

THE LAUSIAC HISTORY

“Palladius, The Lausiatic History (1918) pp. 35-180. English Translation”

INTRODUCTORY PIECES

PREFACE TO THE LIFE OF THE HOLY FATHERS ¹

[1] THIS book is a record of the virtuous asceticism and marvellous manner of life of those blessed and holy fathers, the monks and anchorites which inhabit the desert, (written) with a view of stirring to rivalry and imitation those who wish to realize the heavenly mode of life and desire to tread the road which leads to the kingdom of heaven. It contains also memoirs of aged women and illustrious God-inspired matrons, who with masculine and perfect mind have successfully accomplished the struggles of virtuous aceticism, (which may serve) as a model and object of desire for those women who long to wear the crown of continence and chastity.

[2] This is how the book came to be written.² A man, admirable in every way, very learned, of peaceable disposition, religiously disposed and devout-minded, liberal towards those who lack the necessaries of life, in respect of high distinctions preferred above many men of rank owing to the excellence of his character, and with all this guarded continually by the power of the Divine Spirit----such is the man who commanded us to write, or rather, if one must tell the truth, aroused our slothful [36] mind to the contemplation of better things, to imitate and attempt to rival the ascetic virtues of our holy and immortal spiritual fathers and all who have lived to please God with much mortification of the body. [3] And so, having described the lives of these invincible athletes, we have sent them to him, proclaiming the conspicuous virtues of each of these great persons. I am referring to Lausus, the best of men, who by the favour of God has been appointed guardian of our godly and religious empire; it is he who is inspired with this divine and spiritual passion.

[4] I then, who am clumsy in utterance³ and have but a superficial acquaintance with spiritual knowledge and am unworthy to draw up a list of the holy fathers of the spiritual life, fearing the infinite greatness of the task set me, so much above my capacity, found the command intolerable, requiring as it did so much worldly wisdom and spiritual understanding. Nevertheless, respecting in the first place the eager virtue of the man who urged us to obey the command, and considering the benefit accruing to the readers, and fearing also the danger of a refusal albeit with a reasonable excuse, I first commended the noble task to Providence and then applied myself diligently to it. Sustained, as if on wings, by the intercession of the holy fathers, I attended the contests of the arena. I have

described in a kind of summary only the main contests and achievements of the noble athletes and great men---not only illustrious *men* who have realized the best manner of life, but also blessed and highborn women who have practised the highest life.

[5] I have been privileged to see with my own eyes the revered faces of some of these, but in the case of others, who had already been perfected in the arena of [37] piety, I have learned their heavenly mode of life from inspired athletes of Christ. In the course of my journey on foot I visited many cities and very many villages, every cave and all the desert dwellings of monks, with all accuracy as befitted my pious intentions. Some things I wrote down after personal investigation, the rest I have heard from the holy fathers, and I have recorded in this book the combats of great men, and women more like men than nature would seem to allow, thanks to their hope in Christ. I now send the whole to you whose ears love divine oracles, to you, Lausus, who are the pride of excellent and God-beloved men, and the ornament of the most faithful and God-beloved empire, noble and Christ-loving servant of God. I have recorded ⁴ to the best of my feeble powers the famous name of each of the athletes of Christ, male and female, describing a few short contests out of the many mighty ones engaged in by each, adding in most cases the family and city and place of residence.⁵

[6] We have also told of men and women who have reached the highest stage of virtue, but owing to vainglory, as it is called, the mother of pride, have fallen into the lowest pit and abyss of hell, and the triumphs of asceticism, so earnestly desired and so strenuously fought for, acquired by them after long periods of time and many labours, have been dissipated in an instant by pride and self-conceit. But by the grace of our Saviour and the fore-knowledge of the holy fathers and the sympathy of spiritual affection they have been snatched from the nets of the devil and, helped by the prayers of the saints, have recovered their former life of virtue. [38]

COPY OF A LETTER WRITTEN BY PALLADIUS THE BISHOP TO LAUSUS THE CHAMBERLAIN.⁶

[1] I congratulate you on your intention. Indeed I am justified in beginning my letter with congratulation, because, when all men are gaping after vain things and building their edifice with stones from which they got no joy,⁷ you yourself want to be taught words of edification. For only the God of all is untaught, since He is self-originate and has none other before Him. But all other things are taught, since they are made and created. The first orders (of angels) have the supreme Trinity as teacher, the second learn from the first, the third from the second, and so successively in order until the last. For those who are superior in judgment and virtue teach those who are inferior in knowledge. [2] So then men who think they do not need teachers, or do not obey those who teach them in love, suffer from the disease of ignorance, the mother of arrogance. Their leaders on the road to destruction are those who have fallen from the heavenly life, the demons who fly in the air having fled from their teachers in heaven. For teaching does not consist in words and syllables---sometimes men possess these who are as vile as can be---but [39] in meritorious acts of character, cheerfulness, intrepidity, bravery, good temper; add to these unfailing boldness, which generates words like a flame of fire. [3] For if this had

not been so, the great Teacher would not have said to His disciples: "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart."⁸ He does not train the apostles with elegant language, but with care for character, distressing none save those who hate the word and hate teachers. For the soul that is being trained according to God's purpose must be either learning faithfully what it does not know, or teaching clearly what it knows. But if it wants to do neither, though able to do them, then it is mad. For to be sated with teaching and unable to bear the word, for which the soul of him who loves God is always hungry, is the beginning of apostasy. Be strong then and of sound mind and play the man, and may God grant you to pursue closely the knowledge of Christ.

PROLOGUE

[1] Forasmuch⁹ as many have left behind for their age many and divers writings concerning different epochs, some of them by an inspiration of heavenly God-given grace (writing) for the edification and safety of those who follow with loyal purpose the teachings of the Saviour, others with sycophantic and corrupt intention having indulged in mad follies in order to encourage such as desire vain-glory, others again, inspired by a certain madness and the influence of the demon who hates good, and in their pride and wrath planning the destruction of light-minded men and the soiling of the immaculate Catholic Church, having attacked the minds of the foolish to make them dislike the saintly life, [40 [2] it seemed good to me also,¹⁰ your humble servant, reverencing the command of your magnanimity,¹¹ O man most eager to learn, a command issued with a view to spiritual progress, to publish this book in narrative form for your benefit, (telling my story) from the beginning. (When I thus decided),¹² it was, I suppose, my thirty-third year in the society of the brethren and the twentieth year of my episcopate, and the fifty-sixth of my whole life.¹³ You were asking for accounts of the fathers, both male and female (saints), both those whom I had seen and those about whom I had heard and those with whom I lived in the Egyptian desert and Libya, the Thebaid and Syene, near which last are the so-called Tabennesiots,¹⁴ and again in Mesopotamia, Palestine and Syria, and the districts of the West---Rome and Campania and thereabouts. [3] (My aim is) that you may have (in my book) for the benefit of your soul a solemn reminder, an unailing cure for forgetfulness; and that you may drive away by its help all drowsiness proceeding from irrational lust, all indecision and pettiness in business affairs, all backwardness and pusillanimity in the domain of character, all resentment, worry, grief and irrational fear; and moreover the excitements of the world; and may with unailing desire make progress in the purpose of piety, becoming a guide both to yourself, your companions, your subordinates, and the most religious Emperors. For by means of these meritorious works all lovers of Christ press on to be joined to God. [41 Each day you will be expecting the departure of your soul, as it is written: [4] "It is good to depart and be with Christ,"¹⁵ and "Prepare thy works for thy departure and be ready in thy field."¹⁶ For he that keeps death always in mind, that it will come of necessity and will not tarry, shall not greatly fall. You will neither take amiss the guidance of my directions, nor will you despise the uncouthness and inelegance of my style; for indeed it is not the work of divine teaching to speak with studied elegance, but to persuade the mind with considerations of truth, as it is written: "Open thy mouth to the word of God,"¹⁷ and again: "Miss not the discourse of the aged, for they also learned of their fathers."¹⁸

[5] I then, O man of God most eager to learn, following in part this precept, have been in contact with many of the saints. Putting aside considerations of prudence,¹⁹ I have made journeys of thirty days, yes and twice as long. (I say it) as before God, traversing on foot in my journeys all the land of the Romans,²⁰ I welcomed all the hardship of the way so long as I might meet some man that loved God, that I might gain what I had not got. [6] For if Paul, who was so far in advance of me, surpassing me in manner of life, knowledge, conscience and faith, undertook the journey from Tarsus to Judaea to meet Peter, James and John; and [42] if he tells of it with a kind of boastfulness, recounting²¹ his toils in order to stir to emulation those who live in sloth and laziness, saying: "I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas;"²² if he was not satisfied with the report of Peter's virtue, but longed for an actual meeting face to face---how much more was I, the debtor who owed ten thousand talents,²³ bound to do this, not for any good I might do them, but for my own benefit? [7] For indeed those who wrote the lives of the Fathers, Abraham and his successors, Moses, Elijah and John, told their tale, not to glorify them, but to benefit their readers. Knowing these things then, Lausus, most loyal servant of Christ, and impressing them on yourself, be patient with my folly, (which is designed) to preserve the pious disposition of your mind; for it is naturally exposed to waves of evil, both visible and invisible, and can enjoy calm only with the help of continuous prayer and spiritual self-culture.²⁴ [8] For many of the brethren, pluming themselves both on their labours and charities and boasting of their celibacy or virginity and putting their trust in meditation on the divine oracles and acts of zeal, have yet failed to attain impassivity.²⁵ Through lack of discernment, under the pretext of piety, they have fallen victim to a disease (which manifests itself) in acts of idle curiosity, from which spring officious or even evil activities, such as drive away good activities, the mother of spiritual self-culture.²⁶ |43

[9] Play the man then, I beseech you, and do not increase your wealth. This policy you have already adopted, since of your own accord you have lessened it by distributing to those- in need owing to the supply of virtue which is thereby gained. Nor have you yielded to impulse and unreasonable premature decision and fettered your free choice with an oath²⁷ to curry favour with men, as some have done who in a spirit of rivalry, that they may boast of not eating or drinking, have enslaved their free will by the constraint of an oath and have succumbed again miserably to the love of this world and accidie²⁸ and pleasure and so have suffered the pangs of perjury. For if you partake reasonably and abstain reasonably you will never sin. [10] For reason, of all the emotions within us, is divine, banishing what is harmful and welcoming what is beneficial. "For the law is not made for a righteous man."²⁹ For to drink wine with reason is better than to drink water with pride. And, please, look on those who drink wine with reason as holy men and those who drink water without reason as profane men, and no longer blame or praise the material, but count happy or wretched the minds of those who use the material well or ill. Joseph drank wine in Egypt long ago, but his mind suffered no harm, for he kept his thoughts under control, [11] But Pythagoras, Diogenes and Plato drank water; ³⁰ |44so did the Manichaeans and the rest of the band of *soi-disant* philosophers, and yet they reached such a pitch of vain-glory in their intemperance that they failed to know God and worshipped idols. The apostle Peter and his companions used wine to some extent, so that their Master, our Saviour, was himself reproached on account of their participation, by the Jews' saying: "Why do not thy disciples fast as do the disciples of John?"³¹ Again

insulting the disciples with reproaches they said: "Your Master eats and drinks with the publicans and sinners." ³² Clearly they would not have attacked them over bread and water. [12] And again, when they were unreasonably admiring water-drinking and blaming wine-drinking, the Saviour said: "John came in the way of righteousness, neither eating nor drinking"----obviously meat and wine, for apart from the other things he could not have lived----"and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners" ³³ ----because of his eating and drinking. What are we to do then? Let us follow neither those who blame nor those who praise, but let us either fast with John reasonably even if they say: "They have a devil," or let us drink wine wisely with Jesus, if the body needs it, even if they say: "Behold men gluttonous and wine-bibbers." [13] For in truth neither is eating nor refraining anything, but faith extending itself in love to works. For when faith accompanies every action, he that eateth and drinketh because of faith is uncondemned, "for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."³⁴ But when any one of those who sin says he partakes in faith or is doing anything else with unreasonable self-confidence and |45 corrupted conscience, the Saviour has given express orders, saying: "By their fruits ye shall know them."³⁵ But that the fruit of those who live with reason and understanding, as the divine Apostle says, "is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance,"³⁶----this is granted by all. [14] For Paul himself said: "The fruit of the spirit is" so-and-so. But because he who sets himself to get such fruit will not eat meat or drink wine unreasonably or without definite aim or out of season, nor will he dwell with an uneasy conscience, again the same Paul says: "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." ³⁷ When the body is in health he abstains from fattening things, when it is weak or in pain or meets with griefs or misadventures, he will make use of foods or drinks as medicines to heal what grieves him, and he will abstain from all that harms the soul----anger, envy, vain-glory, accidie, detraction, and unreasonable suspicion----giving thanks to the Lord.

[15] Having then discussed the matter sufficiently above, I bring another exhortation to your desire of learning. Flee, as far as is in your power, encounters with men whose presence confers no benefit and who beautify their skin in unseemly fashion, even if they be orthodox----not to speak of heretics! They do you harm by their hypocrisy, even when they seem to be dragging out a great age with their grey hair and wrinkles. For, even supposing you come to no harm at their hands by reason of your noble character, you will suffer this lesser evil in becoming insolent and proud, and mocking at them, and this will do you harm. But go near a bright window and seek encounters with holy men and women, in order that by their help you may be able to see |46 clearly also your own heart as it were a closely-written book,³⁸ being able by comparison to discern your own slackness or neglect. [16] For the colour of their faces with the bloom of grey hairs and the arrangement of their clothes and the modesty of their language and the reverence of their conversation and the grace of their thoughts will strengthen you, even if you should happen to be in a mood of accidie. "For a man's attire and his gait and the laugh of his teeth will proclaim what he is like," as Wisdom says.³⁹

So now I begin my tales. I shall leave unnoticed neither those in the cities nor those in the villages or deserts. For the object of our inquiry is not the place where they have settled but the fashion of their plan of life. |47

CHAPTER I. -- ISIDORE ⁴⁰

[1] THE first time that I set foot in the city of the Alexandrians, in the second consulate of the great Emperor Theodosius,⁴¹ who now lives with the angels because of his faith in Christ, I met in the city a wonderful man, distinguished in every respect, both as regards character and knowledge, Isidore the priest, hospitaller of the Church of Alexandria. He was said to have fought successfully his first youthful contests in the desert, and I actually saw his cell in the mountain of Nitria. But when I met him, he was an old man seventy years of age, who lived another fifteen years and then died in peace. [2] Up to the very end of his life he wore no linen except a head-band, never had a bath, nor partook of meat. His slender frame was so well-knit by grace that all who did not know his manner of life expected that he lived in luxury. Time would fail me if I were to tell⁴² in detail the virtues of his soul. He was so benevolent and peaceable that even his enemies the unbelievers themselves revered his shadow because of his exceeding kindness. [3] So great a knowledge had he of the holy scriptures and the divine precepts that even at the very meals of the brethren he would have periods of absent-mindedness and remain silent. And being urged to tell the details |48 of his ecstasy he would say: "I went away in thought on a journey, seized by contemplation." For my part I often knew him weep at table, and when I asked the cause of the tears I heard him say: "I shrink from partaking of irrational food, being myself rational and destined to live in a paradise of delight owing to the power given us by Christ." [4] He became known to all the Senate at Rome and to the wives of the nobles, when he paid his first visit in company with Athanasius the bishop,⁴³ and on a second occasion with Demetrius the bishop; a man of great wealth and extensive property, he wrote no will when he came to die, and left neither money nor goods to his sisters, who were virgins. But he commended them to Christ, saying: "He that created you will provide for your life, as He has done for me." Now there was with his sisters a community of seventy virgins.

When I visited him as a young man and besought that I might be trained in the solitary life, since I was in the full vigour of my age and needed, not discourse, but bodily hardships, like a good tamer of colts he led me out from the city to the so-called Solitudes five miles away (and handed me over to Dorotheus).⁴⁴

CHAPTER II. -- DOROTHEUS ⁴⁵

[1] HANDING me over to Dorotheus, a Theban ascetic who was spending the sixtieth year in his cave, he |49 ordered me to complete three years with him in order to tame my passions----for he knew that the old man lived a life of great austerity----bidding me return to him afterwards for spiritual instruction. But being unable to complete the three years owing to a breakdown in health, I left Dorotheus before the three years were up, for living with him one got parched and all dried-up.⁴⁶ For all day long in the burning heat he would collect stones in the desert by the sea and build with them continually and make

cells, and then he would retire in favour of those who could not build for themselves. Each year he completed one cell. And once when I said to him: "What do you mean, father, at your great age by trying to kill your poor body in these heats?" he answered thus: "It kills me, I kill it." For he used to eat (daily) six ounces of bread and a bunch of herbs, and drink water in proportion. God is my witness, I never knew him stretch his legs and go to sleep on a rush mat, or on a bed. But he would sit up all night long and weave ropes of palm leaves to provide himself with food. [3] Then, supposing that he did this for my benefit, I made careful inquiries also from other disciples of his, who lived by themselves, and ascertained that⁴⁷ this had been his manner of life from a youth, and that he had never deliberately gone to sleep, only when working or eating he closed his eyes overcome by sleep, so that often the piece of food fell from his mouth at the moment of eating, so great was his drowsiness. Once when I tried to constrain him to rest a little on the mat, he was annoyed and said: "If you can persuade angels to sleep, you will also persuade the zealous man." [4] One day about the ninth hour he sent me to fill the jar at his well in view of a meal at the ninth hour. |50 Well, as it happened, I went and saw an asp at the bottom of the well, and stopped drawing water and went away and said to him: "We are dead men, father, for I saw an asp in the well." But he smiled gravely and looked at me for a time, and then shaking his head said: "If the devil decides to become a serpent or tortoise in every well and to fall into our water-supply, will you refrain from drinking for ever?" And he went out and drew the water himself, and was the first to swallow some of it, fasting, saying: "Where the cross passes, the evil of anything is powerless."⁴⁸

CHAPTER III. -- POTAMIAENA ⁴⁹

[1] THIS blessed man Isidore, who had met Antony of blessed memory, told me a story which is worth recording, which he had heard from Antony. There lived in the time of Maximianus the persecutor a very beautiful maiden called Potamiaena, a certain man's slave. Her master failed to seduce her, though he besought her eagerly with many promises. [2] At last mad with rage he handed her over to the then prefect of Alexandria, giving her up as a Christian and one who abused the times ⁵⁰ and the Emperors because of the persecutions, and suggesting this to him with the help of money: "If she falls in with my design, keep her without punishment." But if she should remain |51 puritanical, he asked that she might be punished, lest continuing to live she should mock at his licentious ways. [3] She was brought before the tribunal and the fortress of her soul was attacked by various instruments of torture. For one of them, the judge had a great cauldron filled with pitch and ordered it to be heated. When the pitch was now bubbling and terribly hot, he gave her the choice: "Either go away and obey the wishes of your master, or know that I shall order you to be plunged into the cauldron." But she answered and said: "God forbid that there should be another such judge, who orders one to submit to licentiousness." [4] So in a fury he ordered her to be stripped and thrown into the cauldron; but she lifted up her voice and said: "By the head of your Emperor whom you fear, if you have decided to punish me thus, order me to be let down gradually into the cauldron that you may know what endurance the Christ, Whom you know not, bestows on me." And being let down gradually during a space of one hour she died when the pitch reached her neck.

CHAPTER IV. -- DIDYMUS THE BLIND ⁵¹

[1] VERY many indeed of the men and women who reached perfection in the Church of Alexandria were worthy (to inherit) the land of the meek.⁵² Among these was Didymus the blind author. I met him four times in all, visiting him at intervals during a period of ten years. He was 85 years old when he died. He was blind, ⁵² having lost his sight at the age of four, so he told me, and he had never learned to read nor gone to school.⁵³ [2] (This was not necessary) for he had nature's teacher ----his own conscience----strongly developed. He was adorned with such a gift of knowledge, that, so it was said, the passage of scripture was fulfilled in him: "The Lord maketh the blind wise." ⁵⁴ For he interpreted the Old and New Testament word by word, and such attention did he pay to doctrine, setting out his exposition of it subtly yet surely, that he surpassed all the ancients in knowledge. [3] Once when he tried to make me say a prayer in his cell and I was unwilling, he told me this story: "Into this cell Antony entered for the third time on a visit to me. I besought him to say a prayer and he instantly knelt down in the cell and did not make me repeat my words, giving me by his action a lesson in obedience. So if you want to follow in the steps of his life, as you seem to, since you are a solitary and living away from home to acquire virtue, lay aside your contentiousness." And he told me this also: "As I was thinking one day about the life of the wretched Emperor Julian, how he was a persecutor, and was feeling dejected ----and by reason of my thoughts I had not tasted bread even up to late evening----it happened that as I sat in my seat I was overcome by sleep and I saw in a trance white horses running with riders and proclaiming: 'Tell Didymus, to-day at the seventh hour Julian died. Rise then and eat,' they said, 'and send to Athanasius the bishop, that he too may know,' And I marked," he said, "the hour and month and week and day, and it was found to be so." ⁵⁵ ⁵³

CHAPTER V. -- ALEXANDRA

[1] HE told me also of a maid-servant named Alexandra, who having left the city and shut herself up in a tomb, received the necessaries of life through an opening, seeing neither women nor men face to face for ten years. And in the tenth year she fell asleep, having arrayed herself (for death): ⁵⁶ and so the woman who went as usual to see her and got no answer informed us.⁵⁷ So we broke down the door and entering in found her fallen asleep. [2] Concerning her also the thrice-blessed Melania,⁵⁸ about whom I shall speak later, used to say: "I never saw her face to face, but standing by the opening I urged her to say the reason why she shut herself up in a tomb. And she called out to me through the opening: 'A man was distressed in mind because of me and, lest I should seem to afflict or disparage him, I chose to betake myself alive into the tomb rather than cause a soul made in the image of God to stumble.' [3] When I said," she continued, "'How then do you endure never meeting any one, but struggling with accidie?'" ⁵⁹ she replied: 'From early morn to the ninth hour I pray hour by hour, spinning flax the while. ⁵⁴ During the remaining hours I meditate on the holy patriarchs and prophets and apostles and martyrs. And having eaten my bread I remain in patience for the other hours, waiting for my end with cheerful hope.' "

CHAPTER VI. -- THE RICH VIRGIN

[1] BUT I must not omit from my story those also whose life has been characterized by pride, that I may praise those who have remained true and ensure the safety of my readers. There was a virgin at Alexandria of humble exterior but haughty inward disposition, exceedingly wealthy, but never giving ⁶⁰ an obol either to a stranger or a virgin or a church or a poor man. In spite of the frequent exhortations of the fathers she was not weaning herself from material things. [2] Now she had relations living, one of whom, her sister's daughter, she adopted, and night and day she kept promising the girl should have her money, having fallen away from her aspirations after heaven. For this is a form of the deceit of the devil, who afflicts us with pangs of avarice under the pretext of family affection. For it is common knowledge that he cares nothing about family ties, since he teaches men to murder brothers and mothers and fathers. [3] But even if he seems to inspire anxiety for relations, he does not do so from benevolent feelings towards them, but to practise the soul in unrighteousness, knowing the decree: "The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God." ⁶¹ Now it is quite possible for a man without neglecting his own soul to be influenced by a godly consideration and give assistance to his kinsfolk if they are in want. But when a man subordinates his whole soul |55 to the interests of his relations, he comes under this law, reckoning his soul "unto vanity." ⁶² [4] But the sacred psalmist sings thus concerning those who care for their soul with fear: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? "----meaning (it is) rarely (any one does) ---- "or who shall stand up in his holy place? He that has clean hands and is pure in heart, who did not lift up his soul unto vanity." ⁶³ For as many as neglect the virtues, these lift up the soul unto vanity, believing that it is dissolved with the body.

[5] Wishing to bleed this virgin, so the story goes, and thus relieve her of her avarice, the most holy Macarius,⁶⁴ the priest and superintendent of the hospital for cripples, devises this expedient. In his youth he had been a worker in precious stones ---- what they call a lapidary. So he goes and says to her: "Some precious stones, emeralds and sapphires,⁶⁵ have fallen by fate into my hands, and I cannot say whether they are treasure-trove or stolen property. They have not been valued, since they are beyond price, but any one who has the money can buy them for five hundred pounds. [6] If you decide to take them, you can get back your five hundred pounds from one stone and use the rest for the adornment of your niece." Excited (by his words) the virgin is caught by the bait and falls at his feet. "By your feet," she says, "let no one else get them." Then he invites her: "Come to my house and look at them." But she had not the patience (for this), but flings down |56 the five hundred pounds before him, saying: "You want them, take them. For I do not want to see the man who sells them." [7] But he takes the five hundred pounds and gives them for the needs of the hospital. Time sped along and she was shy of reminding him (of the matter), for Macarius clearly had a great reputation in Alexandria, being a lover of God and charitable----he remained vigorous until he was a hundred, and we too passed some time with him. Finally, having found him in the church, she says to him: "I beg you, what decision have you come to about those stones for which I gave the five hundred pounds?" [8] But he answered thus: "The moment you gave me the money, I deposited it for the price of the stones. And if you would like to come and see them in the hospital----for there they are----come and look if they please you. If not, take back your money." So she came, very willingly. Now the hospital had women on the first floor and men on the ground floor. And having taken her there he brings her into the porch and says to her:

"Which do you want to see first, the sapphires or the emeralds?" She says to him: "As you please." [9] He takes her to the upper floor and shows her the women disabled in hand or feet with their disfigured faces and says to her: "Behold your sapphires!" Then he takes her down again and says to her, showing her the men: "Behold your emeralds! Do they please you? If not, take back your money." So she turned and went out, and returning home fell ill from excess of grief, because she had not done this thing in a godly fashion. 'Afterwards she thanked the priest, when the maid for whom she was planning died childless after marriage.⁶⁶ |57

CHAPTER VII. -- THE MONKS OF NITRIA ⁶⁷

[1] So then, after my visit to the monasteries round Alexandria with their 2000 or so most noble and zealous members and my three years sojourn there, I left them and went to the mountain of Nitria. Between this mountain and Alexandria lies the lake called Maria⁶⁸ seventy miles in extent. Having sailed across this I came to the mountain on its south side in a day and a half. [2] Next to this mountain lies the great desert which stretches as far as Ethiopia and the Mazicae and Mauretania. On the mountain live some 5000 men with different modes of life, each living in accordance with his own powers and wishes, so that it is allowed to live alone, or with another, or with a number of others. There are seven bakeries in the mountain, which serve the needs both of these men and also of the anchorites of the great desert, 600 in all. [3] So, having dwelt on the mountain for a year and having received much benefit from the blessed fathers Arsisius the Great⁶⁹ and Poutoubastes and Asion and Cronius⁷⁰ and Sarapion,⁷¹ and having been spurred on by hearing their many tales about the fathers, I penetrated into the innermost desert. In this mountain of Nitria there is a great church, by |58 which⁷² stand three palm-trees, each with a whip suspended from it. One is intended for the solitaries who transgress, one for robbers if any pass that way, and one for chance comers; so that all who transgress and are judged worthy of blows are tied to the palm-tree and receive on the back the appointed (number of stripes) and are then released. [4] Next to the church is a guest-house, where they receive the stranger who has arrived, until he goes away of his own accord, without limit of time, even if he remains two or three years. Having allowed him to spend one week in idleness, the rest of his stay they occupy with work either in the garden, or bakery, or kitchen. If he should be an important person, they give him a book, not allowing him to talk to any one before the hour.⁷³ In this mountain there also live doctors and confectioners. And they use wine and wine is on sale. [5] All these men work with their hands at linen-manufacture, so that all are self-supporting. And indeed at the ninth hour it is possible to stand and hear how the strains of psalmody rise from each habitation so that one believes that one is high above the world in Paradise.⁷⁴ They occupy the church only on Saturday⁷⁵ and Sunday. There are eight priests who serve the church, in which, so long as the senior priest lives, no one else celebrates, or preaches, or gives decisions,⁷⁶ but they all just sit quietly by his side. |59

[6] This Arsisius and many other old men with him whom we saw were contemporaries of the blessed Antony. Some among them, they told me, had also known Amoun⁷⁷ of Nitria, whose soul Antony saw being taken up and conducted to heaven by angels.

