The Histories of the Monks of Egypt (Syriac version, Budge translation)

Desert Fathers (anonymous) (4th–6th century)

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Chapter 1. The Apology, and the reason for [writing] the Book, [which are addressed] to those who required [them] from him

Blessed be God Who desireth the welfare of all the children of men, Who wisheth that they may live and come to the knowledge of the truth, Who hath led us also into Egypt, and hath shewed us the great and marvellous things which are worthy to be remembered at all times, and to be written down in a book, Who hath given us the Cause of our salvation and of every one who wisheth to be helped further, and Who hath given unto us a demonstration of the good life and the doctrine which is able to rouse up the soul to the excellent rule of the ascetic life. Now therefore, I am not worthy to begin this history, for inferior men are not capable of approaching the histories of great men, since they are unable to narrate them as they really are, and still less are they able to set them down in writing in a book, and they ought not to be so bold as to attempt to explain matters which are difficult in mean and halting words; and it must appear to be great presumption which will bring danger in its train, for incapable men to undertake such things, and to be so bold as to write in a book sublime histories.

But inasmuch as I have been requested, earnestly and frequently, on several occasions, by the brotherhood of blessed men who had their habitation in the Mount of Olives, to write an account of the lives and deeds of the blessed men, and of the solitary dwellers who were in Egypt, according to what I myself have seen of their abundant love, and their patient endurance, and their vexatious toil for God's sake, I have then put my trust in their prayers, and have been so bold as to narrate the following history, and to set it down in writing, so that I myself may gain a fair and abundant reward, and so that those who hearken unto the same may be benefited [thereby], and may emulate such beautiful deeds, and may depart from the world in a state of perfection, and may enjoy peace and rest through the excellent long-suffering of their toil. For in very truth I have observed and seen the treasure of Christ which is hidden under human garments, and I have not buried it for the advantage of many,

but have brought it forward that it may be for the good of every one. And I am sure that for me to give this benefit to the blessed brethren will be noble merchandise for me, for they will pray for the redemption of my soul.

At the beginning of this book then I make [mention] first of all of the coming of our Redeemer Jesus Christ, by Whose doctrine the blessed and holy brethren who are in Egypt are led, for I have seen many fathers there who were living the lives of angels, and were fashioning their lives into the similitude of that of the Redeemer. And I have also seen others, who were young men, and who were like unto the Prophets; and they did work which was divine and marvellous, and they were men who were indeed servants of Christ, and they had no care of this earth and nothing belonging to time vexed their minds. Verily these men, although they appeared to be living upon earth, had their habitation in heaven; for some of them were not even conscious that it was the world [wherein they lived], and did not even know that there were wickednesses committed in the world. And verily [it was with them] even as it is written in the Psalm, "Great is the peace of those who love Thy Law" (Psalm cxix, 165); and again it is written, "I will be to them a Father, and they shall be unto Me sons and daughters, saith the Lord" (2 Corinthians vi, 18), the Stay of all creation.

And, moreover, many of them when they heard of what was spoken in the world [found it] to be strange unto them, and all the good things and all the cares of this world were forgotten by them; for a man saw them sown in the desert, and they were, like true sons, expecting their father Christ, and like husbandmen of the truth and honourable servants they waited for Christ their companion. They had care neither for houses, nor meats, nor raiment, for the coming of Christ their hope was the one thing for which their thoughts waited. Therefore, whensoever any of them lacked the things which were necessary, they sought neither city, nor village, nor brother, nor friend, nor parents, nor children, nor servants that the things which they lacked might be supplied by them, but their desire and their faith were sufficient for them, [and they only needed] to spread out their hand in supplication, and to offer up the confession of their lips to God, and immediately their prayers were ended everything [they needed] was found before them. Why is it necessary to speak at length concerning their faith in Christ, which was able to remove mountains? And, moreover, many of them restrained fountains and streams of running water, and walked upon the floods of the river Nile, and destroyed serpents, and worked cures, and wonders, and mighty deeds, even like unto those of the holy Prophets, and the blessed Apostles, by the might of their Lord. And it is a well-known and evident thing to every inhabitant of that country that the world standeth through their prayers, and that through them the life of the children of men is held to be precious by God.

And I have also seen [in Egypt] a numerous nation of monks who could neither be defined nor counted, and among them were men of every sort and condition, and they lived both in the desert and in the villages, and no earthly king hath ever been able to gather together so great a number of men into his service; for there is neither village nor city in Egypt or in the Thebaid which is not surrounded by monasteries as by walls, and many multitudes

of people rest upon their prayers as they do upon God. Some of the monks live quite close [to the towns and villages] in caves and on the waste land, and many of them afar off, and they all in every place make manifest their labour in a marvellous manner as if they were envious of each other. The object of the zeal of those who [live] afar off is that none of their fellows shall surpass them in the labours of the fear of God, and the greatest anxiety of those who [live] near is to vanquish by their life and deeds those who lived at a distance and are famous, even though the things of evil (or wickednesses) vex them from every place.

Therefore, as one who hath obtained great benefit from them, and as one who hath examined carefully the labours of the life and deeds, whereby I have also obtained benefit, I now approach this history with the view of making the successful monks [more] zealous by the memorials which I hand on [to them], and for the edification and profit of those who are beginning to emulate strenuously their rules of life. First of all then, by the grace of God, I will write at the beginning of this history the narratives of the lives and deeds of the great and holy fathers, by whose hands our Lord hath wrought at this present time the same kind of things as he wrought by the hands of His Prophets and Apostles; for it is our Lord Himself, Who then, as now, worked, as He still worketh, everything in every man.

Chapter 2. The Triumphs of Mar John the Recluse, the Prophet of the Thebaid who lived in Lycus

I SAW then on the borders of the city of Lycus, in the Thebaid, the great and blessed man John, a man who was truly holy and excellent, and by his works it was known unto every man that he possessed the gift of prophecy. And he made known unto the believing Emperor Theodosius, before they took place, the things which God was about to do unto the children of men, and he revealed [to him] what manner of ending they would take, and the arrogance of the kings who would rise up against him, and how they would speedily be destroyed, and how the nations which would gather together to make war upon him would perish, [and his ability to read the future was] so [great] that even a general came to enquire of him, if he should be able to conquer the Kûshâyê peoples (i.e., the Nubians), who at that time had boldly invaded Syene, which is the beginning of the Thebaid, and who had overrun the city and laid it waste. And the blessed John said unto him, "Thou shalt go up against them, and shalt overtake them, and thou shalt conquer them, and shalt be victorious [or triumphant] before the Emperor"; and these things were actually done. Now this blessed man possessed the power of prophecy to an extraordinary degree, according to what I have heard from the fathers who were constantly with him, and as the lives of these men were well known to the inhabitants of that country, and were carefully scrutinized by them, it is impossible to think that their stories about him were in any way hypocritical; on the contrary, their language was incapable of describing his honourable life and deeds.

There was a certain tribune who came to him, and who begged and entreated him to allow his wife to come to him, for she was exceedingly anxious to see him; she was about to go up [the river] to the district of Syene, and before she went up she wished to see him, that he might offer up prayer on her behalf, and bless her, and then send her away [on her journey]. And because the blessed man had taken a vow not to see women, and because he was ninety years of age, now he had been in a cave for forty years, and he had lived therein the whole time, and had never departed from it, and because he never allowed any man to come into his abode, he excused himself from seeing the noble lady; and he was in

the habit of saluting folk through his window only, and of blessing those who came to him therefrom, and he spake with every man only concerning the care which it was necessary to take in the matter of the life and works of ascetic excellence. And, although the tribune multiplied greatly his supplications and entreated him to allow his wife to come to him, now the dwelling of the blessed man was situated in the mountainous desert about five miles distant from the city, the holy man would not be persuaded to do so, but said, "This thing is impossible"; and he dismissed the tribune in grief and in sorrow.

And the woman tormented her husband by day and by night, and she took an oath, saying, "I cannot go to any other place until I have seen the holy prophet. And when the oaths of the woman were revealed to the blessed man by her husband, he discerned the faith of the woman, and said unto her husband, "I will appear unto her in a dream this night, but she must never [try] in addition to see my face in the body"; and the tribune made known to his wife the words of the blessed man. And as she was lying in her bed at night she saw the prophet himself come to her, and he said unto her, "What have I to do with thee, O woman? Why dost thou so eagerly desire to see my face? Am I a prophet or a righteous man? I am a sinner and a man of passions even as ye are, but behold, I have prayed for thee and for thy husband, and for thy dwelling, that even as ye have believed, so may it be unto you. Therefore get ye gone in peace; and having said these words he departed from her. And when the woman woke up she related to her husband the words of the prophet and described his form and appearance, and she offered her thanks to the prophet through her husband.

Now when the holy man John saw that her husband had come, before he could speak he said unto him, "Behold, thy request is completed, for I have seen thy wife, and I have fulfilled her petition, and thou must never see my face again; but depart ye in peace."

Now the wife of another prefect was with child, and she was nigh unto [her time] for bringing forth; and her husband was away at a distance, and on the day in which the blessed man John met her husband she was afflicted, even unto death, with the pains of her bringing forth. And the holy man John gave the news to her husband, and said unto him, "If thou didst only know the grace of God, for behold, a son hath been born unto thee this day, thou wouldst praise God, for his mother hath suffered in no small degree. Behold, thou shalt go and shalt find the boy to be seven days old on thine arrival, and thou shalt give him the name of John, and when he hath grown up, and hath been instructed, and is seven years of age, thou shalt send him to the solitary monks in the desert."

