unto your Father, Who is in ‘heaven.’ And He calleth the spiritual excellences, which contain likenesses of the similitude of our Father, Who is in heaven, and which make us heirs of God, and sons of the inheritance of Jesus Christ, by the name of ‘riches and ‘possessions of his parents,’ and these are faith, and hope, and the love of God and man, and joy, and rest, and peace, and graciousness, and pleasantness, and lowliness, and humility, and longsuffering, and patient endurance, and integrity, and simplicity, and purity, and mercy, and cleanness of heart, and the holy light of the mind, and pure prayer, and the divine light which riseth on the heart at the hour of prayer, and spiritual prayer, and Divine knowledge, and the visions and revelations of our Lord. These are the possessions of the soul, some of which it acquireth naturally, and some by Divine Grace; now those which it acquireth naturally are they which the Creator sowed in its nature at the beginning of its creation, and those which it acquireth by Divine Grace are they which are bestowed upon it by the baptism in Christ. And these possessions are lost to a man through pleasures, and honours, and lusts, and benefits, but they are found and acquired, and the soul waxeth rich in them, through tribulations, and revilings, and oppression, and hardships. Now although Abbâ Bessarion, and men who were as perfect as he was, possessed these things, other men lack them and are strangers unto them. [And as regards the words] ‘He once came to a certain monastery, ‘and sat down outside the door like a wandering beggar,’ [they mean that] he saw clearly with the secret eye of the mind that the greater number of the monks were destitute of this spiritual possession, and of the spiritual excellences and gifts which have been already mentioned. And being incited there, to by the law of affection and of brotherly love, he cried out

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“and wept on their behalf, as if it had been on his own, and he made supplication to the lovingkindness of God that He would make them worthy of the riches of His love, and of the possession of His Grace.”

624. The brethren said, “What are the nine spiritual excellences which that holy man possessed, and what did he lack?” The old man said, “Although they are not written down I think that they were as follows: 1. Voluntary poverty. 2. Abstinence, 3. Constant evening fasting. 4. Vigil. 5. The recital of the whole Book of the Psalms seven times during the night and day. 6. The reading of the Holy Books between times. 7. Lowliness. 8. Humility. 9. Love of man. These are the nine spiritual excellences which he possessed, and by means of them he vanquished all passions. By poverty he overcame the love of money. By abstinence he conquered unbridled appetite and gluttony. By fasting he overcame the passion of the love of the belly. By vigil he vanquished sleep. By the recital of the Psalms he did away idleness. By reading he kept away the converse of evil. By lowliness he dispelled wrath and anger. By humility he overcame vain-glory and pride. By love of man he conquered hatred, and spite, and enmity. Now the spiritual excellence which he lacked, and which is the tenth, was the constant fervour of the love of God, which is in our Lord Jesus Christ, and this can [only] be gathered together, and established and acquired by the secret prayer of the mind, which is unceasing and wandereth not, and by the strict and constant suppression of the thoughts of the passions, and the incitements of devils, when they first begin to bestir themselves in the heart. And because among all the works of ascetic excellence there is none more difficult [to do] than this, for, even as the blessed Macarius said, ‘All the fightings and fierce, and crafty, and evil temptations of the devils are set in array against it,’ the holy man is not able easily to become perfect in the love of Christ, which is acquired by the concentration of the mind and by deep thought about God. Therefore the blessed Evagrius said, ‘If thou canst overcome the wandering of the thoughts, it is the end of all ends; and if thou canst make deep thought about God have dominion in thee, thou canst overcome all passions, and thou shalt be worthy of the perfection of the love of Christ.’ By the love of man and by the other virtues a monk may, by the help of God, vanquish all the passions; but by the love of Christ he shall conquer the evil passion of the love of the soul, which is the first of all the passions, and which embraceth them all, even as Saint Evagrius said, ‘The first of

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“all the passions is the thought of the love of the soul, and
“after it come the following eight.’ And again he said, ‘Con-
“quer the strife of the love of the soul which is in thy bosom,
“by that which is towards God.’ For until the monk is
“worthy of this love, he is unable to acquire exact consolati-
“on from the remainder of the labours of the other spiritual
“excellences, even though it be that he obtaineth assistance
“from them, as Abbâ Isaiah said, ‘Although the children of
“Leah were a help to Jacob, yet he loved Joseph most of all,
“and when Joseph was born, he wished to leave Laban and
“go to his parents,’ that is to say, When a monk hath be-
“come worthy, and hath acquired the perfect love of Christ,
“which is stablished by silent contemplation, and the power
“to pray without ceasing, and his soul is at all times rejoicing
“and exulting with gladness, he will not be content to remain
“in this life; but each and every day he will be desiring
“eagerly and longing to depart from the body, and to be with
“our Lord in Paradise, which is the habitation of the spirits
“of just men who have become perfect, and the holy country
“which is exalted above the passions, and devils, and the
“striving of those who cultivate the virtues until the revela-
“tion of our Lord Jesus, Who loveth to make perfect a man
“with the never-ending happiness of His love in a glorious
“kingdom.”

625. The brethren said, “Explain to us the course of life
“and labour of the old man [who made] baskets, [and dropped]
“small stones in them.” The old man said, “The course of
“life of that old man was one which was of the mind, and it
“was stern, and excellent, and it swiftly brought the monk
“unto purity of heart. And as concerning that which he said,
“‘I set two baskets, one on my right hand and one on my
“left,’ etc. it doth not [mean] that he sat the whole day with
“his baskets round him, but that his two baskets were set in
“two places. And he himself was occupied with service and
“prayer, and with his toil, and for every thought, good or
“bad, which entered his mind he cast a pebble [into the
“baskets], that is to say, the labour is very severe for the
“man for a certain time at the beginning, because the devils
“are envious at the purity of heart which is acquired by him,
“and therefore they afflicted this old man also for a long time
“with the multitude of evil thoughts which were stirring in
“him, even as he said, ‘Many days I have eaten nothing, be-
“cause the good thoughts did not outnumber the bad ones.’
“Now he used to afflict his body with the labour of much
“fasting, so that he might do away the evil thoughts, because
“it is not the soul only which feeleth the labours of the body,

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“ its counterpart through its union with it, but also those
“ devils which wage war against the soul, and they feel the
“ labours of the body more than doth the soul. For immediately
“ the devils see the monk afflicting his body with labours,
“ they become afraid, and stagger about, because they are
“ more tormented by the labours than is the man who is
“ engaged in them. Therefore the blessed Evagrius, when the
“ demon of fornication assailed him, stripped off his tunic and
“ stood the whole night long, in the season of winter, under
“ the open sky, and by these means he made the demon to
“ suffer pain, and he fled from him. And again, when the
“ demon of blasphemy attacked him, he stood naked under
“ the open sky, in the season of winter, for forty days. And
“ because the thought of gluttony stirred in the heart of Abbâ
“ Zeno, and made him to eat a cucumber by stealth, he cruci-
“ fied his soul in the sun, during the season of summer for five
“ days. In this wise the holy men were afflicting themselves
“ with labours and tribulations, and when the devils were
“ stirring up in them the thoughts of sin, the demons were
“ afflicted and tortured far more than they thereby. Now the
“ demons were afflicted and tormented by the labours of the
“ patient endurance of the monks not only in their minds but
“ in their persons, through the operation of the holy angels,
“ and by the command of God, even as, on one occasion, one
“ of the devils was tortured the whole night in the cell of those
“ two brethren who were brothers naturally, when he wished
“ to separate them from each other. For when the younger
“ brother lighted a lamp the devil threw down the candlestick,
“ and extinguished the light, whereupon the [elder] brother
“ smote him [on] the cheek; and the other brother expressed
“ his contrition, and said, ‘My brother, have patience, and I
“ ‘ will light the lamp [again].’ And when God saw the patient
“ endurance and humility of the young man, He commanded
“ His angel, and he fettered the devil the whole night long in
“ their cell; and the devil was tormented therein until the
“ morning because of that [blow on] the cheek which he made
“ the one brother to suffer from the other through his wicked
“ agency; and that wicked devil was fettered and tortured the
“ whole night long. And the devils are tortured not only when
“ we afflict our bodies with labours, in order that we may not
“ consent to the will of devils, but also when they stir up in
“ us evil thoughts; if we constrain ourselves a little, and cast
“ them from us, at the same time calling our Lord to our
“ assistance, straightway the holy angels which cleave unto
“ us will constrain the demons, and will drive them away from
“ us, and we shall be full of light, and of fervour, and of glad-

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ness. Even as one of the demons said to Abbâ Pachomius, "A certain monk, against whom I wage war, is very strenuous, and whensoever I draw nigh unto him to sow evil thoughts in him, he betaketh himself to prayer, and I, though burning with fire, have to depart from his presence blazing (?) even like iron which hath been thoroughly well [heated] in the fire.' Now monks are, at the beginning [of their career] afflicted for a long time, not only by the stirring up of the evil thoughts themselves, but also by their tarrying in the heart; but after a known time a man receiveth strength from our Lord, through their tarrying, and also after a known time their motion is restrained, and then the monk also hath rest from strivings, and he is held to be worthy of purity of heart. For at the beginning of the strivings the devils stir up evil thoughts in the heart mightily; sometimes, however, these are destroyed through prayer at the very beginning of their movement, and sometimes they remain. And afterwards the mind becometh strong against them, and doth not permit them to tarry altogether in the heart, but it is as yet unable to restrain their violent movement, and the [tribulation which they cause], even as one of the old men said, 'I carried on a strife for twenty years in order that an evil thought might not enter my heart, and until the ninth hour I used to see Satan with his bow drawn to shoot an arrow into my heart. And when he found no opportunity of doing this, he would become dejected and go away ashamed each day.' Now the old man [of whom we first spake] held fast to his rule in respect of the baskets, and though he was afflicted for a long time by the motion of evil thoughts, and sometimes even by their tarrying in his heart, finally he received power over their tarrying only, for their rising up remained for a considerable time. And having laboured in striving for twenty years against the motion of the thoughts, finally he became strong [enough to resist them], and he overcame them. And the devils fled from him, and he arrived at a state of purity, and at the haven of impassibility, and he was held to be worthy of revelations."

626. The brethren said, "If the holy men themselves afflict themselves with labours of tribulation because of the tarrying of the evil thoughts which bestir themselves in them, and if they sin against God though not consenting to them, why should we toil against the motion of the devils? For behold, even as the blessed Evagrius said, 'Whether they fight against us or not the matter is not in our hands.'" The old man said, "The perfection of the monks ariseth from a spiritual rule of life, and a spiritual rule of life cometh from purity of

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“heart, and purity of heart from divine vision; ‘Blessed are
“ ‘those who are pure in heart, for they shall see God.’ When,
“ therefore, a monk laboureth, and afflicteth himself because
“ of the motion of evil thoughts, in order to prevent their re-
“ maining for a long time in his heart, and when after a con-
“ siderable time his heart becometh pure, there remaineth
“ disgust only therein, and it vexeth the mind of the monk,
“ and preventeth his ascent to God, and cutteth off his journey-
“ ing to Him, and doth not allow him to enjoy the vision of
“ glory. Now when a monk worketh for a considerable time
“ because of the motion of evil thoughts [in him], God hath
“ compassion upon his trouble, and not only doth his heart
“ become cleansed, and his soul pure from every thought of
“ evil, but he is also held to be worthy of the sight of our Lord
“ in a revelation of light, and henceforth, the devils never
“ again dare to stir up evil thoughts in the heart of him that
“ hath been esteemed worthy of this great thing. And should
“ it happen that they dare so to do, they suffer pain and burn
“ even as he suffereth who is hot, and who kicketh away with
“ his feet the piercing goads of iron which glow with heat in
“ the fire. During the interval between the beginning of the
“ strife against evil thoughts and [the attainment of] purity of
“ heart, the devils sometimes vex the monk, and sometimes
“ are vexed by him, even as the blessed Evagrius said, ‘If
“ ‘those who go down to the conflict afflict [others], they are
“ ‘themselves afflicted’; so the devils afflict us, and they are
“ also afflicted by us. They afflict us when we receive their evil
“ thoughts, and they are afflicted by us when we, by means of
“ prayer and wrath, hide (i. e., suppress) their thoughts. When,
“ then, we labour and afflict ourselves for a considerable time
“ in order that their thoughts may not tarry in us, we also
“ afflict ourselves with labours and prayer so that they may not
“ vex and hinder us by [their] violent motion, and afterwards
“ power is given unto us by our Lord to lift ourselves up upon
“ the necks of our enemies, and thenceforward our heart
“ resteth and is at peace, not only from the perception of their
“ thoughts, but from all the violence of their motion. And the
“ peace and rest of God rule over our souls, and we see that
“ there remaineth only the war which is manifest of the visions
“ of devils until the time of death merely to terrify us, so that
“ we may not be exalted [unduly] and destroy ourselves. And
“ should it happen that the devils stir up thoughts in the heart
“ of him that hath been made perfect, straightway they be-
“ come extinguished, even as fire is extinguished when water
“ falleth thereon.”