Arsius used to say that he also knew Pachomius ⁷⁸ of Tabennisi, a prophet and archimandrite ⁷⁹ over 3000 men, of whom I shall speak later.

CHAPTER VIII. -- AMOUN OF NITRIA ⁸⁰

[1] (ARSISIUS) used to say that Amoun lived in this wise. When he was a young man of about twenty-two he was constrained by his uncle to marry a wife---he (himself) was an orphan. Being unable to resist the pressure of his uncle, he thought it best to be crowned ⁸¹ and take his seat in the nuptial chamber and undergo all the marriage rites. When all (the guests) were gone ⁶⁰ out, after settling ⁸² the pair to sleep on the couch in the bridal chamber, Amoun gets up and locks the door, then he sits down and calls his blessed companion to him and says to her: [2] "Come here, lady, and then I will explain the matter to you. The marriage which we have contracted has no special virtue. Let us then do well by sleeping in future each of us separately, that we may please God by keeping our virginity intact." And drawing from his bosom a little book, he read to the girl, who could not read at all, in the words ⁸³ of the apostle and the Saviour, and to most of what he read he added all that was in his mind and explained the principles of virginity and chastity; so that convinced by the grace of God she said: [3] "I too am convinced, my lord. And what further commands have you now?" "I command," he said, "that each of us lives alone in future." But she could not endure this, saying: "Let us dwell in the same house, but in different beds." So he lived in the same house with her eighteen years. During each day he occupied himself with his garden and balsam-grove---for he prepared balsam. Balsam grows like a vine, requiring cultivation and pruning and much hard work. Then in the evening he would enter the house and offer prayers and eat with his wife; and then having said the night prayers would go out. [4] Such was their practice, and both having attained impassivity, the prayers of Amoun prevailed, and she says to him at last: "I have something to say to you, my lord; that, if you hearken to me, I may be convinced that you love me in a godly way." He says to her: "Say what you wish." She says to him: "It is just that we should live apart---you being a man and practising righteousness, and I also ⁶¹ eagerly following the same way as you. For it is absurd that you should live with me in chastity and yet conceal such virtue as this of yours." [5] But he, thanking God, says to her: "Then you keep this house; but I will make myself another house." And he went out and settled in the inner part of the mount of Nitria---for there were no monasteries there yet---and he made himself two round cells. ⁸⁴ And having lived twenty-two years more in the desert he died, or rather fell asleep. He used to see that blessed lady his wife twice each year.

The blessed Athanasius the bishop in his life of Antony told a marvellous story about this man, ⁸⁵ how that he came to the bank of the river Lycus with his disciple Theodoras, and shrinking from removing his clothes lest he should see him naked, he was found on the other side, having been carried across by angels without using the ferry. Such then was the life of the blessed Amoun and such his perfection that the blessed Antony saw his soul carried to heaven by angels. I crossed this river once in a ferry, but with fear; for it is a canal leading from the great Nile.

CHAPTER IX. -- OR

[1] IN this mountain of Nitria there was an ascetic named Or, to whose great virtue the whole brotherhood bore witness, and especially Melania, that woman ⁸⁶ of God, who came to the mountain before me. For my part, I never saw him alive. And they used to say this |62 of him in their stories, that he never lied, nor swore, nor abused any one, nor spoke without necessity.

CHAPTER X. -- PAMBO

[1] To this mountain also belonged the blessed Pambo, teacher of Dioscorus the bishop and Ammonius and Eusebius and Euthymius, "the (Tall) Brethren," ⁸⁷ also of Origen the nephew of Dracontius, a wonderful man. This Pambo possessed heroic virtues and great qualities, one of which was this: he was very suspicious of gold and silver, as Scripture demands. [2] For the blessed Melania told me this story: "In early days, when I came to Alexandria from Rome, I heard of his virtue and----the blessed Isidore ⁸⁸ having told me of him and having conducted me to him in the desert----I brought him a casket of silver containing silver to the weight of three hundred pounds and besought him to take a part of my goods. But he sitting still and weaving palm-leaves merely blessed me in a sentence and said: 'May God give you your reward.' [3] And he said to his steward Origen: 'Take it and distribute it to all the brethren who live in Libya and the islands, for these monasteries are poorer (than the rest)'; instructing him to give to none of those in Egypt, because their country was more fertile. But I," she said, "remained standing, expecting to be honoured or glorified by him because of my gift, but hearing nothing from him I said to him: 'That you may know, Sir, how much there is, it amounts to three hundred pounds.' [4] But he without even |63 raising his head answered me: 'The One to Whom you brought them, my child, has no need of weights. For He Who weighs the mountains, much more does He know the weight of the silver. If you had given it to me, you would have done well to tell me; but if it was to God, Who did not scorn the two obols,⁸⁹ then be silent.' So," said she, "did the Lord manifest His power when I came to the mountain. [5] After a little while the man of God fell asleep, not from an attack of fever, nor from any illness, but while he was stitching up a basket, at the age of seventy. He had sent for me and----the last stitch being ready to be completed----he said to me when about to die: 'Receive the basket at my hands to remember me by, for I have nothing else to leave you.'" Having prepared the body for burial and wrapped it in linen cloths she buried him, and then returned from the desert, keeping the basket with her till her death.

[6] This Pambo on his death-bed, at the very moment of his passing, is reported to have said this to the bystanders, Origen the priest and steward and Ammonius----famous men, both of them----and the rest of the brethren: "From the day that I came to this place in the desert and built my cell and inhabited it, I cannot remember having eaten 'bread for nought,' ⁹⁰ not earned by my hands. I have not had to repent of any word that I have spoken up to the present hour. And so I go to God, as one who has not even begun to be pious." [7] Prominent men, Origen and Ammonius, testified further to us, saying: "When he was asked about a word of Scripture or other practical matter never did he answer at once, but would say: 'I have not yet found (the answer).' Often he went three months even and gave no answer, saying he had not put his hand on it. |64 Accordingly men received

his answers as come from God, so carefully were they framed, as God would approve them. For this one virtue he was said to possess even above the great Antony and above all others, namely exactness of language."

[8] The following incident is told of Pambo. Pior ⁹¹ the ascetic came to see him, bringing his own bread, and being accused by Pambo, "Why have you done this?" answered: "Lest I should burden you." Pambo gave him a silent lesson expressly. For after a while he went to see Pior and took with him his bread, having first moistened it, and when asked why he said: "I moistened it as well, lest I should burden you."

CHAPTER XI. -- AMMONIUS

[1] THIS Ammonius, Pambo's disciple, with his three brothers ⁹² and two sisters, having reached the perfection of the love of God, made their home in the desert, the women living separately by themselves, and the men by themselves, so as to have a sufficient distance between them. But since Ammonius was exceedingly learned and a certain city coveted him for its bishop, a deputation waited on the blessed Timothy, ⁹³ beseeching him to ordain him as their bishop. [2] And he said to them: "Bring him to me and I will ordain him." When therefore they had gone with a force and he saw that he was caught, he besought them and swore that he would not accept ordination, nor depart from the desert. [65] And they would not give way to him. So before their eyes he took scissors and cut off his left ear to the base, saying to them: "Well, be convinced now that it is impossible for me to be ordained, since the law forbids a man with ear cut off to be raised to the priesthood." ⁹⁴ [3] So then they left him and departed and went and told the bishop. And he said to them: "Let the Jews observe this law. For my part, if you bring a man with his nose cut off worthy in character, I'll ordain him." So they went off again and implored Ammonius. And he swore to them: "If you use force to me, I'll cut off my tongue." So then they left him and went their way.

[4] About this Ammonius the following marvellous story was told. When desire arose in him, he never spared his poor body, but heating an iron in the fire he would apply it to his members, so that he became a mass of ulcers. Now his table from youth until death contained raw food only. For he never ate anything that had passed through the fire except bread. Having learned by heart the Old and New Testaments and (passages) in the writings of the famous authors Origen, Didymus, Pierius and Stephen, he could repeat 6,000,000 (lines), as the fathers of the desert testify. [5] He was a comforter to the brethren in the desert beyond all others. To him the blessed Evagrius, an inspired and discerning man, gave testimony, saying: "never have I seen a man of more impassivity than he."

[Having been obliged on one occasion to visit Constantinople . . . after a little while he fell asleep and was buried in the martyr's chapel called Rufiniana. His tomb is said to cure all sufferers from shivering fever. ⁹⁵] |66

CHAPTER XII. -- BENJAMIN ⁹⁶

[1] IN this mountain of Nitria there was a man called Benjamin who at the age of eighty years having reached the perfection of asceticism was counted worthy of the gift of healing, so that every one on whom he laid his hands or to whom he gave oil after blessing it was cured of every ailment.⁹⁷ Now this man who was accounted worthy of such a gift, eight months before his death developed dropsy, and his body swelled so greatly that he seemed a second Job. So Dioscorus the Bishop,⁹⁸ at that time a priest of Mount Nitria, took us---the blessed Evagrius,⁹⁹ that is, and me---and said to us: [2] "Come, see a new Job, who with so great swelling of body and incurable suffering yet maintains "an unbounded thankfulness." So we went and saw his body so greatly swollen that another man's fingers could not get round one finger of his hand. We turned our eyes away, being unable to look owing to the terrible nature of the affliction. Then that blessed Benjamin said to us: "Pray, children, that my inner man may not become dropsical. For my outer man neither benefited me when it was well, nor harmed me when it was ill." [3] During these eight months a seat was arranged for him, very wide, in which he sat continually, being no longer able to lie down owing to the other requirements of his body. But while he was in this state of affliction he healed others. I have felt bound to describe this affliction, lest we should be surprised when some untoward fate befalls righteous men. When he died, the 67 lintels and door-posts were removed, that his body might be carried out of the house, so great was the swelling.¹⁰⁰

CHAPTER XIII. -- APOLLONIUS

[1] A MAN named Apollonius, a merchant, who had renounced the world and come to live on Mount Nitria, being unable owing to advanced years either to learn a craft or work as a scribe,¹⁰¹ had this occupation during his twenty years' life on the mountain. From his private money and from (the produce of) his own labours he bought in Alexandria all kinds of drugs and things needed for the cells, and provided all the brotherhood with them in their illnesses. [2] And one might see him from early morn until the ninth hour going the round of the monasteries and entering in at each door in case there should be any one ill in bed, taking with him dried grapes, pomegranates, eggs, and bread made of fine flour, the things which such people need. This plan he had devised for a profitable life in his old age. When he died he left his stores to one like-minded with himself, exhorting him to carry on this ministration. For with 5000 monks inhabiting the mountain there was need of this visiting, since the place was desert.

CHAPTER XIV. -- PAESIUS AND ISAIAS

[1] THERE were two brothers called Paesius and Isaias, sons of a Spanish¹⁰² merchant. On their father's death they divided the real property which they got, 68 also the personal property consisting of 5000 pieces of money and clothes and slaves. They considered with each other and took counsel together saying: "What mode of life shall we adopt, brother? If we adopt the merchant career which our father followed, then we shall have to die and leave our labours to others. [2] Perhaps we may even succumb to dangers from robbers or on the sea. Come, then, let us embrace the monastic life, that we may make a profitable use of our father's riches and not lose our own souls." So the ideal of the monastic life pleased them. But they found themselves at variance, differing from each

other ¹⁰³ in their views. For having divided the property, they applied themselves each to his purpose of pleasing God, but by different tactics. [3] For the one bestowed everything on the monasteries and churches and prisons, and having learned a trade by which to earn his bread applied himself to asceticism and prayer. But the other parted with nothing, but making himself a monastery and getting together a few brethren welcomed every stranger, every invalid, every old man, every poor man, preparing three or four tables every Sunday and Saturday. In this way he spent his money.

[4] When the two were dead, various eulogies were pronounced over them, as if both had reached perfection. And some preferred Paesius, others Isaias. But a contention having arisen in the brotherhood over their praises, they went to the blessed Pambo and referred the decision to him, imploring that they might learn which was the better method. But he said to them: "Both are perfect; for one showed the works of an Abraham, the other those of an Elijah." ¹⁰⁴ [5] And when one party said: "By your feet (we ask), how can they possibly be equal?" and preferred the ascetic and said: "He performed an Evangelical work ¹⁰⁵ selling all and giving to the poor, and every hour both by day and night bearing the cross and following the Saviour and his prayers." But the other side contended with them and said: "Our man showed such great mercy to the needy that he even sat in the roads and collected the afflicted. And not only did he refresh his own soul but the souls of many others, treating their diseases and helping them." [6] Then blessed Pambo said to them: "Once again I tell you, they are both equal. I assure each of you that the one, unless he had been so great an ascetic, was not worthy to be compared with the benevolence of the other, while the second again, refreshing the stranger, was himself refreshed, and though he seemed to carry the burden of toil, yet had the refreshing that follows it. But wait until I receive a revelation from God, and after that come and you shall learn." So they came again a few days after and he said to them: "I saw both standing in Paradise, as it were in the presence of God."

CHAPTER XV. -- MACARIUS THE YOUNGER ¹⁰⁶

[1] A YOUTH named Macarius, when he was about eighteen years old, as he played with his comrades by the lake called Maria, ¹⁰⁷ being in charge of animals, unwittingly committed a murder. And saying nothing about it to any one he took to the desert and became so ¹⁷⁰ afraid both of God and man that he lost all feeling and remained three years in the desert without a roof to his head. The land in these parts is rainless, and all men know this, some from hearsay, others from personal experience. [2] This man afterwards built himself a cell. And having lived a further twenty-five years in that cell he was counted worthy of the gift of blowing away demons; ¹⁰⁸ all his pleasure he found in solitude. Having spent a long while with him, I inquired how he felt on the subject of his sin of murder. He declared that so far from grieving he actually gave thanks for the murder, since the murder unwittingly committed proved the occasion of his salvation. [3] And, bringing testimony from the Scriptures, he used to say that Moses would not have been accounted worthy of the divine vision and so great a gift and the writing of the holy words, unless he had fled to Mount Sinai in fear of Pharaoh owing to the murder which he had committed in Egypt. I say this, not to lead any one to commit murder, but to show

that there are virtues due to circumstances, when a man does not come to the good of his own accord. For some virtues are chosen voluntarily, others are due to circumstances.

CHAPTER XVI. -- NATHANAEL

[1] THERE was another of the old (monks) called Nathanael. I did not visit him during his lifetime, since he had fallen asleep fifteen years before my arrival. But when I met the men who lived with him |71 and shared his life of asceticism, I made a point of inquiring about the virtues of this man. They showed me his cell, wherein no one dwelt any longer because it was too near the world; he had made it when the anchorites were few in number. They told this story about him as specially characteristic, that he stopped in his cell so perseveringly as not to be shaken from his purpose. [2] Among other things, having been mocked at the outset by the demon who mocks all men and deceives them, he seemed to feel a distaste ¹⁰⁹ for his first cell and went off and built another nearer a village. So when he had completed the cell and occupied it, three or four months after the demon came by night, holding a whip of ox-hide like the executioners, and having the appearance of a ragged soldier, and began cracking his whip. Then the blessed Nathanael answered and said: "Who are you who do such things in my dwelling?" The demon answered: "I am he who drove you from that cell. I have come to chase you out of this too." [3] Knowing that he was the victim of an illusion, he returned again to the first cell, and in a period of thirty-seven years in all did not cross the threshold, having a quarrel with the demon; who showed him such wonders, trying to force him out, as it is impossible to relate. This is one of them. Having watched for a visit from seven holy bishops----either arranged by God's providence or being one of his own temptations----the demon very nearly turned him from his purpose. For when the bishops went out after prayer, he did not escort them even one step. [4] The deacons said to him: "This is an act of pride, Father, not escorting the bishops." But he said to them: "I am dead both to my lords the bishops and to all the world. For I have a hidden design and God knows my |72 heart. Wherefore I do not escort them." Having failed in this affair, the demon disguised himself nine months before Nathanael's death and became a lad about ten years old, driving an ass laden with loaves in a basket. And having arrived late in the evening near his cell he made it seem that the ass was fallen and the boy crying: [5] "Father Nathanael, pity me and give me a hand." Hearing the voice of the supposed boy and opening the door, he stood within and said to him: "Who are you and what do you want me to do for you?" He said: "I am so-and-so's little servant and I am carrying loaves, for it is this brother's agape, and to-morrow when Saturday ¹¹⁰ dawns offerings will be wanted. I beseech you, do not neglect me, lest perchance I be eaten by hyaenas." For many hyaenas are found in those places. So blessed Nathanael stood in silence with his brain in a whirl and his heart sore troubled and argued thus with himself: "Either I must give up the commandment, ¹¹¹ or my purpose." Afterwards, however, considering that it was better for the confusion of the devil not to disturb the purpose of so many years, he prayed and said to the supposed boy that spoke to him: "Listen, boy! I |73 believe in the God Whom I serve, that if you are in need God will send you help and neither will hyaenas harm you nor any one else. But if you are a temptation, God will reveal the matter now." And he shut the door and went in. But the demon, put to confusion at the defeat, dissolved into a

dust-storm and into wild-asses jumping and fleeing and emitting yells. This was the conflict of the blessed Nathanael, this his manner of life, this his end.

CHAPTER XVII. -- MACARIUS OF EGYPT ¹¹²

[1] I HESITATE either to speak or write the many great and incredible events that happened in connection with those famous men, the two Macarii, lest I should incur the suspicion of being a liar; indeed the Holy Spirit has declared that "the Lord destroys all them that speak falsehood." ¹¹³ So do not disbelieve me, most believing one, for I am not lying. Of these Macarii the one was an Egyptian by race, the other an Alexandrian, ¹¹⁴ a seller of sweetmeats.

[2] First of all I will tell of the Egyptian, who lived a full ninety years. Of these he spent sixty in the desert, having retired there as a young man of thirty. And he was counted worthy to possess such great discernment that he was called the "aged youth." Because of this also he made the quicker progress. For when he was forty years old he received grace to contend against the evil spirits both by healing and forecasting the future. Also he was counted worthy of the priesthood.

[3] He had two disciples with him in the inner desert |74called Scete. There was always one of them at his service near at hand because of those that came to be healed, while the other rested in an adjoining cell. After some time had elapsed, having seen into the future with prophetic eye, he said to the man who waited on him, named John, who afterwards became a priest in the place of Macarius himself: "Listen to me, brother John, and bear with my warning; for you are being tempted and the spirit of covetousness is tempting you. [4] I have seen this, and I know that if you will bear with me you will be perfected in this place and glorified, 'neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling'; ¹¹⁵ but if you will not listen to me, the end of Gehazi shall come upon you, of whose illness you are even now sick." ¹¹⁶ Now it came to pass when fifteen or twenty years had elapsed after the death of Macarius that he disobeyed, and accordingly after robbing the poor fund contracted elephantiasis, so that there was not found on his body a whole part, on which one could put his finger. So this is what the holy Macarius prophesied. [5] Now concerning eating and drinking it is superfluous to relate, seeing that not even among the indolent is it possible to find gluttony or carelessness in these regions, owing both to the scarcity of necessaries and the zeal of the inhabitants. But concerning the rest of his asceticism I do speak, for he was said to be in a continual ecstasy and to spend a far longer time with God than with things sublunary. The following marvels are told of him.

[6] A certain Egyptian, enamoured of a lady ¹¹⁷married to a husband, and being unable to seduce her, consulted a magician, saying: "Lead her to love me, or contrive that her husband reject her." And the magician having |75 received a sufficient sum, used magic spells and arranged for her to take the form of a mare. The husband having come in and seen her was surprised that a mare lay on his bed. He weeps and laments; he talks to the animal, but gets no reply. He calls in the priests ¹¹⁸ of the village. [7] He brings them in, shows her to them, but does not discover what has happened. During three days she neither took fodder as a mare nor bread as a human being, thus deprived of both forms of

nourishment. Finally, that God might be glorified and the virtue of the holy Macarius appear, it entered into her husband's heart to take her into the desert. And having put a halter on her as upon a horse, he led her into the desert. When they came near, the brethren stood by the cell of Macarius, struggling with the woman's husband and saying: [8] "Why did you bring this mare here?" He said to them: "That she may receive mercy." They said to him: "What is the matter?" The husband answered them: "She was my wife and was turned into a mare, and to-day is the third day that she has tasted nothing." They referred the matter to the saint, who was praying within. For God had revealed the matter to him and he was praying for her. The holy Macarius therefore answered the brethren and said to them: "You are horses, since you have the eyes of horses. [9] For she is a woman and has not been transformed, except in the eyes of deluded men." And he blessed water,¹¹⁹ and pouring it from the head downwards on to her bare skin he prayed. And [76] immediately he made her appear to all as a woman. Then giving her food he made her eat and sent her away with her husband thanking the Lord. And he advised her thus: "Never give up the church, never stay away from the Communion. For these things happened to you because you did not attend the mysteries for five weeks."

[10] Here is another example of his asceticism. He made in the course of time a tunnel running under the ground from his cell for half a stade and finished it off at the end with a cave. And if ever a crowd of people troubled him, he would leave his cell secretly and go away to the cave and no one would find him. Now one of his zealous disciples told us this, and said that he used to say twenty-four prayers on his way to the cave and twenty-four as he returned.

[11] A report was prevalent concerning him that he raised a dead man, in order to persuade a heretic who did not acknowledge that there was a bodily resurrection. And this report was current in the desert.

Once a young man possessed with a devil was brought to him by his lamenting mother, bound to two young men. And the devil had this method of working. After eating three bushels of bread and drinking a beaker of water,¹²⁰ he would belch out the food and dissolve it into vapour, for in this way what had been eaten and drunk was dissolved as it were by fire. [12] For there is a class (of demons) called fiery. Since there are differences among demons, as also among men, not of nature but of character. This young man then, not receiving enough food from his mother, often ate his own dirt and drank his own water. As then his mother wept and implored the saint, he took the lad and prayed over him beseeching God. And after a day or two, the malady [77] having eased a little, the holy Macarius said to her: [13] "How much do you want him to eat?" She replied: "Ten pounds of bread." So having rebuked her, saying this was too much, and having prayed over him with fasting for seven days, he put him on to (a regime) of three pounds, with obligation to work. And so having cured him he restored him to his mother. And this wonder God wrought through Macarius. I never met him, for he had fallen asleep a year before my entry into the desert.

CHAPTER XVIII. -- MACARIUS OF ALEXANDRIA ¹²¹

[1] BUT I did meet the other Macarius, the Alexandrian, a priest of the place called Cellia. I sojourned in this Cellia nine years.¹²² He survived for three years of my stay there. And some things I saw (for myself), some I heard from him, and some things again I heard from others. This then was the method of his asceticism. If ever he heard of any feat, he did the same thing, perfectly. For instance, having heard from some that the monks of Tabennisi all through Lent eat (only) food that has not been near the fire, he decided for seven years to eat nothing that had been through the fire, and except for raw vegetables, if any such were found, and moistened pulse he tasted nothing. [2] Having practised this virtue to perfection, he heard about another man, that he ate a pound of bread.¹²³ And having broken up his ration-biscuit¹²⁴ and put it into a vessel with a narrow mouth,¹²⁵ he decided to eat just as much as his hand brought out. And he would tell the story thus in a joking manner: "I seized hold of a number of pieces, but I could not extract them all at once by reason of the narrowness of the opening, for like a tax-gatherer it would not let me."¹²⁶ So for three years he kept up this practice of asceticism, eating four or five ounces of bread and drinking as much water, and a pint of oil in the year.

[3] Here is another practice of his. He determined to dispense with sleep, and he told us how he did not go under a roof for twenty days, that he might conquer sleep, being burnt up by the sun's heat and shrivelled up with cold by night. And he used to say this: "Unless I had soon gone under a roof and got some sleep, my brain would have so dried up as to drive me into delirium for ever after. And I conquered so far as depended on me, but I gave way so far as depended on my nature that had need of sleep."

[4] As he sat early in the morning in his cell, a mosquito settled on his foot and stung him. And feeling the pain he squashed it with his hand after it was full of blood. So, accusing himself for having taken vengeance, he condemned himself to sit naked for six months in the marsh of Scete, which is in the great desert. The mosquitos there are like wasps, and even pierce the hides of wild boars. So then he was bitten all over and developed so many swellings that some thought he had elephantiasis. Returning to his cell after six months, he was recognized by his voice that it was Macarius himself.

[5] Once he desired to enter the garden-tomb of Jannes and Jambres,¹²⁷ so he told us. But this garden-tomb had once belonged to the magicians who had [79] great power long ago with Pharaoh. Forasmuch then as they had the power for long periods, they built their work with stones faced four-square, and made their tomb there, and stored away much gold. They also planted trees, for the place is rather damp, and they dug a well besides. [6] Since therefore the saint did not know the way, he followed the stars by a kind of guesswork, crossing the desert, as one does at sea. Taking a bundle of reeds he planted them one each mile as landmarks in order to find his way as he returned. So having travelled nearly nine days he approached the place. Then the demon, who always withstands the athletes of Christ, collected all the reeds and put them at his head as he slept about a mile from the garden-tomb. [7] So he arose and found the reeds, God having allowed this perhaps to try him further, that he might not trust in reeds,¹²⁸ but in the pillar of cloud that led Israel forty years in the desert. He used to say: "Seventy demons came out from the garden-tomb to meet me, shouting and fluttering like crows against my face

and saying: 'What do you want, Macarius? What do you want, monk? Why have you come to our place? You can't stay here.' I told them," he said, "'Let me just go in and look round and go away.' [8] So," he said, "I went in and found a little brazen jar suspended and an iron chain against the well, rusted already by time, and some pomegranates with nothing inside because they had been dried up by the sun." So then he turned back and went on his way for twenty days. But when the water which he was carrying failed him and also the loaves, he was in great distress. And when he was nearly collapsing there appeared to him a maiden, so he declared, wearing a pure white robe and holding a cruse dripping with water. [9] He said she was some distance, about a stade, away from him, and he went on for three days, gazing at her as she stood with the vessel and being unable to catch her up, as happens in dreams,¹²⁹ but he lasted out sustained by the hope of drinking. After her appeared a herd of antelopes, one of which with a calf stopped--- there are many in those regions. And he said that her udder was flowing with milk. So, creeping under her and sucking, he was satisfied. And the antelope went as far as his cell, giving him milk, but not allowing her own calf to suck.

[10] On another occasion, while digging a well near to some vegetable shoots, he was bitten by an asp. Now this beast is able to cause death. And having taken it with both hands he seized it by the jaws and pulled it in pieces, saying to it: "When God did not send you, how did you dare to come?"

Now he had several cells in the desert: one in Scete, the great interior desert, and one in the Libyan desert, and one at the so-called Cellia, and one on Mount Nitria. Some of these are without windows, and in these he was said to sit during Lent in darkness. Another was too narrow for him to stretch out his feet in it. Another, in which he met his visitors, was more spacious.