And the blessed John also made manifest wonderful things like these to stranger folk who used to come to him, and he very frequently made known to the people of the city who used 321 to come to him beforehand concerning their affairs, and showed them the things which were about to happen. And he told each one of them that which was done by him in secret, and he foretold concerning the rise of the river Nile, and the good crop which there would be as the result thereof, and described it unto them; and he declared and pointed out the time when the anger of God was about to come upon them, and rebuked those who were

the cause of the same. Now the blessed man John did not himself work his cures openly, but he used to consecrate the oil and give [it] to those who were afflicted, and they were healed. Thus the wife of a certain nobleman had the light of her eyes taken away through the cataract which obstructed the light thereof, and she begged and entreated her husband to take her to him, and when he said unto her, "The blessed man hath never met a woman," she besought him to have a message sent to the holy man asking him to offer up a prayer on her behalf; and this the blessed man did, and he also sent her some oil over which he had said a blessing and made the sign of the Cross, and when she had smeared her eyes therewith three times, after three days she was able to see. Then she praised God the Lord of all, and openly gave thanks unto Him always.

And what shall we say about his other deeds? [Nothing]. We can only tell of the things which we saw with our own eyes. Now there were of us seven brethren who were strangers, and who went to him all together, and having given us the salutation of peace with his glorious face, and shown his gladness [at seeing us] to each one of us, we asked him before anything else to offer up a prayer on our behalf, for it is the custom with all our fathers in Egypt to do this. Then he asked me if there was, perchance, a man among us who was a priest or deacon, and although we said there was none such among us all, he well knew that there was one among us who was hiding his honourable rank. Now there was among us one who had received the hand of deaconship, but only one of the brethren, and he was with us, knew of this, and the deacon, by reason of his humility, prohibited him from making this known to anyone, "For," said he, "in comparison with these holy men I am not worthy to be called even Christian; permit me then not to make use of the honour of deaconship. Then the blessed man pointed out to us all with his hand the deacon, and said, "This brother is a deacon";

whereupon the deacon denied this repeatedly, thinking to lead us astray, but the blessed man grasped the hand of the deacon through the window, and kissed it, and begged him, rebuking him at the same time, saying, "Wrong not the grace of God, O my son, and lie not concerning the gift of Christ with the denial of an alien; for falsehood, whether it be uttered concerning a small matter or a great one, or something which is convenient, is still falsehood, and is not to be praised. For our Redeemer said, 'All falsehood is of the Evil One'" (St. Matthew v, 33, 37; St. John viii, 44). And the deacon being thus rebuked accepted the reproof of the old man pleasantly.

And when we had prayed and made an end of our supplications, one of us became afflicted with shiverings and strong fever, and he begged the blessed John that he might be healed. Then the blessed man said unto him, "This sickness is for thy benefit, because a diminution of faith hath come upon thee," but he gave him some oil, and let him anoint himself therewith, and when the man had rubbed the oil upon his body, every evil thing which was inside him he cast forth through his mouth, and he was completely cured of his sickness, and departed on his own feet with us to the place where travellers rested.

CHAPTER 2. THE TRIUMPHS OF MAR JOHN THE RECLUSE, THE PROPHET OF THE THEBAID

Now the blessed man appears to have been about ninety years old, and his whole body was emaciated and frail as if by the severity of his rule of life, and no hair whatsoever remained upon his cheeks; and he ate nothing whatsoever except dried vegetables (or fruits), and in the period of his old age he did this at sunset. In the early part of his career he suffered severely, because he would neither eat bread, nor anything which had been cooked by fire. And he commanded us, and we sat down with him, and we gave thanks unto God that we were esteemed worthy to see him; and he rejoiced [in us] as if we had been beloved children of his who were meeting their father after a long absence, and with a joyful countenance he held converse with us, saying, "Where do ye come from, my sons, and from what country? Ye have come to a miserable and wretched man." And when we told him [the name of] the country, and that we had come to him from Jerusalem for the benefit of our souls, and that that which we had received with our ears we might see with our own eyes, for the hearing of the ears is less trustworthy than the sight of the eyes, and frequently error maketh its way into what is heard by the ears, whilst the remembrance of what a man hath seen can never be blotted out from the heart, and the description of the same will be permanently fixed in the mind, the blessed man John answered and said unto us, "What great thing did ye think ye would see, O beloved sons, that ye have come all this way, and have toiled all this great toil? Did ye desire to come and see miserable and wretched men? We possess nothing whatsoever which is worth looking or wondering at. There

323 21a are, however, in every place men who are wonderful and who are worthy of admiration, that is to say, men who are called in the church the Prophets and Apostles of God, and of these it is meet that we should emulate their example.

" But I marvel greatly at the indefatigable zeal which made you treat the tribulations of the journey with contempt in order that ye might come hither, for your welfare, to those men who, because of their sluggishness, are unwilling to go out of their caves. And I say that, although that which ye have now done meriteth praise, ye must not allow th thought to come into your minds that ye have fulfilled completely every duty, but ye must make yourselves to be like unto your fathers in respect of the glorious rules of life by which they were guided and the works which they did. For although ye possess all the virtues, which is a difficult matter to accomplish, ye must not even so be [over-] confident in yourselves, for the men who have become puffed up with pride, and who thought they had arrived at the stage of [being worthy of] praise, have subsequently fallen from their high estate. But examine yourselves carefully and see whether your consciences are pure, so that purity may not be driven out from your minds; and let not your thoughts wander about at the season when ye stand up in prayer before God, and let not any other thought enter into your mind and turn it away from that glorious sight of God which riseth upon the pure heart at the season of prayer, and which enlighteneth and maketh the understanding to shine; and let not the remembrance of evil thoughts disturb your minds.

And examine yourselves and see whether ye have truly made a covenant with God, and whether ye have not, after the manner of men, entered in that ye may attain the freedom

which is in Christ, and whether ye do not desire to possess the vainglory of ascetic deeds, and whether ye do not, after the manner of men who boast themselves before men, [possess only] the similitude of our ascetic deeds. And take heed lest any passion whatsoever vex you, or any longing for honour or glory from the children of men, or any deceitful desire of priesthood, or of self-love. And do not think that ye are righteous men only, but be ye diligent and zealous in very truth that ye may neither be boastful nor unduly exalted by applause.

" And let there not be any anxiety about family in the mind of him that prayeth unto God in very truth, neither shall there be to him any remembrance of the fair things which have been done by him, nor love for other folk, nor any memory whatsoever of the world, for if the man who holdeth converse with his Lord be reduced, or drawn aside, or led away by any other mind [than this] his labour is emptiness. Now this falling away happeneth to the mind of man after man who doth not deny the world absolutely, and who hunteth after the approbation of the children of men; for he devoteth himself unto everything in multitudes of ways, and his mind is divided among many kinds of thoughts, both of the body and of the earth, and thereupon he is obliged to strive against his own passions and is not able to see God. It is therefore not seemly for a man to think that he hath found knowledge with absolute certainty, [lest peradventure being unworthy of knowledge], and having only acquired a small portion thereof, he imagine that he hath found the whole of it, and so he devote himself wholly to destruction. But it is right that we should always draw nigh unto God with moderate ideas and in faith, so far as it is possible to approach Him in the mind, and so far as the children of men are able to attain unto Him.

It is right therefore that the mind of every man who loveth God should be remote from all these things, for he who in truth seeketh after God with all his heart will remove his mind far away from every earthly thing, and he will direct the gaze of his understanding towards God, for it is written, 'Turn ye and know that I, even I, am God' (Psalm xlvi, 108). He therefore who is worthy of a little of the knowledge of God, for man is not able to receive the whole of it, is able to acquire the knowledge of many things, and to see those mysteries which the knowledge of God will shew him. And he will see the things which are about to happen beforehand, and glorious revelations will be made known to him as [unto] the saints, and he will do mighty works, and everything which he asketh from God he shall receive."

And having said these things unto us, and many others which also concerned the rules of the life of ascetic excellence, he added the following:—"It is right that every one who is a man of discernment should wait for his departure from this world as if he were going to approach a life of happiness, and that he should not set before his eyes the humiliation of the body, and should not fill his belly with that which he hath; for the thoughts of him that filleth himself full of meats resemble those of men who are fed upon delicate meats. But strive ye in your life and deeds to acquire the power of enduring lusts and appetites patiently, and let no man seek after the things which are fine, and those which are gratifying to the body, but let him restrain himself in the short time [which we have] here so that he may inherit

rest and relaxation in the kingdom of God, for it is said, 'Through abundant tribulation it is meet for us to enter into the kingdom of God' (Acts xiv, 22). And in this manner also Paul the Apostle admonished us, and he spake that which he had learned from our Redeemer, Who said, 'How strait and narrow is the way which leadeth to life, and few there be who find it (St. Matthew vii, 14);

and how broad is the gate, and wide the way which leadeth to destruction, and many there be who travel upon it.' And let us not be in despair in this country, for in a very little while we shall depart unto the world of rest; and let not any man be [unduly] exalted through the fair deeds which he performeth, but let him be always in a state of penitence. And let him betake himself away far into the desert whensoever he feeleth within himself that he is becoming [unduly] exalted, for on several occasions the monastic dwelling which is nigh unto villages hath harmed those who were perfect. And he must do as did one unto whom this happened, who said in his Psalm (Psalm lv, 6, 7), 'Behold, I fled away to a remote place, and I took up mine abode in the whirlwind,' and I waited for God to deliver me from littleness of soul, and from the spirit of the world. And this very thing hath happened unto many of our own brethren, and because of their pride they fell away from the mark which they had set for themselves.