10 627. The brethren said, “Why do the devils fear the labours

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“of the monks, even as the Fathers say, ‘If thou wishest the
“‘devils to be afraid of thee, despise lusts?’” The old man
said, “They are afraid because of three things. 1. First. Be-
“cause our Lord treated with contempt three kinds of pas-
“sions, wherein are included and contained all the various
“classes of passions, and these are they: The love of the belly,
“the love of money, and vainglory. By means of these the
“Calumniator fought against our Redeemer, and through His
“constancy in the wilderness, and silent contemplation, and fast-
“ing, and prayer, He overcame Satan; therefore all the monks
“who travel in His footsteps, and who by means of fasting, and
“prayer, and silent contemplation, hide away all the thoughts of
“sin, and who perform their labours in righteousness, our Lord
“maketh to conquer by His strength, and He vanquisheth the
“devils who are their enemies. And as the demons fear and
“tremble, not only by reason of the Crucifixion of Christ, but
“even at the sign of the Cross, wheresoever it be made ap-
“parent, whether it be depicted upon a garment, or whether
“it be made in the air, so also do the devils fear and tremble,
“not only by reason of the labours of our Lord and His con-
“stancy in the wilderness, but also at the existence of the
“monks in the wilderness, and at their silent contemplation,
“and their fasting, and their prayers, and their patient per-
“sistence in the performance of difficult labours, which take
“place for Christ’s sake. Therefore on one occasion Abbâ
“Macarius said unto Palladius, ‘Speak to the devils which
“‘war against thee with disgust, and sluggishness, and
“‘despair: if I had no labours of spiritual excellence, neverthe-
“‘less for the sake of Christ I would guard these walls and
“‘His Name would be sufficient for the redemption of my life.’
“2. Secondly. The war and contest which the devils [wage]
“against the monks possess both rule and system, and they
“are neither irregular nor unsystematic. And as when the
“devils stir up the monks by means of evil thoughts of sin,
“and the monks accept them, and consent to them, and let
“themselves be incited to commit sin thereby, straightway
“their souls become dark, and remote from God, and sorely
“afflicted, and ashamed, and guilty, and weak and miserable,
“so when their souls accept not these thoughts, and they do
“not consent to them, and do not allow themselves to be in-
“cited to sin thereby, but drive them away and cast them out
“as soon as ever they begin to have motion [in them], and
“call upon our Lord to help them, straightway all the former
“things which come against the monks, inasmuch as they do
“not acquiesce in their incitings, are hurled upon the demons
“with greatly intensified force, and they become ashamed,

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“and tremble, and are destroyed, even as the blessed Mark said, ‘As he who breaketh into a house which is not his own taketh to flight with fear and trembling as soon as he heareth the voice of the master of the house, so also doth ‘Satan,’ etc. 3. Thirdly. Because without labours and humility we who are rational beings are unable to please God, and because without them neither men nor angels can enjoy His love and His blessings, therefore also the demons and devils, which live wholly in a state of pride and laxity, [cannot enjoy them].”

628. The brethren said, “Why is it that although the Fathers gave the admonition, ‘Whensoever a demon appeareth unto a man in any form whatsoever, let that man make the sign of the Cross, and pray, and that similitude will disappear,’ we see that on several occasions the devils still remain, and not in appearance only, but also in terrors, which remain for a long time, and in many cases in blows and stripes?” The old man said, “The holy Fathers gave the admonition because it would apply in the majority of cases. For since our Redeemer was crucified for us, and since He exposed to disgrace the Rulers and Dominions, which are evil demons, and put them to shame openly by His Person, even as it is written, from that time onwards, whensoever they have made themselves visible to the adorers of Christ in divers form [to do them] harm, as soon as a man hath made mention of the Name of Christ, and hath signed himself with the sign of the Cross, the devils have fled straightway, and their forms have disappeared. And this happeneth not only in the case of holy men, and perfect men, but also in respect of ordinary men who possess shortcomings.”

629. The brothers said, “Why was the blessed Martinyânâ, after all the great ascetic practices which he had acquired, and the gifts of the spirit which he had received, and after he had burned his fingers for the sake of the harlot, still afraid of the war of fornication, and why, having gone and dwelt in the island in the sea for thirty years, did he not stay [for] a season with that woman whom he had brought up from the sea, but cast himself in the sea being afraid of the contest?” The old man said, “Because the whole strength of the demon of fornication was discharged upon him, and he was, therefore, properly afraid. For those who have not with them this war in all its fierceness imagine that they have overcome it, but let them not boast themselves, and let them know the truth, that is to say, they have not vanquished the demon of fornication, and it is only that he hath

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“not waged war against them with all his strength, because he hath not been permitted so to do, and he hath not been permitted to do so because of their feebleness and laxity. For the war of fornication which cometh upon a man only attacketh him in the degree which he is able to bear. For, behold, the great and famous fathers who endured this war in all its severity for a long time were always in a state of fear and trepidation, as was also Abbâ Arsenius, who was a man eighty years old; and when the noble lady came to him and said, ‘Remember me in thy prayers,’ he did not hesitate to say, ‘I will pray to God that He may blot the remembrance of thee out of my heart.’ And by means of this which he spake, he put to shame the demon of fornication, and shewed how great was the hatred for this unclean passion that warreth against the holy men which he possessed.”

[The story of Martînyânâ and the harlot is as follows:— There was a certain monk who dwelt in the desert, and whose name was Martînyânâ, and he laboured in great works, and God wrought by his hands many mighty deeds, and he was applauded by all men. Now when Satan, the Evil One, saw that he was greatly applauded he became bitterly angry, and he wished to distract and to withdraw him from his rule of life and ascetic labours. One day Satan saw that many folk were glorifying him, and he went and dwelt in a certain harlot, and he sent her to the blessed man in order to make him fall. So the harlot took her attire, and placed it in a bag, and went to the holy man, and when she arrived at his abode it was evening; and she knocked at the door and said, “O Saint Martînyânâ, open the door to me, so that the wild beasts may not eat me.” Now the holy man thought that she was a phantom, and he rose up and prayed, and since meanwhile she ceased not to cry out, he rose up from his prayer, and opened the door to her, and said to her, “Whence comest thou to me, O devil?” And she said, “[My] companions have forsaken me on the road, and I wandered about in the desert, and have arrived hither”; and he left her [there], and went into the inner cell, and shut the door thereof between himself and her. And after the old man had laid down to sleep the harlot arrayed herself in her attire, and put on her ornaments, and then sat down; and when the morning had come, the old man went forth from his cell, and seeing her dressed he said to her, “Whence art thou? What is thy business?” And she said, “I am a daughter of people of high degree, and my parents are dead, and they have left me great wealth. I heard that thou wast a great man, and I have come to thee, and I beg thee to come to my house and take me to wife, and we will live

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“on thy excellence.” Then the old man said unto her, “How can I forsake my labour and my rule of life, and take thee to wife, and fall from my covenant?” And she said unto him, “What sin is there in it? Did not Adam and all the Fathers take wives, and Noah, and Abraham, from whose seed Christ hath risen?” Now by repeating these and suchlike things, she well-nigh succeeded in leading the holy man away captive, and he said unto her, “O woman, tarry a little so that I may see, lest peradventure some one may come and see us.” And having gone up to the roof to look, he woke up in his mind, and he made a flame of fire and stood up in it, and stayed in the fire until he burnt his toes; and when the harlot saw this, she fell down at his feet and wept, saying, “I have sinned against God and thee,” and she revealed unto him the whole truth, [saying], “I repent.” And the holy man sent her to a nunnery, and he remained in his cell until his feet were healed of the burning of the fire. And after he was healed of his sickness, he rose up and went and dwelt in an island in the sea, where there were neither women nor men.]

630. The brethren said, “What is the meaning of that which one of the old men said, ‘If thou seest the wings of ravens flying about thou wilt also see the prayer of him that is oppressed in mind being exalted?’” The old man said, “As the ravens do not in the course of their flight mount upwards to the height of heaven like the eagle, but fly close to the surface of the ground and wheel about [seeking] for their unclean food, so is the mind of the man who is not fervent in the love of God, and who is continually in a state of sluggishness and dejection, for when he standeth up for service or for prayer, his thought will not be exalted to the height of the love of Christ, but his mind will wander after evil passions.”

631. The brethren said, “An old man said, ‘If thou seest a young man who, in his desire, ascendeth unto heaven, take hold of his foot and sweep him hence, for in this way thou wilt help him’; what is the meaning of the words, ‘Who in his desire ascendeth unto heaven?’” The old man said, “This resembleth that which Isaiah spake, ‘If the mind seeketh to ascend to the Cross before the feelings cease from feebleness, the wrath of God shall come upon him because he hath begun to do something which is beyond his capacity, without having first of all cured his feelings.’ Now certain of the beginners in the ascetic life are so silly and bold as to dare to undertake things which are far above their capacity and their strength; they do not wish to learn, and they will not be persuaded by the commands of their Fathers, but, without

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“having lived the proper period of time in the coenobium, they dare to enter the cell, even as it is written concerning one of the brethren in the Book of Paradise, for immediately he had received the garb of the monk, he went and shut himself up as a solitary recluse, saying, ‘I am a monk of the ‘desert’; and the Fathers went and brought him out into the monastery [again]. There are others, too, who seek to shut themselves up for a week at a time, and it in no wise helpeth them; and there are others, the children of this world, who at the beginning of their careers imitate the exalted rule of life of the Fathers, and who imagine that they can imitate the rule of the mind, that is to say, of the spirit, when as yet they have not fulfilled the rule of the body. Therefore their lives and works are not open to the Fathers, and they will not receive correction, but they live according to their own desire, and they are delivered over into the hands of the devils who make a mock of them.”

632. The brethren said, “One of the brethren asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, ‘My body is feeble, and I cannot lead an ‘ascetic life.’ Abbâ Poemen said unto him, ‘Canst thou lead the ascetic life in thy thought, and not permit it to go with ‘deceit to thy neighbour?’ Tell us how the feeble man was able to lead the ascetic life in his thoughts.” The old man said, “This question belongeth closely, both in order and meaning, to that which a certain brother asked Abbâ Poemen, saying, ‘My body is feeble, but my thoughts are not.’ Now in the former case he spake having regard to those who were afraid that through pains and sickness they would become negligent of the labours of spiritual excellence, and, in a different manner, that they might fall into pains and sickness by way of punishment; in the latter case he spake having regard to those who had toiled for a very long time in the labours of self-denial, and who had finally become enfeebled, either through old age, or through pains and sicknesses, and who were ceasing from ascetic labours. Now this is what Abbâ Poemen [meant] when he said, ‘If thou art not now able, by reason of thy weakness, to toil in the labours of the body as thou didst formerly, toil in the labours of the soul, that is to say, the ruling of the thoughts, which is the ruling of the mind; if thou art unable to fast from meats, fast from evil thoughts; and if thou art no longer able, through the weakness of the body, to stand up and to recite as many Psalms as formerly, make thy mind to stand up before our Lord, and pray before Him vigilantly with the prayer which is secret and pure, and be tranquil, and humble, and pleasant, and good, and forgiv-

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“ing, and merciful; and endure thy sickness and weakness
“with praise, and make no man to be sorry by thy tongue;
“and judge not, and blame not, and condemn not thy
“brother in thy heart. Now these excellences may be culti-
“vated in the soul with the labours of the mind, and not
“those of the body, and they are not impeded by the weak-
“ness of the body.”