[11] He healed so great a crowd of demoniacs that they cannot be counted. When we were there a highborn maiden was brought from Thessalonica, paralyzed for many years. He rubbed her for twenty days with holy oil¹³⁰ with his own hands, praying the while, and sent her back to her city restored to health. After she had gone she sent him many generous gifts. |81

[12] Having heard that the monks of Tabennisi had a splendid rule of life, he changed his clothes and put on the secular garments of a workman, and went a fifteen days' journey to the Thebaid, travelling through the desert. And having come to the monastery of the Tabennesiots he asked for their archimandrite, Pachomius by name, a man of great reputation and possessing the gift of prophecy---though the story of Macarius had not been revealed to him. So meeting him he said: "I pray you, receive me into your monastery that I may become a monk." [13] Pachomius said to him: "You have already reached old age,¹³¹ and you cannot be an ascetic. The brethren are ascetics and you cannot endure their labours. You will be offended and will depart, cursing them." And he did not receive him either the first day or the second, till seven days had passed. But he persisted in waiting, fasting (all the time), and at last he said to him: "Receive me, father, and if I do not fast as they do and work, order me to be driven out." He persuaded the brethren to admit him; now the total number (of the occupants) of the first monastery was

1,400 men ¹³² and remains so up to this day. [14] Well, he entered. When a little time had passed, Lent came on and he saw each man practising different ways of asceticism---one eating in the evening only, another every two days, another every five, another again standing all night but sitting down by day. So having moistened palm-leaves in large numbers, he stood in a corner and until the forty days were completed and Easter had come, ate no bread and drank no water, neither knelt down nor reclined, and apart from a few cabbage leaves |82 took nothing, and them only on Sunday, that he might appear to eat. [15] And if ever he went out in obedience to nature, he quickly came in again and took his stand, speaking to no one and not opening his mouth but standing in silence. And, apart from prayer in his heart and the palm-leaves in his hands, he was doing nothing. All the ascetics therefore, seeing this, raised a revolt against the superior, saying: "Where did you get this fleshless man from, to condemn us? Either drive him out, or know that we are all going." Pachomius, therefore, having heard the details of his observance, prayed to God that the identity of the stranger might be revealed to him. [16] And it was revealed; and he took him by the hand and led him to the house of prayer, where the altar was, and said to him, "Here, good old man, you are Macarius and you hid it from me. For many years I have been longing to see you. I thank you for letting my children feel your fist, lest they should be proud of their ascetic achievements. Now go away to your own place, for you have edified us sufficiently. And pray for us." Then he went away, as asked.

[17] On another occasion he told us this story: "Having perfected every kind of life that I desired, then I had another desire. I desired to keep my mind for five days only undistracted from (the contemplation of) God. And, having determined this, I barred the cell and enclosure, so as not to have to answer any man, and I took my stand, beginning at the second hour. So I gave this commandment to my mind: "Do not descend from heaven. There you have angels, archangels, the powers on high, the God of all; do not descend below heaven." [18] And having lasted out two days and two nights, I exasperated the demon so that he became a flame of fire and burned up all the things in the cell, so that even the little mat on which I stood was |83 consumed with fire and I thought I was being all burned up. Finally, stricken with fear, I left off on the third day, being unable to keep my mind free from distraction, but I descended to contemplation of the world, lest vanity should be imputed to me."

[19] Once I visited this holy Macarius and found a village priest lying just outside his cell, whose head was all eaten away by the disease called cancer, and the actual bone appeared on the crown of his head. He had come to be healed and Macarius would not grant him an interview. So I besought him: "I pray you, pity him and give him his answer." [20] And he said to me: "He does not deserve to be healed, for it has been sent him as a punishment. But if you want him to be healed, persuade him to give up taking services. For he was taking services, though living in fornication, and for this reason he is being punished and God is healing his soul." ¹³³ So when I said this to the afflicted man he consented, and swore that he would no longer exercise his priesthood. Then he received him and said: "Do you believe that God is?" He said to him: "Yes." [21] "Were you able to mock God?" "No," he answered. He said: "If you recognize your sin and the chastening of God, on account of which you suffered this, reform yourself

henceforward." So he confessed his fault ¹³⁴ and gave a promise that he would sin no more nor take the service, but embrace the position of a layman. Then he laid his hands on him and in a few days he was cured and the hair grew and he went away healed.

[22] Before my eyes a young lad was brought to him possessed by an evil spirit. So, putting one hand ¹⁸⁴ on his head and the other on his heart, he prayed so much that he made him hang in mid-air. Then the boy swelled like a wine-skin and festered so that he became a mass of erysipelas.¹³⁵ And having cried out suddenly, he produced water through all his senses, and calming down returned to his original size. So he anointed him with holy oil and handed him to his father, and having poured water upon him ordered that he should touch neither flesh nor wine for forty days. And so he healed him.

[23] One day vainglorious thoughts troubled him, driving him out from the cell and suggesting to him as if by a divine dispensation that he should visit the city of the Romans to cure the sick. For grace acted powerfully in him against (evil) spirits. And when for a long while he would not obey, but was being vehemently pressed, falling on the doorstep of his cell, he put his feet outside and said: "Drag me, demons, pull me. For I am not going with *my* feet. If you can take me, then I will go." He swore to them: "Here I lie until evening. Unless you shake me, I will not listen to you." [24] So, having lain there a long while, he got up, but when night came on they attacked him again, and having filled a two-bushel basket with sand and put it on his shoulders, he tramped about in the desert. Theosebuius the Cosmetor,¹³⁶ an Antiochian by race, met him and said to him: "What are you carrying, father? Give me the burden and don't trouble yourself." But he said to him: "I trouble my trampler. For he is insatiable and tempts me to go out." So having tramped about for a long time he went into his cell, having punished his body. ¹⁸⁵

[25] This holy Macarius told me the following---for he was a priest. "I noticed at the time of distributing the mysteries that it was never I which gave the oblation to Marcus the ascetic, but an angel used to give it him from the altar. I saw only the knuckle of the donor's hand." Now this Marcus was a young man, who learned by heart the Old and New Testaments, exceedingly meek and continent beyond all others.¹³⁷

[26] One day having leisure---Macarius then being in extreme old age---I went off and sat by his door, thinking him superhuman, seeing that he was so old, and listened to what he said and what he did. He was quite alone inside; being already a hundred years old and having lost his teeth, he was righting with himself and the devil and saying: "What do you want, bad old man? See, you have had oil and have taken some wine. What do you want more, you white-haired glutton?"---scolding himself. Then to the devil: "Do I owe you anything now? You won't find anything. Go away from me." And, as if humming to himself, he was saying: "Here, you white-haired glutton, how long shall I be with you? "¹³⁸

[27] Paphnutius his disciple told us, that one day a hyaena took her whelp, which was blind, and brought it to Macarius. And having knocked with her head at the door of the enclosure, she entered, Macarius sitting outside (his cell), and threw the young one down at his feet. And he took it and spat on its eyes and prayed, and immediately it recovered

its sight.¹³⁹ And its mother having suckled it took it and went away. [28] And on the next day she brought the saint the fleece of a large sheep.¹⁴⁰ And the blessed Melania said this to |86 me: "I got that fleece from Macarius as a gift to a visitor. And what marvel, if He who tamed the lions for Daniel, also made the hyaena intelligent?"

And he said, that from the day he was baptized he never spat on the ground,¹⁴¹ it being then sixty years from his baptism. [29] As to his bodily form, he was rather short, and beardless, having no hairs except on his lips and the tip of his chin. For owing to the excess of his asceticism the hairs of his beard did not even sprout.

One day, when I was suffering from accidie, I went to him and said: "Father, what shall I do? Since my thoughts afflict me saying, 'You are making no progress, go away from here.'" And he said to me: "Tell them, 'For Christ's sake I am guarding the walls' " ¹⁴²

I have told you these few stories out of many relating to the holy Macarius.

CHAPTER XIX. -- MOSES THE ROBBER ¹⁴³

[1] A CERTAIN Moses---this was his name---an Ethiopian by race and black, was house-servant to a government official. His own master drove him out because of his immorality and brigandage. For he was said to go even the length of murder. I am compelled to tell his wicked acts in order to show the virtue of his repentance. Anyhow they used to say that he was leader |87 of a robber-band, and among his acts of brigandage one stood out specially, that once he plotted vengeance against a shepherd who had one night with his dogs impeded him in a project. [2] Desirous to kill him, he looked about to find the place where the shepherd kept his sheep. And he was informed that it was on the opposite bank of the Nile. And, since the river was in flood and about a mile in extent, he grasped his sword in his mouth and put his shirt on his head and so got over, swimming the river. While he was swimming over, the shepherd was able to escape him by burying himself in the sand. So, having killed the four best rams and tied them together with a cord, he swam back again. [3] And having come to a little homestead he flayed the sheep, and having eaten the best of the flesh and sold the skins in exchange for wine, he drank a quart, that is eighteen Italian pints, and went off fifty miles further to where he had his band.

In the end this abandoned man, conscience-stricken as a result of one of his adventures, gave himself up to a monastery and to such practising of asceticism that he brought publicly to the knowledge of Christ even his accomplice in crime from his youth, the demon who had sinned with him.¹⁴⁴ Among other tales this is told of him. One day robbers attacked him as he sat in his cell, not knowing who it was. They were four in number. [4] He tied them all together and, putting them on his back like a truss of straw, brought them to the church of the brethren, saying: "Since I am not allowed to hurt anyone, what do you bid me do with these?" Then these robbers, having confessed their |88 sins and recognized that it was Moses the erstwhile renowned and far-famed robber, themselves also glorified God and renounced the world because of his conversion, saying

to themselves: "If he who was so great and powerful in brigandage has feared God, why should we defer our salvation?"

[5] This Moses was attacked by demons, who tried to plunge him into his old habit of sexual incontinence. He was tempted so greatly, as he himself testified, that he almost relinquished his purpose. So, having come to the great Isidore,¹⁴⁵ the one who lived in Scete, he told him about his conflict. And he said to him: "Do not be grieved. These are the beginnings, and therefore they have attacked you the more vehemently, seeking out your old habit. [6] For just as a dog in a butcher's shop owing to his habits cannot tear himself away, but if the shop is closed and no one gives him anything, he no longer comes near it. So also with you; if you endure, the demon gets discouraged and has to leave you." So he returned and from that hour practised asceticism more vehemently, and especially refrained from food, taking nothing except dry bread to the extent of twelve ounces, accomplishing a great deal of work and completing fifty prayers (a day). Thus he mortified his body, but he still continued to burn¹⁴⁶ and be troubled by dreams. [7] Again he went to another one of the saints and said to him: "What am I to do, seeing that the dreams of my soul darken my reason, by reason of my sinful habits?" He said to him: "Because you have not withdrawn your mind from imagining these things, that is why you endure this. Give yourself to watching and pray with fasting and you will quickly [89 be delivered from them." Listening to this advice also he went away to his cell and gave his word that he would not sleep all night nor bend his knees. [8] So he remained in his cell for six years and every night he stood in the middle of the cell praying and not closing his eyes. And he could not master the thing. So he suggested to himself yet another plan, and going out by night he would visit the cells of the older and more ascetic (monks), and taking their water-pots secretly would fill them with water. For they fetch their water from a distance, some from two miles off, some five miles, others half a mile. [9] So one night the demon watched for him, having lost his patience, and as he stooped down at the well gave him a blow with a cudgel across the loins and left him (apparently) dead, with no perception of what he had suffered or from whom. So the next day a man came to draw water and found him lying there, and told the great Isidore, the priest of Scete. He therefore picked him up and brought him to the church, and for a year he was so ill that with difficulty did his body and soul recover strength. [10] So the great Isidore said to him: "Moses, stop struggling with the demons, and do not provoke them." But he said to him: "I will never cease until the appearance of the demons ceases." So he said to him: "In the name of Jesus Christ your dreams have ceased. Come to Communion then with confidence, for, that you should not boast of having overcome passion, this is why you have been oppressed, for your good." [11] And he went away again to his cell. Afterwards when asked by Isidore, some two months later, he said that he no longer suffered anything. Indeed, he was counted worthy of such a gift (of power) over demons that we fear these flies more than he feared demons. This was the manner of life of Moses the Ethiopian; he too was numbered [90 among the great ones of the fathers. So he died in Scete seventy-five years old, having become a priest; and he left seventy disciples.

CHAPTER XX. -- PAUL ¹⁴⁷

[1] THERE is a mountain in Egypt called Pherme, which borders on the great desert of Scete. On this mountain dwell some 500 men, devotees of asceticism. One of them, a man named Paul, had this manner of life: he touched no work, and no business, nor did he receive anything from any man beyond what he ate. But his work and his asceticism consisted in ceaseless prayer. So he had 300 set prayers, and he collected as many pebbles and kept them in his lap¹⁴⁸ and threw out of his lap one pebble at each prayer.¹⁴⁹ [2] Having gone for an interview with Macarius, the one known as Citizen,¹⁵⁰ he said to him: "Father Macarius, I am afflicted." So he compelled him to say for what reason. But he said to him: "In a certain village there dwells a virgin who has lived the ascetic life for thirty years. They have told me of her that except on Saturday and Sunday¹⁵¹ she never eats. But all the while dragging out the long weeks and eating at intervals of five days she [91] makes 700 prayers. And when I learned this I despaired of myself because I could not make more than 300." [3] The holy Macarius answered him: "I am now sixty years old; I make 100 set prayers and produce my food by my own work, and give the brethren the interviews that are their due, and my reason does not condemn me as having neglected my duty. But if you say 300 and are condemned by your conscience, you are clearly not praying them with purity, or else you could pray more and do not."

CHAPTER XXI. -- EULOGIUS AND THE CRIPPLE

[1] CRONIUS the priest of Nitria told me this: When I was young and because of accidie fled from the monastery of my archimandrite, I came in my wanderings to the mountain¹⁵² of the holy Antony. It lay between Babylon¹⁵³ and Heracles¹⁵⁴ in the great desert that leads to the Red Sea, about thirty miles from the River. So having come to Antony's monastery by the River where his two disciples dwelt at the place called Pispir---I mean Macarius and Amatas, who also buried him when he died---I waited five days for an interview with the holy Antony. [2] For he was said to visit this monastery at intervals now of ten days, now of twenty, now of five, as God led him, to do good to those who happened to visit the monastery. So a number of brethren were [92] assembled, one with this need, another with that. Among them was a certain Eulogius, a monk of Alexandria, and another man, a cripple, who had come for the following reason.

[3] This Eulogius was a learned man,¹⁵⁵ having had a good all-round education,¹⁵⁶ who smitten with a love of immortality renounced the clamours (of the world), and disposing of all his goods left himself a little money, since he was unable to work. Well, suffering from accidie and wishing neither to enter a convent nor to reach perfection alone, he found a man lying in the market-place, a cripple, with neither hands nor feet. His tongue was the only part of his body that was undamaged, and was used to appeal to the passer-by.¹⁵⁷ [4] So Eulogius stood and gazed at him and prayed to God and made a covenant with God (saying): "Lord, in Thy name I take this cripple and comfort him until death, that I also may be saved through him. Grant me patience to serve him!" And approaching the crippled man he said to him: "Would you like me, great one, to take you to my house and comfort you?" He said to him: "Yes, indeed." "Then shall I get an ass and take you?" He agreed. So he fetched an ass and carried him and brought him to his own guest-chamber and took care of him.¹⁵⁸ [5] Well, the cripple lasted on for fifteen years and was nursed by him, being washed and tended by the hands of Eulogius, and fed in a way

suitable to his malady. But after the fifteen years a demon attacked him, and he rebelled against 93 Eulogius. And he began to dress the man down with great abuse and reviling, adding: "Assassin,¹⁵⁹ deserter, you stole other folk's property, and you want to be saved through me. Throw me into the market-place. I want meat." He brought him meat. [6] Again he cried out: "I am not satisfied. I want crowds. I want to be in the market-place. Oh the violence! Put me where you found me." If he had had hands he would have quickly strangled him, to such an extent had the demon infuriated him. So Eulogius went off to the neighbouring ascetics and said to them: "What shall I do, because this cripple has brought me to despair? Am I to cast him out? I pledged myself to God and I am afraid. But am I *not* to cast him out? He gives me bad days and nights, so that I do not know what to do to him." [7] But they said to him: "While the great one is still alive"---- for so they called Antony----" put the cripple in a boat and go to him, and take him to the monastery and wait till Antony comes out from the cave and refer the case to him. And whatever he says to you, go by his decision, for God speaks to you by him." And he heard them patiently, and putting the cripple into a rustic boat went out by night from the city and took him to the monastery of the disciples of the holy Antony. [8] Now it happened that the great man came the next day in the late evening, as Cronius had said, wrapped in a cloak of skin. When he reached the monastery, this was his custom, to summon Macarius and ask him: "Brother Macarius, have any brethren come here?" He answered "Yes." "Egyptians or from Jerusalem?" And he had given him a sign: "If you see them inclined to be careless, say Egyptians; but when they are more serious and 94 studious, say from Jerusalem." [9] So he asked him as usual: "Are the brethren Egyptians or from Jerusalem?" Macarius answered and said to him: "A mixture." Now when he said to him "They are Egyptians," the holy Antony would say to him: "Prepare some lentils and give them a meal," and he would utter a prayer for them and say good-bye. But when he said "from Jerusalem," he would sit up all night, talking to them about salvation. [10] So that night he sat down, (Cronius) says, and called them all to him and, though none had told him what name he bore, called out in the dark and said "Eulogius, Eulogius, Eulogius"----three times. He, the learned man I mean, did not answer, thinking that another Eulogius was being called. He said to him again: "I am speaking to *you*, Eulogius, the man who came from Alexandria." Eulogius said to him: "What are your commands, I pray?" "Why have you come?" Eulogius answered and said to him: "He that revealed to you my name, hath also revealed to you my business." [11] Antony said to him: "I know why you came. But speak before all the brethren, that they also may hear." Eulogius said to him: "I found this cripple in the market-place and I pledged myself to God that I would nurse him and so be saved through him and he through me. So since after all these years he torments me to distraction, and I contemplated casting him out; on this account I came to your holiness, in order that you might counsel me what I ought to do and pray for me, for I am terribly distressed. [12] Antony said to him with angry and stern voice: "Cast him out? But He Who made him does not cast him out. Will *you* cast him out? God will raise up a man better than you, and he will succour him." Eulogius, who had been calm up till now, trembled. And Antony leaving Eulogius began to castigate the 95 cripple with his tongue and cry: "You crippled and maimed man, deserving neither earth nor heaven, will you not cease fighting against God? Do you not know that it is Christ Who is serving you? How dare you utter such words against Christ? Was it not for Christ's sake that he made himself a slave to minister to you?" So having

reprimanded him, he left him alone too. And having conversed with all the rest about their needs he returned to Eulogius and the cripple and said to them: "Do not wander about any more, go away. Do not be separated from one another, except in your cell in which you have dwelt so long. For already God is sending for you. For this temptation has come upon you because you are both near your end and are about to be counted worthy of crowns. Do nothing else therefore, and may the angel when he comes not find you here." So they journeyed in haste and came to their cell, and within forty days Eulogius died, and in three days more the cripple died too.

[15] But Cronius, after staying in the regions round the Thebaid, came down to the monasteries of Alexandria. And it happened that the services for the fortieth day ¹⁶⁰ of the one and the third day of the other were being celebrated by the brethren. Cronius learned this and was amazed, and having taken a gospel and put it before the brethren took an oath, after telling what had happened, and said: "I was blessed Antony's interpreter in these conversations, since he does not know Greek; for I know both tongues and interpreted to them, speaking to these two in Greek, to Antony in Egyptian.

[16] And Cronius told this story also: "In that night blessed Antony told me this: 'For a whole year I ⁹⁶ prayed that the place of the just and of sinners might be revealed to me. And I saw a tall giant reaching to the clouds, black, with his hands stretched up to heaven, and under him a lake as vast as the sea, and I saw souls flying like birds. [17] And as many as flew over his hands and head were saved. But as many as were struck by his hands fell into the lake. Then came a voice to me saying, These souls of the righteous which thou seest flying are the souls which are saved for Paradise. But the others are those which are drawn down to hell, having followed the desires of the flesh and revenge.' " ¹⁶¹

CHAPTER XXII. -- PAUL THE SIMPLE ¹⁶²

[1] CRONIUS and the holy Hierax and a number of others, about whom I shall presently speak, told me this tale also. A certain Paul, a rustic peasant, exceedingly ⁹⁷ guileless and simple, was wedded to a most beautiful woman of depraved character, who for a very long while concealed her sins from him. However, Paul came in suddenly from work ¹⁶³ and found his wife and her lover ¹⁶⁴ behaving shamefully, Providence thus guiding Paul to what was best for himself. And laughing discreetly he called to them and said: "Good, good. I don't mind, truly. By Jesus, I'll take her no longer. Go, you have her and her children, for I am going to become a monk." [2] And saying nothing to anyone he hastened along the eight stages ¹⁶⁵ and went to the blessed Antony and knocked at the door. He came out and asked him: "What do you want?" He said to him: "I want to become a monk." Antony answered and said to him: "You are an old man, sixty years old; you cannot become a monk here. But rather go back to your village and work and live an active life giving thanks to God, for you cannot endure the tribulations of the desert." The old man answered again and said: "Whatever you teach me, I will do it." [3] Antony said to him: "I have told you that you are an old man and cannot stand it. If you really want to become a monk, go to a cenobium with a number of brethren, who can support your weakness. For I live here alone, eating after a five days' fast, and that

without satisfying my hunger." With these and such-like words he tried to frighten Paul away and, since he could not endure him, Antony shut the door and did not go out for three days because of him, not even for necessary purposes. But Paul did not go away. [4] But on the fourth day necessity compelling him he opened the door and went [98] out and said to him again: "Go away from here, old man. Why do you annoy me? You cannot stay here." Paul said to him: "It is impossible for me to die elsewhere than here." So Antony looked about and noticed that he had not with him any form of nourishment, neither bread nor water, and that he was now in the fourth day of his fast, and saying: "Lest perchance you die and stain my soul," he received him. And Antony adopted in those days a regime which he had never tried in his youth. [5] And having moistened some palm-leaves he said to him: "Take these, weave them into mats, as I do." The old man wove until the ninth hour, laboriously completing ninety feet.¹⁶⁶ So Antony looked and was displeased and said to him: "You have woven badly, unpick them and weave them over again" ----imposing this nauseous task upon him,¹⁶⁷ though he was hungry and aged, in order that he might be disgusted and flee away from Antony. But he both unpicked and wove again the same leaves, though it was more difficult, because they were all shrivelled up.¹⁶⁸ And Antony, seeing that he neither murmured nor was discouraged nor angry, felt compunction. [6] And after sunset he said to him: "Would you like us to eat a piece of bread?" Paul said to him: "As you please, father." And this again moved Antony, that he did not rush eagerly at the mention of food, but had thrown the power (of choice) upon him. So he laid the table and brought in bread. And Antony, having put out the biscuits, weighing six ounces each, moistened one for himself---for they were dry---and three for Paul. And Antony struck up a psalm which he knew, and after [99] singing it twelve times he prayed twelve times, to test Paul. [7] But he eagerly joined in the prayer, for he would have preferred being eaten by scorpions, so I think, to living with an adulterous woman. But after the twelve prayers they sat down to eat late in the evening. Now Antony, having eaten the one biscuit, did not touch another. But the old man, eating more slowly, was still at his little biscuit. Antony was waiting for him to finish and says to him: "Eat, father, a second biscuit." Paul says to him: "If you will eat, I will too; if you do not eat, I will not." Antony says: "I have had enough, for I am a monk." [8] Paul says to him: "I too have had enough, for I too want to become a monk." He rises again and prays twelve prayers and chants twelve psalms. Antony sleeps a little of his first sleep and then gets up to sing psalms at midnight until day. So when he saw the old man eagerly following his mode of life he said to him: "If you can do thus every day, stay with me." Paul said to him: "If there is anything more, I do not know; for I can do easily these things which I have seen." Antony said to him the next day: "Behold, you have become a monk."

[9] So Antony, convinced after the required number of months that Paul had a perfect soul, being very simple and grace co-operating with him, made him a cell, three or four miles away, and said to him: "Behold, you have become a monk; remain alone in order that you may be tried by demons." So Paul dwelt there one year and was counted worthy of grace over demons and diseases. Among other cases, a demoniac was once brought to Antony, exceedingly terrifying, possessed by a spirit of high rank, who cursed even heaven itself. [10] So Antony, having examined him, said to those who brought him: "This is not my work, for I [100] have not yet been counted worthy of power over this

order of high rank, but this is Paul's business." So Antony went off and led them to Paul, and said to him: "Father Paul, cast out this demon from the man that he may go away cured to his home." Said Paul to him: "What are *you* doing?" Antony said to him: "I have no leisure, I have something else to do." And Antony left him and went again to his own cell. [11] So the old man got up, and having prayed an effective prayer, addressed the demoniac: "Father Antony has said, 'Go out from the man.'" But the demon cried out, saying with blasphemies: "I am not going out, bad old man." So Paul took his sheep-skin coat and struck the man on the back with it saying: "Father Antony has said, 'Go out.'" Again the demon cursed with some violence both Antony and him. Finally he said to him: "You are going out; or else I'll go and tell Christ. By Jesus, if you don't go out I am going this very minute to tell Christ, and He will do you harm." [12] Again the demon cursed yet more, saying: "I am not going out." So Paul got angry with the demon and went outside his dwelling at high noon. But the heat of the Egyptians is akin to the furnace of Babylonia.¹⁶⁹ And standing on a rock on the mountain he prayed and said: "O Jesus Christ, Who wast crucified under Pontius Pilate, thou seest that I will not descend from the rock, I will not eat nor drink till I die, unless Thou drive out the spirit from the man and free the man." [13] But before the words were out of his mouth the demon cried out, saying: "Oh violence! I am being driven away. The simplicity of Paul drives me away, and where am I to go?" And immediately the spirit went out and was turned into a great dragon seventy cubits long and was swept away to the Red Sea, |101 that the saying might be fulfilled: "The righteous will declare the faith that is shown."¹⁷⁰ This is the marvellous tale of Paul who was surnamed Simple by all the brotherhood.

CHAPTER XXIII. -- PACHON ¹⁷¹

[1] THERE dwelt in Scete a man named Pachon, who had reached his sixtieth year or thereabouts. Now I happened to be dejected, having been tormented by the love of women, both in my (waking) thoughts and my nocturnal visions. And I was nearly leaving the desert, passion driving me, yet I did not refer the matter to my neighbours, nor to my teacher Evagrius. But I journeyed secretly into the great desert and spent fifteen days in meeting the fathers who had grown old in the desert at Scete. [2] Among others I met Pachon. Well, finding him more guileless and better versed in asceticism than the rest, I was bold to refer to him the state of my mind. And he said to me: "Let not the affair disconcert you, for you are not suffering this from negligence. For the place is a witness in your favour, both because of the lack of necessities and the absence of facilities for meeting women. But rather it comes from your zeal. For the war against impurity is triple. At one time the flesh attacks us because it is vigorous; at another the passions attack us through our thoughts; at another the demon himself in malice. I have found this after much observation. [3] Look how you see me, an old man now. I have spent forty years in this cell caring for my own salvation, and growing to be as old as this I have been tempted all the while." And |102 he said this, confirming it with an oath: "For twelve years after my fiftieth year the demon gave me no respite in his attacks by night and day. Supposing therefore that God had left me and on this account I was under his power, I preferred to die in an irrational manner rather than act improperly through bodily passion. And having gone out and explored the desert I found a hyaena's cave. In which cave I laid myself down naked in the daytime, in order that the beasts when they came

out might eat me. [4] So, when evening came, as it is written: 'Thou madest darkness and night come: in it all the beasts of the forest will roam'¹⁷² ----the beasts came out, male and female, and smelt me, licking me from head to foot. And when I was expecting to be eaten up, they left me. So having lain down all night, I was not eaten. But reckoning that God had spared me, I returned again to the cell. Well, the demon, having restrained himself a few days, then attacked me again more vehemently than at first, so that I very nearly blasphemed. [5] He changed himself into an Ethiopian maiden, whom I had once seen in my youth in the summer-time picking reeds, and sat on my knee.¹⁷³ So in a fury I gave her a blow and she disappeared. Well, for two years I could not bear the evil smell of my hand! So I went out into the great desert, wandering up and down discouraged and in despair. And having found a little asp, I picked it up and applied it to my flesh,¹⁷⁴ in order that I might die, even though it were by a bite of this kind. And I rubbed the beast's head on my flesh,¹⁷⁵ as the cause of my temptation, but I was not bitten. [6] Then I heard a voice saying in my thoughts: 'Go, Pachon, |103 struggle on. For this is why I have left you to be tyrannized over, that you should not be proud, as if you had any strength, but recognizing your weakness should not trust in your manner of life, but run for the help of God.' Thus convinced I returned and dwelt in confidence, and no longer troubling about the war I was in peace the rest of my days. But he, knowing how I despised him, no longer came near me."