" Now there was a certain brother who dwelt in a cave which was in the desert nigh unto Shainâ, and he followed the ascetic life with the utmost strenuousness, and he used to provide himself with bread day by day by the labour of his hands; and because he was constantly in prayer, and excelled greatly in praiseworthy actions, and had confidence in himself, and was proud of his fair life and deeds, the Tempter, having asked God for him as he asked Him for Job, shewed him the form of a beautiful woman who was wandering about in the desert in the evening. Now this woman, finding the door of the cave open, leaped up, and passed through the door, and fell upon the knees of the man, beseeching him to let her rest there because the night had overtaken her, and he, having compassion upon her, [did] what was not right, and received her into the cave, and he wished to learn from her how she had come to lose her way. Then she spake unto him, and sowed words of sin and of incitement to lust in his ears, and she prolonged her conversation with him so that by means of her lascivious flattery she might excite him to the hateful lust;

and there being much speech between them, together with laughter and jesting, she led him astray little by little by means of much speaking until at length she took hold of his hand, and then of his beard, and then of his neck, and finally she made the valiant man her captive. Meanwhile as thoughts of these things were chasing each other through his mind, and he believed that the matter was in his own hands, he waited for the moment and the opportunity when he would be able to fulfil his lust; and having delivered himself over to his wicked imagination, he strove diligently to work it out, and to be united to the woman like a man who hath lost his mind, and like a horse mad with desire, [and as he was about to fulfil his lust] the woman cried out several times, and suddenly escaped from out of his hands, and flew away like a shadow. Then straightway there was heard in the air the great

shouts of laughter of the multitudes of devils who had overthrown him and made him to fall into error, and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Whosoever exalteth himself shall be humbled; and as for thee, O thou who didst exalt thyself unto the heavens, behold, thou hast been brought down into the deepest depth.

" And it came to pass after these things that the man rose up in the morning having been clothed with grief the [whole] night, and he beat his breast and cried over himself the whole day through; and having given up all hope of his redemption, he did that which was unseemly and went back to the world again. For it is of the cunning of the Evil One that, having vanquished a man in the strife, he bringeth him to a senseless state of despair, and he is never able to stand up again. Therefore, O my sons, it helpeth us not to dwell in caves near to the villages, and the meeting with women is not beneficial to us, for we keep in our minds a remembrance which cannot be blotted out from the mind, both of their words and appearance, and moreover it is not right that we should reduce ourselves to despair; for behold, very many men have been in despair about themselves, but the compassion of God hath not forsaken them.

" For there was a young man in a certain city who had committed multitudes of sins and great wickednesses, with a most evil intent, yet at a sign from God he repented of his sins, and departed to the place of the tombs, where he wept over his former sins; and he cast himself upon the earth face downwards, and did not care to lift up his voice and to make mention of the Name of God in his mouth, or to make entreaty to Him, and he thought that he was not worthy to live, and before his death he shut himself up in the place of the tombs, groaning from the depth of his heart, because he had lost all hope of his life. Now when he had passed a whole week of days in this manner, those devils who had formerly injured his life rose up against him by night, and cried out, saying, 'Where is that corrupt and filthy man who, having filled himself as full as he could with pollution and corruption, doth now unseasonably and suddenly appear to be both chaste and good, and because he is not able to do so he wisheth to become a Christian, and a man of well ordered life? What then is the beautiful thing which thou expectest to acquire now that thou hast sated thyself with every kind of wickedness? Wilt thou not stand away from where thou art, and come with us and [enjoy] the things which thou usually hast?

Behold, whores and tavern companions are waiting for thee, wilt thou not then come and gratify thy lust with us? Every hope for thee hath been extinguished, and truly thy punishment shall arrive swiftly, and in this manner thou wilt slay thyself. Why art thou terrified at '[the idea of] punishment, O wretched man? And why strivest thou that it may not come upon thee swiftly?' And they said 'unto him very many other things, and cried out to him, Thou art ours, for thou didst make a covenant with us. Thou didst commit every kind of wickedness, and thou wast worse than every one of us, and wouldst thou dare to flee '[from us]? Wilt thou not return us an answer, and wilt thou not agree with us and go forth with us?'

"But the young man continued to weep steadily, and he neither inclined his ear to hearken unto them, nor made answer unto them. Then, when those devils had remained with him a long time and had done nothing [unto him], as they were speaking wicked and abominable devils laid hold upon him, and smote him with severe stripes, and tore to pieces his whole body, and entreated him most evilly, and then departed, leaving him with very little life in him. And the young man lay groaning in the same place where they had left him, for he was unable to turn round and depart to another place, and shortly afterwards, when he had regained a little of his breath, the members of his house and his relatives went forth in sorrow to seek him, and when they found him they learned from him the cause of the stripes, and they besought him to go with them to his house; but the young man did not yield to their frequent and urgent entreaties.

And again, on another night, those devils made to come upon him stripes which were more numerous and more severe than the former ones, nevertheless he would not consent to depart from that district at the entreaty of his relatives, but he said unto them, 'It is better for me to die [thus] than to live with the blemishes of this world upon me.' On the third night, however, within a very little, through the multitudinous stripes of the devils, he departed from this temporary life, for they fell upon him without mercy, and they smote him with blows where the former blows had fallen, and they entreated him so evilly that he was obliged to fight for [his] breath. And when they saw that he would not yield to them, they left him for dead and departed from him, and they went away from him, crying out and saying, 'Thou hast conquered us, thou hast conquered us, thou hast conquered us.' And afterwards nothing evil came upon him.

"And the pure young man continued to dwell in the grave and to lead a pure life gloriously, and he was so weighted with the fear of God in the wonderful and mighty deeds which he made manifest, that many folk marvelled at him, and desired greatly [to do as he did], for those who had entirely abandoned all hope of their souls devoted themselves to the performance of his excellent rules of life. And in him was fulfilled that which is written, 'Whosoever humbleth himself shall be exalted' (St. Luke xiv, 11). Therefore, O my sons, I beseech each and every one of you before all things to lead a life of humility, for that is the foundation of all the glorious virtues; but besides this, the dwelling in a remote desert place is exceedingly helpful to the performance of deeds of ascetic excellence.

"And there was also another solitary monk who dwelt in a place which was a long way off in the desert, and having led for many years a life of perfection with all credit, in the time of his old age he became tempted by devils; he had been a strenuous man and had loved the life of quiet contemplation all his days, and he excelled exceedingly in prayers, and in [singing] praises, and in multitudes of visions, and spiritual manifestations were revealed unto him with such scrupulous exactness, some in revelations and some in dreams, that finally he was able to walk in the footsteps of incorporeal beings. And because he was not stablished in the earth, and took no care about his food, he sought not in the trees the things of which the body hath need, neither in the green herb, nor in the birds, nor in the animals

of the desert, and he was full of trust in God. For from the time when he went forth from the habitation of men into the desert, he had no care whatsoever in his mind about that whereon he was to live and to support his body, but wholly forgetting all such things his whole love was exalted to God.

And he awaited his call from Him and his departure from this world, and he enjoyed exceedingly the visions and the hope of that which was to come, and his body did not shrink by reason of length of years nor did his soul decay, and he possessed a beautiful nature through his chaste life. But God took care of him, and at certain welldefined intervals, that is, once every two or three days, he found bread upon his table; and whensoever he felt that his body needed food, he would go into the cave and take rest, and having refreshed himself, and bowed himself before God, he would return again to his praises, and say 'Amen' in his prayer and in his visions. And rejoicing in his peace every day he added to the glory of his life and works, and he waxed stronger daily in the hope of that which is to come, like a man who was confident that he would depart from this world in virtue, which actually took place within a very short time from his fall, through the temptation that subsequently came upon him.

"But why should we not tell the story of his sin whereto his folly was exceedingly close? For, having become proud in his mind, and thinking therein that he was better than many men, and that he possessed some faculty for goodness which was greater than that possessed by all other men, and trusting in himself that this really was so, at no remote time there was born in him first of all a degree of negligence which was so small that it might be imagined that it was not negligence, and then there burst into existence contempt, which is a greater [sin] than negligence, and then sluggishness made itself felt, and as a result of these things he used to stand up in vigil and prayer in a listless fashion, and the entreaty of his prayer became small, and his praises of God were short, and his soul longed for pleasures, and his mind inclined to terrestrial things, and his thoughts wandered to hateful things, and in secret he meditated upon the abominable things of lust. But, however, the constraint of his former life and deeds was still with him as a protection, and at eventide, after his usual prayer, he found upon his table the bread which had been given to him by God, and he ate and was refreshed. And because he did not cast away his shortcomings, and did not consider that his negligence injured his strenuousness in ascetic virtues, and increased his zealousness in the performance of other things which were hateful, and because he did not turn to the healing of his wickednesses, and because it was a small matter in his sight that he had fallen away entirely from the things which were seemly, the evil lust of filthy fornication seized upon his mind, and carried him away in his thoughts to the world.

"And having remained [thus] for one day, he turned to his usual service of singing the Psalms, and he prayed, and praised God, and went into the cave, and he found therein his bread which had been placed there at [the fixed] time, but it was not as pure as it was usually, and it was somewhat dirty; and though he marvelled thereat, and was sad about it, he ate the bread and was refreshed. And it came to pass on the third night that there was

added a threefold evil, and he delivered over his wicked mind quickly to his guilty thoughts; now it seemed in his consciousness as if there was a woman close to him, and lying by his side, and as if he was looking at her with his eyes, and as if he was actually performing an act of union with her. Now on the third day he went out to his occupation of prayer and praise, but his thoughts were not clean, and his mind was wandering about hither and thither, and he was moving the sight of the pupils of his eyes in all directions, and the remembrance of his lusts shortened his good work. And he went back in the evening seeking for bread, and when he had gone into the cave he found upon his table bread, part of which had been eaten by the mice, and part had been gnawed by dogs, and the rest was dry; then he groaned again and wept, but not sufficiently to restrain him from his wickedness. And having eaten the bread, which was not according to his taste, he endeavoured to take some rest.

"Then again the evil thoughts stirred in him, and made war upon his mind so that they might lead him along the road and carry him to the world; and he rose up by night and went forth from his cave to travel in the desert to Shainâ, and whilst he was still far from the habitations of men, the day overtook him, and the heat of the sun afflicted him, and he looked round about him that, peradventure, he might see a monastery wherein he might enter and rest himself. And he saw a monastery, and went into it, and the chaste and believing brethren who regarded him as a true father received him; and they washed his face and his feet, and when they had prayed, and set forth a table, they entreated him lovingly to partake of whatsoever they had, and when he had eaten and was refreshed, they asked him to address to them a word of help and to tell them how they might be able to escape from the crafty snares of the Enemy, and to rise up and to prevail like men over lascivious thoughts. Then that monk, like a father who was admonishing his sons, commanded them to persevere in the labours of ascetic life, even unto weariness, as men who, after a short time, would depart to abundant delight; and having spoken unto them several other most excellent things he helped them greatly.