633. The brethren said, ‘Why is it that the monks are
“obliged to go round about begging for the meat and rai-
“ment of which they have need, like those who are in the
“world, although our Lord promised them, saying, ‘Seek ye
“first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and that
“of which ye have need shall be given to you?’” (St. Matthew
vi, 33). The old man said, “This [saying] is a proof of the
“wisdom and grace of God towards those who are in the
“world, for, in the majority of cases, the righteousness of the
“children of this world consisteth of alms and compassion;
“but the children of light are righteous men and monks who,
“in their persons, and in their members, and in their thoughts,
“serve our Lord. And God hath made the monks to have
“need of the children of this world because of His love, so that
“they may care each for the other, and may pray each for the
“other, that is to say, the children of the world must care for
“the monks, and the monks must pray in love for them. And
“as the children of the world make the monks associates with
“them in the corporeal things of the world, the monks must
“make the children of the world to be associates with them
“in the things of heaven, for our Lord spake to the children
“of the world, saying, ‘Make ye to yourselves friends of this
“mammon of iniquity, so that when they have become per-
“fect they may receive you into their tabernacles which are
“for ever’” (St. Luke xvi, 9).

634. The brethren said, “What is the difference between
“[the words], ‘I will dwell in you,’ and ‘I will walk in you,’
“which God spake concerning the righteous? And what is the
“meaning of ‘dwelling,’ and ‘walking?’” The old man said,
“God dwelleth in the saints through the constant remembrance
“with which they remember Him, as they marvel at Him, and
“His works; but He walketh in them by means of His visions
“and revelations [which He sendeth] upon them as they mar-
“vel at His majesty, and rejoice continually in His love.”

635. The brethren said, “With how many, and with what
“names is the meditation upon God called?” The old man said,
“Its names are six, and they are as follows:—1. Hope in God.
“2. The state of being bound to our Lord. 3. Continuance
“with God. 4. Persistence in all the good works of God.

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“ 5 Holding fast to God. 6. Dependence upon God. Hope in God
“ [meaneth], fix ye your gaze upon Him, and hope in Him, that
“ is to say, meditate ye upon Him. Being tied to our Lord
“ [meaneth] that we should be bound to our Lord, and should
“ fast and pray, until the old man cometh to an end, both
“ without and within. Continuance with God is the state of
“ being gratified through Him. Persistence [meaneth] that
“ we should possess persistence in the Lord in all the good
“ works of God. Holding fast to God [meaneth], ‘Cut off from
“ ‘thysel all cares which are not of Him, and let thy mind
“ ‘fasten its gaze upon God only.’ Dependence upon God [mean-
“ eth], ‘Hang thyself upon God,’ to Whom be glory (*or* praise)!
“ Amen.”

336. The brethren said, “An old man was asked a question by
“ one of the brethren, who spake thus:— ‘If I am in a state of
“ ‘admiration of God, and in purity of soul, and the time of
“ ‘prayer arriveth, ought I to come to prayer or not?’” And the
“ old man said, “‘What man who possesseth riches will make
“ ‘himself poor?’ Explain to us the meaning of the words of
“ ‘the holy man.’” The old man said, “‘The holy man calleth
“ ‘admiration of God and purity [of soul]’ that to which the
“ ‘blessed Mark gave the name ‘meditation upon God’ and
“ ‘atmosphere of freedom.’ There are some brethren whose
“ hearts become pure after labours and great strivings, and
“ they become worthy of pure prayer, and their hearts also be-
“ come illumined from time to time by the light of Divine Grace,
“ and they attain to the meditation which is on God, and to
“ the spiritual understandings which are superior to custom.
“ The Fathers would not permit the men who attained to this
“ capacity, when they were standing in the purity of soul
“ of this nature, and in the atmosphere which was free from
“ trouble, and when the beater struck the board, and the season
“ for prayer arrived, to leave this enjoyable meditation, and to
“ stand up and sing the Psalms, but they [allowed] them to remain
“ therein until it had come to an end. For a man to sing the Psalms
“ and to perform the service could always be found, but such
“ meditation and such purity of the understanding, and the
“ atmosphere of freedom could not at all times be acquired,
“ and a man is neither able nor hath the power to attain to this
“ state whensoever he pleaseth, for it is a gift from heaven which
“ is given by our Lord from time to time to him that is worthy
“ thereof. For this reason one of the Fathers gave the follow-
“ ing commandment:—If a man enjoyeth such meditation
“ whilst he be standing up at the service, let him not interrupt
“ it until it cometh to an end, for such meditation filleth the
“ place of the service of the Psalms. See then that thou drivest

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“not away from thee the gift of God, and let thy subservience
“(*or* submission) to the same stand firm; but it is right to know
“that certain brethren have not as yet attained to meditation
“of this kind. They have thought that these words were
“spoken for every man and for men of every kind of capacity,
“and although their minds have been illumined somewhat by
“the Psalms and prayers, they have relaxed the fulfilment of
“the canon of their service, wherein are placed their consolation,
“and their wages, and their profit, and have occupied
“themselves [with the meditation], but on several occasions
“they have been interrupted in the meditation which hath
“come to them by the devils. It is, therefore, not right for the
“brethren who are beginners in the ascetic life to do this, but
“they should commit their life and works and meditation wholly
“to God, and if it should happen that this meditation cometh to
“them, let them reveal the matter to one of the old men who
“is acquainted with such things, so that the demons may not
“lead them astray and work their destruction.”

637. The brethren said, “By what means did the Fathers
“sing the Psalms of the Holy Spirit without wandering [of
“mind]?” The old man said, “First of all they accustomed
“themselves whensoever they stood up to sing the service in
“their cells to labour with great care to collect their minds
“from wandering, and to understand the meaning of the
“Psalms, and they took care never to let one word (*or* verse)
“escape them without their knowing the meaning thereof, not
“as a mere matter of history, like the interpreters, and not after
“the manner of the translator, like Basil and John [Chrysos-
“tom], but spiritually, according to the interpretation of the
“Fathers, that is to say, they applied all the Psalms to their
“own lives and works, and to their passions, and to their
“spiritual life, and to the wars which the devils waged against
“them. Each man did thus according to his capacity, whether
“he was engaged in a rule of life for the training of the body,
“or of the soul, or of the spirit, even as it is written, ‘Blessed
“‘are the people who know Thy praises, O Lord,’ that is to
“say, blessed is the monk who, whilst glorifying Thee with
“praise, collecteth his mind from wandering, and understand-
“eth clearly the knowledge and meaning of the Psalms of
“the spirit, even as it is written, ‘Sing ye unto God with
“‘praise, sing ye unto our King.’ When then a man singeth
“the service in this manner, and payeth attention to the mean-
“ing of the verse, he acquireth daily the faculty of singing a
“song mingled with the meditation of God and with the gaze
“[which is fixed] upon Him. And after the time in which he
“hath arrived at the spiritual rule of life, immediately a monk

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“hath begun to sing the Psalms, though one or two sections of them become too great for him, he is permitted to sing them with understanding and with the meditation which is on God, and he refraineth from the customary Psalms, and he singeth a song which is superior [to that of] body and flesh, and which is like unto that of angels, even as the Fathers say.”

638. The brethren said, “By means of what thoughts of excellence may the children of this world not be offended by the monks, when they see or hear concerning the stumblings (or lapses) which come upon them through the frailty of [their] nature, and from the wars of the devils?” The old man said, “When they consider and look upon the monks as frail men, who are clothed with a body which is full of passions, and who although they are monks are striving to imitate the life and deeds of angels, yet owing to the weakness of their bodies, and the inclination of their souls, and the need which cleaveth unto them, and the strivings of the devils against them, the children of the world will see that it is quite impossible that the monks should not be snared, involuntarily, by certain weaknesses. For behold, some of the perfect men [mentioned] in the Old and New Testaments were caught in snares against their will, through the frailty of their nature and the war of the devils, as, for example, the blessed and perfect men Moses, and Aaron, and David, and Samson, and Hezekiah, and Peter and Paul.”

639. The brethren said, “Why do the monks who have led a life of hard labour become in their old age silly, and simple, and act in a foolish way like children and drunken men?” The old man said, “Because all the ascetic excellences which God hath placed in the nature of their souls, and which appear in them from their youth up, perish through the relaxing of the will, and through the love of the body, and the war of the devils, and finally through labours and contentings. Sometimes they receive them from our Lord as gifts, even as it is written, ‘Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of God,’ even as our Lord said.”

640. The brethren said, “What should be the beginning of the fight against sin of the man who hath cast all impediments out of his soul, and who hath entered the arena, and where should he begin the contest?” The old man said, “It is well known unto every man that in all the contests against sin and its lusts the labour of fasting is the first thing [to undertake], and it is so especially in the case of him that fighteth against the sin which is within him; and the sign of

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“ the enmity against sin and its lusts becometh apparent in
“ those who go down to this invisible conflict when they begin
“ to fast. And next cometh the rising up in the night, and
“ whosoever loveth the occupation of fasting all the days of
“ his life is a friend of chastity. For as the pleasure of the
“ belly, and the laxity caused by the sleep which inciteth to a
“ polluted bed, are the head and chief of all the sins which are
“ in the world, and all the abominations thereof, so fasting,
“ and strict vigil in the fear of God, with the crucifying of the
“ body throughout the night against the pleasures of sleep, are
“ the foundation of the holy path of God, and of all the spiri-
“ tual excellences. For fasting is the strengthener of all spiritual
“ excellences, it is the beginning and end of the strife, and it
“ is the foremost of all virtues; and as the enjoyment of the
“ light cleaveth closely to the eyes which are healthy, so doth
“ the desire for prayer cleave closely to the fasting [which is
“ observed] with discernment. For as soon as a man hath begun
“ to fast, he desireth greatly to converse with God in his mind.
“ The body which is fasting cannot continue to lie on [its] bed
“ the whole night, for fasting naturally inciteth to wakeful-
“ ness towards God, not only by day, but also by night; for
“ the empty body is not fatigued overmuch by its conflict with
“ sleep, even though it be weak in the senses thereof, for its
“ mind is towards God in supplication, and it is better for it to
“ cease from labour through weakness than from the weights
“ of meats. As long as the seals of fasting lie upon the mouth
“ of man, his thoughts meditate upon repentance, and his
“ heart maketh prayers to arise; and mildness lieth upon his
“ countenance, and abominable motions are remote from him,
“ and rejoicing never, in the smallest degree, appeareth in his
“ forehead, for he is a foe of lusts and of unprofitable converse.
“ The man who fasted regularly and with understanding, and
“ whom abominable lust brought into subjection hath never
“ been seen, for fasting is the abode of all spiritual excellences,
“ and he who holdeth it in contempt disturbeth them all. Now,
“ the first commandment which God laid down for our nature
“ at the beginning gave [Adam] warning concerning the eat-
“ ing of food, and the head of our race fell through eating,
“ therefore, at the point where the first corruption took place
“ [in asceticism], must begin the building of the fear of God,
“ when they lay down the first course for the observance of the
“ law. And moreover when our Lord shewed Himself at the
“ Jordan He also began at this point, for after He was baptized
“ the Spirit took Him out into the wilderness, and He fasted
“ for forty days and forty nights; and all those who travel in
“ His footsteps lay the beginning of their strife on this founda-

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tion. For who shall treat with contempt, or hold lightly the armour which hath been forged by God? If He Who laid down the law fasted, who is there among those who would keep the law that hath not need thereof? Immediately this armour appeareth on a man straightway terror falleth upon the thoughts of the chief of the rebellion, that is, Satan; and his power is shattered at the sight of the arms which our Captain of the host hath placed in our hands, for as soon as he seeth the might of this armour on a man he knoweth at once that he is ready for the contest. What armour is there which is as strong or which giveth such boldness in the fight against evil spirits as hunger for the sake of Christ? For in proportion as a man is harried and brought low in his body, at the time when the phalanx of Satan surroundeth him, doth his heart support itself with confidence, and he who treateth this with contempt is lax and is a coward in respect of other spiritual triumphs, because he hath not upon him the armour whereby the divine athletes have gained the victory. And at the very beginning the sign of weakness appeareth in him, and he himself giveth the opportunity of defeat to his adversary, and since he goeth naked into the strife it is evident that he will emerge therefrom without victory, because he hath cast away from him the strength which would stir up in him the divine zeal; for his members are not clothed with the flame of hunger, that is to say, fasting. As merchants cannot without labour and trouble save up riches, so the righteous man without anguish and labour for the sake of righteousness cannot expect the crown and the reward."

641. The brethren said, "If a man attaineth unto purity of heart what is the sign thereof? And when will he know himself if the heart is coming to purity?" The old man said, "When he seeth that all men are fair, and when no man appeareth to him to be unclean or polluted; whosoever is thus indeed standeth in purity. And if this be not the case, how can he fulfil the word of the Apostle which saith, 'When a man standeth wholly in purity, he will think that every man is better than he in heart and in truth,' unless it be that he attaineth to the state of him of whom it is said, 'He whose eyes are pure seeth not wickedness.'"