CHAPTER XXIV. -- STEPHEN ¹⁷⁶

[1] ONE Stephen, a Libyan by race, dwelt on the shores of Marmarica ¹⁷⁷and the Mareotis for sixty years. He became an ascetic of great eminence with a gift of discernment, and was counted worthy of such a gift of grace that every afflicted man, whatever his affliction, went away free from affliction after meeting him. Now he was known to the blessed Antony; and he lived on also to our own days. I never met him, because his place was so far away. [2] But the holy Ammonius and Evagrius and their companions, who met him, told me the following: "We found him suffering from an illness like this, having developed an ulcer of the sort called cancerous. We discovered him being treated by a doctor, and working with his hands and weaving palm-leaves and talking to us, while the rest of his body was being operated on. He was behaving just as if another man were being cut. Though the flesh was cut away like hair, he was insensible, thanks to the greatness of his religious preparation. [3] But while we were on the one hand grieving and on the other hand feeling |104 disgusted that such a life had ended in such suffering and such surgical operations, he said to us: 'Children, do not be troubled by this affair. For God does nothing of what He does for malice, but for a good end. For perhaps my flesh deserves chastisement, and it is fitting that it should pay the penalty now rather than when I have quitted the arena.'¹⁷⁸ So he edified us with his exhortations and encouragements," But I have told this lest we should be disconcerted when we see saints suffering such afflictions.

CHAPTER XXV. -- VALENS

[1] THERE was a man named Valens, a Palestinian by race, but Corinthian in his character----for St. Paul attributed the vice of presumption to the Corinthians. Having

taken to the desert he dwelt with us for a number of years. He reached such a pitch of arrogance that he was deceived by demons. For by deceiving him little by little they induced him to be very proud, supposing that angels met him. [2] One day at least, so they told the tale, as he was working in the dark he let drop the needle with which he was stitching the basket. And when he did not find it, the demon made a lamp, and he found the needle. Again, puffed up at this, he waxed proud and in fact was so greatly puffed up that he despised the communion of the mysteries. Now it happened that certain strangers came and brought sweetmeats to the Church for the brethren. [3] So the holy Macarius our priest received them and sent a handful or so to each of us in his cell, among the rest also to Valens. When Valens received the bearer he insulted [105 him and struck him and said to him: "Go and tell Macarius, 'I am not worse than you, that you should send me a blessing.' " ¹⁷⁹ So Macarius, knowing that he was the victim of illusion, went the next day to exhort him and said to him: "Valens, you are the victim of illusions. Stop it." And when he would not listen to his exhortations, he retired. [4] So the demon, convinced that he was completely persuaded by his deception, went away and disguised himself as the Saviour, and came by night in a vision of a thousand angels bearing lamps and a fiery wheel, in which it seemed that the Saviour appeared, and one came in front of the others and said: "Christ has loved you because of your conduct and the freedom of your life, and He has come to see you. So go out of the cell, do nothing else but look at his face from afar, stoop down and worship, and then go to your cell." [5] So he went out and saw them in ranks carrying lamps, and antichrist about a stade away, and he fell down and worshipped. Then the next day again he became so mad that he entered into the church and before the assembled brotherhood said: "I have no need of Communion, for I have seen Christ to-day." Then the fathers bound him and put him in irons for a year and so cured him, destroying his pride by their prayers and indifference and calmer mode of life. As it is said, "Diseases are cured by their opposites." ¹⁸⁰

[6] But it is necessary to insert in this little book the lives of men like this, for the safety of the readers, in the same way as there was the tree of knowledge of good and evil among the holy trees of paradise; in order that, if ever a righteous act should be achieved by them, they [106 may not be proud of their virtue. For often even virtue becomes the cause of a fall, whenever it is not accomplished with upright intention. For it is written: "I saw a just man destroyed in his just act; and this thing is indeed vanity." ¹⁸¹

CHAPTER XXVI. -- HERON ¹⁸²

[1] THERE was a certain Heron, a neighbour of mine, an Alexandrian by race, an excellent young man, of good natural ability and pure in his life. He also after many toils was attacked by pride and flung off all restraints and cherished presumptuous sentiments against the fathers, insulting even the blessed Evagrius by saying: "Those who obey your teaching are dupes; for one should not pay heed to any teachers except Christ." He even abused Scripture to serve the purpose of his folly and would say: "The Saviour Himself said, 'Call no man teacher upon the earth.'" ¹⁸³ [2] His mind became so darkened that he too was afterwards put in irons, since he was unwilling even to attend the mysteries--- truth is dear. He was excessively abstemious in his mode of life, so that many who knew him intimately declared that he frequently went three months without eating, being

content with the communion of the mysteries and any wild herbs that might be found. And I too had an experience of him when I went to Scete with the blessed Albanus. [3] Scete was forty miles away from us.¹⁸⁴ In the course of those forty miles we ate twice and drank water three times, but he without eating anything |107 went on foot and said by heart fifteen psalms, then the long psalm,¹⁸⁵ then the Epistle to the Hebrews, then Isaiah and part of Jeremiah, then Luke the Evangelist, then the Proverbs. And things being so, yet we could not keep up with him as he walked. [4] Finally, driven as it were by fire, he could not remain in his cell, but went off to Alexandria, by (divine) dispensation, and, as the saying goes, "knocked out one nail with another." For of his own free will he fell into indifference, but afterwards found salvation involuntarily. For he frequented the theatre and circuses and enjoyed the diversions of the taverns. And thus, eating and drinking immoderately, he fell into a mire of concupiscence. [5] And when he was resolving to sin he met an actress and had converse with her. In consequence a carbuncle developed on his private parts, and for six months he was so ill that the parts rotted away and fell off. Later, restored to health without those parts and returned to a religious frame of mind, he came and confessed all these things to the fathers. A few days after he fell asleep before he had returned to work.

CHAPTER XXVII. -- PTOLEMY

[1] AGAIN another monk, Ptolemy by name, lived a life difficult, even impossible, to describe. He dwelt beyond Scete in a place called Climax.¹⁸⁶ The place which bears this name is one in which no one can live because the well of the brethren is eighteen miles away. He then, carrying a number of pots¹⁸⁷ brought them there, and collecting the dew with a sponge from the rocks |108 during the months of December and January---for there is a plentiful fall of dew then in those parts---he made this suffice during the fifteen years he lived there. [2] And he became a stranger to the teaching of holy men and intercourse with them, and the benefit derived therefrom, and the constant communion of the mysteries,¹⁸⁸ and diverged so greatly from the straight way that he declared these things were nothing; but they say¹⁸⁹ he is wandering about in Egypt up to the present day all puffed up with pride, and has given himself over to gluttony and drunkenness, speaking no (edifying) word to anyone.¹⁹⁰ And this disaster fell on Ptolemy from his irrational conceit, as it is written: "They who have no directing influence fall like leaves."¹⁹¹

CHAPTER XXVIII. -- A VIRGIN WHO FELL

AGAIN, I knew a virgin in Jerusalem who wore sackcloth for six years and shut herself up in a cell, taking none of the things that bestow pleasure. In the end she fell, abandoned (by God) because of her excessive arrogance. She opened the window and admitted the man who waited on her and sinned with him, because she had practised asceticism not with a religious motive and for the love of God, but with human ostentation,¹⁹² which springs from vain-glory and corrupt intention. For, her thoughts being engrossed in condemning others, the guardian¹⁹³ of her chastity was absent. |109

CHAPTER XXIX. -- ELIAS

[1] ELIAS, an ascetic, was a great friend of the virgins. For there are some souls like this, whose virtuous aims testify to their goodness. He had compassion on the class of women ascetics, and having property in the city of Athribé ¹⁹⁴ built a great monastery and brought into the monastery all the dispersed women, caring for them consistently (with his purpose), and procured them every kind of refreshment, and gardens and utensils and whatever their life required. These ladies, brought from different sorts of lives, had continual fights with one another. [2] Now since he was obliged to listen to them and make peace----for he collected some 300 of them----he found it necessary to remain in their midst for two years. Being still young, for he was some thirty to forty years old, he was tempted by desire. And having left the monastery he wandered fasting in the desert for two days, making this request in his prayer: "Lord, either kill me, that I may not see these women in trouble, or take away my passion that I may care for them in a rational way." [3] When evening had come, he fell asleep in the desert, and three angels came to him----so he told the story----and caught hold of him and said: "Why did you leave the monastery of the women?" He explained the matter to them. "Because I was afraid I might harm both them and myself." They said to him: "Then if we relieve you of the |110 passion, will you go and care for them?" He agreed to this. They made him swear an oath. [4] He said this was the oath: "Swear to us, by Him Who cares for me I will care for them." And he swore to them. Then one of them seized his hands, and another his feet, and a third taking a razor unmanned him, not really but in the vision. So he seemed to himself to have been cured, so to say, in the trance. They asked him: "Do you feel any benefit?" He said to them: "I feel greatly lightened and am persuaded that I am relieved of my passion." [5] They said to him: "Go away, then." And he returned after five days, the monastery mourning for him the while, and went in and remained inside henceforward, in an adjoining cell, from which being near at hand he corrected them continually so far as he could. But he lived forty years more, always assuring the fathers: "Passion comes no more into my mind." Such was the gift of grace of that holy man who thus looked after the monastery.

CHAPTER XXX. -- DOROTHEUS

HE was succeeded by Dorotheus, a well-trying man who had grown old in a good and active life. Not being able to stay in the monastery itself, as Elias had done, he shut himself up in an upper chamber and made a window looking on to the women's monastery, which he used to shut and open. So he would sit continually at the window reminding them to keep the peace. And so he grew old up there in the upper chamber, without either the women going up to him or himself being able to come down to them. For there was no ladder fixed. |111

CHAPTER XXXI. -- PIAMOUN

[1] PIAMOUN was a virgin who lived the years of her life with her mother, eating every other day ¹⁹⁵ in the evening and spinning flax. She was accounted worthy of the gift of prophecy, of which this is an example. It happened once in Egypt during the overflow (of the Nile) that one village attacked another. For they fight over the distribution of the water, ¹⁹⁶ so that murders and woundings ensue. Well, a stronger village attacked her

village, and men came in a crowd with spears and clubs to destroy her village. [2] But an angel appeared to her, revealing to her their attack. And, sending for the elders¹⁹⁷ of the village, she said: "Go out and meet the men who are coming against you from that village, lest you also perish with the village, and urge them to cease from their malice." But the elders were afraid and fell at her feet beseeching her and saying to her: "We dare not meet them; for we know their drunkenness and madness. [3] But if you have pity both on the whole village and your own house, go out yourself and meet them." Not agreeing to this, she went up to her own cottage---it was night at the time---and stood continually in prayer, not kneeling down, and beseeching God thus: "O Lord, Who judgest the earth, to Whom no unjust act is pleasing, when this prayer reaches Thee, let Thy power nail these men to the spot where-ever .it finds them." [4] And about the first hour, |112 when they were about three miles away, they were nailed to the ground and could not move. And it was revealed also to them that this hindrance had come to them through her petitions. And they sent to the village and asked for peace, declaring: "Give thanks to God and the prayers of Piamoun, for they hindered us."

CHAPTER XXXII. -- PACHOMIUS AND THE TABENNESIOTS

[1] TABENNISI¹⁹⁸ is a place, so-called, in the Thebaid, in which there lived a certain Pachomius, one of those who have lived in the straight way, so that he was counted worthy both of prophecies and angelic visions. He was exceedingly devoted both to his fellow-men and his brethren. Accordingly, to him as he sat in his cave¹⁹⁹ an angel²⁰⁰ appeared and said: "You have successfully ordered your own life. So it is superfluous to remain sitting in your cave. Up! go out and collect all the young monks and dwell with them, and according to the model which I now give you, so legislate for them;" and he gave him a brass tablet on which this was inscribed----

[2] "Thou shalt allow each man to eat and drink according to his strength; and proportionately to the strength of the eaters appoint to them their labours. |113 And prevent no man either from fasting or eating. However, appoint the tasks that need strength to those who are stronger and eat, and to the weaker and more ascetic such as the weak can manage. Make a number of cells within the enclosure and let three dwell in each cell.²⁰¹ But let them all go to one building for their food. [3] Let them sleep not lying down full length, but let them make sloping chairs easily constructed and put their rugs on them and thus sleep in a sitting posture.²⁰² And let them wear at night linen *lebitons*²⁰³ and a girdle. Let each of them have a worked goatskin cloak,²⁰⁴ without which they are not to eat. When they go to Communion on Saturday and Sunday, let them loosen their girdles and lay aside the skin cloak and go in with the cowl²⁰⁵ only." And he prescribed for them napless cowls, as for children, on which he ordered an imprint, the mark of a cross, to be worked in dark red. [4] And he ordered that there should be twenty-four sections,²⁰⁶ and to each order he assigned a letter of the Greek alphabet----alpha, beta, gamma, delta, and so on.²⁰⁷ So when the Superior asked questions, or |114 busied himself with the affairs of the great multitude, he asked the second: "How is the Alpha section?" or, "How is the Zeta?" or again: "Greet the Rho," and they followed a private meaning assigned to the letters. "And to the simpler and more unworldly thou shalt give the Iota, and to the more difficult and perverse thou shalt assign the Xi." [5] And so, in

correspondence with the nature of their dispositions and manners and lives, he fitted the letters to each section, only the spiritual knowing what was meant. And it was written on the tablet: "A stranger of another monastery which has a different rule is not to eat with them, nor drink, nor enter into the monastery, unless he happens to be on a (genuine) journey."²⁰⁸ However, the man who has come to remain with them they do not allow to enter into the sanctuary for three years.²⁰⁹ But after a three years' probation and performance of the more toilsome labours, then he enters. [6] "As they eat let them cover their heads with their cowls lest one brother see another chewing. A monk is not allowed to talk at meals nor let his eye wander beyond his plate or the table." And he ordered them during the whole day to make twelve prayers, and twelve at the lamp-lighting, and twelve at the night-vigils, and three at the ninth hour. But when a group was about to eat he ordered a psalm to be sung before each prayer.²¹⁰ |115

[7] When Pachomius objected to the angel that the prayers were few, the angel said to him: "I gave this rule so as to make sure in advance that even the little ones keep the rule and are not afflicted."²¹¹ But the perfect have no need of legislation, for by themselves in their cells they have surrendered the whole of their life to the contemplation of God. But I have legislated for as many as have not a discerning mind, in order that they, like house-servants fulfilling the duties of their station, may live a life of freedom."

Now there are a number of these monasteries which have observed this rule, amounting to 7000 men.²¹² But the first and great monastery is that where Pachomius himself dwelt, which itself also is the parent of the other monasteries; it has 1300 members.²¹³ [8] Among them there was also the noble Aphthonius, who became my intimate friend, and is now second in the monastery. Him they send to Alexandria, since nothing can make him stumble, in order to sell their produce and buy necessaries. [9] But there are also other monasteries two hundred or three hundred strong. One of these, with 300 monks, I found when I entered the city of Panopolis. [In the monastery I found fifteen tailors, seven smiths, four carpenters, twelve camel-drivers, and fifteen fullers.]²¹⁴ But they work at every kind of craft and with their surplus output they provide for the needs both of the women's convents and the prisons. [10] [They keep pigs too, and when I blamed the practice, |116 they said: "In our tradition we have received this, that they are to be kept because of the chaff, and the refuse of the vegetables and other scraps that one throws away, lest they be wasted."²¹⁵ And the pigs are to be killed and their meat sold, but the tit-bits are to be devoted to the sick and aged, because the neighbourhood is poor and populous; for the tribe of the Blemmyes live near.] [11] But those who are to serve that day rise early and get to their work, some to the kitchen, others to the tables. They spend their time then until the meal-hour in arranging and preparing the tables, putting loaves on each, and charlock, preserved olives, cheese of cows' milk, [the tit-bits of the meat], and chopped herbs. Some come in at the sixth hour and eat, others at the seventh, others at the eighth, others at the ninth, others at the eleventh, others in the late evening, others every other day, so that each letter knows its own hour.²¹⁶ [12] So also is it with their work. One works on the land as a labourer, another in the garden, another at the forge, another in the bakery, another in the carpenter's" shop, another in the fuller's shop, another weaving the big baskets, another in the tannery, another in the shoemaker's shop,

another in the scriptorium, another weaving the young reeds. And they learn all the scriptures by heart.

CHAPTER XXXIII. -- THE TABENNESIOT NUNS ²¹⁷

[1] THEY also had a monastery of women with some 400 members; it had the same constitution and the |117 same manner of life,²¹⁸ except for the sheep-skin coat. And the women are on the far side of the river,²¹⁹ the men opposite them. So when a virgin dies, the (other) virgins, having prepared her body for burial, act as bearers and lay it on the river bank. But the brethren, having crossed in a ferry boat, with palm-leaves and olive-branches, take the body across, singing psalms the while, and bury it in their own cemetery. But apart from the priest and the deacon no man goes across to the women's monastery, and they only on Sunday.

[2] In this women's monastery the following thing happened. A tailor, living in the world, crossed the river in ignorance and sought work. A young sister came out---the place was deserted ²²⁰---and met him involuntarily and gave him the answer: "We have our own tailors." ²²¹ [3] Another sister saw the meeting; and when some time had elapsed and a contention arose, actuated by diabolic motives inspired by great wickedness and an outburst of temper, she denounced the other before the sisterhood. A few others also joined her from malice. So that sister, distressed at having endured a calumny of a kind that had never even entered her thoughts, and being unable to bear it, flung herself into the river secretly and lost her life. [4] Likewise the calumniator, recognizing that her calumny was wicked, and that she had committed this abomination, went and hung herself, she too being |118 unable to bear (the shame of) the affair. So when the priest came the rest of the sisters told him the affair. And he ordered first that the sacrifice should not be offered for either of them; and as for those who had not kept the peace, since they had been accomplices of the calumniator and had believed the scandal, he separated them (from the rest) for seven years, depriving them of Communion.²²²

CHAPTER XXXIV. -- THE NUN WHO FEIGNED MADNESS

[1] IN this monastery there was another virgin who feigned madness and possession by a demon. And they detested her so much that they would not even eat with her, she preferring this. She would wander about in the kitchen and do every kind of menial work, and she was, as they say, "the monastery sponge," fulfilling in fact the words of Scripture: "If any one seem to be wise among you in this world, let him become foolish that he may be wise." ²²³ She fastened some rags on her head---all the rest had the tonsure and wore cowls---and served in this guise. [2] None of the 400 sisters ever saw her chewing during the years of her life. She never sat at table, nor partook of a piece of bread, but wiping up the crumbs from the tables and washing the kitchen pots she was content with what she got in this way. Never did she insult any one nor grumble nor talk either little or much, although she was cuffed and insulted and cursed and execrated.

[3] Now an angel appeared to the holy Piteroum, an anchorite of high reputation who dwelt in Porphyrites,²²⁴ |119and said to him: "Why are you proud of yourself for being

religious and dwelling in a place like this? Do you want to see a woman who is more religious than you? Go to the monastery of the Tabennesiot women and there you will find a woman wearing a crown on her head. She is better than you. [4] For though she spars with so great a crowd, she has never let her heart go away from God. But you sit here and wander in imagination through the different cities." ²²⁵ And he who had never gone out went off to that monastery and besought the masters ²²⁶ to let him go to the monastery of the women. They were emboldened to let him in, since he was famous and advanced in years. [5] And having gone in he demanded to see them all. But *she* did not appear. At last he said to them: "Bring me all, for there is one lacking." They said to him: "We have one within in the kitchen, a *sale*." ²²⁷ For thus they style the mentally afflicted. He said to them: "Bring her also to me. Let me see her." They went off to call her. She did not answer, perhaps perceiving what was the matter, or even having had a revelation. They drag her forcibly and say to her: "The holy Piteroum wants to see you"; for he was famous. [6] When she came, he perceived the rag on her forehead and fell at her feet and said to her: "Bless me." She also fell at his feet in like manner, saying: "Do you bless me, Master." They were all amazed and said to him: "Father, do not let her insult you, she is *sale*." Said Piteroum to them all: "*You are sale*. For she is mother ²²⁸ both of me |120 and you"----for thus they call the spiritual women----"and I pray to be found worthy of her in the day of judgment." [7] Having heard these words they fell at his feet, all confessing in different ways: one that she had poured the rinsings of the plate over her; another that she had beaten her with her fist; another that she had applied a mustard-plaster to her nose. And, in a word, all confessed outrages of one kind or another. So after praying for them he went away. And after a few days, unable to bear her glory and the honour bestowed by the sisters, and burdened by their apologies, she left the monastery. And where she went, or where she disappeared to, or how she died, no one knows.

CHAPTER XXXV. -- JOHN OF LYCOPOLIS ²²⁹

[1] THERE was a certain John in Lycopolis, who in his childhood learned the trade of carpentering---he had a brother a dyer. Later, when he was about twenty-five years old, he renounced the world. And having lived in various monasteries for five years he retired by himself to the mountain of Lyco, where he made himself three cells on the actual summit and went in and immured himself. One chamber was for his bodily needs, and another where he worked and ate, and the third where he prayed. [2] Having completed thirty years thus immured, and receiving the necessaries of life through a window from one who ministered to him, he was counted worthy of the gift of predictions. Among other instances he sent various predictions to |121 the blessed emperor Theodosius, ²³⁰ one concerning Maximus the tyrant, that he would conquer him and return from the Gauls; similarly also he gave him good news about the tyrant Eugenius. His reputation as a virtuous man was widespread.

[3] When we were in the desert of Nitria---by *we* I mean myself and the blessed Evagrius and his companions---we were anxious to find out accurately, in what his virtue consisted. Then said the blessed Evagrius: "Gladly would I be learning what kind of man he is, from some one who knows how to test character and speech. For if I am unable to see him myself, but can hear accurately from another's description the details of

his manner of life, then I will not go so far as the mountain." I heard, and saying nothing to anyone kept silence for one day; but the next day, having closed my cell and committed myself and it to God, I hastened away to the Thebaid. [4] And I arrived after eighteen days, having gone partly on foot, and partly by boat on the river. But it was the time of the flood, when many are ill; which was also my experience. Well, I went and found the vestibule of his cell closed; for the brethren built on later a very large vestibule holding about 100 men, and shutting it with a key they opened it on Saturday and Sunday. So, having learned the reason why it was closed, I waited quietly till the Saturday. And having come at the second hour for an interview I found him sitting by the window, through which he seemed to be exhorting²³¹ his visitors. [5] So, [122 after greeting me, he said through an interpreter ²³²: "Whence are you? and why have you come? For I conjecture that you belong to the convent of Evagrius." I said: "I am a stranger who started out from Galatia." And I confessed that I belonged to Evagrius' society. Meanwhile, as we talked, the ruler ²³³ of the district came up, Alypius ²³⁴by name. He turned to him and left off talking with me. So I retired a little and gave way to them, standing some way off. As their conversation lasted a long time, I became disgusted, and in my disgust I murmured against the good old man, since he despised me and honoured him. [6] And annoyed in mind at this, I formed the plan of going away, disdainingly him. But having called his interpreter, named Theodore, he said to him: "Go, tell that brother, 'Do not be petty-minded. I am just going to dismiss the ruler and talk to you.' " So I resolved to wait patiently, attending to him as a spiritual man. And when the ruler had gone, he called me and said to me: "Why are you vexed with me? What did you find worthy of blame, that you thought those things that neither applied to me nor befitted you? Or do you not know that it is written: 'They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick?' ²³⁵ I find you when I want you, and you me. And if I do not console you, there are other brethren to console you and other fathers. But this man is delivered up to the devil through his worldly affairs and, having respite for a brief hour, like a servant run away from his master, he has come to receive benefit. It would have been absurd that we should leave [123him and attend to you, when you have uninterrupted leisure to attend to your salvation." So I exhorted him to pray for me and was fully convinced that he was a spiritual man. [8] Then, having affectionately slapped my left cheek gently with his right hand, he said to me: "Many afflictions are in store for you, and many times have you been tempted to leave the desert. And you have been timid and have deferred (a decision). But the demon by providing you with pious and specious excuses unsettles you. For he suggested to you both a longing to see your father, and the instruction of your brother and sister with a view to the monastic life. [9] Behold then, I give you good news: both are saved, for both have renounced the world. And as regards your father, at this very moment he still has other years to live. So continue in the desert and do not wish on their account to go home to your native land, for it is written: 'No man having put his hand to the plough and turning back is fit for the kingdom of heaven.'" ²³⁶ So, benefited by these words and sufficiently corrected, I thanked God, having learned that the pretexts which were driving me were finished with.

[10] Then again he said to me graciously: "Do you want to become a bishop?" I said to him: "I am one." He said to me: "Where?" I said: "(I am bishop) over the kitchens, the shops, the tables and the pots. I am their bishop, and if there is any sharp wine I

excommunicate it, but I drink the good. Similarly, I am bishop over the pot too; and if salt or any seasoning is lacking, I throw it in and season (the pot) and then I eat it. This is my bishopric, for gluttony ordained me." [11] He said to me with a smile: "Stop your jokes. You have to be ordained bishop, and toil much and be afflicted. If then you would escape afflictions, |124 depart not from the desert. For in the desert no man can ordain you bishop."

So I left him and went into the desert to my accustomed place, and told these things to the blessed fathers, who after two months went by boat and met him. But I forgot his words, for after three years I fell ill with an illness of the spleen and stomach. [12] I was sent by the brethren from the monastery to Alexandria, under treatment for dropsy. The doctors advised me to betake myself from Alexandria to Palestine for the sake of the air. For (Palestine) has light airs, such as befit our constitution. From Palestine I came to Bithynia, and there----I know not how, whether from human zeal or from the good pleasure of Him Who is more powerful, God would know----I was counted worthy of the laying-on of hands, so much above my deserts,²³⁷ having become embroiled in the disturbance connected with the blessed John.²³⁸ [13] And for eleven months hidden in a gloomy cell I remembered that blessed man, that he had foretold these things which I endured. And indeed he told me this, designing by his tale to lead me to endure the desert. "Forty years have I spent in the cell. I have not seen the face of woman nor the appearance of money. I have seen no one chewing, nor has any one seen me eating or drinking."

[14] When Poemenia the servant of God came to interview him, he did not meet her, but he had a number of secret matters told to her. And he enjoined her, when she went down from the Thebaid not to turn aside to Alexandria, "for you will fall into temptation." But she, thinking differently, or forgetting, turned aside to Alexandria to see the city. But on the way she moored |125 her boats near Niciopolis ²³⁹ to rest. [15] So her servants went on shore and after some disorderly behaviour had a fight with the people of the place, who were desperate characters. They cut off the finger of one eunuch and murdered another, and even threw Dionysius the most holy bishop into the river, not recognizing him, and after wounding all the other servants, loaded the lady herself with insults and threats.