And having made an end of his admonitory discourse, he remembered himself a little, and thought within himself, saying, 'How is it that I am able to rebuke others, and remain myself without reproof?' Then having understood his guiltiness, he ran back with all speed to the desert, and wept over himself, saying, 'If it had not been that the Lord helped me my soul would have been destroyed by misery, for I am within a very little of '[falling] into every kind of wickedness, and my life would have been destroyed in the earth.' And it was fulfilled in him the saying, 'A man is helped by his brethren, even as a city is helped by its fortress, and he is like a wall which shall never fall.' And from that time onwards, for the whole period of his life, that monk mourned and wept because he was deprived of his heavenly table, and he obtained his daily bread only by means of great toil. And he shut himself up in the cave, and [put on] sackcloth and ashes, and he humbled himself in prayer; and he neither rose up from earth nor ceased from groans and sighs, until he heard in a dream a sound of angels which came to him, [and said], 'God hath received thy repentance, and hath had mercy upon thee. Therefore take good heed that thou stumble not a second time into sin.

And the brethren whom thou didst admonish shall come unto thee and console thee, and shall bring unto thee a blessing [which] thou shalt receive from them, and ye shall be refreshed and shall give thanks unto God always.' These things which I have narrated unto you, O my sons, [shew] that ye should acquire humbleness of mind before every other thing in your life and works, and in all matters which shall be unto you, whether they be small or whether they be great, for this is the first commandment of our Redeemer, Who said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (St. Matthew v, 3). Take good heed that ye be not confounded by the Devil when filthy visions rise upon you, and go not astray after devils when they shew you a lying vision. But if anyone come unto you, be it brother, or friend, or wife, or old man, or father, or teacher, or mother, or sister, or son, or daughter, first of all lift up your hands in prayer, and if it should happen that any lying vision of devils should come, it will depart quickly from before you. And moreover, if men or devils would lead you astray, and would incite you [to sin] by flattering you, be not persuaded by them, and be not lifted up in your minds.

For in this way they have led even me astray on several occasions, and the devils would let me neither pray nor take my rest in the night season, and they used to show me lying visions the whole night long, and then in the morning they would laugh at me, and would bend the knee before me, and say, 'Father, let us vex thee [by day]

"in the same way as we did all night long,' and I would say "unto them, 'Get ye gone from me, O ye workers of iniquity, for "ye shall not vex the servant of God.' Therefore, O my sons, "after quietness, follow ye after and love peaceful meditation, "and train yourselves at all times in the vision of excellence, "and ye shall acquire in prayer to God the broadness of a "pure mind. For he is a good and fair athlete of Christ, "and a noble and strenuous man, who shall at all seasons "train himself in labours, who shall do fair deeds con- "tinually, who shall shew forth love for the brethren and for "strangers, who shall perform love and mercy, who shall "visit and relieve all those who are nigh unto him, who shall "help the suffering and support the sick, and who shall bring "his days to an end without stumbling. For if a man bring

"his days to an end without stumbling, even though he "labour in and be held fast by the things of earth, he is a fair, "and good, and noble soldier and workman, and worker and "doer of the commandments. "But the spectator of the mind who leaveth all these things "for others to administer [or provide] is far better, and more "excellent and greater than he, and he pursueth spiritual "instead of corporeal things, and leaveth the transitory things "of this world unto others; for he denieth himself, and for- "getteth himself, and taketh up his cross and cleaveth unto "Christ, and he embraceth the things of heaven continually, "and he maketh his escape from everything [earthly], and "draweth nigh unto God, and he will not allow himself to be "drawn to turn behind him through any care whatsoever. "And such a man as this is, through his godly works, and

"the praises which he offereth up continually before God, with "God, and, being free and unfettered by any tie whatsoever, "he standeth before God in security, and his mind is not

”drawn away by any other care. He who is in this condition ”holdeth converse with God continually, and offereth up to ”Him unceasingly praise and glorifying. But it is necessary ”[that those who seek after God should forsake] everything ”which is visible, and should turn themselves completely to- ”wards God, and should commit themselves to Him that He ”may protect their lives; for the man in whom God dwelleth ”doth not know even that the world existeth, since the whole ”of creation is an alien thing in his eyes, because he is crucified ”unto all the world, and it is accounted by him as nothing.” These then were the things which the blessed John related unto us (now he told us many others), and he held converse and talked with us for three days, and he healed our souls until the season of the ninth hour; and when he gave us [his] blessing, he spake unto us also a word of prophecy, saying, ”This day letters [recording] the victory of Theodosius the Emperor have entered Alexandria, and these make known that he hath slain [A.D. 394] Eugenius the tyrant, and the death which the Christian Emperor Theodosius himself will die.” Now these things actually happened as he said. And having seen many other fathers, other brethren came and informed us that the life of the blessed John had come to an end in a most excellent and exemplary manner; for he commanded him (i.e., his disciple) that for three days no man should be allowed to go up to him, and he bowed his knees in prayer, and his career was crowned, and he went to our Lord, to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 3. The Triumphs of the holy Man Abba Hor

And we saw also another wonderful man whose name was Abbâ Hôr, now he was the Abbâ of one thousand monks, and he had an angelic form and was about ninety years of age; his beard flowed down over his breast, and it was white and beautiful, and his countenance was so glorious that those that saw him were reproved by the sight thereof only. And this blessed man had for a very long time lived a life of the utmost austerity at a remote place in the desert, but subsequently he took certain monasteries in the desert which was near Shainâ, and gathered together a brotherhood, and he planted so many wild trees at that spot that they formed a dense wood in the wilderness. For the fathers who lived with him there said that before this man came there from the desert there was not even a shrub in the place; now he planted these trees in order to fill a want, and to prevent the brethren who were gathered together to him from being troubled by searching for wood. And in his prayer to God he took the same pains and strove that all the needs of the brethren might be supplied, so that they would only have to be anxious about their redemption, and that nothing which they used might be wanting for them, [so that they might have no excuse for negligence].

When formerly the blessed man lived in the desert of Dalgâw he used to eat roots and herbs, and to drink water when he was able, and he passed the whole time of his life in prayer and praise; but when he arrived at complete old age, an angel appeared unto him in a dream, in the desert, and said, "Thou shall become a great race, and shalt be set in authority over a numerous people, and those who shall be saved through thee shall be ten myriads [in number], and thou shalt be a governor in the new world, and above every one else in the world thou shalt have life. And," said the angel unto him, "fear not, for thou shalt never be in want of food, whensoever thou criest unto thy God, until the day of thy departure from this world."

And having heard these things the blessed Abbâ Hôr journeyed on his way diligently and came to the desert which is nigh unto Shainâ, and first of all he lived there by himself in a little tabernacle (or booth), which he made, and he fed upon garden herbs soaked in vinegar, and on several occasions he ate only once a week. And because originally he had no

knowledge of letters, when he rose up to go forth from the desert into Shainâ, the knowledge of the Holy Books was given unto him by Divine Grace so fully that he was able to repeat all the Scriptures by heart; and when he had come [to Shainâ] and a book was given unto him by the brethren to read, he read it forthwith as if he were a man who had been always acquainted with books. And there was added unto him also the gracious gift of being able to cast out devils, and many of them came to him by the constraint [of this gift], against their wills, and would shriek out through his acts. And he wrought so many other cures so often that from all sides there were gathered together unto him brethren who lived in monasteries, one thousand in number.

And when the man of God saw us, he rejoiced in us, and saluted us, and straightway he offered up a prayer; and he washed our feet with his own hands, and began to teach us, for he was exceedingly well acquainted with the Scriptures, even as a man who had received the gift from God, and he expounded to us many chapters of the Scriptures, and delivered to us the orthodox faith; moreover, he urged us to prayer, and to partake of the Mysteries. For it was the habit of all the great monks not to give food to their bodies until they had offered spiritual sustenance to their souls, that is to say, the participation in the Body and Blood of Christ. And having partaken of the Mysteries we gave thanks unto God, and he urged us [to come] to the table of food, and he called to our recollection the ascetic lives of noble men, and said, "I know a certain man in this desert who for three years past hath not eaten anything which is of this earth, but an angel cometh to him once in three days, and bringeth him heavenly food and placeth it in his mouth, and this sufficeth him instead of meat and drink.

And I know that there came to this man in a lying vision devils who were in the forms of horses and chariots of fire and numerous horsemen, as if they had come from a king, and they said unto him, 'Thou hast become perfect in everything, O man, but now, bow down and worship me, and I will take thee up [to heaven] like Elijah.' Then the monk said in his mind, 'I worship the King and Redeemer every day, and if this creature were '[a king] he would not ask me to worship him now.' And 'when he had said unto him that which was in his mind, I have a King, and I worship Him always, and thou art not a king,' immediately the Devil removed himself and was no 'more found. Now Abbâ Hôr told us these things because he wished to conceal his own rules and manner of life, and to tell us stories about those of other monks, but the fathers who were always with him told us that it was Abbâ Hôr himself who had seen these things.

Now this man was more glorious in his life than very many of the fathers. And because of the multitude of the monks who came to him he used to call the brethren who were with him, to come to make houses for the new comers each day; some of the brethren spread the mud, and others brought the bricks, and others cut down the wood, and when their building was finished, he would supply the needs of those who came. On one occasion a lying brother who had hidden his clothes came to him, but the blessed man rebuked him before every man, and brought his clothes into the light, so that as a result of this [exposure] no man

might in future dare to tell a lie in his presence. Now the beauty of his life and deeds made him so glorious that he was able to gather together very many monks to him, and one saw the congregation of the monks with him in the church like a band of righteous men who were splendid in their garb, and they glorified God with praises continually.