642. The brethren said, "What is purity? And to what length doth its limit extend?" The old man said, "In my opinion purity consisteth in oblivion of the various kinds of knowledge which are beyond nature, and which nature hath discovered in the world; and the limit thereof is that a man should be wholly free from them, so that he may arrive at

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“the state of natural simplicity and integrity which he possessed at first, and which somewhat resembleth that of a child, except in the case of small matters.”

643. The brethren said, “Is it possible for a man to attain to this state?” The old man said, “Yea. Behold, one of the old men attained to this state to such a degree that he was in the habit of asking his disciple continually if he had eaten or not. And on one occasion one of the saints, who was a very old man, became too innocent and simple, and attained to such a state of simplicity and purity that he did not even know how to keep watch upon himself so that he might partake of the Mysteries, or whether he had done so or not, until at length his disciples kept him in his cell, and took him that he might partake of the Mysteries, just as if he had been a child. Now although he was in this state as regards the things of this world, he was perfect in his soul.”

644. The brethren said, “What are the [subjects of] meditation and conversation which it is meet for a man to have whilst he is living the life of the recluse and passing his time in silent contemplation, so that his understanding may not occupy itself with casual thoughts?” The old man said, “Dost thou ask concerning meditation, what shall a man have wherewith to put to death the world in his cell? Hath the man whose soul is strenuous and watchful any need [to ask] the question as to what labour he shall occupy himself with when he is alone? What is there for the monk to occupy himself with except weeping? If, then, the monk be unoccupied with weeping, and he be able to pay attention to [any] other thought, what is the meditation which hath died out of him? And if we come to silent meditation, we can also be constant in weeping, and therefore let us beseech our Lord most earnestly with the mind that He may grant this unto us.”

645. The brethren said, “Since, then, a man is not sufficient for the constant exercise of this faculty, because of the frailty (or sickness) of his bodily nature, it is right that he should have something else besides this which shall be useful for the consolation of his mind, so that the passions may not attack him through the idleness of the understanding.” The old man said, “The passions cannot attack the soul of the monk, whose heart hath been cut off from the world by living a solitary ascetic life, unless he hath been negligent of the things which it is proper for him to do; and this is so especially if he hath, besides the employment [of reading] the Scriptures, the helpful thoughts of the man who is occupied with spiritual excellence. And living alone and in silence will help this [result] greatly, and he will receive in his mind the

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“hope of the world which is to come, and the glory which is laid up for the saints.”

646. The brethren said, “One of the old men said, ‘I have toiled for twenty years that I might see all men together (i.e., alike).’ How can a man attain to this measure, and when, and by what means? Give us a demonstration concerning this matter.” The old man said, “It is only the perfect men who attain to this measure, and according to what the Fathers say, without contemplation in silence, and prayer, and great conflicts, and humility, no man can attain thereto. And there is a similarity to this demonstration in the case of natural parents, for as they regard all their children in the same way, and as they love them all equally, and pity and spare all of them alike, even though there be among them great and small, and healthy and sick, and righteous and sinners, and good-looking and bad-looking, so the strenuous Fathers after the labours and the contests which they have passed through during long periods of time spent in silent and solitary retirement, regard all men, both the righteous and the sinners, in the same way, and they love them all alike and without distinction. And as God maketh the shadow to fall upon all men, both upon the righteous and upon sinners, even though he loveth the righteous for their righteousness, yet He sheweth most compassion upon the sinners. And the coming of our Lord was for the sake of sinners, for [saith He], ‘I did not come to call the righteous,’ &c.”

647. The brethren said, “Why was it, when the brother, according to the body, of one of the Fathers who was living the life of a recluse, sent to him, when he was about to die, to come and see him, that he would not do so, and that the one brother died without seeing the other? And what is the meaning of the words which he spake, ‘If I go forth and see him my heart will not be pure before God’?” The old man said, “The holy man was living secluded in a cell, in a habitation of the brethren, and his brother according to the body was also living, like the other brethren in another cell, and when the latter became sick unto death, he wished to see his brother before he died. Now to the holy man, since he was keeping silence in respect of all the other brethren, it did not appear to be right to go forth to his brother according to the body, and not to go forth afterwards to his spiritual brethren, that is to say, to those who dwelt in the monastery with him. Had he gone forth to his brother according to the body at the season of his death, and had not gone forth to his brethren in the spirit, he would not have found freedom of speech with God at the season of prayer, but his mind would have passed

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“judgement upon him, and his mind would have been darkened, as if he had held in contempt and treated his brethren in the spirit in a dishonourable fashion, and had done more honour to his brother according to the body than to them. This is the meaning of what he said, ‘I cannot go forth, for if I do, my heart will not be pure before God.’”

648. The brethren said, “The sage said, ‘Whosoever possesseth not the art of labouring, that is, either the things which belong to the labour of the spirit, whereby he may find consolation from God in his inner man in the spirit, or the things which belong to the art of human labour, cannot tarry long in his cell; whosoever doth not possess one or other of these cannot tarry long in his cell.’ Explain to us the words of the old man.” The old man said, “The things which belong to the art of human labour are well known unto every man; but things which belong to labour of the spirit he calleth the following: fasting, vigil, the singing of psalms and hymns, the prayers which are said kneeling down, anguish, weeping, tears, and other labours which are like unto these. And together with these [there must be the recital of] the offices for the seven hours [of the day and night], and the reading of the Holy Scriptures and of the [books of] doctrine of the old men, and these make the monk to acquire patient endurance, and the ability to live the ascetic life alone in a cell, and they produce for him joy and spiritual comfort. If he be a beginner in the ascetic life and strong, and he toil-eth in labours, he will acquire consolation; and if he be a feeble old man, or sick, he will labour in the labours of the mind, and will find joy. For as all the objects which are of gold are wrought by means of anvil, and a hammer, and a pair of tongs, so by means of the labour of the body in a place of silence and seclusion, and the striving of the mind, are wrought all the fruits of the spirit, which the Apostle said were love, joy, peace, faith, humility, graciousness, pleasantness, long-suffering and patient endurance.”

649. The brethren said, “On one occasion, when the brethren were sitting down and asking questions about the thoughts, one of them said, ‘It is not a great matter if a man seeth thoughts afar off.’ What did he want to say? Explain to us the words of the old men.” The old man said, “When the brethren drew nigh to the Fathers and asked them questions [wishing] to learn concerning the mode of action and thought in respect of the wars of the devils, the Fathers did not persuade those among them who appeared to possess subtlety of thought, and intelligence, and understanding, and to hate the passions, and to be fervent in the

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“spirit, to cast out from themselves straightway the thoughts
“of the passions whensoever they stirred in them, and to make
“them to depart foolishly, but they ordered them to tarry with
“them, and to examine carefully how they arose, and then to
“contend against them; for in proportion as they were trained
“in the knowledge of strivings and contendings against the
“passions and against devils they would benefit not them-
“selves only, but many other people also. And in this wise
“acted also Evagrius, that man of understanding, and Abbâ
“Poemen, and others who were like unto them. Therefore
“Abbâ Joseph said to Abbâ Poemen, ‘When the passions rise
“‘up in thee, give unto and receive from them, and understand
“‘carefully their crafty nature, and train thyself to contend
“‘against them.’ Now there are certain weak and foolish breth-
“ren whom in no way whatsoever doth it benefit to dally with
“the rise of the thoughts of the passions which are in the
“heart, on the contrary, it is far better for them, immediately
“they perceive the motions of the passions, to cast them forth
“from them by prayer, and with anger and hatred. Therefore,
“when several of the Fathers were gathered together and
“were discussing the conflicts of the thoughts, and whether it
“was right to dally with them because of knowledge [concern-
“ing them], or to suppress them by means of prayer through
“fear [of them], one of the Fathers said, ‘Even to understand
“‘the thoughts afar off is a great and excellent work, but it
“‘is a far greater work, and one which maketh a man to ac-
“‘quire practice, for him to understand the thoughts, and to
“‘wage war against them. When he hath gained experience
“‘of their crafty character, then he will suppress them and
“‘make them to disappear by the power of prayer and hu-
“‘mility. Now the meaning of this question is this. When a
“‘man hath laboured in conflict and contest against the pas-
“‘sions for a long time in seclusion, by the grace of our Lord
“‘his heart becometh purified, and rest and peace reign in his
“‘soul, and he hath relief from tribulation, and he rejoiceth in
“‘God at all seasons, and the devils have no power henceforth
“‘to stir up evil thoughts in his soul, because his heart is
“‘filled with divine thoughts, and the understanding of spiri-
“‘tual things, and he is never without the mind which is in
“‘God, and the remembrance of His fear and mercy. And
“‘should the demons dare to stir up thoughts in him, they
“‘will not [succeed] in rousing those which cause anguish
“‘and which bring to naught spiritual excellences, but only
“‘those which are of an ordinary nature, and which impede
“‘the vision, even as Evagrius said.’”

650. The brethren said, “How is it possible for a man to live

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“in such a way as to be pleasing to God?” The old man said, “It is impossible for a monk to rise to the height of the love of God, unless he first of all regard with affection and love man, the image of God; for this is the end of all the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ, even as He Himself said, ‘If ye love Me, keep My commandments.’”

651. The brethren said, “An old man said, ‘If there rise up in thy mind a thought about the need of the body, and thou castest it out once, and it cometh to thee a second time, and thou castest it out, should it come a third time, pay no regard to it, for it appertaineth to war’; explain to us these words.” The old man said, “If whilst thou art in seclusion, and art engaged in spiritual labour, Satan, being envious of thee, and wishing to drive thee out of the cell, or to impede thy spiritual progress, stir up in thee one of the thoughts which goad a man into sin, either to eat before the proper time, or to lie down and sleep, or to visit some one, or to do something else; and if he sheweth thee thy power of discretion [saying], ‘It is unseemly for thee to do this thing’; or again, should some evil devil constrain thee, and hinder thee, and wishing to make thee to cease from thy labour, should mock and scoff at thee; then stand thou up quickly, and bestir thyself boldly, and bow thy knee before our Lord, and pray, and ask, and entreat for help, and mercy, and protection. For that brother who soaked palm fibres in water, and who sat down to plait ropes and mats, was engaged in a similar war, and a demon roused up in him the thought to go and visit one of the brethren; and he cast the thought from him twice, and thrice. Now finally, because he did not understand that the war was of the Evil One, who sought to stop [his work] and drive him out of his cell, he was overcome by the war, and he left the palm leaves soaking in the water, and ran and hurried out in great haste. At length the matter was revealed unto one of the holy men who was a neighbour of his, and he cried out to him, saying, ‘Captive, Captive,’ and made him to come back to his cell, and afterwards the devils cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Ye have overcome us, O monks.’ For the demons are so wicked, and they are so envious of the monks when they remain constantly in seclusion for our Lord’s sake, that on several occasions they have, in an irregular manner, driven them out of their cells, as if for a good object, but their object was not a good one.”

652. The brethren said, “Why was it that Abbâ Ammon was not able to overcome the passion of wrath for fourteen years, although he said unto us, that he had entreated God,

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“with anguish and tears, both by day and by night unceasingly, to give him the victory over it?” The old man said, “That passion probably overcame him to an excessive degree through the natural constitution of his body, but it is quite certain that the passions and the devils waged war against him like a mighty man and a warrior. For the devils made war upon the Fathers with intense fierceness and violence, upon each man according to his capacity, and in proportion to their power to triumph, through long-suffering, that is to say, through patient and persistent endurance, the battle against them was protracted.”

653. The brethren said, “Abbâ Dorotheus said, ‘Our lack of ability to distinguish between matters will permit us to acquire great excellence in the virtues’; explain to us what the old man [intended] to say.” The old man said, “He wished to say as follows:—‘Because of our lack of ability to distinguish between matters we do not make progress in the virtues, and our heart is not quickly purified, and we do not ascend to perfection, because we do not labour with the knowledge and power of discernment which it is right [for us to have]; but [we progress] painfully, and [only] for the sake of vainglory, and as the result of chance circumstances, and without discretion. And, as it cometh, this resembleth that which the blessed Evagrius spake, saying, “As it is not the material foods themselves which nourish the body, but the power which is in them, so it is not matters themselves which make the soul to grow, but the power of discernment which [cometh] from them.” And he also said, “As the feeding, and health, and growth of the body do not come through the actual materials of our foods, for these are cast out of the body in the draught, but from the hidden power which is in them, so also the nourishment and the growth of the soul take place through the fear of God. And the healthy state thereof which ariseth through impassibility, and the perfection thereof which is in righteousness, do not exist through the labours of the body only, but from the deeds and acts which [are performed] with knowledge, that is to say, with a straight object, and from the action of the mind which hateth passions, and from the prayer which is joined to humility, and from the mind which is in God.”’”