CHAPTER XXXVI. -- POSIDONIUS

[1] THE stories about Posidonius the Theban are many and hard to relate, how meek he was and how exceedingly ascetic, and what great innocence of soul he possessed----I do not know if I have met any such. For I lived with him at Bethlehem for one year when he dwelt beyond Poemenion,²⁴⁰ and I beheld his many virtues. [2] Among other things he himself told me this one day: "Living for a year in the Porphyrites district, the whole year I met no man, heard no talk, touched no bread. I merely subsisted on a few dates and any wild herbs I found. This happened one day. My food failing, I went out from the cave to go back to the world. [3] And having walked all the day with difficulty did I get two miles from the cave. Well, looking round I saw a horseman with the appearance of a soldier, having on his head a helmet in the shape of a tiara. And expecting him to be a

soldier, I ran to the cave and found (on the way) a basket of grapes and newly-picked figs. I picked it up and went to the cave overjoyed, and had that food as my comfort for two |126months. [4] And this was the miracle he did in Bethlehem. A certain woman approaching her confinement had an unclean spirit and, when she was actually about to be delivered, she had difficult labour, the spirit tormenting her. The husband, therefore, since his wife was suffering from the demon, came and besought that holy man to come. So he stood up----we were present, having come at the same time to pray----and prayed, and after kneeling down for the second time he drove out the spirit. [5] So he stood up and said to us: "Pray, for at this moment the unclean spirit is going out, and there should be a sign, that we may be convinced." So the demon on his way out of her threw down the whole wall of the precincts, foundations and all. Now the woman had been six years without speech. After the demon had gone out she gave birth to a child and spoke.

[6] I knew also the following prophecy spoken by this man. A certain Jerome, a priest, distinguished Latin writer and cultivated scholar as he was, showed qualities of temper so disastrous that they threw into the shade his splendid achievements.²⁴¹ Well, Posidonius, who had lived with him many days, said in my ear: "The noble Paula, who looks after him, will die first and be freed from his bad temper, so I think. [7] And because of this man no holy man will dwell in these parts, but his envy will include even his own brother." The thing happened as he said. For, in fact, he drove out the blessed Oxyperentius the Italian, and another man Peter, an Egyptian, and Simeon, admirable men, whom I noticed with approval at the time. This Posidonius told me that he had not tried bread for forty years, nor indeed had he borne malice for half a day. |127

CHAPTER XXXVII. -- SARAPION THE SINDONITE ²⁴²

[1] THERE was another monk, Sarapion, and he was surnamed the Sindonite, for apart from a *sindon* (loincloth) he never wore clothes. He practised great detachment from possessions and, being well educated, knew all the Scriptures by heart. And through his great detachment and his meditation on the Scriptures he was unable to remain calmly in the cell; not because he was distracted by material things, yet none the less he travelled up and down the world and perfected this type of asceticism. For he was born with this nature; for there are differences of natures, not of substances.

[2] The fathers used to relate how, taking an ascetic as his accomplice,²⁴³ he sold himself to some Greek actors |128in a certain city for twenty pieces of money. And having sealed up the money he kept it on his person. Then he stayed a long while and served as slave to the actors who had bought him, until he both made them Christians and induced them to leave the stage. All the time he took nothing except bread and water, nor did his lips rest from expounding the Scriptures. [3] After a long period, first the man was stricken with compunction, then the actress, then the whole house. But it was said that as long as they did not know him he washed the feet of them both. So both were baptized and gave up the stage, and applying themselves to an honourable and pious life they revered the man exceedingly and said to him: "Here, brother, let us free you, since you yourself have freed us from disgraceful slavery." He said to them: "Since God has wrought this, and your soul is saved, let me tell you the mystery of my conduct. [4] I pitied your soul, being

myself an ascetic, a free man, an Egyptian by race, and I sold myself for this reason, that I might save you. But since God has done this, and your soul has been saved through my humiliation, take back your money, that I may go away and help others." But they used many entreaties and assured him: "We will have you as father and master, only stay with us." But they could not persuade him. Then they said to him: "Give the money to the poor, for it has been our first payment for salvation; but come and see us, if only once a year."

[5] In the course of his incessant wanderings²⁴⁴ he came to Greece, and during a three days' stay at Athens no one thought fit to give him bread; he carried no |129money, no purse, no sheep-skin coat---nothing of the kind. So when the fourth day came he was very hungry; for hunger unwillingly endured is terrible, if it has an ally²⁴⁵ in the fact that no one believes you. And standing on an eminence in the city, where the authorities were collecting, he began to lament violently, clapping his hands, and to call out: "Men of Athens, help!" [6] And all ran to him, wearers of the philosopher's cloak and labourer's smock alike,²⁴⁶ and said to him: "What is the matter? Whence are you? What ails you?" Said he to them: "By race I am an Egyptian. After I left my real country I fell in with three usurers. And two left me having got their debt in full, with no accusation to make. But one does not leave me." So, inquiring minutely about the usurers in order that they might satisfy them, they asked him: "Where are they? and who are they? Who is it that troubles you? Show him to us that we may help you." [7] Then he said to them: "From my youth covetousness and gluttony and fornication have troubled me. From two am I freed, covetousness and fornication; they trouble me no longer. But I cannot get free from gluttony. For this is the fourth day that I have not eaten, and my stomach continues troubling me and seeking its habitual debt without which I cannot live." Then certain of the philosophers, supposing it to be acting, gave him money. And having received it he put it down in a baker's shop, and having got one loaf he resumed his journey and left the city at once and never more returned to it. |130

[8] Then the philosophers recognized that he was truly virtuous, and giving the baker the price of the bread they took the piece of money.²⁴⁷ But having come to the country where the Spartans live, he heard that one of the first men²⁴⁸ of the city was a Manichaeon with all his house, though virtuous in other respects. To him again he sold himself as he had done at first; and within two years he induced him to forsake his heresy, and brought him to the Church and his wife also. Then they loved him no longer as a servant, but treated him as a true brother or father and glorified God.

[9] One day he flung himself into a vessel as if he had a right to sail to Rome. The sailors, thinking that either he had paid his fare or had the price of it in cash, received him without trouble, each thinking that another had taken his luggage. But when they had sailed away and got 500 stades from Alexandria the passengers began to eat about sundown, the sailors having eaten first. [10] They saw that he did not eat the first day, and expected it was because of the voyage;²⁴⁹ similarly on the second, third and fourth days. On the fifth day they saw him sitting quietly while all ate and said to him: "Why are you not eating, man?" He said to them: "Because I have nothing." So they inquired one of another: "Who received his luggage or his fare?" [11] And when they found that no one

had they began to attack him and say: "How did you come on without paying? From what source can you give us the fare? Or from what source can you get fed?" He said to them: "I have nothing. Pick me up and throw me where you found me." But they would not willingly have relinquished their voyage, even for 100 gold pieces, |131 but they wanted to get to their destination. So he remained in the ship and found that they fed him until (they got to) Rome.

[12] So having come to Rome he inquired who was a great ascetic in the city, man or woman. Among others he met also a certain Dominus, a disciple of Origen, whose bed healed sick persons after his death. So he met him and was benefited, for he was a man of refined manners and liberal education, and learning from him what other ascetics there were, male or female, he was told of a certain virgin who cultivated solitude and would meet no one.²⁵⁰ [13] And having learned where she lived he went off and said to the old woman who attended her: "Tell the virgin, 'I *must* meet you, for God has sent me.' " So after waiting two or three days at last he met her, and said to her: "Why do you remain stationary?" She said to him: "I do not remain stationary, I am on a journey." He said to her: "Where are you journeying?" Said she to him: "To God." He said to her: "Are you alive or dead?" She said to him: "I trust in God that I am dead, for no one who lives to the flesh shall make that journey." He said to her: "Then do what I do, that you may convince me that you are dead." She said to him: "Order me possible things, and I will do them." [14] He answered her: "All things are possible to a dead person except impiety." Then he said to her: "Go out and appear in public." She answered him: "This is the twenty-fifth year that has passed without my appearing in public. And why should I appear?" "If you are dead to the world," said he to her, "and the world to you,²⁵¹ it is all the same to you whether you appear or appear not. So appear in public." She did so, and |132 after she had appeared outside and gone as far as a church, he said to her in the church: "Now then, if you wish to convince me that you are dead and no longer live pleasing men,²⁵² do what I do and I shall know that you are dead. [15] Follow my example and take off all your clothes, put them on your shoulders, go through the middle of the city with me leading the way in this fashion."²⁵³ She said to him: "I should scandalize many by the unseemliness of the thing and they would be able to say, 'She is mad and possessed by a demon.' "He answered her: "What does it concern you if they say, 'She is mad and possessed by a demon?' For you are dead to them." Then she said to him: "If you want anything else I will do it; for I do not profess to have reached this stage." [16] Then he said to her: "See then, no longer be proud of yourself as more pious than all others and dead to the world, for I am more dead than you and show by my act that I am dead to the world; for impassively and without shame I do this thing." Then having left her in humility and broken her pride, he departed.

There are many other marvellous acts which he did in the direction of impassivity. He died in the sixtieth year of his age, and was buried at Rome itself.²⁵⁴

CHAPTER XXXVIII. -- EVAGRIUS PONTICUS ²⁵⁵

[1] IT is not right to be silent about the story of the illustrious deacon Evagrius, a man who lived in apostolic |133 wise; rather one ought to put it into writing for the edification

of readers and the glory of the goodness of our Saviour. I have thought it worth while to relate (the story) from the beginning, how he came to his ideal, and how having pursued asceticism worthily he died in the desert at the age of fifty-four, according to the words of Scripture: "In a little time he fulfilled many years."²⁵⁶

[2] He came of a Pontic family and belonged to the city of Ibora,²⁵⁷ the son of a country-bishop.²⁵⁸ He was ordained reader by the holy Basil, the bishop of the church of Caesarea. After the death of the holy Basil, Gregory Nazianza²⁵⁹ the bishop, that very wise and most impassive and highly cultured man, ordained him deacon. Then at the great synod of Constantinople²⁶⁰ he left him to the blessed Nectarius the bishop, since he was skilled in argument against all heresies. And he flourished in the great city, speaking with youthful zeal against every heresy. [3] Now it happened that this man, who was held in high honour by the whole city, was congealed by |134 an image of the desire of a woman,²⁶¹ as he himself told us at a later time, when his soul was freed from such thoughts. The woman loved him in return; now she belonged to the highest rank. So Evagrius, fearing God and respecting his own conscience, and putting before his eyes the greatness of the shame and the malicious joy²⁶² of the heresies, prayed to God in supplication that he would put some obstacle in the way. Now the woman was pressing and madly excited, while he, though desiring to withdraw, had no power to, being constrained by the chains of this servitude. [4] After no long time, when his prayer had succeeded but he had not experienced the benefit of it, there appeared to him an angel vision in the shape of soldiers of the governor, and they seized him and took him apparently to the tribunal and threw him into the so-called *custody*, the men who had come to him, as it seemed, without giving a reason having first fastened his neck and hands with iron collars and chains. But he knew in his conscience that for the sake of the above fault he was suffering these things, and imagined that her husband had intervened. [5] So now he was extremely anxious. Another trial was going on and others were being put to torture for some accusation, so he continued to be much perturbed. And the angel who brought the vision transformed himself to represent the coming of a genuine friend and said to him, tied up as he was among forty prisoners chained together: "Why are you retained here, my lord deacon?" He said to him: "In truth I do not know, but I have a suspicion that so-and-so the ex-governor has laid a charge against me, impelled by an absurd jealousy. And I fear |135that the judge corrupted by bribes may inflict punishment on me." [6] He said to him: "If you will listen to your friend, it is not expedient for you to stay in this city." Evagrius said to him: "If God will release me from this misfortune and you see me in Constantinople (any more), know that I shall suffer this punishment justly." He said to him: "Let me bring the gospel, and swear to me by it that you will leave this city and care for your soul, and I will free you from this durance." [7] So he brought the gospel and he swore to him by the gospel: "Except for one day, to give me time to put my clothes on board, I certainly will not remain." So when the oath had been produced,²⁶³ he came back out of the trance which had come on him in the night; and he arose and argued with himself: "Even if the oath was in a trance, nevertheless I did take it." So having put all his belongings into the ship he went to Jerusalem. [8] And there he was received by the blessed Melania, the Roman lady. But once again the devil hardened his heart, as he did Pharaoh's, and since he was young and vigorous doubts beset him, and he hesitated, saying nothing to any one, and changing his clothes and his habit of speech

back to his old ways,²⁶⁴ vain-glory stupefying him. But God Who wards off destruction from us all involved him in a bout of fever, and after that in a long illness lasting six months, drying up his flesh, the source of his trouble. [9] But when the physicians were at a loss and could find no way of cure, the blessed Melania said to him: "Son, your long illness does not please me. Tell me therefore what are your thoughts. For this illness of yours is not without God." Then he confessed to her the whole matter. |136But she said to him: "Give me your word before the Lord that you will keep to the mark of the monastic life; and, sinner though I am, I will pray that you may be granted a furlough of life." ²⁶⁵ And he consented. So within a few days he got well, and he arose and received a change of clothes ²⁶⁶ at the hands of the lady herself and went away and exiled himself in the mount of Nitria which is in Egypt.

[10] Having lived there two years, in the third year he entered the desert. So he lived fourteen years in the place they call Cellia, and he used to eat a pound of bread, and in three months a pint of oil, though he was a man who had come from a luxurious and refined and voluptuous life. And he made 100 prayers; and he wrote during the year only the value of what he ate---for he wrote the Oxyrhyncus characters ²⁶⁷ excellently. So in the course of fifteen years having purified his mind to the utmost he was counted worthy of the gift of knowledge and wisdom and the discerning of spirits. So he composed three holy books for monks, called *Antirrhetica*,²⁶⁸ in which he taught the arts to be used against demons. [14] The demon of fornication troubled him grievously, as indeed he told us himself. And all night long he stood naked in the well, though it was winter, so that his flesh was frozen. On another occasion again the spirit of blasphemy troubled him. And for forty days he did not enter under a roof, as he told us himself, so that his |137body threw out ticks, like the bodies of irrational animals. Three demons attacked him by day disguised as clerics, questioning him on the faith. And one said he was an Arian, the other an Eunomian, the third an Apollinarian; and he vanquished these in his wisdom by means of a few words. [12] Again one day, the key of the church having been lost, having made the sign over the front of the lock and pushed with his hand, he opened it, after first calling upon Christ. So many castigations did he receive from demons and so great trial of them did he have that there is no counting the occasions. And to one of his disciples he told the things that would happen to him after eighteen years, having prophesied all to him in a vision (of the future). And he said: "From the time that I took to the desert, I have not touched lettuce nor any other green vegetable, nor any fruit, nor grapes, nor meat, nor a bath. [13] And later, in the sixteenth year of his life without cooked food, his flesh felt a need, owing to the weakness of the stomach, to partake of (something that had been) on the fire; he did not however take bread even now, but having fed on herbs or gruel or pulse for two years, in this regime he died, after communicating in church at Epiphany. Shortly before his death he told us:²⁶⁹ "For three years I have not been troubled by fleshly desire---after so long a life and toil and labour and ceaseless prayer." He was told of the death of his father, and said to his informant: "Cease blaspheming, for my father is immortal." ²⁷⁰ |138

CHAPTER XXXIX. -- PIOR ²⁷¹

[1] PIOR, a young Egyptian, having renounced the world, left his father's house and in an excess of zeal gave his word to God that he would never see any of his relations again. Fifty years after his sister, now an old woman, having heard that he was alive seemed likely to go out of her mind if she could not see him. But being unable to go to the great desert she besought the bishop of the district to write to the fathers in the desert that they should send him and she might see him. So, considerable pressure having been brought to bear on him, he decided to take one other with him and go. [2] And he announced at his sister's house: "Your brother Pior has come." So standing outside and perceiving from the creaking of the door that the old woman came out to meet him, he closed his eyes and called to her: "Ho! What's-your-name, I am Pior your brother, I am he. Look at me as much as you want." So she was convinced and glorified God, and having failed to persuade him to enter her house she returned to her dwelling. But he having offered a prayer on the doorstep exiled himself again in the desert.

[3] Now this miracle is told of him, that he dug in the place where he lived and found some very bitter water. And until he died he remained there, accepting the bitterness of the water in order to show his endurance. Many of the monks therefore after his death tried to rival him by dwelling in his cell, but they could not complete a year; for the place is terrible and inconsolably dreary.

[4] Moses the Libyan,²⁷² a man of exceedingly gentle |139 disposition and very affectionate, was counted worthy of the gift of healings. He told me this: "When I was a young man in the monastery we dug a very big pit, twenty feet broad. In this eighty of us excavated for three days and we got a cubit further than the vein where we generally found water and expected it (in this case), but found none. So very much disheartened we were contemplating the abandonment of the work. Then Pior appeared from the great desert at the sixth hour, (the time) of burning heat, an old man clad in a sheep-skin coat, and greeted us and said after the greeting: "Why have you lost heart, men of little faith? For I have seen you since yesterday losing heart." [5] And having descended by a ladder to the cavity of the well he said a prayer with them, and having taken the pick he said after striking the third blow: "O God of the holy patriarchs,²⁷³ make not the toil of thy servants useless, but send them the water they need." And immediately water sprang out so that they were wetted all over. So he prayed once more and went off. They tried to make him eat, but he would not suffer them, saying: "That for which I was sent is accomplished; for this I was not sent."

CHAPTER XL. -- EPHRAIM ²⁷⁴

[1] You must have heard particulars about Ephraim, the deacon of the Church of Edessa; for he is one of those who deserve to be remembered by religious people. Having completed in worthy fashion the journey of the Spirit, without being diverted from the straight |140 road, he was counted worthy of the grace of natural knowledge, and afterwards of the knowledge of God¹ and final blessedness. So having always practised the quiet life and for many years continuing to edify his visitors, at last he left his cell, for the following reason. [2] A great famine having come upon the city of Edessa, he felt compassion for the whole country-side, which was being destroyed, and approached

those who were rich in material things and said to them: "Why do you not take pity on human nature being destroyed, instead of letting your wealth be corrupted for the condemnation of your souls?" They considered the matter and said to him: "We have no one whom we can trust to minister to the famine-stricken. For all are dishonest in business affairs." He said to them: "What do you think of me?" Now he had a great reputation among all, not falsely but truly. [3] They said to him: "We know you to be a man of God." "Then trust me," he said. "See, on your behalf I appoint myself hospitaller." And he raised money, and partitioned the porticoes and made up some 300 beds, and so nursed the sufferers from the famine, burying those who succumbed and treating those who had hope of life, and in a word out of the funds entrusted to him provided day by day hospitality and assistance for all the inhabitants. [4] So when the year was completed and prosperity returned and all went home, no longer having anything to do he entered his own cell and died after a month, God having provided him this opportunity of gaining a crown just before his end. Also he left some writings, most of which deserve to be studied. |141

CHAPTER XLI. -- HOLY WOMEN

[1] IT is necessary also to mention in my book certain women with manly qualities, to whom God apportioned labours equal to those of men, lest any should pretend that women are too feeble to practise virtue perfectly. Now I have seen many such and met many distinguished virgins and widows.²⁷⁵ [2] Among them was the Roman lady Paula,²⁷⁶ mother of Toxotius, a woman of great distinction in the spiritual life. She was hindered by a certain Jerome from Dalmatia. For though she was able to surpass all, having great abilities, he hindered her by his jealousy, having induced her to serve his own plan. She has a daughter now living an ascetic life at Bethlehem, Eustochium by name. I have never met her, but she is said to be very chaste, and she has a convent of fifty virgins;

[3] I knew also Veneria, wife of Vallovicus the count,²⁷⁷ who gallantly distributed her camel's burden²⁷⁸ and was delivered from the wounds which property inflicts. And Theodora the wife of the tribune, who reached such a depth of poverty that she became a recipient of alms and finally died in the monastery of Hesychas near the sea. I knew a lady named Hosia, in every respect most venerable; and her sister Adolia, |142 who lived in a way not indeed comparable to her, but proportionately to her own capacity. [4] I knew also Basianilla, the wife of Candidianus the general, who practised virtue ardently and scrupulously, and is still even now strenuously engaged in contests. Also the virgin Photina, venerable in the extreme, daughter of Theoctistus the priest near Laodicea. Again, I met in Antioch a most venerable lady who conversed familiarly with God, the deaconess Sabaniana, aunt of John the bishop of Constantinople. And I saw also in Rome the beautiful Asella, the virgin who had grown old in the monastery, a very gentle lady and a supporter of convents. [5] There also I saw men and women recently instructed. I saw also Avita,²⁷⁹ who was worthy of God, with her husband Apronianus and their daughter Eunomia, all so desirous to please God that they were publicly converted to the life of virtue and continence, and were held worthy on this account to fall asleep in Christ

freed from all sin, having become possessed of knowledge and leaving their life in good remembrance.]

CHAPTER XLII. -- JULIAN [280](#)

[I HAVE heard of a certain Julian in the region of Edessa, a very ascetic man, who wore away his flesh till it was so thin that he carried about only skin and bone. At the very end of his life he was counted worthy of the honour of the gift of healing.] |143

CHAPTER XLIII. -- ADOLIUS

[1] AGAIN, I knew a man at Jerusalem named Adolius, a Tarsian by origin, who having come to Jerusalem followed eagerly the untrodden road, not that on which most of us walked, but carving out for himself a strange mode of life. For his asceticism was superhuman, so that the very demons, trembling at his austerity, dared not approach him. For by reason of his excessive abstinence and his vigils he was even suspected of being a phantom. [2] For in Lent he would eat at intervals of five days, and the whole rest of the time every other day. But his greatest act of asceticism was this. From evening until the time when the brotherhood began to assemble again in their houses of prayer he would continue on his feet singing psalms and praying, on the Mount of Olives, the hill of the Ascension whence Jesus was taken up; and whether it snowed or rained or there was a white frost he remained undaunted. [3] So having completed his accustomed time he knocked at the cells of all the monks with his little waking-up knocker, collecting them into the houses of prayer and in each house singing one or two psalms with them antiphonally and praying with them. Then he went away to his own cell before daybreak, so that of a truth the brethren often had to undress him and wring out his clothes as if after the wash, and put other clothes on him. So then, after resting until the hour of psalmody, [281](#) he applied himself (to worship) until evening. And so this was the virtue of Adolius the Tarsian, who reached perfection in Jerusalem and died there. |144

CHAPTER XLIV. -- INNOCENT [282](#)

[1] You have heard from many the story of the blessed Innocent, the priest of the Mount of Olives, but none the less you will hear it also from us who lived with him for three years. He was simple to an excess. Having been one of the dignitaries of the palace in the early days of the Emperor Constantius, he renounced the world, leaving his marriage, by which he had also a son, Paul by name, of the imperial bodyguard. [2] When the latter had sinned with the daughter of a priest, Innocent cursed his own son, beseeching God and saying: "Lord, give him such a spirit that his flesh may no longer find opportunity to sin"---thinking it better that he should struggle with a demon than with incontinence, which actually happened. At this present moment he is still on the Mount of Olives, wearing irons and chastised by the spirit. [3] How compassionate indeed this Innocent was, so that often he himself stole from the brethren and gave to the needy---I shall seem to be talking nonsense if I tell the truth. And he was exceedingly innocent and simple, and was counted worthy of the gift (of power) over demons. As an example of this: Once a young man was brought to him before our eyes taken by a spirit and by paralysis, so

that I, having seen him, wished publicly to repel the mother of the man who had been brought, since I despaired of his cure. [4] Well, it happened in the meantime that the old man having come up saw her standing and weeping and lamenting |145over the unspeakable misfortune of her son. So the good old man wept and, moved with compassion, took the young man and entered into his oratory, which he had built with his own hands, and in which relics of John the Baptist were laid. And having prayed over him from the third hour to the ninth, he restored the young man to his mother cured that same day, having driven out both his paralysis and the demon. His paralysis was such that the boy, when he spat, spat on his own back, so twisted was he.

[5] An old woman having lost a sheep came to him in tears. And having followed her he said: "Show me the place where you lost it." She led him to the neighbourhood of the tomb of Lazarus.²⁸³ He stood and prayed. But the young men who had stolen it anticipated him by killing it. So while he prayed, no one confessing and the meat lying hidden in the vineyard, a crow came from somewhere and hovered over the place, took a morsel and flew off again. And the blessed one having marked the place found the slain animal, and so the young men who had killed it fell at his feet and confessed and paid, when asked, the proper price of the sheep.

CHAPTER XLV. -- PHILOROMUS

²⁸⁴ [[1] We met in Galatia the priest Philoromus, a most ascetic and enduring man, and stayed with him a long time. His mother was a maidservant, his father a free man. But he showed such nobility in the Christlike mode of life that even those whose family record was unsurpassable revered his life and virtue. He renounced the world |146in the days of Julian the infamous Emperor, and spoke to him with boldness. Julian ordered him to be shaved and buffeted by boys. He endured the ordeal patiently and expressed his thanks to Julian, as he told us himself. [2] In his early days war against fornication and gluttony was his lot. He drove out these passions by shutting himself up and wearing irons, and by abstinence from corn-bread and all things cooked by fire. After persevering in this course for eighteen years he sang the hymn of triumph to Christ. Attacked in divers ways by the spirits of wickedness, he abode in one monastery for forty years. He told us this: "For thirty-two years I touched no fruit." Once when timidity attacked him, in order to get rid of it, he shut himself up in a tomb for six years. [3] The blessed Basil, the bishop, took great care of him, rejoicing in his austerity and firmness. Even now he has not renounced the pen and the writing sheet,²⁸⁵ though perhaps in his eightieth year. He said: "From the time that I was initiated and born again until to-day, I have never eaten another's bread for nothing, but always as the result of my own labours." (Speaking) as in the presence of God, he convinced us that he had given to the cripples 250 pieces of money earned by the work of his hands, and had never wronged anyone. [4] He went on foot even as far as Rome itself to pray at the martyr-chapel of the blessed Peter. He went also as far as Alexandria, to pray at the martyr-chapel of Mark. Then he came also a second time to Jerusalem, having gone on his own feet and defrayed his own expenses. And he said this: "I do not remember that I was ever absent in mind from my God." |147

CHAPTER XLVI. -- MELANIA THE ELDER ²⁸⁶

[1] THE thrice-blessed Melania was a Spaniard by origin, but afterwards belonged to Rome. She was the daughter ²⁸⁷ of Marcellinus the ex-consul, and wife of a certain man of high official rank, whom I do not quite remember. Having become a widow at twenty-two, she was favoured with the divine love, and having said nothing to any one---for she would have been prevented---in the time when Valens had the rule in the empire, she had a guardian nominated for her son and took all her movable property and put it on a ship; then she sailed with all speed to Alexandria, accompanied by various highborn women and children. [2] After that, having sold her goods and turned them into money, she went to the mountain of Nitria, where she met the following fathers and their companions---Pambo, Arsisius, Sarapion the Great, Paphnutius of Scete, Isidore the Confessor, bishop of Hermopolis, and Dioscorus. And she sojourned with them for half a year, travelling about in the desert and visiting all the saints. [3] But after this, when the prefect ²⁸⁸ of Alexandria banished Isidore, Pisimius, Adelphius, Paphnutius and Pambo, with them also Ammonius Parotes, and twelve bishops and priests, to Palestine in the neighbourhood of Diocaesarea, she followed them and ministered to them from her own money. But, servants being forbidden them, so they told me---for I met the holy Pisimius and Isidore and |148 Paphnutius and Ammonius---wearing the dress ²⁸⁹ of a young slave she brought them in the evenings what they required. But the consular of Palestine got to know of it, and wishing to fill his pocket thought he would terrify ²⁹⁰ her. [4] And having arrested her he threw her into prison, ignorant that she was a lady. But she told him: "For my part, I am So-and-So's daughter and So-and-So's wife, but I am Christ's slave. And do not despise the cheapness of my clothing. For I am able to exalt myself if I like, and you cannot terrify me in this way or take any of my goods. So then I have told you this, lest through ignorance you should incur judicial accusations. For one must in dealing with insensate folk be as audacious as a hawk." ²⁹¹ Then the judge, recognizing the situation, both made an apology and honoured her, and gave orders that she should succour the saints without hindrance.