Chapter 4. The Triumphs of Abba Ammon

Now we saw in Thebaïs another man whose name was Ammon, who was the Abbâ of three (or thirty) thousand monks; and they called these monks also ”men of Tabenna.” And they lived lives of the greatest austerity, and they used to put their head cloths over their faces, and they covered themselves when they ate, and they turned their looks towards the ground, so that one might not see the other; and they kept strict silence, so that they might think that they were in the desert, and they did these things in order that each might hide his works of ascetic excellence from his fellows. When they sat at table it was a mere matter of form, and they did so in such a way as to deceive each other, and to make each other say, ”Behold, they are eating.” Some of them only carried their hands to their mouths once or twice and took a piece of bread, or an olive, or a portion of something else of all the food which was set before them, and it was unto them sufficient for a meal; and others ate in silence a piece of bread only, and endured [hunger] without touching any of the other dishes of food which were placed before them; and others only reached out their hands to the dishes of cooked food three times and ate. Now their souls were weaned from everything. And since we marvelled at all their glorious deeds we obtained benefit from them all.

Chapter 5. The Triumphs of Abba Abban [Benus]

And we saw another blessed man whose virtues were more abundant than those of all [other] men, and whose name was Abbân [Benus]; the brethren who were with him related that he had never sworn, or told a lie, or been angry with any man, or rebuked any man even by a word. He had passed his whole life in silent contemplation and in humility, and in his manner of life he was as one of the angels, and he clothed himself in the deepest humility. And when we had entreated him earnestly to address to us a word of exhortation, it was only with the greatest difficulty that he could be persuaded to say unto us a few words. On one occasion, when the labourers in the fields which were near the river begged him [to drive away] a certain hippopotamus which was doing them harm by his [great] strength, the blessed Abbâ Abbân [Benus] commanded the animal in a gentle voice, saying, "I adjure thee to depart in the name of Jesus Christ"; and the hippopotamus, as if driven away by an angel, never more appeared in that district.

Chapter 6. The History of the Lives and Acts of the Brethren who were in the City of Oxyrhyncus

And we came also to Oxyrhyncus, a great city in Thebaïs, but we are not able to relate all the wonderful things which [we saw] therein; for the city is so full of the habitations of the brethren that the walls thereof are wellnigh thrust out with them, so many are the brethren! And there are so many other monasteries round about the walls, on the outside, that one would think that they were another city, and the sanctuaries of the city, and the temples which are therein, and all the spaces about them, are filled with the monks. And besides these there were thirteen churches in which the people assembled, for the city was exceedingly large. There was a place set apart for the monks to pray in each of the

337 monasteries, and one might think that the monks were not very much fewer in numbers than the ordinary inhabitants of the city, for they were so numerous that they even filled the [buildings at] the entrances to the city, and some of the monks lived in the towers by the side of the gates thereof. Now the people said that the monks who lived inside were five thousand in number, and that five thousand brethren lived round about it, and there was not an hour, either of the day or the night, wherein they were not performing the service of God. But there were also heretics in the city, and they were not of the heathen who dwelt therein. And all the inhabitants of the city were believers, and they would hearken to the Scriptures so readily that the Bishop was able to proclaim peace to the people even in the streets; and the officers and the princes of the city, who were lavish in their gifts to the congregations, used to place watchers at the gates and entrances thereof that if they saw any needy person or any stranger they might bring him to them, in order that they might supply his need from their gifts. And what shall we say concerning the fear of God which was in these men to such a degree that, when they saw us, who were strangers, passing through the streets, they drew nigh, like angels, unto us [and helped us]?

And how can a man describe adequately the multitude of monks and the innumerable virgins who used to live there? Now we would make known that which we have learned from the holy Bishop who was there, namely, that he had under his authority ten thousand

monks and twenty thousand virgins. I am wholly unable to express how great is the love of strangers and the affection which exist among these men and women, for our cloaks and the other portions of our apparel were wellnigh torn to rags by the force which each one of them, in the ardour of his love, displayed in dragging us to his home. And we saw there multitudes of fathers and of great monks who possessed gifts of divers kinds, for some had the gift of speaking, and some of doing works, and some of doing mighty deeds, and some of working signs.

Chapter 7. The Triumphs of Abba Theon

And we also saw another blessed man, who lived at some distance from the city, at a place which faced the open desert, and his name was Theon; he was a holy man who had shut himself up in a small house by himself, and he had kept silence for thirty years, and because he had performed many mighty deeds he was held to be a prophet among the people. For every day a multitude of sick folk went forth to him, and he would stretch out his hand through the window and lay it upon them, and would send them away healed. Now the countenance of the blessed man appeared to be like that of an angel, and his eyes sparkled, and he was filled with all the grace of God. A short time ago certain thieves came by night against the blessed man from a great distance, thinking that they would find a large quantity of gold with him, and they were prepared to kill him, but when he had said a prayer they found themselves fast bound with ropes before the door, [and they had to stay there] until the morning. And when the crowds of people came to him in the morning, they had it in their minds to commit the thieves to the flames, but the blessed man felt himself urged to speak a word unto the men, and he said, "Let these thieves depart in peace, for if ye do not let them, the gracious gift of healing which I possess will depart from me." Then the multitudes hearkened unto his words, for they did not dare to treat them lightly, and straightway the thieves went and took up their abode with the brethren [and] monks, and changed their former manner of life, because they truly repented of that which they had done in the past.

Now this man, through the gift which God had bestowed upon him, knew three languages, and he was able to read Greek, Latin, and Egyptian, a fact concerning the blessed man which we have learned from many folk; and when he knew that we were strangers he wrote down [the fact] in a book, and thanked God on our behalf. His food consisted of garden herbs, and they said that he used to go forth from his cell by night and mingle with the wild animals of the desert, and he gave them to drink of the water which he found. The footmarks which appeared by the side of his abode were those of buffaloes, and goats, and gazelle, in the sight of which he took great pleasure.

Chapter 8. The Triumphs of Abba Elijah

And we also saw another priest in the desert of Antinoë, the metropolis of the Thebaïd, whose name was Elijah; he was about one hundred and ten years old, and the monks used to say that the spirit of Elijah the Prophet rested upon him. Now this blessed man Elijah was famous in the desert, for he had lived therein for seventy years, and it is wholly impossible to find a word which would adequately describe the sterility and desolation of that desert, and of the mountain in which he lived. He never went down to Shainâ, but there was a narrow path along which a man could walk with the greatest difficulty and make his way to him [guided] 339 22a by the rough stones which were placed on both sides of the way; and his dwelling was under a rock in the cave. Now his appearance was terrible, for by reason of old age which had laid its hold upon him he trembled greatly; nevertheless he worked signs daily, and he never ceased to heal the sick. And the fathers told us concerning him that there was no man among them who could remember the time when he went up [to live] in the mountain. In his old age he used to eat three ounces of bread every evening, and three olives, but in his early manhood he partook of food only once a week, and subsisted thereon.

Chapter 9. The Triumph of the Blessed Apollo [and Ammon]

And we saw also another priest, whose name was Apollo, who lived in the Thebaid, on the borders of Hermopolis, whereunto our Redeemer went with Mary and Joseph, that there might be fulfilled the word of Isaiah (xix, i), who said, "Behold the Lord is mounted upon swift clouds and shall go into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall tremble before Him, and shall fall upon the earth." And we also saw there the house of idols wherein all the idols that were in it fell down upon their faces on the ground when our Redeemer went into that city. And we saw, moreover, that this man who dwelt in the desert was the Abbâ of five hundred monks who lived in the monasteries which stood around the base of the mountain, and that he was exceedingly well known throughout the land of Thebaïs; for he possessed the excellent virtues of the ascetic life, and God performed many great and mighty deeds through him, and very many signs took place by his hand. And this man Apollo, whose ascetic labours were so wonderful from his youth up, in the time of his old age was held to be worthy of an act of grace from God, for when he was eighty years of age he took possession of a great monastery containing five hundred marvellous men, who were also able to work miracles, and when he was fifteen years [older] (i.e., when he was ninety-five years of age), he departed from this world, having lived for forty years in the inner desert, where he led a perfectly spiritual life.

And towards the end he heard a voice like unto that of an angel, which said unto him, "Apollo, I am about to destroy the wisdom of the wise men of Egypt by thy hands, and I will remove the knowledge, which is not knowledge, of the fools of the nations; and thou shalt destroy for Me with them also the wise men of Babel (i.e., Babylon of Egypt), and thou shalt wipe out all the service of devils. And now, get thee away quickly to the desert, to the region thereof which is nigh unto the habitations of men, for thou shalt beget for Me a holy people, who shall be exalted by [their] good works." Then Apollo made answer, and said, " My Lord, take Thou away from me pride, lest peradventure I become [unduly] exalted over the brotherhood, and I lose all the blessing thereof." And the [divine] voice spoke again unto him, and said, " Place thine hand upon thy neck, and whatsoever thou layest hold upon, take it down and bury it in the sand"; then he quickly laid his hand upon his neck, and laid hold upon a small Ethiopian, and he buried him in the sand, as the creature cried out and

said, " I am the spirit of pride." And again the voice came to him, and said, " Get thee gone, and whatsoever thou shalt ask from thy God shall be given unto thee."

So the blessed man, having heard [this], straightway set out to come to Shainâ, in the time of Julian, the Emperor [and] tyrant. And at first he lived in the desert which was nigh unto Shainâ, in a small cave which he found there on the side (or base) of the mountain, and his occupation was as follows:—he offered up prayer unto God the whole day through, that is to say, he prayed one hundred times in the night, and as many times in the day, and he bowed his knees when he prayed. As concerning his food he took no care whatsoever, for that was given unto him by God, and it was brought into the desert by an angel; his apparel consisted of a short-sleeved garment which covered his body, and a small napkin which he wore on his head, and these remained upon him in the desert and never wore out. He lived in the desert which was nigh unto Shainâ in the power of the spirit, and he worked miracles, and performed many wonderful cures, the glory of which it is impossible for a man to describe, but we have heard thereof from the elders who were with him, and who were also perfect men, and from the heads and governors of the brotherhood. This man, then, was famous as a new prophet, and as an apostle who had appeared in our generation.