654. The brethren said, “Abbâ Arsenius said unto one of the brethren, ‘Lead the ascetic life with all the strength that thou hast, and the hidden labour which is within, and which is performed for God’s sake, shall vanquish thine external passions’; to what doth he give the name of ‘passions?’”

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The old man said, "In this case Arsenius calleth the labours of the body 'passions.' For labours are also called by the name of 'passions,' because they constrain those who toil, and make them feel pain, even as Abbâ Macarius said, "Constrain thy soul with pains and labours of every kind in 'ascetic excellence.' And this is what Abbâ Arsenius said to that brother, Labour with all thy might in the work of righteousness, and toil with the labours of the mind more than with all the various kinds of work of the body. For the labours of the body only incite and gratify the passions of the body, but the labours of the mind, that is to say, the thought which is in God, and prayer without ceasing, and the suppression of the thought[s] with humility, liberate [a man] from all the passions, and they vanquish devils, and purify the heart, and make perfect love, and make him worthy of the revelations of the spirit."

655. The brethren said, "What is the meaning of that which Abbâ Benjamin said, 'Had Moses not been gathering the sheep into the fold he would not have seen Him that was in the bush?'" The old man said, "What he said was this:—As the blessed Moses, who was held worthy of the vision in the bush, first gathered together the sheep which he was tending into one company lest, when going to see that wonderful sight, his mind should be perturbed through anxiety about the sheep which were [wandering] in the desert, so also is it with the monk, for if he wisheth and desireth the purity of heart which looketh upon God in the revelation of light, it is right that first of all he should abandon every earthly possession, and his feelings, and his passions, and he should live in seclusion always, and should collect his mind and free it from all wandering and straying, and should have one object only to gaze upon, that is God. In this manner he will become worthy of purity of heart, and he will enjoy visions and revelations concerning Him."

656. The brethren said, "Hieronimus said that the blessed Evagrius commanded the brethren who were with him not to drink their fill of water, and said, 'There are always demons in the places wherein there is water'; what opinion is this?" The old man said, "The blessed Evagrius interpreted these words spiritually, as being suitable to our mode of life, and he said that which our Lord said, 'The demon goeth round about in the places wherein there is no water, that he may seek for rest, and he findeth it not'; which saying maketh us to understand that when the unclean devil of fornication wageth war against the monk, if the monk afflicteth himself by eating food sparingly, and especially by

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“drinking water sparingly, Satan will never be able to injure him by means of this passion. And the devil will never be gratified at the fulfilment of this passion by him, for there is nothing which will dry up the arteries, and prevent the accident of the night, and make a monk to possess chaste and quiet thoughts by day, so much as the restraining of the belly by thirst. Some fast the whole day until the evening, and some fast for [several] nights at a time, yet when they break their fast and eat a little food, because they drink much water, they benefit in no wise by their fasting and by the sparing use of food which they practise because of the war of lust. For the drinking of much water filleth the arteries [of the monk] with [excessive] moisture, and Satan findeth an occasion for exciting him by means of thoughts in the daytime, and he trippeth him up by means of dreams by night, and he depriveth him of the light of purity. Therefore, in another place, Abbâ Evagrius admonisheth the monk, saying, ‘If thou wishest for chastity make little thy food, and restrain thyself in the drinking of water, and then impassibility of heart shall rise upon thee, and thou shalt see in thy prayer a mind which emitteth light like unto a star.’”

657. The brethren said, “In how many ways doth Divine Grace call the brethren unto the life of the solitary ascetic?” The old man said, “In very many and different ways. Sometimes Divine Grace moveth a man suddenly, even as it moved Abbâ Moses, the Ethiopian, and sometimes by the hearing of the Scriptures, as in the cases of the blessed Mâr Anthony and Mâr Simon Stylites, and at others by the doctrine of the word, as in the cases of Serapion, and Abbâ Bessarion, and others who were like unto them. Concerning these three ways whereby Divine Grace calleth to those who would repent, I would say that Divine Grace moveth the conscience of a monk in the manner which is pleasing to God, and that through these even evil-doers have repented and pleased God. And there is, moreover, the departure from this world by the hands of angels, by terrors, and sicknesses, and afflictions, even as that which took place in respect of the blessed Evagrius; and sometimes God Himself calleth from heaven and taketh a man out of the world, as in the cases of Paul, and Abbâ Arsenius.”

658. The brethren said, “Wherefore is it that the beginning of the doctrine of the old men is laid down in the books from the choice (*or* election) of Abbâ Arsenius, and on [his] coming forth from the world into a monastery, and from a monastery of the brethren into the seclusion which is in a cell?”

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The old man said, "Because he was called by God to the monastery, and from the monastery to the cell, and because it is certain that these two calls were according to the Will of God, well was it that the beginning of the doctrine of the old men [was derived] from the history of this holy man."

659. The brethren said, "Explain unto us these two calls of Abbâ Arsenius. What is the meaning of that which was said in the first call, 'Flee from the children of men and thou shalt live,' and what is the signification of that which was said at the second call, 'Flee, keep silence and live a life of contemplation in silence, for these are the principal things which keep a man from sinning?'" The old man said, "The meaning of 'Flee from the children of men, and thou shalt live,' is this:—If thou wishest to be delivered from the death which is in sin, and to live the perfect life which is in righteousness, leave thy possessions, and family, and country, and depart into exile, that is, to the desert and mountains to the holy men; and cultivate with them My commandments, and thou shalt live a life of grace. And the meaning of 'Flee, keep silence, and live a life of contemplation in silence' is this:—Since when thou wast in the world thou wast drawn towards anxieties about the affairs thereof, I have made thee to come out from the world, and I have sent thee to the habitation of monks, so that after a short time of dwelling in the coenobium thou mayest be drawn, first to the cultivation of My commandments openly, and secondly to contemplation in silence. And now that thou art trained in the former sufficiently, thou mayest flee, that is to say, get thee forth from the monastery of the brethren, and enter into thy cell, just as thou didst go forth from the world, and didst enter into the monastery. And the meaning of 'Keep silence, and lead a life of contemplation in silence,' is:—Having entered into thy cell to contemplate in silence, thou shalt not give the multitude an opportunity of coming in to thee, and talking to thee unnecessarily, except on matters which relate to spiritual excellence; if thou dost not do this thou wilt benefit by sitting in silent contemplation. For through the sight, and the hearing, and the converse of the multitude who shall come in to thee, the captivity of wandering thoughts will carry thee off, and thy silence and thy contemplation will be disturbed. But do not imagine that the mere fact of having left the brethren in the monastery, or not bringing other men into thy cell to be disturbed by them will be sufficient to make thy mind to be composed, or to enable thee to meditate upon God, and to correct thyself, unless thou dost take good heed not to occupy thy mind

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“with them in any way whatsoever when they are remote from thee. For until a man arriveth at a state of impassibility, and overcometh by striving both the passions and the devils, whensoever a monk remembereth any man in his cell, he remembereth him in connexion with some passion, that is to say, with desire (*or* lust), or with anger, or with vain-glory. And if it should happen that the mind wandereth in respect of ordinary things (*or* means), unless he cutteth them off from him, his wandering inclineth through absolute necessity towards a remembrance which is allied to some passion. And it is also thus in the case of a neophyte, for whensoever during his contemplation in silence he remembered women he falleth into the lust of fornication; and whensoever he remembereth men, he is either wroth with them in his thoughts, and he maketh accusations against them, and blameth them, and condemneth them, or he demandeth from them vainglory, and he inclineth to passibility. Therefore when Abbâ Macarius was asked, ‘What is the right way for a brother, who is a neophyte, to live in his cell?’ he said, ‘Let no monk when he is in his cell have any remembrance whatsoever of any man, for he cannot profit in any way in restraining his feelings from the conversation of men, except he take care to withhold his thoughts from secret intercourse with them.’ This is the meaning of the words, ‘Flee, keep silence, and contemplate in silence.’”

660. The brethren said, “What is the meaning of the words which one of the old men spake, saying, ‘He who dwelleth with men, because of the commotion of worldly affairs is unable to see his sins; but if he dwell in the silent repose of the desert he will be able to see God in a pure manner?’” The old man said, “The excellences which are cultivated in the world, and to which our Lord, speaking in the Gospel, ascribed blessing, are lovingkindness, peace-making and the other commandments which are like unto them, and it is quite possible for such virtues to be cultivated in the world by certain strenuous persons. But the purity of heart which seeth God, and to which our Lord ascribed blessing, saying, ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,’ cannot be acquired without dwelling in the desert, and solitary and silent contemplation, and the monk must acquire it in the following way. First of all a man must go forth from the world, and dwell in a monastery, and after his training in a monastery and having gone into his cell, he must die through contemplation in silence, and through the other labours of his body, and through striving against the passions, and through conflict with devils. Then through the

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“tranquillity of mind [which he will acquire] in silent contemplation, he will remember his sins, and when he hateth his passions, and hath petitioned for the remission of his sins, and hath suppressed his thoughts, and hath become constant in pure prayer, and hath cleansed his heart from odious thoughts, then shall he be worthy to see in his heart, even as in a polished mirror, the light of the revelation of our Lord [shine] upon it, even as the Fathers say. Well, then, did that holy man say to those brethren, Visit the sick, reconcile the men of wrath, for he who cultivateth spiritual excellences in the world cannot, by reason of the commotion of the affairs thereof, see his sins; but if he continue in silent contemplation and prayer he shall see God.”

661. The brethren said, “What is [the meaning of] that which Abbâ Sisoës said to Abbâ Ammon, ‘Freedom of my thoughts in the desert is sufficient for me?’” The old man said, “Sisoës was a great and a perfect old man, and he dwelt all the days of his life in the remote desert, and after he had become old, and was exceedingly feeble, the Fathers brought him to the monastery of the brethren, who used to go in and visit him each day, for the sake of some profitable discourse and helpful prayer. And because he was unaccustomed to feel comfortable in the presence of many folks, his mind began to wander about in remembering the brethren, and to meditate upon many things, and he was unable to find that dominant freedom for the continuous, secret prayer of the mind, which is superior to every influence that would make it decline, and is free from every [other] attraction, and he was, therefore, rightly grieved. Now one day, Abbâ Ammon went to visit him, and he saw that he was sorry about his coming from the desert, and he said unto him, ‘Father, it is not right for thee to be sorrowful because thou hast drawn nigh to the place where the brethren dwell, for thy body hath become feeble, and thou art unable to perform those works wherein thou wert wont to labour in the desert.’ Now when Abbâ Sisoës heard these things, he looked at Abbâ Ammon sternly, and he answered him with indignation, saying, ‘What sayest thou to me, Ammon? Was not the freedom of the thoughts which I had in the desert sufficient to take the place for me of all labours? And as regards thyself also, O Ammon, who art conscious of the life and acts of the freedom of the mind, and who art not subject unto the constraint of wandering and disturbance of the mind, and who art not impeded by old age and infirmity, tell me what thou art able to do in the desert at thy great age? Even if I be unequal to the labours of the

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“body, because I have become infirm through old age, I am
“better able to perform the labours of the mind than I was
“in the time of my early manhood. Or, perhaps in thy opinion
“the clear shining of the mind, which a monk acquireth by
“a life of contemplation in silence, and the constant inter-
“course with God, and the prayer which is without ceasing,
“and the remembrance of Christ, and the constant gazing
“upon Him, and the exultation of the soul in Him, and the
“favour of His love, and the affection for His command-
“ments, and the desire for His good things, and the medita-
“tion upon His glory, and the thought about His excellence
“and His majesty, and the admiration of His humility, are
“matters which are small and contemptible? All these labours
“of the mind, and many others which are like unto them,
“neither old age nor infirmity impedes, but they are pre-
“vented, and brought low, and, by degrees, are destroyed,
“by converse with the children of men, and by seeing many
“people, and by care about worldly affairs.”