[5] After they were recalled she founded a monastery in Jerusalem, and spent twenty-seven years there in charge of a convent of fifty virgins. With her lived also the most noble Rufinus, from Italy, of the city of Aquileia, a man similar to her in character and very steadfast, who was afterwards judged worthy of the priesthood. A more learned man or a kinder than he was not to be found among men. ²⁹² [6] So these two during twenty-seven years receiving at their own charges those who visited Jerusalem in pursuance of a vow, bishops and monks and virgins, edified all who visited them, and they reconciled the schism of Paulinus, ²⁹³ some 400 monks |149 in all, and winning over every heretic that denied the Holy Spirit they brought him to the Church; and they honoured the clergy of the district with gifts and food, and so continued to the end, without offending anyone.

CHAPTER XLVII. -- CHRONIUS AND PAPHNUTIUS

[1] A CERTAIN man named Chronius ²⁹⁴ of the village called Phoenice, having measured off from his own village, which was near the desert, 15000 steps counted with his right foot, dug a well there after prayer; and having found very good water forty-two feet away, built himself there a little dwelling. And from the day that he installed himself in this abode he prayed to God that he might never return to an inhabited place. [2] But

when a few years had passed he was counted worthy of the priesthood, a brotherhood of some 200 men having collected round him. Now this meritorious feature of his asceticism is told, that having officiated at the altar for sixty years, exercising his priesthood, he did not leave the desert and never ate bread that came from any source but the work of his own hands.

With him dwelt one Jacob, who belonged to the neighbourhood, surnamed the Lambe, an exceedingly learned man. Now both were known to the blessed Antony. [3] Now one day they were joined by Paphnutius,²⁹⁵ surnamed Kephalas, who had the gift of knowledge of the divine Scriptures of the Old and New |150 Testaments, interpreting it all without having read the Scriptures, but he was so modest that his prophetic virtue was concealed. It is told of him that during eighty years he never wore two tunics together. The blessed Evagrius and Albanus and I when we met these men sought to know the causes of brothers falling away or backsliding or stumbling in the proper life. [4] For it happened in those days that Chaeremon the ascetic died in a sitting posture and was found dead on his chair holding his work in his hands. And it happened also that another brother while digging a well was swallowed up by the well; and another on his way down from Scete died from lack of water. Then again there was the story of Stephen, who fell into disgraceful profligacy, and of Eucarpus, and the story of Heron of Alexandria, and the story of Valens of Palestine, and the story of Ptolemy the Egyptian who lived in Scete. [5] We asked therefore what was the reason why the men who lived there in the desert were some of them deceived in their mind and others shattered by lust. So this was the answer that the most enlightened Paphnutius gave us, namely: "All things that happen are divided into two, what God approves and what He allows. As many things then as happen in accordance with virtue for the glory of God, these happen with His approval. But as many, on the contrary, as are fraught with loss and danger and are due to external crises or fallings away, these happen with God's permission. [6] But the permission is given in a rational manner. For it is impossible that a man who thinks rightly and lives rightly should succumb to snares of shame or the deceit of demons. Consequently, all who seem to pursue virtue with a corrupt purpose, the vice of men-pleasing or perverse imagination, these also make false steps, for God deserts them for their benefit, in order that through |151their desertion they may perceive the difference that results from their change and correct either their intention or their conduct. [7] For at one time the will sins, when it acts with evil intent, at another time also the conduct, when it acts corruptly or in the wrong fashion. And this indeed often happens, that the vicious man with a corrupt purpose gives alms to girls in pursuance of an evil end, though he does an apparently good action by giving help to her who is an orphan, a solitary, or an ascetic. But it happens also that men give alms with a right purpose to the sick or aged or those who have lost money, but sparingly and with a grumble, and the intention is right but the action is unworthy of the intention; for it is necessary that the merciful man show mercy gladly and generously."²⁹⁶ [8] They said also this: "There are good qualities in many souls, in some a natural goodness of thought, in others aptitude for asceticism. But whenever some action is not done or natural goodness not manifested for the sake of the actual good, and those who possess good qualities do not ascribe them to God the Giver of all good things, but to their own free will, natural goodness and capacity, then such men are deserted and are involved either in disgraceful conduct or experience and in

shame, and by means of the consequent humiliation and shame gradually lose the pride felt in their pretended virtue. [9] For when the man who is puffed up with pride, pluming himself on the natural charm of his discourse, does not ascribe to God the natural charm or even the supply of knowledge, but to his own application or natural gifts, God withdraws from him the angel of foreknowledge. When this angel is removed, then overpowered by the adversary the man who plumes himself on his natural charm falls into licentiousness through his ¹⁵²presumption, in order that, the witness of his self-control being withdrawn, the words spoken by such men may be no longer worthy of credit; while religious men shun the teaching which proceeds from such a mouth as if it were a fountain containing leeches, so that the Scripture is fulfilled: 'But to the sinner said God, Why dost thou recount my judgments and takest my covenant in thy mouth?'²⁹⁷ [10] For truly the souls of the vicious are like diverse fountains. The gluttonous and wine-lovers are like muddy fountains; the covetous and greedy like fountains with frogs; others, envious and haughty but with an aptitude for knowledge, are like fountains which cherish serpents, in which reason is always floating but no one likes to draw from them because of the bitterness of their character. This is why David demanded three things in his prayer, 'goodness and discipline and knowledge.'²⁹⁸ For without goodness knowledge is not good. [11] And if such a man corrects himself, putting away the cause of his abandonment, that is, pride, and recovers humility and recognizes his own measure, not exalting himself against anyone, and thanking God, then knowledge attested by proof returns to him. For spiritual words which do not have as an escort a sober and disciplined life are like ears of corn blasted by the wind; they have the outward appearance (of corn) but have been robbed of their nutritive value. [12] Therefore every fall, whether by the tongue, or by perception, or by action, or by the whole body, tends to produce abandonment in proportion to the presumption, though God spares those who are abandoned. For if, in the midst of their vice, the Lord will bear witness to their natural grace by providing them with eloquence, arrogance turns them into demons, puffed up with uncleanness."

[13] And those men told us this too: "When you ¹⁵³see a man irregular in his life but plausible in speech, remember the demon who conversed with Christ using the words of Scripture, and the witness which says: 'Now the serpent was the most subtle of all the beasts on the earth.'²⁹⁹ In his case intelligence has rather resulted in harm, since no other virtue accompanied it. For the faithful and good man must think the thoughts which God gives and say what he thinks and do what he says. [14] For if the relationships of a man's life do not accord with the truth of his words, he is, as Job says, like bread without salt which will in no case be eaten, or, if eaten, will make those who eat it ill. 'Shall bread be eaten without salt?' he says. 'And is there any taste in vain words,'³⁰⁰ which are not fulfilled by the witness of the works? Now these are the causes of the abandonings: in one case because of hidden virtue, that it may be revealed, as was Job's, God speaking to him and saying: 'Reject not My judgment, nor think that I have spoken to thee for any other reason than that thou mightest be shown to be righteous.'³⁰¹ [15] For thou wast known to Me who see secret things; but when thou wast unknown to men, people supposing that thou wast serving Me because of wealth, I brought on the disaster, I cut off the wealth, that I might show them thy philosophy of gratitude.' In other cases it is to avert pride as with Paul. For Paul was abandoned, being tossed about in misfortunes and

buffetings and divers afflictions, and he said: 'There was given me a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted.'³⁰² [16] Lest perhaps in the midst of his marvellous works both the repose and the prosperity and the honour which accrued to him might cast him gaping with vanity into diabolical pride. The paralytic |154 was abandoned because of sins, as Jesus says: 'See, thou art made whole, sin no more.'³⁰³ Judas was abandoned, because he loved money more than the word, wherefore also he hanged himself. Esau also was abandoned and fell into dissolute conduct, preferring the grossness ³⁰⁴ of entrails to his father's blessing. [17] So that considering all these things Paul said concerning some: 'As they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do things which are not fitting.'³⁰⁵ And concerning certain others who seem to have the knowledge of God with a corrupt mind: 'Since knowing God, they glorified Him not as God, neither gave Him thanks, for this cause God gave them up unto vile passions.'³⁰⁶ So that from these instances we know that it is impossible that any should fall into dissolute conduct unless he has first been abandoned by God's Providence."

CHAPTER XLVIII. -- ELPIDIUS

[1] IN the caves of the Amorites round about Jericho, which they excavated long ago when they fled from Joshua the son of Nun,³⁰⁷ who was ravaging then the aliens on the mountain of Doukas,³⁰⁸ there lived a certain Elpidius, a Cappadocian, afterwards counted worthy of the priesthood. Having been a member of the monastery of Timothy,³⁰⁹ the Cappadocian |155 country-bishop, a very able man, he came and settled in one of the caves. He showed such self-discipline in his asceticism as to put all others in the shade. [2] For during his twenty-five years' life there he used to take food only on Sunday and Saturday and would spend the nights standing up and singing psalms. With him, (reigning) like a little king in the midst of his bees,³¹⁰ lived the multitude ³¹¹ of the brethren, and I too lived with him, and thus he made the mountain a veritable city. And one could see there different modes of life. Once a scorpion stung this Elpidius as he sang psalms by night and we too were singing with him. He trod it underfoot, nor did he even move from his standing position, despising the pain caused by the scorpion. [3] One day, as a brother was holding a vine-cutting, he took it as he sat at the declivity of the mountain and dug a hole for it as if planting it, though it was not the season. It grew big and became a vine large enough to give shade to the church. In his company also a certain Aenesius reached perfection, a worthy man, and so did Eustathius his brother. To such a height of impassivity did he attain in drying up his body that the sun shone through his bones. [4] The story is told by his zealous disciples that he never turned (to gaze) towards the west because the mountain with its height dominated the door of the cave. Nor did he ever see the sun after the sixth hour, having passed overhead and now descending towards the west, or even the stars that rise in the west, for twenty-five years. From the time he entered the cave he did not descend from the mountain until he was buried. |156

CHAPTER XLIX. -- SISINNIUS

[[1] THIS Elpidius had a disciple, by name Sisinnius, of servile origin, but a free man as regards the faith, a Cappadocian by race. For one must point out these things for the glory of Christ, Who ennobles us and leads us to the true nobility. After dwelling with Elpidius six or seven years finally he shut himself up in a tomb and continued for three years in a tomb, praying constantly, sitting down neither by night nor day, neither lying down nor walking out. He was counted worthy of a gift (of power) over demons. [2] But having returned to his native country he was counted worthy of the priesthood, and collected a community of men and women. By his grave manner of life he drove out whatever masculine lusts there were in himself, and by self-discipline he curbed the feminine element in the women, so that the words of Scripture were fulfilled: " In Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female." ³¹² Then also he is hospitable, although without possessions, so as to shame the rich men who are not generous.]

CHAPTER L. -- GADDANAS ³¹³

I KNEW an old Palestinian named Gaddanas, who lived in the open air in the region round the Jordan. Some Jews once set about him in a fanatic outburst, in the region round the Dead Sea, and came against him with sword drawn. And this incident occurred. When a man lifted up his sword and wished to use it against Gaddanas, the hand of him who had drawn it was |157 withered up, and the sword fell from the hand of its wielder.

CHAPTER LI. -- ELIAS

THEN again Elias, a monk, dwelt in the same parts in a cave, living a life most grave and disciplined. One day when a number of brethren had come to him, for the place was on the main road, he ran short of bread. And he assured us: "Dismayed at what had happened, I went into the cell and found three loaves. And the visitors having eaten of them to satiety----they were twenty in all----one was left over, which lasted me twenty-five days."

CHAPTER LII. -- SABAS

³¹⁴ [A MAN named Sabas, a layman, ³¹⁵ a native of Jericho, became so enamoured of the monks that he went the round of the cells and the desert at nights and at each habitation put outside a bushel of dates, and a sufficiency of vegetables, because the ascetics of the Jordan do not eat bread. One day a lion met him and, talcing him by surprise, chased him for a mile and then turned back, took his ass and went off.]

CHAPTER LIII. -- ABRAMIUS

THERE was a certain Abramius, an Egyptian by race, who lived a very rough and savage life in the wilderness. Afflicted in his mind by an untimely fancy, he went to the church and contended with the priests, saying: "I |158have been ordained a priest by Christ this night, accept me as a celebrant." The fathers removed him from the desert and led him to a less ascetic and calmer life, and cured him of his presumption, bringing this man who had been deluded by the demon to a knowledge of his own weakness.

CHAPTER LIV. -- THE ELDER MELANIA

[1] THOUGH I have told above ³¹⁶ in a superficial way of the wonderful and saintly Melania, nevertheless I will now weave into my narrative at this point what remains to be said. What stores of goods she used up in her divine zeal, as it were burning them in a fire, is not for me to dwell on, but for those who dwell in Persia. For no one escaped her benevolence, neither East nor West nor North nor South. [2] For thirty-seven years she had been giving hospitality, and at her own costs had succoured both churches and monasteries and strangers and prisoners, her family and her son himself and her stewards providing the money. She persevered so long in the practice of hospitality that she possessed not even a span of land. She was not drawn (from her purpose) by desire for her son, nor did yearning after her only son ³¹⁷ separate her from love towards Christ. [3] But thanks to her prayers the young man attained a high standard of education and a good character and an illustrious marriage, and participated in the honours of the world; he had also two children. A long while after, hearing how her granddaughter was situated, that she was married and was proposing to renounce the world, afraid lest they should be injured by bad teaching or heresy or evil living, though an |159 old woman of sixty years, she flung herself into a ship and sailing from Caesarea reached Rome in twenty days. ³¹⁸ [4] And having met there that most blessed and worthy man Apronianus, a pagan, she instructed him and made him a Christian, persuading him to be continent as regards his wife, Melania's niece named Avita. And having also strengthened the will of her own granddaughter Melania, with her husband Pinianus, and instructed her daughter-in-law Albina, wife of her son, and having induced all these to sell their goods, she led them out from Rome and brought them into the holy and calm harbour of the (religious) life. And in so doing she fought with beasts ³¹⁹ in the shape of all the senators and their wives who tried to prevent her, in view of (similar) renunciation of the world on the part of the other (senatorial) houses. But she said to them: "Little children, it was written 400 years ago, It is the last hour. ³²⁰ Why do you love to linger in life's vanities? Perchance the days of antichrist will surprise you, and you will cease to enjoy your wealth and your ancestral property." [6] And having liberated all these she led them to the monastic life. And after instructing the younger son of Publicola she brought him to Sicily, and having sold all her remaining goods and received their value, she came to Jerusalem. Then, having got rid of her possessions, within forty days she fell asleep in a good old age and profound meekness, leaving behind both a monastery in Jerusalem and an endowment for it.

[7] But when all these persons had left Rome there fell on Rome a hurricane of barbarians, which was ordained long ago in prophecies, and it did not spare even the bronze statues in the Forum, but sacking them |160 all with barbaric frenzy delivered them to destruction, so that Rome, which had been beautified by loving hands ³²¹ for 1200 years, became a ruin. ³²² Then those who had been instructed (by Melania) and those who had opposed her instruction glorified God, Who had persuaded the unbelievers by a reversal of fortune, in that, when all the other families had been made prisoners, these ones only were preserved, having been made by Melania's zeal burnt-offerings to the Lord.

CHAPTER LV. -- SILVANIA (MELANIA *continued*) ³²³

[1] IT so happened that we ³²⁴ travelled together from Aelia ³²⁵ to Egypt, escorting the blessed Silvania the virgin, sister-in-law of Rufinus the ex-prefect. Among the party there was Jovinus also with us, then a deacon, but now bishop of the church of Ascalon, a devout and learned man. We came into an intense heat and, when we reached Pelusium, it chanced that Jovinus took a basin and gave his hands and feet a thorough ³²⁶ wash in ice-cold water, and after washing flung a rug on the |161ground and lay down to rest. [2] She came to him like a wise mother of a true son and began to scoff at his softness, saying: "How dare you at your age, when your blood is still vigorous, thus coddle your flesh, not perceiving the mischief that is engendered by it? Be sure of this, be sure of it, that I am in the sixtieth year of my life and except for the tips of my fingers neither my feet nor my face nor any one of my limbs have touched water, although I am a victim to various ailments and the doctors try to force me. I have not consented to make the customary concessions to the flesh, never in my travels have I rested on a bed or used a litter."

[3] Being very learned and loving literature she turned night into day by perusing every writing of the ancient commentators, including 3,000,000 (lines) of Origen ³²⁷ and 2,500,000 (lines) of Gregory, Stephen, Pierius, Basil, and other standard writers. Nor did she read them once only and casually, but she laboriously went through each book seven or eight times. Wherefore also she was enabled to be freed from knowledge falsely so called ³²⁸ and to fly on wings, thanks to the grace of these books; elevated by kindly hopes she made herself a spiritual bird and journeyed to Christ.

CHAPTER LVI. -- OLYMPIAS

[1] THAT most venerable and devoted lady Olympias followed the counsel of Melania, attending to her precepts and walking in her footsteps. She was the daughter of Seleucus the ex-count, grand-daughter of |162Ablavius the ex-prefect, and bride for a few days of Nebrius, the ex-prefect of the city, but the wife of no man. For she is said to have died a virgin, but the spouse of the Word of Truth. [2] She dispersed all her goods and gave to the poor. She engaged in no mean combats for truth's sake, instructed many women, addressed priests reverently, and honoured bishops; she was accounted worthy to be a confessor for truth's sake. The inhabitants of Constantinople reckon her life among the confessors, for she died thus and went away to the Lord in the midst of her struggles for God's honour.

CHAPTER LVII. -- CANDIDA

[1] ATTENDING to her precepts and imitating her like a mirror, the blessed Candida, daughter of Trajan the general, lived a worthy life and attained to the height of sanctity, paying honours both to churches and bishops. Having instructed her own daughter for the condition of virginity she brought her to Christ as a gift of her own body, afterwards following her own daughter in temperance and chastity and the distribution of her goods. [2] I knew her labour all night long with her hands at the mill to subdue her body; and she used to say: "Fasting is insufficient; I give it an ally in the shape of toilsome watching, that I may destroy the insolence of Esau." ³²⁹ She abstained absolutely from anything

with blood ³³⁰ and life in it, but taking fish and vegetables with oil on feast days, at other times she continued to content herself with a mixture of sour wine and dry bread. |163

[3] In emulation of her example the most venerable lady Gelasia, a tribune's daughter, walked in the path of religion, having put on the yoke of virginity. Her virtue is renowned in that the sun never went down ³³¹ on her irritation against man-servant or maid-servant or any one else.

CHAPTER LVIII. -- THE MONKS OF ANTINOË

[1] HAVING spent four years³³² at Antinoë in the Thebaid, in so long a time I acquired knowledge also of the local monasteries. For some 1200 men are settled round the city, who live by their hands and are extremely ascetic. Reckoned among these there are also anchorites who have shut themselves up in the caves of the rocks. One of these is a certain Solomon, a man of very mild disposition and restrained and possessing the gift of endurance. He used to say that he had been fifty years in the cave. He provided for himself by the work of his hands and had learned by heart all the holy Scriptures.

[2] In another cave lived Dorotheus, a priest. He was extraordinarily good, and having himself lived an irreproachable life was counted worthy of the priesthood, and ministered to the brethren in the caves. To him Melania the younger, grand-daughter of the great Melania, concerning whom I shall speak later,³³³ once sent 500 pieces of money, beseeching him to spend them on the brethren there. But he took three only and sent the rest to Diocles the anchorite, a most-learned man, saying: "Brother Diocles is wiser than I, and can administer them without doing harm, knowing |164 those who should rightly be helped. For myself, I am content with these."

[3] This Diocles began in the first instance with the grammar course, but afterwards gave himself to philosophy. However, in course of time grace drew him on, and in the twenty-eighth year of his life he gave up the cycle of studies ³³⁴ and gave himself up ³³⁵ to Christ; and he had spent thirty-five years in the caves.³³⁶ He told us this: "Intelligence which is separated from the thought of God becomes either a demon or a brute beast." But since we were curious to know his manner of speaking he explained thus: "Intelligence separated from the thought of God inevitably falls into concupiscence or anger." And he said concupiscence was beast-like and anger demoniacal. [4] But when I objected: "How can human intelligence be continually with God?" this same man said: "Whenever the soul is engaged in a thought or action that is pious and godly, then it is with God."

There lived near him a certain Capiton, who had been a robber. He had completed fifty years in the caves four miles from the city of Antinoë, and did not come down from his cave, not even as far as the river Nile, saying that he was not yet able to meet crowds because the Adversary at that instant would oppose him.

[5] With these we saw also another anchorite, himself also (living) in a cave in similar fashion. Being mocked in dreams by the frenzy of vainglory, he mocked in his turn those that deceived themselves, "feeding the winds."³³⁷ And he possessed bodily continence

thanks to his age and his long time (in the desert), and perhaps |165 also thanks to his vainglory.³³⁸ On the other hand, his judgment was perverted owing to the unrestrained character of his vainglory.

CHAPTER LIX. -- AMMA TALIS AND TAOR

[1] IN this city of Antioe there are twelve convents of women; in one of them I met Amma³³⁹ Talis, an old woman who had spent eighty years in asceticism, as she and the neighbours told me. With her dwelt sixty young women who loved her so greatly that no key even was fixed on the outer wall of the monastery, as in other monasteries, but they were kept in by love of her. Such a height of impassivity did the old woman reach that when I entered and sat down she came and sat by me and put her hands on my shoulders in a transport of freedom.

[2] In this monastery there was a disciple of hers by name Taor, a virgin who had been thirty years in the monastery; she would never accept a new habit or hood or shoes, saying: "I do not need them, lest I be forced also to go out." For all the others go out on Sunday to church for the Communion; but she remains in the house clothed in rags, ceaselessly sitting at her work. But her looks were naturally so charming that even the |166most steadfast would almost have been deceived by her beauty, if she had not had her chastity as an exceedingly strong sentinel, and by her modesty had been compelling the unrestrained eye to reverence and fear.

CHAPTER LX. -- COLLYTHUS

[1] ANOTHER virgin was a neighbour of mine, but I did not see her face, for she never came out, so they say, from the day she renounced the world. But having completed sixty years of asceticism in company with her own mother (-superior), at last she was about to depart from this life. And the martyr of the place stood over her---Collythus was his name---and said to her: "Today you are going to travel to the Master and see all the saints. Come then and breakfast with us in the chapel."³⁴⁰ So she got up at twilight and dressed and took in her basket bread and olives and shredded herbs, after all those years going out, and she went to the chapel and prayed. [2] And having marked that moment of the whole day when no one was inside, she took her seat and called on the martyr, saying: "Bless my food, holy Collythus, and accompany me with thy prayers on the journey." Then having eaten and prayed again she went home about sunset. And having given her mother (-superior) a writing of Clement, author of the *Stromateis*, on the prophet Amos,³⁴¹ she said: "Give it to the exiled bishop³⁴² and say to him, Pray for me, for I am going on a journey." And she died that very night, with no fever nor pain in the head, but having decked herself for the funeral. |167

CHAPTER LXI. -- MELANIA THE YOUNGER ³⁴³

[1] SINCE I promised above to tell about the (grand-) daughter of Melania, I am constrained to pay the debt, for it is not just that men should disdain her youthfulness in respect of the flesh and leave on one side with no pillar to commemorate it such great

virtue, virtue which, frankly, far surpasses that of old and zealous women. Her parents by using compulsion made her marry a man of the highest rank in Rome. Her conscience was always being pricked by the tales she heard about her grandmother, and (at last) she was so goaded that she felt unable to perform her marriage duty. [2] For, two male children having been born to her and both having died, she came to have such great hatred of marriage as to say to her husband Pinianus, son of Severus the ex-prefect: "If you choose to practise asceticism with me according to the fashion of chastity, then I recognise you as master and lord of my life. But if this appears grievous to you, being still a young man, take all my belongings and set my body free, that I may fulfil my desire toward God and become heir of the zeal of my grandmother, whose name I also bear. [3] For if God had wished us to have children, He would not have taken away my children untimely." After they had struggled under the yoke a long while, at last God had pity on the young man and planted in him a zeal for renunciation, so that the word of Scripture was fulfilled in their case: "How knowest thou, O woman, that thou shalt save thy husband?" ³⁴⁴ So having been married at thirteen and having lived with her husband seven years, in the 168th year she renounced the world. And first she gave her silk dresses to the altars: this the holy Olympias has also done. [4] Then she cut up her other silks and made them into different church ornaments. And having entrusted her silver and gold to a certain Paul, a priest, a monk of Dalmatia, she sent them across the sea to the East, 10,000 pieces of money to Egypt and the Thebaid, 10,000 pieces to Antioch and its neighbourhood, 15,000 to Palestine, 10,000 to the churches in the islands and the places of exile, while she herself distributed to the churches in the West in the same way. [5] All this and four times as much she snatched, if God will allow the expression, "out of the mouth of the lion" ³⁴⁵ Alaric by her faith. And she freed 8000 slaves who wished freedom, for the rest did not wish it, but preferred to be slaves to her brother; and she allowed him to take them all for three pieces of money. But having sold her possessions in the Spains, Aquitania, Tarragonia and the Gauls, she reserved for herself only those in Sicily and Campania and Africa and appropriated their income for the support of monasteries. [6] Such was her wise conduct with regard to the burden of riches. And her asceticism was as follows. She ate every other day---to begin with after a five days' interval---and assigned to herself a part in the daily work of her own slavewomen, whom also she made her fellow-ascetics.

She had with her also her mother Albina, who lived a similar ascetic life and distributed her riches for her part privately. Now these ladies are dwelling on their properties, now in Sicily and now in Campania, with fifteen eunuchs ³⁴⁶ and sixty virgins, both free and slave. ³⁴⁷ [169][7] Similarly also Pinianus her husband lives with thirty monks, reading and busying himself with the garden and solemn conferences. But in no small way did they honour us when we, a numerous party, went to Rome because of the blessed bishop John, ³⁴⁸ they refreshed us both with hospitality and lavish equipment for the journey, thus winning for themselves with great joy the fruit of eternal life by their God-given works springing from a noble mode of life.

CHAPTER LXII. -- PAMMACHIUS

A KINSMAN of theirs, Pammachius by name, an ex-consul, renounced the world in like manner and lived the perfect life. As for all his wealth, part of it he distributed while still alive and the rest he left to the poor at his death. Similarly also there was a certain Macarius, an ex-vicar,³⁴⁹ and Constantius, who became assessor of the prefects in Italy, distinguished and very learned men, who reached the highest degree of the love of God. I believe that they are still in the flesh after practising the perfect life.

CHAPTER LXIII. -- THE VIRGIN AND ATHANASIUS ³⁵⁰

[1] I KNEW a virgin in Alexandria whom I met when she was about seventy years old. Now all the clergy bore her witness that when she was young, some twenty |170years old, and exceptionally lovely, she was to be shunned because of her beauty, lest she should make any one an object of blame through suspicion. So when it happened that the Arians conspired against the blessed Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, by means of Eusebius the prefect, when Constantius was Emperor, and they were calumniously accusing him of unlawful deeds, he avoided being judged by a corrupt tribunal and trusted no one, neither relation nor friend, nor cleric nor any one. [2] But when the prefect's men entered suddenly into the episcopal residence and sought him, he fled at midnight to this virgin, wearing only his tunic and cloak.³⁵¹ But she was disconcerted at the affair and frightened. So he said to her: "Since I am sought by the Arians and am unjustly accused, I resolved to flee, lest I should bear a false reputation and involve in sin those who wish to punish me. [3] But God revealed to me to-night: 'With no one canst thou be saved except with this lady.'" So with great joy she cast aside all hesitation and gave herself wholly to the Lord; and she hid that most holy man for six years,³⁵² as long as Constantius lived, both washing his feet herself and ministering to his bodily requirements and arranging for all his needs, borrowing books and bringing them to him, and no man in all Alexandria during the six years knew where the blessed Athanasius was living. [4] Now when the death of Constantius was announced and came to his ears, he dressed himself fittingly and was found once more by night in the church; and all were astonished and looked on him as a dead man come to life. Now his defence to his near friends was as follows: "This is why I did not take refuge with you, that you might the better |171| swear (ignorance of my whereabouts), and also because of the search. But I fled to one whom no one could suspect, because she was beautiful and young, bearing two things in mind, her salvation-- --for I did help her----and my reputation."