And when his fame had travelled abroad on all sides, all the monks who lived scattered about in various places came unto him in a body as unto a true father, and they offered themselves to him as an offering. And the blessed man stirred up some of them to divine visions, and others to glorious deeds of spiritual excellence, but he first of all shewed them by actual examples the things which he was exhorting them to do by his words, and he incited them on several occasions to perform work of ascetic excellence. One Sunday after another he ate with them, but he tasted nothing but the herbs which grew of themselves in the earth, and he ate neither bread, nor pulse, nor the fruit of trees, nor anything which had been prepared by fire.

Now in the reign of Julian, the blessed Apollo heard that a certain brother, who had been seized for military service, had been thrown into prison, and he took brethren, and went to visit him, and to comfort him; and having gone to him, he told that brother to endure the suffering, and to despise the tribulations which were surging in upon him, for the sake of the hope which is to come. Now that time was a season of strife, and the believing mind was sorely tried by the temptations which came upon it. And when he had strengthened the soul of the brother by such words as these, one of those who had been appointed by the Chiliarch to guard [him] came and said unto the Chiliarch, "The brethren wish to get that man out [of the prison]. Now when the Chiliarch heard this, he rose up, and came in an evil fury, and shut the doors of the prison, and set seals [upon them], and appointed stricter guards, and thus confined the blessed man, and all the brethren who were with him, in the prison, saying, "These men also are useful for military service," and then he departed to his house without listening to the petition they made to him.

But in the middle of the night the angel of the Lord, who held a lamp in his hand, lit up with his light the whole prison-house so brightly that all the watchmen were astonished, and

they entreated the brethren who were therein to go away from them, and the doors were opened before them; and they said, "It is better for us to die for them, than to neglect the freedom which hath been sent from God to men who have been imprisoned in an unseemly manner. And the Chiliarch and the noblemen who were with him came in the morning to the prison-house, and pressed the brethren to depart from the city, for his house had fallen down through an earthquake, and had buried the noble folk of his house; and when they heard this they went forth, and glorified God with a loud voice, and they departed to the desert with rejoicings.

Now all these brethren lived together after the example of the Apostles, and they possessed one mind and one soul, and the blessed man admonished them daily that they should excel in glorious works, and that they should drive away quickly and immediately to a distance, before they came, the evil crafts of the Calumniator which burst into the thoughts. For he said, "When the head of the serpent is bruised all his body dieth, for our Lord commanded us to be watchful against the head of the serpent, which is this:—We must not only take care that filthy and corrupt thoughts do not come into our minds, but we must blot out also the hateful appearances which are produced in our minds. Now, therefore, strive eagerly and earnestly that ye may emulate each other in the gloriousness of the ascetic works, so that no man may be found to be in any way inferior to his neighbour in spiritual excellence. And this is the sign that ye have approached the glory of ascetic labours, if ye can keep your bodies from the passions of the lusts; for the beginning of the gift of God is when a man acquireth also the manifestation of the wonderful [character] which is from God, lest peradventure he become [unduly] exalted thereby, or be lifted up in his thoughts, as if he were superior to his fellows, and lest he become like a man who maketh it to appear that he is worthy of all this grace; but if not, he will certainly forget that he lacketh divine grace, and that it hath been snatched away from his mind."

Now therefore this man possessed the precious treasure of great doctrine in his mind, which we also heard from him on another occasion, and his works were more excellent than his teaching; for every petition which he asked of God was granted unto him, and visions also appeared unto him; for on one occasion he saw that his brother, who was older than he, and who also brought his life to an end in the desert, possessed more spiritual works than himself. And he saw, as in a dream, that he had become a counterpart of the Apostles, and that God had made him to inherit glory, and he was begging and entreating Him to bring about his departure from the world speedily, so that he might rest with him in heaven, and that it was said unto him by our Redeemer, "It is necessary for Apollo to live upon the earth a little longer, until many shall become perfect through envy of his glorious deeds, for he is prepared to be set over a great nation of monks, and of men who cultivate righteousness, so that he may receive glory proportionate to his labour."

Such were the things which he saw, and they came to pass in connexion with the congregation of monks who came to him, and who, through his abundant doctrine, and through his numerous ascetic habits, became aliens to the world. And a great monastery for brethren

grew up about him in the mountain, and at length five hundred men came to live there together; they had their habitation in common, and they sat at meat at one table, and verily, they appeared to be as angels, and they were like unto workers who were ornamented with princely ornaments, and were arrayed in white apparel. Thus were fulfilled the words of the Scriptures which say, "The dry desert shall rejoice, and the open plain shall leap for joy" (Isaiah xxxv, 1); and, again, "Shout, and cry out, O thou who hast never brought forth, for the children of the barren woman are more numerous than those of her who hath had a husband" (Isaiah liv, 1). And the word of the Prophet concerning the church among the Gentiles was fulfilled, and was completed also by the desert of Egypt, for the sons of God were more numerous there than in the land which had become settled and occupied by people. For in many of the cities of Egypt true congregations of monks increased even as they drew nigh to God in the desert thereof, and in proportion as the nation was at peace even so did the monks multiply in the desert of Egypt, and in them were fulfilled the words of the Apostle (Romans v, 20), who said, "Where sin increased there also did grace abound."

Now at one time in Egypt the exceedingly abominable worship of idols was more common than among any other nation, for they worshipped dogs, and apes, and other things, and even garlic, and onions, and common garden herbs were considered to be gods, according to what we heard the holy man Apollo say, and he described the reason for the worship of idols which existed among the Egyptians, and said, "These heathen, and the early inhabitants of the country worshipped the bull because he was useful in ploughing the ground wherefrom they obtained their food, and they worshipped the waters of the Nile which irrigated their whole country, and also the earth itself which yielded to them excellent crops, and which is far more excellent than the soil of other countries. And they held in reverence their other polluted things, that is to say, dogs, and apes, and all their abominable animals and vegetables, because they had been to them the cause of redemption; now they had been brought to naught in the time of Pharaoh, when he and those who were with him were drowned whilst the children of Israel were pursued by them. For they did not cleave unto Pharaoh in that day, but each man among them made that which was his familiar [spirit] his god, and said, 'This is my god, and through him I shall not perish with Pharaoh.'"

Such were the things which were in the discourse of Apollo, but it is meet that we should write down his deeds before his words. Once heathen peoples dwelt in the various places which were round about the blessed man, and the ten villages which were near him were very wicked, and they went astray in respect of the worship of idols. In one of these villages was a temple, and the idol which was in that village was very famous, and he was made of wood, and the priests danced before him, and carried him about in a procession from village to village, and then the people who were with him leaped and danced about. And once, when they were performing their play on the bank of the river, the blessed Apollo, and a few brethren who were with him, happened to be passing through the district at that time, and, when from a distance he saw the crowd which had begun its devilish sports, he bowed the knee on the spot where he was, and prayed to the Redeemer of all, and straightway all the people became bound with cords, and he put all the heathen in such a state that

they were unable to crawl away from where they were, and as they were not able to depart from that place, one by one became parched [with thirst], and was obliged to suffer under the fierce heat of the sun the whole day long, and they marvelled at what had happened to them. Then their priests said, "There is a certain Christian in your borders, and it is he who hath done these things to them," now they were speaking of the blessed man Apollo, who, by means of his prayers had brought to naught their festival, "and it is right that we should make entreaty unto him that we may not come into tribulation."

And when the inhabitants of the country round about them heard [these things], they came at the sound of the uproar and asked them, saying, "What is this commotion which hath suddenly come upon you? And what is the cause thereof? And they said, "We do not know, but we have a suspicion, we confess, of a certain man who is a Christian, and who liveth on the side of the mountain, and it is right that we should make entreaty to him. Then the inhabitants bore testimony, saying, "Yea, this blessed man did pass through this country," and the priests begged them that they would help them at once; and, wishing [to know] whether they were able to move the idol from his place, they brought oxen to draw him along, but the idol and the oxen became like unto beings who had been fixed there a long time. Now when there was not a (successful) issue to their undertaking on any side whatsoever, and no [help could be obtained] by entreating the people round about them, the priests of the idol sent to the holy man, saying that, if they were delivered from that place, they would turn aside from all their error. And when all these things had been told to the blessed man by a message, that servant of God came down quickly, and prayed over them, and released them from that restraint;

and straightway they all followed him, and they believed in the Redeemer, the Lord of all, Who doeth wonderful things, and they straightway delivered the idol over to burn in the fire, and they became converted, and were baptized, and were added to the number of the sons of the Church, and many of them live to this very day in the habitation of the monastery. Thereupon the report of this old man went forth quickly into every place, and so many people believed on the Lord through him that in those borders henceforward no man gave himself the name of "heathen."

And after a short time two villages quarrelled and fought over certain fields, and as soon as the blessed man heard thereof he went down to them quickly, that he might sow peace between them; now the men who were on one side would not be persuaded by his words, but they disputed them for the reason that they were relying, forsooth, upon a certain mighty man, who was a captain of a band of thieves, and he stood up on their behalf in the struggle. And when the holy Apollo saw this man disputing fiercely, he said unto him, "If thou wilt be persuaded by me, O my beloved, I will beseech our Lord to forgive thee thy sins"; and when the man heard these words, without any hesitation whatsoever he threw his weapons away from him, and fell at the knees of the holy man, and he turned his partisans back into their houses. And when there was peace between them, and every man had departed to his place this famous captain of thieves clung to the blessed man, and entreated him and

openly demanded from him [the fulfilment of] his promise; and the holy man took him with him to the desert, and entreated him, and admonished him to be patient and said unto him, "God is able to grant thee this thing."