662. The brethren said, “They used to say that when the ser-
vice in the church was over, Abbâ Macarius was wont to flee
to his cell, and that the brethren said, ‘He hath a devil, but
he doeth the work of God.’ Now who were those who said
that he had a devil? And what was the work of God which
he used to do?” The old man said, “Those who said that
he had a devil were the lazy brethren. Whensoever Satan
seeth the monks who are leading a life of spiritual excellence
in the monastery, the devils stir up the lazy brethren to wage
war against them, by means of abuse, and revilings, and
backbiting, and calumny, and by means of the trials which
they bring upon them. Now the work of God which Abbâ
Sisoës did when he fled [to his cell] was this: Prayer ac-
companied by weeping and tears, according to the exhorta-
tion of Abbâ Isaiah, who said, ‘When the congregation is
dismissed, or when thou risest up after eating, sit not
down to talk with any man, either concerning the affairs
of the world, or concerning matters of spiritual excellence;
but go thou into thy cell, and weep for thy sins, even as
Abbâ Macarius the Alexandrian said unto the brethren who
were with him, “Brethren, flee.” And the brethren said,
“Father, how can we flee more than [in coming] to the
“desert?” and he laid his hand upon his mouth, and said
“unto them, “Flee ye in this manner”; and straightway
“every man fled to his cell and held his peace.”

663. The brethren said, “Abbâ Anthony said, ‘As a fish
“dieth when it is lifted up out of the water, so doth the monk
“[die] if he remain long outside his cell’; explain these words

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“to us.” The old man said, “Because the remembrance of God is, in our Lord Jesus Christ, the life of the soul, which the Fathers call the ‘repository of life,’ and ‘the breath of the life of the soul and of the mind,’ when the monk tarrieth in the cities, and in the sight and converse of the children of men, he dieth in respect of the breath of life which is in God, that is to say, he forgetteth God, and the love of Christ groweth cold in his heart, the love which he hath acquired by many labours, and he forgetteth his virtues, and he becometh lax in respect of [his] liking for tribulations, and he loveth pleasures, and hath an affection for lusts, and the sincerity of his heart is troubled through the disturbance which entereth into his senses, that is, seeing, and speaking, and hearing, which are indeed the strength of the soul; and it happeneth also that he falleth into great passions, wherefrom may Christ God save us! Amen.”

664. The brethren said, “The excellent man Hieronymus said in the history of the triumphs of the blessed Isidore, the archimandrite, that he had in his monastery one thousand monks, and that they all lived within the gate of his habitation, and that none of them ever went outside it until the day of his death, except two brethren who only set out therefrom to sell their handiwork, and who brought in only such things as were required for their absolute needs. How is it that in an assembly of our early Fathers, that is, a congregation containing one thousand brethren, two men only were sufficient [to provide for] their ministrations? In our generation if there was a congregation of five and fifty monks, only five would lead a life of ascetic excellence in seclusion, and the [other] fifty would be going out and coming in ceaselessly and without rest to supply them with what they needed.” The old man said, “Concerning the love for labours, and the watch which the early Fathers kept [on themselves], and concerning the love of pleasure, and the laxity of ourselves who belong to a later time, if it be right to tell the truth, we ought to speak most concerning the laxity and ignorance of the governors of monasteries. In former times the brethren who lived lives of contemplation and seclusion and loved spiritual repose were many, and those who went out on to the high roads, and entered the cities, and performed outside labours were few; but in our days, in a congregation which, as ye have said, containeth five and fifty monks, five will lead a life of spiritual repose inside the monastery, and the other fifty will toil ceaselessly in the works which are outside it, and during the whole time they will complain and blame the five who are inside, because they do not go out and serve

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“even as do they. And through the words of these foolish and insolent men all the spiritual excellences which are cultivated in the monastery will perish and come to an end. And according to what I say, if the Fathers set the life of contemplation in silence against the whole of the labour of the ascetic life, and if it be more excellent than it all, who would blame him that loveth spiritual contemplation and repose, and the quiet of the cell?”

665. The brethren said, “On one occasion a congregation of monks assembled on the great festival of the Resurrection, and there were gathered together in the monastery all the Fathers, and all the recluses, and other monks, and all the old men in the congregation were asked, Which is the mightiest and most severe war which can come upon monks? And they all agreed that no war is harder or more cruel than that which maketh a man to leave his cell and depart, and that when that war is fought down, all other contests may be easily reduced. Explain to us the meaning of these words.” The old man said, “Constant spiritual repose in a cell hath hope closely bound up in it, but going out there from is united to despair. As long as a man liveth in spiritual repose, and loveth the quiet of the cell, little he goeth forward, one step at a time, according to the order of succession; and he hath hope that in our Lord he will vanquish each of the passions, and that through his repose and labours he will acquire spiritual excellences and the grace of Christ. But if the life becometh tedious to him, and he go forth and leave his cell, and wander about, he will neither vanquish the passions, nor acquire spiritual virtues, but he will incline to despair, and to utter destruction. Therefore the Fathers have well said that no war is more cruel than the war of wandering.”

666. The brethren said, “Abbâ Theodore and Abbâ Lûki passed fifty years in being harassed by their thoughts which urged them vexatiously to change [their] place [of living]; and they said, ‘When the winter cometh we will change.’ And when the winter had come, they said, ‘We will change in the summer’; and thus they continued to do till the end of their lives. Reveal to us if it were the devils who were urging these famous Fathers to go forth from their cells for a period of fifty years, that is, until their death.” The old man said, “The devils urged the great Fathers to wander and to go forth from their spiritual repose because they well knew the benefit which accrued to them therefrom, and these holy Fathers were urged by the devils also, but did not leave their cells. To-day, however, in this generation, the same

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“ devils harass the monks, and drive them out of their cells
“ by this war of departure, and therefore the great Fathers
“ who have felt this war of wandering and of departure have
“ said, ‘ There is no war which is more cruel to the monk than
“ ‘ this; may Christ help us and deliver us from it.’ ”

667. The brethren said, “ Abbâ Anthony used to say, ‘ He
“ ‘ who dwelleth in the desert is free from three wars, that is,
“ ‘ from speaking, hearing, and seeing ’; explain these words to
“ us.” The old man said, “ The old man did not speak [thus]
“ because the strife of him that dwelt in spiritual repose in the
“ desert was less fierce than that of him that wandered about
“ and mingled with men, but that he might show how much
“ more hard and laborious was the war of devils which taketh
“ place in the heart of those who dwell in spiritual repose
“ than that which cometh in the heart of those who dwell with
“ brethren. And because of this the fathers pursued after a life
“ of contemplation in silence, lest when the wars of speaking
“ and seeing and hearing were added unto that which was
“ already in their heart, they would fall by reason of their
“ severity, even as actually happened on one occasion, for a
“ woman came to the monks who were living a life of silent
“ contemplation, and there was added to the war which was
“ already in their hearts the wars of seeing, and hearing, and
“ speaking, and they would have been vanquished by the
“ severity thereof had it not been that the grace of our Lord
“ supported them. That the war which taketh place in the
“ senses of the soul against the monks who live a life of silent
“ contemplation is mightier and fiercer than that which taketh
“ place in the senses of the body, is well known from the words
“ which the blessed Evagrius spake, saying, Against the
“ monks who lead a life of silent contemplation the devils in
“ person wage war, but against those who lead a life of spiri-
“ tual excellence in a general assembly of brethren, the devils
“ only stir up and incite the lazy brethren; but the war which
“ ariseth from the sight, and the hearing, and the speech is
“ much less fierce than that which is waged against the monks
“ who dwell in silent solitude.”

668. The brethren said, “ What is the meaning of that which
“ Abbâ Anthony said, ‘ A monk’s cell is the furnace of Baby-
“ lon, and it is also a pillar of light ’? ” The old man said,
“ There are two things peculiar to the cell; the one warmeth
“ and setteth on fire, and the other giveth light and rejoicing.
“ To neophytes it is oppressive and troublesome, by reason of
“ the many wars and the dejection which are therein, but it
“ rejoiceth the perfect and maketh them glad, with purity of
“ heart, and impassibility, and revelations of light; and it is

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“ even thus with those who begin to live in silent contempla-
“ tion, for although at the beginning they are for a consider-
“ able time afflicted by the wars of the passions, and by devils,
“ they are never forsaken by the help of Divine Grace. For our
“ Lord Himself, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, cometh to them
“ secretly, and he becometh to them a helper and a companion,
“ and after they have overcome both passions and devils, ac-
“ cording to systematic order, He maketh them worthy of the
“ happiness which is in His perfect love, and the revelation of
“ His glorious light.”

669. The brethren said, “ Abbâ Moses the Ethiopian was on
“ one occasion reviled by certain men, and the brethren asked
“ him, saying, ‘Wast not thou troubled in thy heart, O father,
“ ‘ when thou wast reviled?’ And he said unto them, ‘Although
“ ‘ I was troubled, yet I said nothing.’ What is the meaning
“ of the words, ‘ Although I was troubled I spake not?’” The
“ old man said, “ The perfection of monks consisteth of two
“ parts, that is to say, of impassibility of the senses of the body,
“ and of impassibility of the senses of the soul. Impassibility of
“ the body taketh place when a man who is reviled restraineth
“ himself for God’s sake and speaketh not, even though he be
“ troubled; but impassibility of the soul taketh place when a man
“ is abused and reviled, and yet is not angry in his heart when
“ he is abused, even like John Colobos. For on one occasion
“ when the brethren were sitting with him, a man passed by
“ and upbraided him, but he was not angry, and his coun-
“ tenance changed not; then the brethren asked him, saying,
“ ‘ Art thou not secretly troubled in thy heart, O father, being
“ ‘ reviled in this fashion?’ And he answered and said unto
“ them, ‘ I am not troubled inwardly, for inwardly I am just
“ ‘ as tranquil as ye see that I am outwardly’; and this is per-
“ fect impassibility. Now at that time Abbâ Moses had not
“ arrived at this state of perfection, and he confessed that al-
“ though outwardly he was undisturbed, yet he was waging a
“ contest in his heart, and he maintained silence and was not
“ angry outwardly; and even this was a spiritual excellence,
“ although it would have been a more perfect thing had he not
“ been angry either inwardly or outwardly. And the blessed
“ Nilus made a comparison of these two measures of excellence
“ in the cases of the blessed men Moses and Aaron. The act of
“ covering the breast and heart with the priestly tunic which
“ Aaron performed when he went into the Holy of Holies re-
“ presented the state of a man who, though angry in his heart,
“ suppresseth his wrath by striving and prayer; and the state
“ of a man not being angry at all in the heart, because he hath
“ been exalted to perfection by [his] victory over the passions

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“and the devils, Nilus compared to that which is said of the blessed Moses, saying, ‘Moses took the breast for an offering, because the soul dwelleth in the heart, and the heart in the breast.’ And Solomon said, ‘Remove anger from thy heart,’ and concerning Aaron the Book saith, ‘He was covering his breast with the ephod and tunic,’ and this teacheth us monks that it is meet for us to cover over the wrath which is in the heart with gentle, and humble, and tranquil thoughts, and that we should not allow it to ascend to the opening of our throat, and that the odiousness and abomination thereof shall be revealed by the tongue.”

670. The brethren said, “Why is it that, although all the fathers used to admonish the brethren to ask the old men questions continually, and to learn from them, and to reveal to them their thoughts, and to live according to their directions, one of the old men said to one of the brethren, ‘Go, sit in thy cell, and thy cell shall teach thee everything?’” The old man said, “There is no contradiction in these words of the Fathers, and what the old man said hath an object, the meaning of which is well known. The old man who admonished the brother that he should learn like a beginner was great and famous, and to that brother who asked him the question he spake thus:—In the early days when thou goest to thy cell lay hold upon the habits (*or* orders) of the neophytes, and live according to them for a considerable period, that is to say, with fasting, and vigil, and reading, and reciting the offices, and all the other things, until at length, after the lapse of time, the life of contemplation in silence shall give thee the order which befiteth thy seclusion, and will add those things which are seemly, and will diminish those which are not. This is the meaning of that which was said by the holy man, ‘Sit in thy cell, and it shall teach thee everything.’”

671. The brethren said, “One of the old men used to say, ‘A man shall have no care, and he shall contemplate in silence, and shall cover up himself; three meditations shall teach purity.’ What is the meaning of these three words?” The old man said, “‘A man shall have no care’ means that he shall not care concerning the shortcomings of others, and that all his anxiety shall be concerning his own shortcomings. And, ‘He shall contemplate in silence’ means that he shall not speak even concerning matters of spiritual excellence if it will trouble any man or condemn him. And ‘He shall cover up himself’ meaneth that he shall not reveal his life and deeds, but as far as possible, he shall be unknown and unhonoured. Now by these things is esta-

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“blished the purity of heart which seeth God in a revelation of light.”