CHAPTER LXIV. -- JULIANA

[1] AGAIN there was a certain Juliana, a virgin of Caesarea in Cappadocia, said to be very learned and most faithful. When Origen the writer fled from the uprising of the pagans she received him, and supported him for two years at her own cost and waited on him. I found this written in a very old book of verses, in which had been written by Origen's hand: [2] "I found this book at the house of Juliana the virgin at Caesarea, when I was hidden by her. She used to say that she had received it from Symmachus himself, the Jewish interpreter." ³⁵³

I have inserted the virtuous acts of these women as part of my plan, that we may know that it is possible to gain excellence in many ways, if we desire.

CHAPTER LXV. -- HIPPOLYTUS

[1] IN another very old book inscribed with the name of Hippolytus, a disciple of the apostles,³⁵⁴ I found this |172| story. There lived in the city of Corinth a high-born and most beautiful virgin who was practising asceticism with a view to (a vow of) virginity. As the time for it approached, they denounced her to the pagan who was the magistrate then, at the time of the persecutors, that is, as one who blasphemed both the times and the emperors and spoke ill of the idols. At the same time also those who traffic in such things were praising her beauty. [2] So the magistrate, being erotic, received the denunciation gladly, like a horse pricking up his ears. And when after setting every device into operation he failed to persuade the woman, then, furious with her, he did not hand her over to punishment or torture, but put her in a brothel and commanded the man who kept the women: "Take her, and pay me three pieces of money a day as her hire." But he, to earn the requisite sum, intended to hand her over to all comers. So when those who hunt women in this way like so many hawks knew of it they visited this perdition-shop, and paying the tariff talked to her the language of seduction. [3] But she besought them with entreaties, saying: "I have a sore which is offensive, and I fear that you will hate me; give me a few days and you will get the chance of having me for nothing." So she besought God with petitions in those days. Wherefore also God beholding her chastity inspired a certain young man in the employ of the *magister officiorum*,³⁵⁵ fair in character and appearance, with a burning zeal for martyrdom. And having gone off with all outward appearance of lust he came late at night to the keeper of the women and gave him five coins and said to him: "Allow me to spend this night with her." [4] So he went in to the private chamber and said to her: "Get up, save yourself." And he made her take off her clothes and put his own on her, |173| both the vests and cloak and all his masculine apparel, and said to her: "Veil yourself with the ends of the cloak and go out." And so she sealed herself (with the holy sign) and went out and was preserved uncorrupted and undefiled. Next day, therefore, the deed was known. The young official was arrested and thrown to the wild beasts, in order that by him the demon might be put to shame, in that he became a martyr in two senses, both for his own sake and for the sake of that blessed one.

CHAPTER LXVI. -- VERUS THE EX-COUNT

[1] IN Ancyra of Galatia, in the actual city, I met a certain Verus, a man of noble rank, and had considerable experience of him and his lady wife, Bosporia---he was an ex-count.³⁵⁶ They attained such a degree of good confidence that they defrauded even their children, considering the future in a practical manner. For they spent the revenues of their estates on the poor, though they have two daughters and four sons, to whom they give no portion, except to the married daughter, saying: "After we are gone all is yours." But receiving the produce of their estates they spend them on the churches of cities and villages. [2] And this, too, is a mark of virtue in them. A famine having arisen, and militating against natural affection, they brought heresies round to orthodoxy, in many

places putting their granaries at the disposal of the poor for their feeding. But they have adopted in other ways an exceedingly grave and sparing manner of life; they wear very cheap clothes and live |174on the most frugal fare, practising a godly sobriety, living for the most part on their farms and avoiding cities, lest haply through the pleasures of the city they should become involved in some of the city life and fall from their purpose.

CHAPTER LXVII. -- MAGNA

[1] IN this city of Ancyra many other virgins, some 2000 or more, are eminent as women both of continence and distinction. Among them Magna takes a prominent place in religion, a most venerable woman; I do not know what to call her, virgin or widow. For having been forcibly linked with a husband by her mother, she wheedled him and put him off, so people say, and thus remained inviolate. [2] When he died a little later she gave herself wholly to God, attending in a serious spirit to her own houses, living a most ascetic and continent life, having her conversation such that the very bishops revered her for the excellence of her religion. While she provided for the needs, primary and secondary, of hospitals, the poor and bishops on tour, she ceased not to work in secret with her own hands and by means of her most faithful servants, and at nights she did not leave the church.

CHAPTER LXVIII. -- THE COMPASSIONATE MONK

[1] LIKEWISE in the city we found a monk who preferred not to be ordained to the priesthood, but had been led to the life after a short period of military service. He is spending his twentieth year in asceticism, |175in the following fashion. He lives with the bishop of the city, and is so humane and merciful that he goes his rounds even at nights, and has pity on those who are in need. [2] He neglects neither prison nor hospital, poor nor rich, but succours all, giving some advice about compassion, if without compassion; leading others onward; reconciling some and providing others with their bodily needs and clothing. And what generally happens in all great cities is found also in this one; for in the porch of the church a multitude of sick people laid on couches beg their daily food, some being married, others unmarried. [3] Well, it happened one day that the wife of a certain man was confined in the porch, at midnight in winter-time. So he heard her crying out in her pain, and abandoning his customary prayers went out and beheld her; finding no one he took the place of a midwife himself, not disdaining the unpleasantness of such occasions, compassion having made him not sensitive. [4] His clothes in appearance are not worth an obol, and his food runs a good race with his clothes. He cannot endure to lean over a writing-tablet since compassion drives him from his studies. If any of the brethren gives him a book, he immediately sells it, answering thus to those who scoff at him: "How can I persuade my Master that I have learned His art unless I sell Him Himself ³⁵⁷ in order to practise the art perfectly?"

CHAPTER LXIX. -- THE NUN WHO FELL

[1] A CERTAIN virgin ascetic living with two others practised asceticism for nine or ten years. Seduced by a minstrel she fell and conceived and bore a child. |176Having come to

hate her seducer intensely she was conscience-smitten to the depths of her soul, and reached such a degree of repentance that she completely lost heart and tried to starve herself to death. [2] And in her prayers she besought God, saying: "O great God, Who hearest the evils of every creature, and desirest neither the death nor destruction of those who stumble, if Thou wishest me to be saved, show me in this Thy marvels, and take away the fruit of my sin which I have borne, lest I employ a noose or fling myself over a precipice." ³⁵⁸ Praying in these terms she was heard, for her child died not long after. [3] So from that day she never again met the man who had led her captive, but giving herself to the severest fasting for thirty years she served the sick and maimed. She importuned God so, that it was revealed to one of the holy priests: "So-and-so has pleased me more in her penitence than in her virginity." I write this lest we should despise those who genuinely repent.

CHAPTER LXX. -- A READER UNJUSTLY ACCUSED

[1] A VIRGIN once fell, the daughter of a certain priest in Caesarea of Palestine, and was taught by her seducer to accuse a certain reader in that city. And when she was now with child, being cross-examined by her father she denounced the reader. The priest confidently referred the matter to the bishop, and the bishop called his clergy together and had the reader summoned. The case was investigated. The reader was questioned by the bishop but would not confess. For how could that be told which had not happened? [177][2] The bishop was angry and said to him sternly: "Do you not confess, you miserable and wretched man, full of uncleanness?" The reader answered: "I said the truth, that it is no concern of mine. For I am guiltless even of a thought about her. But if you wish to hear what is not true, then I have done it." When he said this, the bishop deposed the reader. Then he approached the bishop and besought him and said to him: "Well then, since I have fallen, bid her to be given me as wife. For neither am I a cleric any more nor is she a virgin." ³⁵⁹ [3] So he gave her over to the reader, expecting that the young man would live with her, and that besides his intercourse with her could not be interrupted. Now the young man having taken her both from the bishop and her father put her in a nunnery and exhorted the deaconness of the sisterhood there to support her until her confinement. So within a little while the days of her confinement were completed. The critical hour came----with groans, pangs, labours, visions of hell----and the babe was not delivered. [4] The first day passed, the second, third, seventh. The woman being in hell with the pain did not eat, drink, or sleep, but cried out, saying: "Woe is me, miserable woman that I am, I am in peril because I accused this reader falsely." The nuns go off and tell the father. The father, fearing to be condemned as a false accuser, keeps silence two more days. The young woman neither died nor was delivered. So when the nuns could no longer endure her cries they ran and told the bishop: "So-and-so has confessed in her cries days ago that she accused the reader falsely." Then he sends deacons to him and tells him: "Pray that she [178]who accused you falsely may be delivered." [5] But he gave them no answer nor opened his door, but from the day he entered his house he had been praying to God. The father went away again to the bishop; prayers were said in the church, and not even then did she bring forth. Then the bishop arose and went to the reader and knocking at the door went in to him and said to him: "Eustathius, arise, loose

what you have fastened." And immediately the reader knelt down with the bishop and the woman brought forth.

Now his pleading and the persistency of his prayer were strong enough both to reveal the false accusation and to chastise the false accuser; that we may learn to persevere in prayers and to know their power.

CHAPTER LXXI. -- THE BROTHER WHO IS WITH THE WRITER ³⁶⁰

[1] And now, when I have said a few words about the brother who has been with me from youth until this day, I will end my tale. I know that for a long time he has not eaten from desire nor fasted from desire. I consider that he has conquered desire of riches, the greatest part of vainglory. He is satisfied with what he has, he does not deck himself out with clothes, when despised he gives thanks, he runs risks for his close friends, he has engaged in contests with demons a thousand times and more; so that one day a demon tried to make an agreement with him and said: "Agree to sin just once, and whatever woman you mention to me in the world I will bring her to you." [2] And again on another occasion, after buffeting him for fourteen nights, as he told me, and dragging him by the feet |179 in the night he conversed with him audibly: "Cease worshipping Christ and I will not come near you." But he answered and said: "This is why I worship Him and will glorify Him infinitely and adore Him, because you are utterly distasteful to me when I am thus engaged." He has visited 106 cities and stayed in most of them, but by God's mercy he has had nothing to do with a woman, not even in a dream, except for this contest. [3] I know that he received from an angel on three occasions the food he needed. One day, being in the inner desert and having not even a crumb, he found three loaves in his sheepskin still warm. Another time he found wine and loaves. Yet another time I learned that some one said this to him: "You are fainting; go then and receive from these men food and oil." So he went to the man to whom this man had sent him and said: "Are you so-and-so?" And he said: "Yes; some one has ordered you to receive thirty bushels of corn and twelve pints of oil." On behalf "of such a one I will glory," ³⁶¹ whoever he was. I have known him often weep over men distressed by dire poverty, and he gave them all that he had except his flesh. I have known him also weep over one who had fallen into sin, and by his tears he led the fallen one to repentance. He once assured me on oath: "I prayed God that I might incite no man, especially the rich and wicked, to give me anything for my needs."

[5] But for me it is enough to have been counted worthy of mentioning all these things which I have committed to writing. For it was not without God that your thought was stirred up to enjoin the writing of this book and the committal to writing of the lives of these |180 saints. But you at least, most faithful servant of God, reading them with pleasure and accepting their lives and toils and so great endurance as a fitting demonstration of the resurrection, follow them eagerly, nourished with good hope, seeing the days in front of you to be shorter than those behind. [6] Pray for me, keeping yourself such as I knew you from the consulate of Tatian until this day and such as I found you when you had been chosen to be prefect of the most religious bedchamber. For a man whom such honour accompanied by riches and such power have not made incapable of

the fear of God, such a one reposes on that Christ Who was told by the devil: "All these things will I give Thee if Thou wilt fall down and worship me."³⁶² |181

[Footnotes renumbered and moved to the end]

1. ¹ Butler prints this Preface, but considers it spurious.
2. ² Butler marks the text here corrupt, but the meaning is clear.
3. ¹ This accords with the evidence of the book.
4. ¹ Literally, "engraved" (as on a statue).
5. ² Or, "situation of the monastery" (to_n to&pon th~j monh~j).
6. ¹ A genuine letter sent by Palladius with his book. Lausus was *praepositus* (i.e. *sacri cubiculi*) at the court of Theodosius II. Cf. J. S. Reid in *Cambridge Mediaeval History*, Vol. I, ch. 2. (This officer) "grew in importance, as measured by dignity and precedence, until in the time of Theodosius the Great it was one of four high offices which conferred on their holders membership of the Imperial Council. . . . Some duties fell to him which are hardly suggested by his title. He was in control of the emperor's select and intimate bodyguard, which bore the name of *silentiarii*, thirty in number, with three *decuriones* for officers. Curiously, he superintended one division of the vast imperial domains, that considerable portion of them which lay within the province of Cappadocia."
7. ² Alternative reading, printed by Butler in the text, but rejected in a supplementary note: "from which they will get no benefit."
8. ¹ Mt. xi. 29.
9. ² Modelled on the Prologue of St. Luke's Gospel.
10. ¹ Lk. i. 3. The long and involved sentence of the original has been retained in order to make the allusion plain.
11. ² Honorific titles of this kind were very common in the Eastern Empire, from which they have descended to the Eastern Church of to-day.
12. ³ From this point the long and involved sentence of the original ----39 lines in Butler's text before a full stop occurs----has been broken up.
13. ⁴ *I.e.* 419-420.
14. ⁵ See Ch. XXXII.

15. ¹ Phil. i. 23.

16. ² Prov. xxiv. 27.

17. ³ Prov. xxxi. 8.

18. ⁴ Ecclus. viii. 9.

19. ⁵ A paraphrase. The Greek is: ou) perie/rgw| xrhsa&menoj logismw~|, "having not used elaborate calculations " (on the contrary, throwing prudence to the winds and undertaking long and arduous journeys). But perhaps it means: "not out of idle curiosity."

20. ⁶ The Roman Empire. But to Palladius this would mean the Eastern Empire, so that "Greeks" would represent his meaning. It actually occurs in the Syriac, see Wallis Budge, I. 83. The Turkish Empire to-day, heir of the (Eastern) Roman Empire, is called Rum.

21. ¹ Literally "inscribing on a pillar."

22. ² Gal. i. 18.

23. ³ Mt. xviii. 24.

24. ⁴ i0diopragmosu&nh|.

25. ⁵ The Stoic virtue of a)pa&qeia naturally became an ideal for the philosophers of the desert, though Palladius of course interpreted it in a Christian sense. See Butler I. 176. A satisfactory English equivalent is difficult to find. Butler renders by "impassivity"; perhaps "detachment" would be better.

26. ⁶ The play on words----filopragmosu&naj, polupragmosu&nai, kakopragmosu&nai, kalopragmosu&nai, i0diopragmosu&nhj ----can hardly be represented in English.

27. ¹ St. Basil (c. 365) contemplates permanent vows, but they were evidently not generally accepted when Palladius wrote. See Clarke, *St. Basil the Great*, pp. 107 f., for a full discussion.

28. ² Since Bp. Paget's famous essay "On Accidie" in *The Spirit of Discipline* the word, which is as old as Chaucer, has been rehabilitated in English. It signifies a state of spiritual torpor and gloom. It was a special temptation of the monks and of all who had or still have few outward distractions and are thrown largely on their own mental resources.

29. ³ I Tim. i. 9.

30. ⁴ See Butler's note *ad loc.* which incorporates a communication from Dr. Henry Jackson, who concludes that "Pythagoras and Diogenes were total abstainers, but Plato a moderate drinker."

31. ¹ Mk. ii. 18.

32. ² Mt. ix. 11 (Lk. v. 30).

33. ³ Mt. xxi. 32 and xi. 18, 19.

34. ⁴ Rom. xiv. 23.

35. ¹ Mt. vii. 16.

36. ² Gal. v. 22.

37. ³ 1 Cor. ix. 25.

38. ¹ The holy men are the window, through which the light shines. As you stand near a window to read a book with small type, so Lausus by frequenting the company of the saints will see clearly into his own life. But the text is doubtful.

39. ² Ecclus. xix. 30.

40. ¹ Palladius mentions three monks named Isidore. Besides this one, there is the priest of Scete (XIX) and the bishop of Hermopolis Parva (XLVI). See Butler's note; and *D. C. B. for* other persons of the same name. See also note on X. 2. (For this Isidore cf. Soz. VI. 9, Soz. VIII. 2, 12 f.).

41. ² *I. e.* 388. But see Duchesne, *Histoire ancienne de l'Eglise*, II. 610.

42. ³ The phrase is taken from Heb. xi. 32.

43. ¹ The visit with Athanasius would be in 340; for the difficulties of the other visit see Butler II. 185.

44. ² The Dorotheus story is made into a separate chapter for the convenience of readers, but there is no break in the original.

45. ³ See Soz. VI. 29 for the same story. Another Dorotheus is mentioned in chap. XXX

46. ¹ h]n ga&r au) tou~ h(di/aita au)xmw&dhj kai\ chrota&th.

47. ² Omitting le/gontej, as suggested by Turner.

48. ¹ He had made the sign of the cross over his food and drink, according to custom.

49. ² Eusebius describes the death of Potamiaena in the persecution of Severus, 202-3 (*H. E.* VI. 5). She comes at the end of a list of martyrs of the school of Origen. Evidently

both accounts have the same person in view, and Palladius or his authority must have been mistaken as to the date.

50. ³ tou_j kairou&j (*i. e.* "the state of affairs," "government"). An alternative reading, tou_j Qeou&j, is clearly a later emendation.

51. ¹ According to Jerome (*de vir. illust.* 109) Didymus was an all-round scholar of great ability. Among his books were many commentaries and a treatise on the Holy Spirit which Jerome translated into Latin. Cf. Socr. IV. 25, Soz. III. 15, Theod. *H.E.* IV. 26.

52. ² a!cioi th~j gh~j tw~n prae/wn. The reference is to Mt. v. 5, maka&rioi oi(praei=j o#ti au)toi\ klhronomh&sousi th_n gh~n.

53. ¹ He learned to read with his fingers from raised type, according to Sozomen.

54. ² Ps. cxlv. (cxlvi.) 8, LXX version.

55. ³ Soz. VI. 2 also has this story. See Theod. III. 24 for a similar story.

56. ¹ sxhmati/sasa. Lucot sees here a reference to the monastic habit (sxh~ma). Later there were two habits, the Little and Great or Angelic. It would be appropriate for Alexandra to assume the latter on her deathbed, as is frequently done to-day on Mount Athos. However, the distinction between the two habits is not found before Theodore of Studium (8th century), unless John the Faster's (6th cent.) reference is to the same thing. See Clarke, *St. Basil the Great*, pp. 135, 138 and N. F. Robinson, *Monasticism in the Orthodox Churches*, p. 52.

57. ² Palladius here slips into *oratio recta*.

58. ³ See XLVI. and LIV. *Melania* is adopted in this edition as the best-known form, but there is good evidence for the diminutive *Melanium* (cf. Eustochium); see Butler II. 222 and Turner.

59. ⁴ Here almost = "boredom."

60. ¹ The text is doubtful here.

61. ² 1 Cor. vi. 9.

62. ¹ Or, as we might say, "not taking his soul seriously." The rendering given is not English, but is retained in order to keep the reference to the psalm quoted below.

63. ² Ps. xxiii. (xxiv.), 3, 4.

64.³ Mentioned also in Cassian, *Coll.* XIV. 4, as presiding over the guest-house at Alexandria; not to be identified with the other Macarii of his book, see XV., XVII., XVIII, XXI. and a careful note (no. 26) in Butler.

65.⁴ u(a&kinqoi

66.¹ Reitzenstein, *Hellenistische Wundererzählungen*, p. 77, derives the above story from the second episode of the Acts of Thomas, in which the apostle receives money from the king with which to build him a palace, spends it on the poor, and so builds him a palace in heaven. The motive is similar in the two stories, but it is simpler to suppose that such stories were known to Macarius and prompted his action.

67.¹ The Wady Natron is some sixty miles south of Alexandria. The actual Mount Nitria overlooked the valley. On Nitria see Butler I. 270-275, II. 187-190, and Duchesne, *Histoire Ancienne de l'Église*, II. 492 f. Cf. *Hist. Mon.* XXIII.

68.² The Mareotic Lake. Palladius exaggerates its size greatly.

69.³ See XLVI. 2; Soz. III. 14, VI. 30.

70.⁴ See XXI. 1, XXII. 1, XLVII. 1.

71.⁵ See XLVI. 2, and *D.C.B.* for the various monks of this name.

72.¹ Lit, "in which." The church may have been built round the trees; instances of this are not unknown.

73.² A reading, rejected by Butler, defines this as the sixth hour.

74.³ The Office was recited separately in each settlement of monks. Palladius has said above that the settlement might consist of one monk, two monks, or a number.

75.⁴ For the observance of Saturday see Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, pp. 230 f.

76.⁵ dika&zei, apparently = hear confessions. "Is this a survival of some primitive practice?" (Butler II. 263).

77.¹ See next chapter. For modern parallels to Antony's vision cf. Gurney, *Phantasms of the Living*.

78.² See Ch. XXXII.

79.³ *I. e.* superior.

80.⁴ Not to be confused with Ammonius, one of the four Tall Brethren, who is mentioned in Ch. XI. For this Amoun cf. Athanasius, *Vit. Ant.* 60, *Hist. Mon.* XXIX., *Socr.* IV. 23, *Soz.* I. 14.

81.⁵ For the crown at weddings see Cant. iii. 11, Isa. lxi. 10, Ezek. xvi. 12. Tertullian objects to it as a heathen practice, *de Cor.* 13. Crowning forms an important feature of the marriage ceremonial in the Eastern Church to-day. Cf. Bliss, *The Religions of Modern Syria and Palestine*, p. 148: "The priest then takes a wreath of flowers, called 'the crown,' and touches the man's head, saying the words: 'The servant of God, M., is crowned for the servant of God, N., in the name, etc.' Then touching the woman's head with the same crown, he says the words a second time; finally, the crown is placed on the man's head while the formula is said for the third time. Then follows the crowning of the woman 'for the man' in a precisely similar way. Then the priest, stretching out his crossed arms towards the heads of the pair, announces the blessing of the crowns three times: 'May the Lord our God crown them with glory and honour.' "

82.¹ Reading koimh&santaj. Butler gives this in the text, but iii his supplementary note prefers koimh&santej.

83.² e0k prosw&pou, "from the person of."

84.¹ du&o qo&louj kelli/wn. The qo&loj was a rounded and vaulted chamber. Cf. the bee-hive cells of the Celtic monks.

85.² *Vit. Ant.* 60.

86.³ h(a!nqrwpoj tou~ qeou~, "female man of God." For Melania see Ch. XLVI.

87.¹ See *Soz.* VIII. 12 for their history.

88.² "Doubtless " the bishop of Hermopolis mentioned in XLVI. (Lucot), Butler, II. 185, finds it impossible to decide who this Isidore is.

89.¹ Mk. xii. 42, Lk. xxi. 2.

90.² 2 Thess. iii. 8.

91.¹ See Ch. XXXIX.

92.² "His three brothers and." These words are omitted in some MSS., probably owing to anti-Origenistic feeling.

93.³ Bishop of Alexandria, 381-5. See *Socr.* IV. 23 for another version of the story. Cf. *Soz.* VI. 30.

94.¹ Lev. xxi. 17f.

95. ² This paragraph is not in the best MSS. The text is reconstructed by Butler.
96. ¹ Cf. Soz. VI. 29.
97. ² For holy oil cf. XVIII. 11, 22.
98. ³ See X. 1.
99. ⁴ See Ch. XXXVIII.
100. ¹ Papias in his fourth book told a similar story of Judas Iscariot. See Lightfoot-Harmer, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 523.
101. ² *alshksin grafikh&n*. Writing was already recognized as an ascetic exercise.
102. ³ Spanodro&moj, i.e. he took his goods to Spain.
103. ¹ Reading *kat' a'llou* with Turner.
104. ² The Syriac version (Budge) gives the sense accurately; "One man made manifest the works of Abraham by his hospitality, and the other the self-denial of Elijah."
105. ¹ Luke xviii. 22; cf. ix. 23, xiv. 27.
106. ² Nothing else is known about him, though Soz. VI. 29 seems to confuse him with Macarius of Alexandria: see Ch. XVIII.
107. ³ See Ch. VII.
108. ¹ Cf. Sulpitius Severus, *Dial.* III. 8, where St. Martin blows away a demon that is sitting behind the back of Avitianus. "Exsufflans," says the author, apologizing for the use of a word which is hardly Latin.
109. ¹ *akhdia~n* ("to feel *accidie*").
110. ¹ Lit. the sabbath. Cf. Socr. V. 22: "For although almost all churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the sabbath of every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, have ceased to do this. The Egyptians in the neighbourhood of Alexandria, and the inhabitants of Thebais, hold their religious assemblies on the sabbath, but do not partake of the mysteries in the manner usual among Christians in general: for having eaten and satisfied themselves with food of all kinds, in the evening making their offerings they partake of the mysteries." Cf. Soz. VII. 19. The evidence of these historians leads us to the conclusion that an agape combined with the Eucharist is intended in the present passage. For a recent discussion see art. "Agape" in *E. R. E.*, by Bp. Maclean, who quotes the Acts of Pionius († 250 A.D.) for a Saturday agape.

The remarkable phrase in the text, "this brother's agape," seems to point to one brother being responsible for providing the food at the agape.

111. ² *I.e.* of mercy; cf. Lk. xiii. 15, xiv. 5.

112. ¹ Lived 300-390. The Homilies and Epistles attributed to Macarius are apparently his work. Cf. *Hist. Mon.* XXVIII., Soz. III. 14.

113. ² Ps. v. 6 (7).

114. ³ *I.e.* a Greek.

115. ¹ Ps. xc. (xci.) 10.

116. ² 2 Kings v. 27.

117. ³ e0leuqe/raj gunaiko&j, *a free woman*, or, perhaps better, a woman of good position.

118. ¹ presbute/rouj. Possibly = elders, in a secular sense, as Budge interprets the Syriac. On much of the land of Egypt the cultivators formed a corporation, separate for each village, which was responsible to the Government. presbut&teroi were at their head, and they had a secretary, grammateu&j. See Mitteis-Wilcken, *Grundzüge und Chrestomathie der Papyruskunde*, I. 1. 275 f.

119. ² Holy water; cf. holy oil in XII. 1, XVIII. 11, 22.

120. ¹ kiliki/sion u#datoj. Butler marks the word as of uncertain meaning.

121. ¹ See *Hist. Mon.* XXX., Soz. III. 14.

122. ² Palladius went to Cellia in 390 or 391: Butler, II. 245.

123. ³ "Only one pound of bread each day" (Syriac).

124. ⁴ boukkella~ton, a hard biscuit used by soldiers.

125. ⁵ The text is doubtful, but this is clearly the meaning.

126. ¹ "The narrow opening of the jar *took toll of* the handful of bread that had come up so far " (Turner).

127. ² For the legendary history of these magicians see the commentaries on 2 Tim. iii. 8 and Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, II. iii. 150.

128. ¹ Possibly an allusion to Mt. xi. 7, "a reed shaken with the wind."

129. ¹ Read w(j e0p' o)nei/rwn in place of w(j e)pi\ i(ere/wn of Butler's text.

130. ² Cf. XII. 1, XVIII. 22.

131. ¹ Butler concludes that Macarius was aged 40-45 at the time, so that he could not be termed old.

132. ² The first or head monastery where Pachomius lived was now Pabau, not Tabennisi. In XXXII. 8, Palladius makes the number 1300.

133. ¹ Lit. "him."

134. ² Note that Macarius, though not a bishop, makes absolution, administered by imposition of hands, and in this case conferring bodily as well as spiritual renewal, conditional on the sinful priest ceasing to exercise his priestly functions.