And when it was night the two men saw in a dream that they were standing before the throne in heaven, and the two men also saw that the angels and the righteous men were worshipping God; and when they also knelt down on their knees, and bowed down on their faces before Christ, the voice of God came to them, saying, "What connexion hath light with darkness? Or what portion hath the believer with the unbeliever? (2 Corinthians vi, 14, 15.) Why then doth this murderer stand with this righteous man, seeing that he is not worthy of this sight? But, O man, get thee gone, for behold, this little one among thy sons who hath taken refuge in thee shall be saved because of thee." Now they saw and also heard many other things which the mouth must not dare to utter nor the ear to hear. And when they woke up they related the dream to those [who were with them], and those who heard how exceedingly glorious were the stories of these men [marvelled] that two men were able to relate one and the same dream. Now the captain of thieves remained in the monastery with the monks, and led therein a life of ascetic excellence until his departure from the world; and from being a wolf he had turned into a simple lamb; and in him was fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah (xi, 6, 7), who said, "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat chopped straw like the ox."

And we saw also there Ethiopians who lived with the monks, and they excelled to such a degree in the ascetic life that in them were fulfilled the words which are said in the Book, "Kûsh (Ethiopia) shall deliver the hand unto God" (Psalm lxviii, 31). And on another occasion when [the heathen] were arming against the Christians because of [a dispute concerning] the boundaries of certain territories, the blessed Apollo came to make peace between them. Now a certain chief of the force of the heathen was boasting and saying, "There can never be peace until death," and the blessed man said unto him, "According to thy word even so let it be, for no man on either side shall die except thyself; and the earth shall not be thy grave, but the bellies of wild beasts." And it came to pass that the man died, and in the morning his body was found, having been torn to pieces by vultures and hyenas; and when the conclusion of the matter was known they gave thanks, and believed in Christ, saying, "This man is certainly a prophet."

Now the dwelling-place of the blessed Apollo was formerly in a cave, with five brethren who had been converted by him in the desert before he left the wilderness. And when the Easter Festival came, and they had performed the service of God in the cave, they made ready to eat whatsoever food they had; now their food consisted of a small quantity of dried bread and pickled vegetables. And the blessed Apollo said unto them, "O my sons, if we are believers and true servants of Christ, each one of us, let us entreat God to give us whatsoever He willeth to eat"; and they devoted their whole petition to this object, despising themselves as men who were unworthy of this gracious gift. And when the blessed man had prayed with a joyful countenance, and had made an end of his prayer, and they had all said, "Amen,"

they found there in the night certain men standing by the door of the cave, and the men were strangers, whom no man knew, and they said concerning themselves that they had come from a far country. And they had brought with them from that country many things of which the brethren had never heard, and which existed not in the land of Egypt, that is to say, various kinds of fruits from Paradise;

grapes, and pomegranates, and figs, and nuts, and almonds, which at that period did not exist [in Egypt], and honey in the comb, and a box of milk (or butter), and dates of huge size, and ten loaves of bread which were still hot; and the men who had brought these things gave them unto them under the pretence that they had been sent by a great and rich and honourable man, and then they returned to their own country with the greatest haste and diligence. Then the holy men partook of what had been sent to them, and the food was sufficient [to last them] until Pentecost. And whilst they were wondering and saying, "Verily, these have been sent unto us by God," one of the monks who were with him entreated the blessed Apollo that he might offer up a prayer for him to be worthy of the gracious gift, and having offered up a prayer on his behalf, the graces of humility, and of graciousness (or happiness), and of patient endurance, were bestowed upon him to such a degree that many marvelled at the excellence of the humility which he possessed. And the fathers related to us stories of the wonderful and mighty works which he performed, and many brethren testified concerning the miracles [which he wrought].

And a short time afterwards there was a great famine in the district of Thebaïs, and when the peoples of the country who were dwelling in that place heard that the monks who were with the blessed man were living without labour, they gathered themselves together, and came to him with their wives and children, and asked him for alms and for food, and he, like a man who did not fear that peradventure food would be wanting for himself and those who were with him, gave unto all those who had come to him that which was sufficient for each one of them from day to day. And when three baskets full of bread were all that remained, and the famine was still severe, he commanded and they brought these baskets into the midst [of them, and he found that] they would only suffice for one day's food for the monks and those who were with them; and in the presence of all the crowds, who were listening, and the whole brotherhood of monks, he said with a loud voice, "Is not the hand of the Lord able to increase [these]? "For thus saith the Holy Spirit, 'Bread shall not be wanting'" "in these baskets until we all eat new bread.'" And all those who were near him said, "In very truth the bread was sufficient to feed them for four months.

And he was in the habit of doing thus from time to time in respect of oil and wheat, until Satan came and said unto him, "Peradventure," "thou art Elijah, or another of the Prophets, or one of the Apostles that thou darest to act thus? Then the blessed man said to him, "And why should I not act thus? Were not the holy Prophets and the blessed Apostles men? And have not [the Fathers] handed down [to us] the tradition that they used to do such things? Or, is our Lord akin to them at one time and remote from them at another? Therefore, at

all times God is able to do things like unto these, and there is nothing which is difficult for Him. If then God is good, why art thou, O corrupt one, evil?"

Why now should I not describe the things which we saw with our own eyes? Now at the time when the five hundred brethren were about to refresh themselves the baskets came in full, and when the brethren had eaten and were filled from them, by the blessing of the blessed man they went forth still being full. And it is right that we should describe another miracle which we saw there and marvelled at. Now when we three brethren went to visit the blessed Apollo, and the brethren saw us from where he was, they recognized us by the descriptions which they had heard from him of our journey, and they met us with gladness and sang songs of praise, for such is the custom with all the brethren. And having bowed down with their faces to the ground, they rose up, and gave us the salutation of peace, and said to their companions, "Behold, the brethren of whom our Abbâ spake unto us three days ago have come to us," for he had said, "Behold, after three days three brethren will come to you from Jerusalem." And some of the brethren were going before us, rejoicing and singing Psalms, and some followed behind answering them, until we arrived at the place where the blessed man was; and when our father Apollo heard the sound of their singing, he also came forth to meet us, according to the custom of the brethren, and when he saw us, he was the first to bow low to the ground, and he stretched out his hand, and rose up, and kissed us, and he led us in, and prayed, and washed our feet with his own hands, and pressed us to rest ourselves and to partake of food, for it was his custom to do this to all the brethren who came to visit him.

Now the brethren who were with him did not approach their food straightway, but they first of all partook of the Eucharist of Christ together; and they used to do this daily at the season of prayer at the ninth hour, and afterwards they ate their meal; whilst they were sitting at meat they learned his commandments until the time for sleep, and afterwards some of them would go forth into the desert and repeat the Scriptures by heart, the whole night long, whilst others would take their meal with him and would glorify God until the morning. And we ourselves saw that such men began to sing the Psalms and hymns of praise in the evening, and that they continued to sing them until the day broke. Now many of them used to come down at the time of the ninth hour and receive the Eucharist, and then return to their places, and the spiritual food alone would be sufficient for them till the ninth hour on the day following; even thus did they, and many of them would continue to do thus, and remain without [ordinary] food for several days at a time, even from one Sunday to another.

And we observed their joy in the desert, with which nothing on the earth, and no bodily delight, can be compared, for there was among them no man who was sorry or afflicted with grief, and if any man was found to be in affliction, our father Apollo knew the cause thereof, and was able to make known to him the secret thoughts of his mind. And he would say unto such an one, "It is not seemly for us to be afflicted at our redemption, for we are those who are about to inherit the kingdom of heaven; but let the Jews weep, and let the

men of iniquity be in mourning, and let the righteous rejoice. For they have their happiness in earthly things, and they cultivate the things of earth, and why should not we, who are worthy of the blessed hope, rejoice always, even according to the encouraging words of the blessed Apostle Paul, who said unto us, 'Rejoice in our Lord always, and pray at all seasons, and in everything give thanks" (1 Thessalonians v, 16-18).

And what shall a man say concerning the grace which dwelt in the words of the blessed Apollo, and concerning his other glorious qualities, about which, because of their great number, we keep silence, and concerning which we have heard from others? Now he discussed many things concerning strenuousness in ascetic deeds together with us, and exhorted us how to receive the brethren, and he told us that when the brethren came to visit us it was seemly to bow low before them, "Not," he said, "that we bow down before them, but before the God Who is in them. [When] thou seest thy brother, thou seest Christ. The custom of urging the brethren from time to time to come in and rest and refresh themselves we have derived from Abraham, and also from Lot, who pressed the angels [to stay with him]. And if it be possible it is fitting that the monks should partake of the Mysteries of Christ each day, and whosoever shall make himself to be remote from them shall remove himself from God; and whosoever shall do this shall receive our Redeemer always. For the voice of our Life-giver saith thus, 'He who eateth My Body, and drinketh My Blood, remaineth in Me and I in him,' and it is very helpful to monks to remember the Passion of our Redeemer at all times, because by the remembrance thereof which we thus keep we become worthy of the forgiveness of our sins always. Therefore it is right that we should always make ourselves worthy to receive the holy Mysteries of our Redeemer.

"Let then no man remit the well-known fasts which have been ordained unless it be for some cause [which] worketh tribulation. We keep the fast on the fourth day of the week because on that day the Jews plotted to betray our Lord, and also on the eve of the Sabbath because on that day He was crucified, and he who remitteth these becometh one of the betrayers and a Jew; but if thy brother cometh to thee during a period of fasting, and is in need of refreshment, although the time be unseasonable, set before him thy table [and let him eat] by himself, and if he wisheth not this, constrain him not, for this is an universal tradition [of hospitality]." And the blessed man blamed severely those who wore woven stuffs and dressed their hair in such a way that they would be seen by children of men to be fasting, and he called them seekers after the vainglory of men, for monks should humble their bodies by fasting and abstinence, and should work the things which are good in secret; and those who do not these things shew themselves only unto the multitude.