672. The brethren said, “How is it possible for a monk to die every day for the love of Christ, even as the blessed Paul said, ‘I swear by your boasting, my brethren, that, in our Lord Jesus Christ, I die daily, and the world is dead unto me, and I am crucified unto the world, and the world is crucified unto me, and I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me?’” The old man said, “A man [can do this] if he contemplate in silence at all seasons, and perform the other works of the body, I mean fasting, and vigil, and the recital of the books of the Psalms, and prayers, and genuflexions, and groanings, and pain, and weeping, and tears, and sighs, and the reading of the Holy Scriptures. And he must especially take care concerning the works of the mind, that is, the constant remembrance of God, and meditation upon Him and His blessings, and upon His commandments and His threatenings; and his gaze must always be on our Lord, and his prayer must be without ceasing and without wandering, and the odiousness of the passions must be away from the heart, and he must suppress with keenness the thoughts of the devils which arise at their prompting. And he must possess that excellence which is the first and most important of all the spiritual virtues, and of all the labours of the ascetic life of the mind, that is to say, death in respect of all the anxieties and cares of this world. And a monk must have no care, and no anxiety, and he must not think about anything, or seek anything, or desire anything, or lust for anything, except for the time when he will attain to the perfect love of God in our Lord Jesus Christ. And he must fulfil at all times the command of the blessed Paul, and his admonition to us wherein he said, ‘Love ye your Lord, rejoice in your hope, pray without ceasing, be fervent in spirit, endure your tribulations, be not anxious about anything, cast all your care upon the Lord; and let all your prayers, and all your requests, and all your petitions be made known unto God, to Whom be glory for ever and ever! Amen.’”

673. The brethren said, “How can love be acquired by men of understanding?” The old man said, “True and pure love is the way of life, and the haven of promises, and the treasure of faith, and it sheweth [the way of] the kingdom, and it is the expositor of the judgement, and the preacher concerning what is hidden.”

674. The brethren said, “We do not know the power of the word.” The old man said, “If a man doth not love God he will not believe in Him, and His promises are not certain to

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“him, and he feareth not His judgement, and he goeth not
“after Him; but, because love is not in him, so that he may flee
“from iniquity, and wait for the life which hath been pro-
“mised, he is always performing the work of sin. And he doth
“this because His judgement is raised too far above his eyes.
“Therefore let us run after love, wherein the holy fathers
“were rich, for it is able to reward its nature and its God, and
“this is its praise.”

675. The brethren said, “In what way doth wisdom live in
“a man?” The old man said, “Now when a man hath gone
“forth to follow God with a sincere mind, grace taketh up its
“abode in him, and his life and deeds are strengthened in the
“Spirit, and he hath taken a hatred to the world, for he per-
“ceiveth that new spiritual life which is in the new man, and
“which is exalted above the impurity of human life, and in
“his mind he thinketh upon the humility of the life and works
“which are to come, and which are [more] excellent than those
“here.”

676. The brethren said, “By what is love made known?”
The old man said, “By the fulfilment of work, and by spiri-
“tual meditation and by the knowledge of faith.”

677. The brethren said, “What are works?” The old man
said, “The keeping of the commandments of God in the purity
“of the inner man, together with the [performance of] labours
“by the outer man.”

678. The brethren said, “Is every man who is destitute of
“works also destitute of love?” The old man said, “It is im-
“possible for the man who is in God not to love and it is
“impossible that he who loveth should not work; and it is incre-
“dible that he who teacheth and doth not work is indeed a
“believer, for his tongue is the enemy of his actions, and al-
“though he speaketh life, he is in subjection unto death.”

679. The brethren said, “And is he who is in this state de-
“stitute of reward?” The old man said, “The man who
“speaketh the things of the spirit, and who performeth the
“things of the body is not destitute of reward, and that which
“he needeth is fulfilled for him, but he is deprived of the crown
“of light, because he desireth not that the rule of the spirit
“shall have dominion over him.”

680. The brethren said, “Fasting and prayer: what are
“they?” The old man said, “Fasting is the subjugation of
“the body, and prayer is converse with God, vigil is the war
“with Satan, abstinence is the being weaned from meats,
“standing up is the humility of the primitive man, genuflexion
“is the bowing down before the Judge, tears are the remem-
“brance of sins, nakedness is our captivity through trans-

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“gression, and [reciting the] service is constant supplication and the praising of God.”

681. The brethren said, “Are these things able to redeem the soul?” The old man said, “When the things which are within agree with the things which are without and the humility which is manifest appeareth in the hidden works which are within, in very truth a man is redeemed from the heaviness of the body.”

682. The brethren said, “And what is internal humility?” The old man said, “It is humility of love, peace, concord, purity, restfulness, gentleness, subjection, faith, remoteness from envy, [and it is] the soul which lacketh the fervour of anger, and is remote from the lust of arrogance, and is separated from vainglory, and is filled with patient endurance like the great deep, and whose motion is drawn after the knowledge of the spirit, and before whose eyes is depicted the departure from the body, and the great marvel of the Resurrection, and the call to judgement, which [shall come] after the quickening, and its standing before the awful throne of God, and the being redeemed.”

683. The brethren said, “Is it possible for a man to fast and not to be redeemed?” The old man said, “There is a fasting which is a matter of habit, and another which is of desire, and another which is of constraint, and another which is of the sight, and another which is of vainglory, and another of tribulation, and another of repentance, and another of spiritual love; and although each one of them is the same outside the mind, yet in the word of knowledge they are distinct. Now although the manner of each in respect of the body is the same, yet each should be undertaken with thorough purpose, and a man should journey straightly along the way of love, and should bear his burden with spiritual patience, and he should not rejoice in his honour.”

684. The brethren said, “Who is the true [monk]?” The old man said, “He who maketh his word manifest indeed, and endureth his pain patiently; with such a man new life is found, and the knowledge of the spirit dwelleth in him.”

685. The brethren said, “Who is he that liveth purely?” The old man said, “He who is free from the delights of the body, and who rejoiceth in the love of his neighbours in the love of God; for in proportion as need hath rule over the soul is spiritual repose produced [therein].”

686. The brethren said, “With what can we vanquish lust?” The old man said, “With the remembrance of the good things of the spirit; for, if the desire for the good things which are to come doth not abrogate the lust for the delights of this

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“world, a man cannot overcome at all. Except the merchant’s ship be laden with manifold hope it will not be able to endure the storms, and will sail on the path of tribulation.”

687. The brethren said, “In what way doth a man go forth from the world?” The old man said, “He doeth this when he forsaketh the gratification of all his lust, and when, so far as it lieth in his power, he runneth to fulfil the commandments; the man who doth not do this will fall.”

688. The brethren said, “Through what did the men of old triumph over nature?” The old man said, “Through the fervour of their love which was above nature, and through the death of the man which is corruptible, and through contempt of arrogance, and through abatement of the belly, and through the fear of the judgement, and through the sure and certain promise; through the desire of these glorious things the Fathers acquired in the soul a spiritual body.”

689. The brethren said, “How can we vanquish the passions which afflict us, since they are placed in our nature?” The old man said, “Through your death to the world, for except a man burieth himself in the grave of continence the spiritual Adam can never be quickened in him. For when a dead man departeth from this temporary life, he hath no perception of the world, and all his senses are at rest and they are useless. Now if that which appertaineth to thy natural body thou dost forsake naturally, and thou dost not do the same voluntarily in respect of thine own person, thou wilt die; but if thy desire dieth through repentance, [thy] nature will cease from this temporary life in the death of the spirit, even as the natural emotions of the body ceased through its natural end.”

690. The brethren said, “To what extent is a man held to be worthy of revelations?” The old man said, “To the same extent as he is held to be worthy to cast off sin inwardly and outwardly. For when a man dieth through spiritual slaughter to all the conversation of this temporary life, and when he hath committed his life to the life which is after the quickening, Divine Grace alighteth upon him, and he is held to be worthy of divine revelations; for the impurity of the world is a dark covering to the soul, and it preventeth it from discerning spiritual meanings.”

691. The brethren said, “Can the man who loveth money be faithful to the promises?” The old man said, “If he believeth why doth he possess [anything]? Is our hope fixed upon gold? Or is the hand of the Lord too short to redeem? He gave us the Body of our Lord for happiness, and His holy Blood as a drink unto our redemption; and hath He kept back from us the loaf of bread and the apparel which grow old?”

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“He who loveth money hath a doubt in his mind concerning God, and he prepareth [the means of] life before God giveth them unto him; and, although in his words he rejoiceth in the promises, he maketh them to be a lie by his deeds. True is the word of our Lord, Who said, ‘It is as difficult for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God, as for a camel to go into the eye of a needle’ (St. Matthew xix, 24); to possess both God and mammon in one abode is impossible. Now those who follow the ascetic life do not belong to the things which are seen.”

692. The brethren said, ‘Who is truly the man of ascetic excellence?’ The old man said, ‘He who at all times crieth out that he is a sinner, and asketh mercy from the Lord, whose speech beareth the sense of discretion, whose feelings bear the excellence of works, who though silent yet speaketh, and who though speaking yet holdeth his peace, and whose acts and deeds bear good fruit to his temporary life and the manifestation of Christ.’

693. The brethren said, ‘Which is the way of life?’ The old man said, ‘That whereby a man goeth forth from this world in his entrance into the other; but if a man forsaketh his childhood of humility, and cometh to the old age of this world in his love, he revealeth the way of life. Now the true departure from this world is remoteness therefrom.’

694. A brother said, ‘What shall I do to this world when it troubleth me?’ The old man said, ‘The world troubleth thee because the cares thereof are in thy mind, and love therefor is in thy body, and its delights are in thy heart. Let the world depart from thee, and tear out from thee all the roots (*or* branches) thereof, and lo, the war thereof will cease from thee. For as long as thy body seeketh [its] pleasures, and its lust is of the world, it is impossible for thee to live.’

695. The brethren said, ‘What is pure prayer?’ The old man said, ‘That which is of few words and is abundant in deeds. For if [thy] actions be not more than thy petition, thy prayers are mere words wherein the seed of the hands is not; and if it be not thus, why do we ask and not receive, since the mercy of Grace aboundeth. The manner of the penitent is one thing, and the labour of the humble is another; the penitent are hirelings, but the humble are sons.’

696. The brethren said, ‘By what is the love of money produced?’ The old man said, ‘From lust, for except a man lusteth he will not possess [money], and if he doth not possess [money] he will not lust. When a man lusteth he possesseth [money], and having acquired it he fulfilleth his lust;

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“and having fulfilled his lust, he becometh greedy, and having
“become greedy he committeth fraud; and having committed
“fraud his possessions increase, and when his possessions
“have increased love becometh little in him. And when love
“hath diminished the remembrance of God is wanting in the
“heart, and the intelligence becometh darkened, and his power
“of discernment becometh blinded, and when the power of
“discernment hath become blinded, the power of distinguish-
“ing is darkened, and when the power of distinguishing hath
“become darkened, the soul goeth blind. And when the soul
“hath become blind goodness is rooted out therefrom, and
“wickedness entereth in, and sin hath dominion; and when
“sin hath obtained dominion the thought of God is blotted
“out, the passions of the body are roused up, and they seek
“for the means for working out their needs. And when they
“have obtained that which they seek it becometh necessary
“for much money to be gathered together, and when money
“hath multiplied the pleasure of the body is fulfilled, and a
“man eateth, and drinketh, and committeth adultery and forni-
“cation, and he lieth and acteth fraudulently, and transgresseth
“the covenant, and he destroyeth the Law, and despiseth the
“promises, and lust is fulfilled, and God is wroth. For if the
“lust for the things which are seen be hated in our sight, we
“shall not love money, but if we perform the lust of the flesh
“it is necessary to love money, because it belongeth to the
“flesh and not to the spirit, even as the Apostle said, ‘The
“flesh hurteth the spirit, and the spirit the flesh, and both
“are opponents each of other’” (Galatians v, 17).

697. The brethren said, “What kind of prayer is that which
“is not acceptable before God?” The old man said, “[The
“prayer for the] destruction of enemies. When we ask that
“evil things [may come] upon those who do harm to us, and
“for bodily health, and abundance of possessions, and fertility
“in respect of children, these requests are not acceptable be-
“fore God. If God beareth with us, who are sinners and who
“offend Him, how much more is it right that we should bear
“each with the other? It is, then, not meet that we should
“ask for the things which concern the body, for the wisdom
“of God provideth everything [necessary].”