135. ¹ Reading e0rusipe/latoj, as suggested by Butler. The pa~j p(usipe/lantoj of the text is evidently corrupt.

136. ² The meaning is uncertain. Sophocles in his *Lexicon* suggests = kosmh&thj, in the sense of a *sweeper* of a monastery.

137. ¹ Cf. Soz. VI. 29.

138. ² Cf. Mt. xvii. 17.

139. ³ Cf. Lk. xviii. 43.

140. ⁴ Cf. the story of St. Francis and the wolf of Gubbio.

141. ¹ Spitting was probably as common in Mediterranean lands as it is now, and to refrain from it seems to have been a mark of asceticism.

142. ² The monks guard the walls, the rest of the Church carry on their avocations in the city. Cf. *Hist. Mon.* prol. 10. "There is no village or city in Egypt and the Thebaid, which is not surrounded by monasteries as if by walls, and the inhabitants are supported by their prayers as if resting on God."

143. ³ Cf. Soz. VI. 29. Butler, II. 197, distinguishes between the various monks of this name. Moses the Robber is the Moses whose sayings are recorded in the *Apophthegmata*,

144. ¹ Butler says: "I am unable to illustrate or explain this curious piece of demonology." But perhaps it is only an unusual way of referring to the rest of the band, in whom the demon was, as it were, incarnate.

145. ¹ This Isidore is omitted in *D. C. B.* See I. 1, X. 2, XLVI. 2, and Butler, II. 185.

146. ² Cf. 1 Cor. vii. 9.

147. ¹ See Butler, II. 177. This Paul is identified in one MS. with Paul the Simple of Ch. XXII. Cf. Soz. VI. 29.

148. ² The fold in his garment made by the girdle.

149. ³ The earliest example of the practice now known as the Rosary.

150. ⁴ See Ch. XVIII. He was so called "because he was a citizen and was of Alexandrian origin," Soz. III. 14. That *politiko&j* = Alexandrian is striking testimony to the position of Alexandria in relation to the rest of Egypt.

151. ⁵ In his note on this passage (II. 198) Butler collects the evidence for the observance of Saturday and Sunday in Egypt. He concludes that there was "a practical co-ordination of the Saturday and Sunday."

152. ¹ Cf. Athanasius, *Vit. Ant. 12*, where Antony goes to the mountain, 49 and 50, where he withdraws to a high mountain, three days and three nights away, and 91: "but he . . . having bidden farewell to the monks in the outer mountain, entered the inner mountain, where he was accustomed to abide." The outer mountain, at Pispir near the Nile, is here meant.

153. ² Just south of Cairo; cf. I Peter v. 13, which conceivably refers to the Egyptian Babylon.

154. ³ *I.e.* Heracleopolis.

155. ¹ *sxolastiko&j*. The word is also used in the specialized sense of 'advocate.'

156. ² *e0k tw~n e0gkukli/wn paideuma&tw*n, the general education of the Greek before he specialized on professional studies.

157. ³ Reading *pro_j sumpa&qeian* with one MS. Butler's text, *pro_j somfora&n* (*tw~n e0ntugxano&ntwn*) is difficult.

158. ⁴ The phrasing is reminiscent of Lk. x. 34.

159. ¹ *sxa&sta*. Butler marks as corrupt or of uncertain meaning; Lucot renders "assassin."

160. ¹ Butler prefers this to "thirtieth," the other reading, since Greek custom, ancient and modern, is to celebrate the departed on the fortieth day. Cf. XXXIII. 4.

161. ¹ It looks as if this vision was suggested by some picture with which Antony was familiar. Dr. Wallis Budge writes to me as follows: "The symbolism is certainly

Egyptian. The god referred to is probably that which we see in the vignettes of the seventeenth chapter of the Book of the Dead standing with his body raised to heaven by the side of the Lake of Maat, wherein souls were tested. The Copts made it the Lake of damned souls. In that Michael used to dip a wing, and all the souls who could cling to it escaped hell. The hawk is the usual bird symbol for the soul." Cf. 3 Baruch x. 1 f. "And when I had learned all these things from the Archangel, he took and led me into a fourth heaven. And I saw a monotonous plain, and in the middle of it a pool of water. And there were in it multitudes of birds of all kinds, but not like those here on earth. . . . The plain ... is the place where the souls of the righteous come;" also *Sanhedrin* 92b. "And the soul may say: The body has sinned; for since I am separated from it I fly in the air like a bird."

162. ² Cf. *Hist. Mon.* XXXI, Soz. I. 13. Reitzenstein, *Hellenistische Wundererzählungen*, pp. 59-61, discusses this story. Paul the Simple is to be distinguished from Paul the Hermit, whose life Jerome wrote, and who was, according to Jer., *Ep.* 22, the originator of the monastic life.

163. ¹ e0c a)grou~. Cf. Mk. xv. 21, Simon the Cyrenian coming a)p' a)grou~.

164. ² Greek, au)tou&j.

165. ³ mona&j. Cf. the meaning sometimes given to monai/ in Jn. xiv. 2, "In My Father's house are many stopping-places (on the road to perfection)."

166. ¹ o)rgui/aj dekapē/nte.

167. ² tau&thn e0pagaw_n th_n sh~yin, lit. "having brought this nausea on him." So Butler, who however is not certain of the meaning.

168. ³ Lit. "wrinkled," dia_to_e)rrutidw~sqai.

169. ¹ Dan. iii.

170. ¹ Prov. xii. 17 (LXX).

171. ² Cf. Soz. VI. 29.

172. ¹ Ps. ciii. (civ.) 20.

173. ² The rest of the sentence is: kai\ e0pi\ tosou~to&n me keki/nhken w(j omi/sai me suggene/sqai au)th~|.

174. ³ toi~j gennhtikoi=j mori/oij.

175. ⁴ toi~j mori/oij.

176. ¹ Cf. Soz. VI. 29.

177. ² The country between Egypt and Cyrenaica.
178. ¹ Stephen assumes purgatorial pains even for the righteous.
179. ¹ eu)logi/a is used specially of *pain bénit*, and in a wider sense of religious gifts, such as a monk gives or receives.
180. ² This proverb, which goes back to Hippocrates, is quoted by several Fathers,
181. ¹ Eccl. vii. 16, 7 (LXX).
182. ² Cf. Cassian, *Coll.* II. 5, where a monk called Heron is mentioned. It is not certain that they are to be identified.
183. ³ Mt. xxiii. 9.
184. ⁴ *I. e.*, probably, from Cellia.
185. ¹ Ps. cxviii. (cxix.).
186. ² "The Ladder."
187. ³ kiliki/sia. See XVII. 11.
188. ¹ Cf. XVII. 9, where a five weeks' absence is enough to call down punishment.
189. ² The translation is approximate only; the text is quite uncertain.
190. ³ mhdeni\ mhde\n o(milou~nta.
191. ⁴ Prov. xi. 14 (LXX).
192. ⁵ Kata_ skhnh_n a)nqrwpi/nhn, lit. on a human theatre or stage.
193. ⁶ *I. e.* guardian angel.
194. ¹ "We cannot be certain whether the Athribé here mentioned was Athribis in the Delta, or Atripé, also called Athribis, near Panopolis. But in all probability it was the latter. Atripé was on the west bank of the Nile nearly opposite to Panopolis (Akhmim), at 26° 30' N. Latitude. Here was Schenoudi's great White Monastery, the ruins of which are still standing. Schenoudi established also a convent of nuns at Atripé, and the story in the text may possibly refer to this convent" (Butler).
195. ¹ mi/an para_ mi/an. So Turner, who rejects Butler's rendering "once a day."

196. ² See Mitteis-Wilcken, *Grundzüge und Chrestomathie der Papyruskunde*, I. i. 273, for the different categories of land, which was classified according as it got an excessive, normal, or deficient supply of flood water.

197. ³ presbute/rouj. See note on XVII. 6. It can hardly mean priests here, though Lucot so translates.

198. ¹ Near Denderah on the Nile. See Introduction, p. 23, and Ladeuze, *Etude sur le Cénobitisme pachomien, passim*. The error that Tabennisi was an island goes back to some MSS. of Sozomen, III. 14, which have Tabe/nnh nh~soj.

199. ² He was with Palaemon at the time.

200. ³ Ladeuze considers the Greek *Vita Pachomii* the source of the other versions, and the Rule in its various recensions to be inferior in authority to the *Lives*. The angel here seems to him legendary, since he is not mentioned in the *Lives* (p. 257). But cf. Gennadius, *de vir. illus.*, 7.

201. ¹ It is clear from the *Lives* that the brethren lived in houses, within which each had a separate cell: Ladeuze, p. 263 f.

202. ² Pachomius himself observed neither the sleeping nor clothing regulations as given here, Ladeuze, p. 264. See Cassian, *Inst.* Book I. for the dress of the Egyptian monks.

203. ³ The lebitw&n was a sleeveless garment, akin to or identical with the kol&bion.

204. ⁴ mhlwth_n ai0gei/an ei0rgasme/nhn.

205. ⁵ koukou&lion. "Un très court mantelet " (Ladeuze). A hood was attached, for it was used to cover the head at meals: see below.

206. ⁶ ta&gmata.

207. ⁷ Ladeuze, *pp.* 264 ff., throws doubt on this classification. It is derived from the Greek alphabet, of which Pachomius was probably ignorant. There is no trace of it in Jerome's Latin version of the Rules. Jerome indeed tells of a special alphabet used by Pachomius in his correspondence with the superiors of the monasteries; but these signs stood for other things besides the classes of monks. "Peut-être est-ce trompé par une mauvaise interprétation de ces lettres de Pakhôme et des supérieurs de ses couvents, que Pallade, superficiellement renseigné d'ailleurs sur les moines de Tabennisi, a inventé la règle que nous avons examinée."

Butler is not convinced by Ladeuze's depreciation of Palladius' version of the Rules (II. 206), and in the *Cambridge Medieval History*, I. 524 (1911), speaks of it as "probably the most authentic epitome."

208. ¹ To exclude professional wanderers, *gyrovagi*.

In the *Lives* Pachomius receives visitors from other forms of monasticism freely, Ladeuze, p. 264.

209. ² No trace of this in the *Lives* or Jerome: Ladeuze, p. 281.

210. ³ See Butler, II., p. 207 f., for a discussion of these prayers. Palladius' version conflicts with Cassian's.

211. ¹ Cf. the Benedictine Rule, which was intended only to be "a little rule for beginners," *minima inchoationis regula*.

212. ² Cassian, *Inst.*, IV. I, says more than 5000; Jerome, in prologue to the Latin version of the Rule, 50,000.

213. ³ Cf. XVIII. 13, where the number is given as 1400. The monastery where Pachomius dwelt was Pabau, not Tabennisi; Palladius is in error.

214. ⁴ The passages in square brackets are apparently genuine, though omitted in some MSS.

215. ¹ George Herbert's Country Parson keeps pigs for the same reason (*Priest to the Temple*, Ch. X.).

216. ² In point of fact, says Ladeuze (p. 298 f.), they ate together twice a day at the same time.

217. ³ There were three Tabennesiot nunneries; Butler is inclined to identify this one with Tismenae, where there was a monastery of Pachomian monks, mentioned in the *Vita Pachomii*.

218. ¹ Pachomius wrote out the rules and sent them to his sister in the nunnery. At the head of the nunneries Pachomius, and later Theodore, placed an aged and discreet monk to instruct the women and explain the Scripture to them. He was aided by other monks for the services, etc. Ladeuze, p. 303. Cf. Gennadius, *de vir. illus.* 7: Pachomius scripsit regulam utriusque generi monachorum aptam.

219. ² See Clarke, *St. Basil the Great*, pp. 104 f., for a similar arrangement in Cappadocia and Pontus.

220. ³ So no one else was available.

221. ⁴ They would make the men's clothes, as in the Basilian double monasteries: see Clarke, *op. cit.* p. 105.

222. ¹ Cf. XXI. 15.

223. ² I Cor. iii. 18.

224. ³ On the shores of the Red Sea. Piteroum may perhaps be identical with Pityrion the disciple of Antony, mentioned in *Hist. Mon.* XVII.

225. ¹ Reitzenstein, *Hell. Wundererz.*, p. 77, says this story is ascribed to Sarapion in the Syriac *Life of Sarapion*. See XXXVII. 5, which speaks of the continual wanderings of Sarapion.

226. ² The senior monks who were responsible for the discipline of the nuns.

227. ³ salo&j. "As a title it was bestowed upon certain holy men who feigned idiocy for Christ's sake, the most distinguished of whom was *Simeon the Fool*" (Sophocles).

228. ⁴ a)mma~j, the feminine equivalent of a)bba~j.

229. ¹. Otherwise called St. John of Egypt. Cf. *Hist. Mon.* I.; Cassian, *Inst.* IV. 23-26; *Coll.* I. 21, XXIV. 26. Lycopolis is the modern Asyut,

230. ¹ Cf. a characteristic passage in Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, Ch. XXVII.: "Before he formed any decisive resolution, the pious emperor was anxious to discover the will of heaven; and as the progress of Christianity had silenced the oracles of Delphi and Dodona, he consulted an Egyptian monk, who possessed, in the opinion of the age, the gift of miracles and the knowledge of futurity . . . The accomplishment of the prediction was forwarded by all the means that human prudence could supply."

231. ² Or "consoling."

232. ¹ Butler suggests that Palladius knew Coptic, but not Sahidic, the dialect of Upper Egypt.

233. ² The h(ge/mwn of the Thebaid, according to Diocletian's arrangements, was responsible to the elparxoj of Alexandria, the civil head of the country. See Mitteis-Wilcken, I. i. 73.

234. ³ See Butler, I. 296.

235. ⁴ Lk. v. 31.

236. ¹ Lk. ix. 12.

237. ¹ th~j u(pe\r e0me\ xeirotoni/aj. Or perhaps only = "laying of hands upon me."

238. ² Chrysostom.

239. ¹ Half-way between Memphis and Alexandria.

240. ² *I. e.* the traditional site of the appearance of the angels to the shepherds.

241. ¹ Palladius' unfavourable opinion of Jerome was reciprocated: see Butler, I. 173 f., and II. 213.

242. ¹ Perhaps the most interesting of all Palladius' tales. See Butler, II. 214 f. Abbé Nau has shown that Sarapion, not Paphnutius, converted the famous courtesan Thais. Now the tombs of Sarapion and Thais have been discovered side by side at Antinoë: see *Archaeological Report* (1900-1901) of the Egypt Exploration Fund, p. 77. The bodies lie in the Musée Guimet at Paris and are probably those of the famous couple.

Reitzenstein, *Hell. Wundererz.*, pp. 64 f., says that the whole story is impossible in its present connexion. An exaggerated modesty characterizes the Egyptian monks, and this is an old Cynic tale put into a Christian setting. Possibly he is right, but he does not seem to allow sufficiently for the fact that "extremes meet." Butler's words are worth quoting: "I had looked upon Palladius' account of Sarapion's life and travels as extravagant and impossible, until a little time ago I met a Hindu Renunciant, a well-educated high-caste Brahmin, who on a religious mission travelled from India to Europe clad in what may be described as pyjamas and a brown dressing gown, with shoes and skull-cap, carrying no money nor anything besides the clothes he wore and an umbrella: he arrived in London with no money, no luggage, no friends, no introductions; yet he managed to effect the purpose of his journey, and said he had no doubt he would get back to India somehow. What Palladius tells of Sarapion's adventures is hardly more wonderful than this."

243. ² labw&n tina sumpai/kthn a)skhth&n. Reitzenstein finds this suspicious and a sign that the story has been borrowed from an older collection. This female companion incomprehensibly disappears; she is out of place here, but would be quite in place as a *subintroducta* of an earlier century. Krottenthaler echoes Reitzenstein. It is sufficient to remark that sumpai/ktria and a)skh&tria are the feminine forms.

244. ¹ Cf. XXXIV. 4.

245. ¹ Reading su&mmaxon with a number of MSS. sunh&goton of Butler's text is difficult to translate.

246. ² tribwnofo&roi te kai\ birrofo&roi. Syriac, "the free men and the soldiers." The bi/rroj was a coarse outer garment. Lucot (on LXIII. 2) quotes Herwerden, who translates it *sagum*, a garment worn by servants, also by soldiers; and the *lex vestiaria* of the Code of Theodosius (382) which allowed slaves to wear only the *birrus* and *cucullus*.

247. ¹ To keep as a sacred relic.

248. ² Reading tina tw~n prw&twn with Turner.

249. ³ *I. e.* seasickness.

250. ¹ For a sketch of a virgin living a similar life at Rome, see Jerome's account of Asella in *Ep.* 24.

251. ² Cf. Gal. vi. 14.

252. ¹ Cf. Gal. i. 10.

253. ² So far from this being an incredible demand, it was frequently done by both sexes in the early days of the Quaker movement.

254. ³ There is MS. authority, including the Syriac *Vit. Sarap.*, for "in the desert."

255. ⁴ For Evagrius see Socr. IV. 23; Soz. VI. 30; Gennadius, *de vir. illust.* ii; Butler, I. 86 f., 101 f., 131 f., II. 216 f.; Zöckler, *Evagrius Ponticus*; Bardenhewer, *Patrologie* (1910), 222 f. Of his voluminous works only fragments remain in Greek and Latin, having been suppressed for their Origenistic tendency. For the same reason the present chapter is omitted in some MSS. of Palladius. There is a considerable amount of material in Syriac and Armenian for the future critical editor of Evagrius.

256. ¹ Wisd. iv. 13.

257. ² Basil's Pontic monastery was in the diocese of Iborra: Greg. Nyss. *In XL. Mart.* (*P. G.* XLVI. 784).

258. ³ The normal sphere of a bishop's jurisdiction was a city with its dependent lands. In districts like Cappadocia, which had never been thoroughly Hellenized, cities were rare and *xwrepi/skopoi* (country-bishops) were accordingly appointed for the sake of practical convenience. See Turner in *Cambridge Medieval History*, I. 146.

259. ⁴ Not Gregory of Nyssa, as Palladius seemed to say, in contradiction of Soz. VI. 30, before the true text was established.

260. ⁵ A.D. 381.

261. ¹ *ei0dw&lw| peripagh~nai gunaikikh~j e0piqumi/aj.* The rendering given hardly makes sense. Can *peripagh~nai* mean "was beset," "fixed all round"?

262. ² *To_ e0pixairesi/kakon.* Exactly the German *Schadenfreude*,

263. ¹ *I. e.* the gospel on which the oath was made.

264. ² That is, from the clerical to the lay. But the text is difficult and probably corrupt.

265. ¹ komi/atoj zwh~j. So Turner, who quotes *Acta S. Perpetuae*: an passio sit commeatus.

266. ² *I. e.* clerical or monastic clothes.

267. ³ Turner thinks that the MSS. discovered at Oxyrhyncus do not betray any characteristic style; so this must refer to some sort of handwriting reserved for MSS. *de luxe*.

268. ⁴ The *Antirrhetica*, or "Answers," were in eight books. Turner, following the Coptic and later versions, considers the three books referred to in the text to have been (a) the Priest, (b) the Monk, (c) Answers. But see Butler, II. 218.

269. ¹ Palladius was present at his death, at Cellia in 399 or 400. There are variants, but h(mi=n is reasonably well attested.

270. ² This last sentence is quoted by Socrates (IV. 23) from Evagrius' work, *The Monk*.

271. ¹ Cf. X. 8, Soz. VI. 29.

272. ² See Butler, II. 197.

273. ¹ Who are frequently recorded in Genesis as digging wells.

274. ² See Soz. III. 16, and *D.C.B.*

275. ¹ Passages enclosed in square brackets are translations of Butler's Greek text, which is here a critical reconstruction.

276. ² Cf. XXXVI. 6.

277. ³ *Comes* was a word of wide meaning. "Constantine . . . used it as a honorific designation for officers of many kinds, who were not necessarily in the immediate neighbourhood of an Augustus or Caesar, but were servants of the Augustus or Augusti and Caesars generally, that is to say might occupy any place in the whole imperial administration."----Reid in *Camb. Med. Hist.* Vol. I. ch. 2.

278. ⁴ *I. e.* riches; cf. Mt. xix. 24.

279. ¹ Cf. LIV. 4.

280. ² See Soz. III. 14. Ephraim Syrus' *Life of Julian* is extant in Greek.

281. ¹ *I. e.*, as in the Syriac, "until the third hour."

282. ¹ Probably to be identified with Pope Innocent I. He is mentioned in Basil, *Epp.* 258, 259, and Athanasius' letter to Palladius (*P. G.* XXVI. 1167). But the Palladius mentioned by Athanasius and Basil is not the author of the *Lausiaca History*. (Butler, II. 219 f.)

283. ¹ *I. e.* Bethany, as in the *Pilgrimage of Etheria*.

284. ² See XLI. 2.

285. ¹ th~j tetra&doj tou~ gra&fein.

286. ¹ See also LIV. Besides Palladius, Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 29, is our chief informant about Melania.

287. ² But see Rufinus, *Apol.* II. 26: "She was the *granddaughter* of the consul Marcellinus." See also Paulinus.

288. ³ au)goustali/ou, the *praefectus Augustalis*.

289. ¹ karaka&llion, Latin *caracalla*, a long tunic or great-coat made with a hood (Lewis and Short).

290. ² kapni/zein. (Butler marks this word as corrupt or of uncertain meaning.)

291. ³ kaqa&per i9e/raki tw~| tu&fw| kexrh~sqai.

292. ⁴ Palladius takes Rufinus' part unhesitatingly in the famous quarrel between him and Jerome.

293. ⁵ The long-continued Antiochian schism; unless the theory of Tillemont is right, according to which Paulinus should be Paulinianus, Jerome's brother, who was forcibly ordained by Epiphanius in 394 in defiance of the diocesan, John of Jerusalem.

294. ¹ It is uncertain whether this Chronius is to be identified with the Chronius of VII. and XXI.

295. ² See Butler, II. 224 f. for the various monks of this name.

296. ¹ Rom. xii. 8.

297. ¹ Ps. xlix. (1.) 16.

298. ² Ps. cxviii. (cxix.) 66 (LXX),

299. ¹ Gen. iii. 1.

300. ² Job vi. 6.

301. ³ Job. xl. 3.

302. ⁴ 2 Cor. xii. 7.

303. ¹ Jn. v. 14.

304. ² ko&pron.

305. ³ Rom. i. 28.

306. ⁴ Rom. i. 21, 26.

307. ⁵ Lucot aptly quotes the inscription of the Canaanite refugees in Africa, recorded by Procopius: "We are they who fled before Joshua the robber, the son of Nun."

308. ⁶ Cf. i Macc. xvi. 15. Simon and his sons go down to Jericho and are received "into the little stronghold that is called Dok."

309. ⁷ To be identified with the chorepiscopus of Bas., *Epp.* 24 and 291.

310. ¹ Cf. Basil's sermon *De Iudicio Dei*, 214E, in which he contrasts the Church distracted by its divisions with a swarm of bees he once saw "following their own king in good order." The Greeks generally mistook the sex of the queen bee, though, as Sir W. M. Ramsay points out (*Hastings, D. B.* V. 116 f.), the bee which symbolizes the goddess of the Ephesian cult is clearly feminine.

311. ² Reading to_ plh~qoj, which is necessitated by the sense.

312. ¹ Gal. iii. 28.

313. ² Cf. Soz. VI. 34.

314. ¹ Cf. XLI.

315. ² kosmiko&j.

316. ¹ Ch. XLVI.

317. ² In point of fact Melania had two other sons.

318. ¹ Butler dates this return to Rome in 398. Melania landed at Naples and went first to see Paulinus at Nola (*Paulinus, Ep.* 29).

319. ² I Cor. xv. 32; *Ign. Rom.* 5.

320. ³ I St. John ii. 18.

321. ¹ filokalhqei=san.

322. ² The sack of Rome by Alaric in 410. Cf. Gibbon, Ch. XXXI. "The edifices of Rome, though the damage has been much exaggerated, received some injury from the violence of the Goths, . . . Some truth may possibly be concealed in his (*i. e.* Orosius') devout assertion, that the wrath of Heaven supplied the imperfections of hostile rage, and that the proud Forum of Rome, decorated with the statues of so many gods and heroes, was levelled in the dust by the stroke of lightning." Palladius' evidence is contemporary and deserves respect.

323. ³ Turner points out that this is a continuation of Ch. LIV; Butler agrees.

324. ⁴ *I. e.* Palladius and Melania.

325. ⁵ Jerusalem was called Aelia Capitolina by Hadrian in 136 A.D. after the suppression of the Jewish rebellion.

326. ⁶ pugmh~|. Cf. Mk. vii. 3. "Probably the only allusion in patristic literature " (Turner).

327. ¹ Omitted by leading authorities for the text, as in the other places where he is mentioned by Palladius.

328. ² I Tim. vi. 20.

329. ¹ Cf. Heb. xii. 16.

330. ² Is this one of the rare traces in the later Church of the influence of the compromise of Acts xv. 20?

331. ¹ Eph. iv. 26.

332. ² From 406 onwards.

333. ³ Ch. LXI.

334. ¹ Cf. XXI. 3.

335. ² a)pet&cato---suneta&cato.

336. ³ From here to the end of section [3] the Greek given in the textual note to Butler's text is translated, in accordance with Butler's later judgment.

337. ⁴ Prov. ix. 12(LXX).

338. ¹ Cf. Cassian, *Coll.* V. 12. "But in one matter vainglory is found to be a useful thing for beginners. I mean by those who are still troubled by carnal sins, as for instance, if, when they are troubled by the spirit of fornication, they formed an idea of the dignity of the priesthood, or of reputation among all men, by which they may be thought saints and immaculate; and so with these considerations they repel the unclean suggestions of lust, as deeming them base and at least unworthy of their rank and reputation; and so by means of a smaller evil they overcome a greater one."

339. ² *I. e.* "Mother."

340. ¹ *martu&rion.*

341. ² Not mentioned elsewhere.

342. ³ Palladius, the author.

343. ¹ See Butler's notes, II. 231-3, on Melania, and his illustrations from the *Vita Melaniae Jun.*

344. ² 1 Cor. vii. 16.

345. ¹ 2 Tim. iv. 17.

346. ² Apparently to be interpreted literally; but perhaps metaphorically in allusion to Mt. xix. 12.

347. ³ They were really at Bethlehem when Palladius wrote.

348. ¹ 405.

349. ² "At the head of each Dioecesis was placed an officer who bore the name vicarius, except in the Eastern prefecture" (Reid).

350. ³ Cf. Soz. V. 6.

351. ¹ *biri/n* (= *birro&n*). See note on XXXVII. 6.

352. ² See *D.C.B.*, art. "Athanasius," for the history of the time. Athanasius may have hid for a little while in a virgin's house, but the story as it stands is unhistorical.

353. ¹ Eus. *H.E.* VI. 17 tells the story in similar words. See Swete, *Intr. to the O.T. in Greek*, pp. 49, 50. Symmachus lived towards the end of the second century. The book probably would be the Bible, arranged in *sti/xoi*, lines or verses.

354. ² Nothing is known of this story from other sources. Hippolytus was not, of course, *gnwri/mou tw~n a)posto&lwn*.

355. ¹ neani/skw| magistrianw~|.

356. ¹ h} a)po_ komh&tw. Such expressions are common in Palladius. They mean that the man had held the dignity mentioned, or that he came of a family which had held it.

357. ¹ *I. e.* the gospel-book that tells of Christ.

358. ¹ h2 e0mauth_n diskeu&sw. I do not understand this word.

359. ¹ It is implied that marriage was impossible even to one in minor orders. Priests' children, born probably before ordination, are mentioned in XXXVIII. 2, XLI. 4, LXX. 1.

360. ¹ A transparent device by which Palladius speaks about himself.

361. ¹ 2 Cor. xii. 5, the passage which has suggested this literary device.

362. ¹ Mt. iv. 9.

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