698. The brethren said, “What is purity of soul?” The old
man said, “Remoteness from anger, and the error of remem-
“brance of evil things, being weaned from a bitter disposition,
“friendliness towards our enemies, peace which is superior to
“troubling, and sincere love which is above the world; by
“means of these the hidden man is purified, and he putteth on
“Christ, and is redeemed.”

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699. The brethren said, "What is envy?" The old man said, "Hatred towards the virtues of others, and wickedness towards the good, and a bitter disposition towards the innocent, and anger against those who are prosperous in this world, and the concealment of the upright acts and deeds of the penitent, and vexation at the peace of the friends of God."

700. The brethren said, "In what way ought we to pray before God?" The old man said, "For the repentance of sinners, and the finding of the lost, and the drawing nigh of those who are afar off, and friendliness towards those who do us harm, and love towards those who persecute us, and sorrowful care for those who provoke God to wrath. And if a man doeth these things truly and with a penitent mind, the sinners will often gain life, and the living soul will be redeemed. Now the prayer which our Lord delivered to us as to the needs of the body, is one which applieth to the whole community, and it was not uttered for the sake of those who are strangers to the world, and with whom the pleasures of the body are held in contempt. He in whose habitation (*or* life) the kingdom of God and His righteousness are found lacketh nothing, even when he asketh not."

701. The brethren said, "What is remoteness from the world?" The old man said, "The thought which vanquisheth the love of the body, for if the body be not trodden down by the lust of patient endurance, a man cannot conquer in the fight."

702. The brethren said, "Can the soul of a man who is held fast in the love of the things which are seen be pleasing unto God?" The old man said, "Who is able to live in chastity when the body is making demands upon him? Or, how can he be found the love of our Lord in the soul which hath its abode with the things which are seen and are corruptible? No man can serve two masters, and the soul cannot please God with spiritual excellence so long as the remembrances of corruptible things are in its mind, for the mind of the flesh is not able to please God; except the world dieth out of the heart humility cannot live therein, and except the body be deprived of its lusts, the soul cannot be purified from thoughts."

703. The brethren said, "Why is the mind disturbed at the meeting with females?" The old man said, "Because they are employed in the fulfilment of the lust of nature. When the gaze falleth upon the structure which [is intended for] the production of children, and for the pleasures of the body, the poison of olden time seizeth upon a man, and the law of his will becometh confused; now the will conquereth nature, not

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“by the stirring up of the passions, but by the fulfilment of works. The humble by the power of our Lord conquer everything by their love through the patient endurance of the merit of our Lord.”

704. The brethren said, “Who is the mightier man? He who is remote from the world, or he who dwelleth therein?” The old man said, “The mighty man, wheresoever he dwelleth, conquereth whether he be in the world or out of it. Now the Fathers departed to the desert place which was free from noise and tumult, because they were afraid that so long as they abode in the body the passions which afflicted them would cleave unto them; but those who have completed the great strife of their contest in the world [have performed] an act of grace the power whereof hath worked, and still worketh, for the help and benefit of the community. And verily their crown shall be a great one, because into the disturbed and troubled sea of the world their spiritual ship, which was on its way to heaven along the straight path which was full of fear, hath not gone down.”

705. The brethren said, “If a man maketh himself a stranger to the world, is it helpful to his soul?” The old man said, “If it fulfilleth with praise it is helpful, and if it endureth tribulation in chastity, and rejoiceth in our Lord, it is beneficial, but it is not, if it doeth away the good seed and preventeth it from producing beloved fruit unto God. If it beareth and is blessed, it hath a reward, but if it lack these things it becometh a wandering to the mind, and a sight which is profitless; but best of all these things is the tranquillity of the mind which is nigh unto God.”

706. The brethren said, “Since all the creatures which God hath made are holy, why were the Fathers in the habit of making the sign of the blessed Cross over such of them as they ate as food?” The old man said, “Verily, all God’s creatures are pure, through the Grace of Him that created them, yet, because sin obtained dominion, every one of them became polluted; then came the advent of our Lord and abrogated sin, and righteousness obtained dominion, and everything became sanctified, whether it was in the heaven or on the earth. But because the blessed Fathers knew the harmful disposition of Satan, who even by means of such things as are used as food carrieth on a war to our injury, they sealed their foods with the holy sign of the Great Cross, that they might bring to naught all the crafts of the Calumniator. For one of the old men said, ‘On one occasion, when I was lying down at night, I thirsted for water to drink. And there was near me a holy man who lived

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“ chastely, and he saw me take up a vessel of water to drink
“ without having made over it the sign of the Cross. And he
“ said unto me, “Wait, master, wait,” and he made the
“ sign of the Cross over it, and straightway there fell from
“ the vessel the Calumniator in the form of a flash of fire; and
“ both he and I saw this, and we marvelled at the great power
“ of the Redeemer, and at the wonderful sign of His merit.’ An-
“ other version of the story reads:—And one of the Fathers said,
“ On one occasion I was lying down at night, and I thirsted for
“ water to drink. And there was near me a certain widow, who
“ led a chaste life, both when she was with her husband, and
“ afterwards, and she said to me, ‘Wait, master, wait,’ and she
“ made the sign of the Holy Cross over the vessel of water, and
“ straightway the Calumniator fell from the vessel in the form of
“ a flash of fire; and both she and I saw it, and we marvelled at
“ the great power of our Redeemer, and at the wonderful sign of
“ His merit. These things were indeed spoken by that holy mouth
“ which was remote from falsehood. Therefore we must neces-
“ sarily do this (i.e., make the sign of the Cross over our food)
“ for the protection of our life. For against this holy woman
“ who did these things, the enemy waged war openly, ac-
“ cording to what I have learned from a certain saint, a chosen
“ man of God, who heard the matter from her own mouth,
“ and he spake thus:—The blessed woman spake unto me,
“ saying, One day I went to the house of God, and Satan
“ drew nigh, and said unto me, Why dost thou pray like a
“ man, and say, Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and
“ to the Holy Ghost? And I said unto him, If I am not to
“ pray thus, how shall I pray? And the blessed woman said,
“ Satan said unto me, Pray thus, and say, Glory be unto thee,
“ O Mary, mother of Christ. Then I answered and said unto
“ him, [There are] ashes in thine eyes, O Satan. Why should
“ I forsake the Lord and adore the mother? And Satan disap-
“ peared. And the blessed man also said unto me, This same
“ old woman said unto me:—On another occasion I went to
“ church according to custom, and I knelt down and prayed,
“ and then the Enemy came and made blind mine eyes, and I
“ could not see, and I called to one of the women, and she led
“ me to my house. After three days Satan departed from be-
“ fore mine eyes, and he began to go away from before me,
“ and then I said unto him, There is something which I must
“ make thee do. Go thou to the place where thou didst seize
“ upon me; and we went to the church, both he and I, and I
“ left him where he seized upon me. Then I went away a short
“ distance, and when I turned and looked at him I saw that
“ he was standing like a shadow; and I went on again, and

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“then turned, and still I saw him. And I shut the door of the temple and went forth, and then I opened it again and went in, and I saw him still standing [there], and at that time his wiles ceased from me. Such were the great things which happened to that blessed old woman. For the monk must not boast himself over the man who liveth in the world, for there are mighty men in the world; for if such qualities are found in Eve, how much greater ones should be found in the Adam which is redeemed by Adam?”

“One of the Fathers said unto me, ‘One night whilst I was sleeping, the Enemy came and smote me, and said unto me, “Get thee into the world and cultivate righteousness, for why dost thou shut thyself up like a beast in caves?” And knowing the wickedness of the Enemy, who was looking at me with an evil eye, I made the sign of the Cross in his face, and he fled from me. Then he waited a few days, and came and smote me on the neck, and said unto me mockingly, “Now thou art a righteous man, rise up, and get thee into the world, that I may not destroy thee”; and having prayed, and made the sign of the Cross over my face, he departed from me. And a little while afterwards he came again, and sat upon my neck; then I made myself bold, and stood up, and made the sign of the Cross, the emblem of merit, before him, and again he disappeared, for he was unable to resist me. For all these things took place, and happened in very truth, and we may therefore know and understand that there is no rule of life in which God so much rejoiceth, or which is so terrible unto the devils, and unto all evil spirits, as the rule of humility, and penitence of mind, and the subjection of the body, and remoteness from the things which are seen. Whosoever despiseth these things will fall into the mire of the world; and whosoever holdeth in contempt the good riches of the fear of God, shall have his hope of the inheritance of the saints cut off, and of the delights of heaven, which never pass away and never end. May we all be held worthy of these through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, the True God, to Whom, with His Father, and the Holy Spirit, be glory, now, and always, and for ever and ever! Amen.’”

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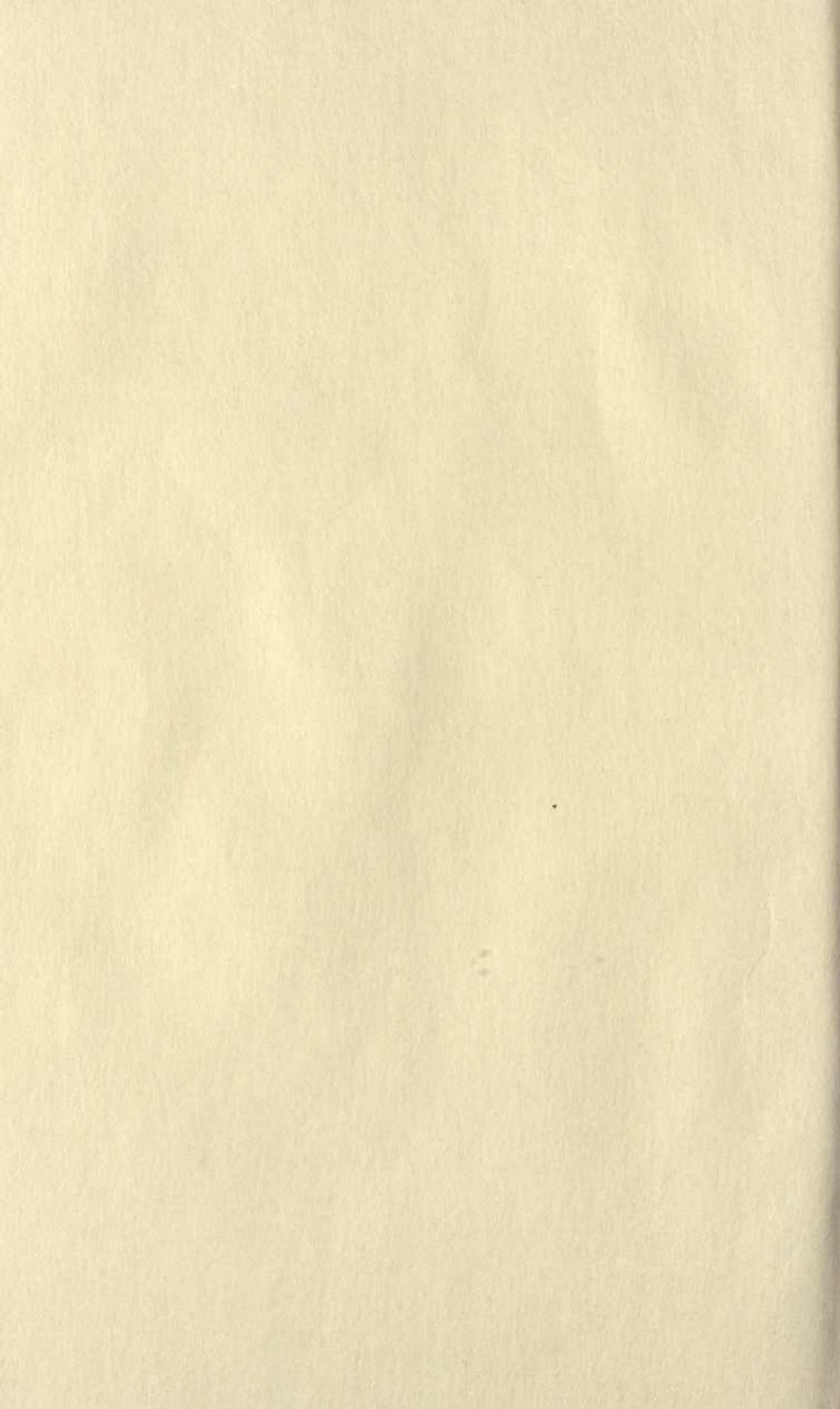
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