And what shall one say concerning all the teachings of the blessed man, which resembled his life and deeds, and which it is impossible for a man to write down, or even to mention in a fitting manner? On several occasions we conversed together the whole Sabbath, and when he was escorting us [on our way back] he said to us, "May ye have peace one with one another, and let no man separate himself from his companion on the way." Then he said to the brethren who were with him, " Who among you is willing of his own accord to

go and escort [these] brethren on the way to the other fathers?" And, with but very few exceptions, all the brethren sought anxiously to go with us and to escort us on our way; but the holy man Apollo selected three of them, men who were mighty in their ascetic labours, and understanding in their speech. Now they had been instructed in the languages of the Greeks, and the Romans, and the Egyptians, and, sending them with us, he commanded them not to leave us until we had seen all the fathers whom we wished to see, and had rejoiced in holding converse with them. Now it would have been impossible for a man to see all the fathers, even in the whole period of his life. Then he blessed us, and sent us away, saying, "May the Lord bless thee out of Zion, and may ye see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life" (Psalm cxxviii, 5).

And as we were journeying along our way through the desert, at the season of noon, we suddenly saw the marks of a monster serpent which had been lying like a log of wood on the sand, and we were afraid, but the brethren who were with us bade us be of good courage, saying, "Fear ye not, but come and see us slay him by faith For we have slain with our own hands many snakes, and asps, and vipers, so that there may be fulfilled that which is written, 'I have given to you power to trample under foot serpents and scorpions, and all the power of the Enemy'" (St. Luke x, 19). Now we, because of our terror, begged the brethren that we might go straight on our journey, and might not follow the trail of the serpent, but one of them left us, and went forth and wandered about tracking the creature by the marks which it had left behind it, until at length he stood over its hole, and he besought us to go and see it, and the brethren who were with us encouraged us so to do, and we went there feeling afraid. Then a certain brother came to meet us, and led us to the monastery, and he said to us, "Ye are not able to resist the attack of the serpent, for he is fifteen cubits long, and, moreover, I have never seen a serpent larger than this one"; and conformably to his words we remained in our places. And the brother [who had found the serpent's hole] went and begged that brother to let us go and slay the serpent, and blamed us because of our little faith, but he turned him back, and then took all of us into his monastery, and made us rest therein, and he related to me the following story:—

In the times which are past a certain holy man, whose name was Ammon, used to dwell in this monastery, and he it was who converted me, and the thieves used to vex him, for they stole his apparel and his food, and by reason of their vexatious attacks he went forth and departed into the desert; and he brought two great serpents and commanded them to guard the door of his abode, and when the thieves came according to their custom, they saw the serpents and marvelled, and, by reason of their fear, they fell down on their faces upon the ground. Then, having gone forth and seen the thieves, the blessed man spake unto them, and reviled them, saying, "Observe how much worse ye are than the serpents! These creatures are, for God's sake, obedient to our command, but ye are neither afraid of God, nor do ye hold His servants in reverence"; and he took them into his dwelling, and fed them, and admonished them, and told [them] that they ought to change their mode of life. And straightway they repented and took up their habitation in a monastery, and they excelled more than many in spiritual works, until at length they also were able to work miracles.

Now on another occasion the inhabitants of that country came to the blessed Ammon, and made complaints to him about another serpent, and they entreated him to destroy it off their land because it used to slay their sheep and cattle; but he, as one who was not able to help them, dismissed them, and they went away in sorrow. And in the morning he rose up, and went to the place over which that serpent used to pass, and he knelt down there in prayer; now when the serpent came to pass by there, according to his wont, and saw the blessed man, he blew upon him, and hissed, and darted forward to strike him three times. Then the blessed man said unto him boldly, "May Christ, the Son of God, Who is about to destroy the great serpent, destroy thee also"; and immediately that he had uttered the word, the serpent burst asunder, and all his gall and blood came forth. And when the inhabitants of the country came and saw the serpent, they marvelled, and at the command of the blessed man, because of the stench, they heaped up the sand upon the serpent, but without the word of Abbâ Ammon they would not have approached the reptile, even though he was dead.

And on one occasion, whilst a certain youth was pasturing sheep, it happened that he saw that serpent, and he was smitten with wonder, and threw himself down in the field without saying a word; and his kinsfolk went forth to seek him, and they found him at eventide in a wretched and terror-stricken state, and they brought him to the blessed Ammon, and told him that they did not know the cause of his condition, and were ignorant of what had happened unto him; and the blessed man prayed, and anointed him with oil, and the boy was healed, and related what had happened to him, and for this reason especially the blessed man was constrained to destroy that serpent.

Chapter 10. The Triumphs of Abba Apellen

And we saw also another Abbâ whose name was Apellen, and he had persevered in the sternest and most austere ascetic labours with the brethren who were by his side, from his youth up; and on several occasions he carried fire in his bosom, and stirred up the brethren to give a manifestation also of the miracles [which] they could [work], and he said unto them, "If ye are, in very truth, servants of God, make manifest forthwith glorious miracles." And whensoever he was by himself in the desert, and the desire to eat honey rose up in him, straightway he would find a honeycomb on a rock, and he used to say, "Get thee gone from me, O evil desire, for it is written, 'Ye shall walk in the spirit, and ye shall not perform the lust of the flesh" (Galatians v, 16); and then he would leave the honeycomb [on the rock] and depart. And again, when he had fasted for three weeks in the desert, and he found some fruit which had been blown down,

353 he answered and said, "I will neither taste nor touch it, lest I make to offend my brother, that is to say, myself. For it is written that 'man liveth not by bread alone'" (St. Matthew iv, 4). Then he fasted another week also, and he slept a little, and an angel came unto him in a dream, and said unto him, "Rise up, and take as much as thou canst, and eat [it]." Then he rose up, and looked round about him, and he saw a fountain of water, and roots, which were exceedingly to be desired, were growing round it; and when he had drunk [some] water, and had eaten [some] green herbs, he said, "There is nothing so sweet and pleasant as this anywhere." Now he found in that country a little cave, and he dwelt therein for a few days without any food, and when he began to feel an hungered, he knelt down, and prayed, and straightway he found his food placed by his side, that is to say, hot bread, and olives, and fruits of various kinds.

And from time to time he used to visit the brethren who lived near him in the desert, and he admonished them frequently. On one occasion he was very anxious to go to his own desert, and to carry there such things as were necessary for him of the blessings (i.e., gifts) which the brethren had given him, and as he was going along the way he saw some goats feeding and he said unto them, "In the Name of Jesus Christ, let one of you carry this load"; and straightway one of them came, and he placed his hands upon [its back], and bowed himself,

and sat upon it, and he arrived at his cave in one day. On another occasion the blessed man spread out his bread in the sun, and the wild animals came according to their custom to the fountain of water [where it was], and any animal which approached the bread died.

And on another occasion he went to certain monks on the first day of the week, and he saw that they were ceasing to perform the service of the Holy Mysteries, and he blamed them, saying, "Why do ye not perform your service? And they said unto him, "Because no priest hath come unto us from over the river"; and he said unto them, "I will go after him, and call him. Then they made answer unto him, saying, "It is impossible for any man to cross over the river, both on account of its depth, and because of the crocodiles which destroy human beings"; but he went a little distance and came to the place where the river was usually crossed, and he seated himself fearlessly upon the back of a crocodile, and passed over [to the other side]. And having gone and found the priest, he entreated him not to neglect the brethren, and when the priest saw that Apellen was dressed in old and ragged garments, he marvelled at his humility, and at the poorness of his apparel; and he clung to him, and followed him to the cave. Now when they came [to the river] and found no boat to take them over, the blessed man Apellen cried out with a loud voice to that crocodile, which straightway heard him and came to him, and it made ready its back before the holy man to sit upon;

and the blessed man entreated the priest to sit with him and pass over to the other side, but when the priest saw the crocodile, he was afraid, and he returned to his own place. And the brethren, who were dwelling in the mountain on the other side of the river, feared when they saw the blessed man sitting in the water on the back of the crocodile; and as soon as he had crossed over on to dry land, and had come up [out of the water], he slew the crocodile, saying, "Death is better for thee than punishment for the souls which thou hast already slain, and wouldst slay"; and the animal died straightway.

And Apellen remained with the brethren three days, and he sat and taught them the commandments, and the thoughts which one of them had secretly he made clear and plain before them, saying, "This man is vexed by lust, and this man by love of vainglory, and this by evil dislike, and this by pride, and this by arrogance, and this by envy, and this by boasting, and this by anger, and this by greediness, and this by avarice; and this man is humble, and this man is straight, and these men are praiseworthy and good, and these are bad and rebellious." And he admonished [them] and shewed forth [these things], and when the brethren heard them they marvelled, for in very truth it was even as [he had said]. And he also said, "Prepare for us a meal of garden herbs, for many brethren are coming to us," and when they had prepared them, the brethren came, and they saluted each other; and one of them entreated him to let him be with him in the desert, and the blessed man said unto him, "Thou art not able to endure the temptations of devils," and at length the brother said, "I can bear everything." Then having received him Abba Apellen commanded him to dwell in a cave by the side of him. But the devils came by night and sought to strangle him. Now first of all they troubled him sorely with filthy thoughts, and that brother fled, and departed

from the cave. And when he had shewn all these things to the blessed Apellen, the Abba set out and made for him an abode at a distance, and he commanded them to there live without fear.

And on a certain occasion when they were in the cave they lacked bread, and an angel in the form of a brother brought them food, and once, when ten of the brethren had been seek- 355 23a ing him by another way, and had found him after they had been fasting for seven days, he commanded them to come in and to rest and refresh themselves in his cave; and when they reminded him about the food, he said unto them, ”God is able to prepare for us food in the wilderness,” and immediately an angel of God in the form of a beautiful youth stood and knocked at the door whilst they were praying; and they opened the door, and [found there] a youth carrying a large basket wherein were bread and olives, and they took it from him, and ate therefrom, and gave thanks unto God, and the youth removed himself from them. These and many other wonderful things were performed by the blessed Apellen.

Chapter 11. The Triumphs of another Apollo, and of John, the dweller in the Desert

And we also saw another holy man in the region of 'Or (or Akûr, i.e., Acre), whose name was also Apollo, who was a righteous man; his handicraft was originally that of a blacksmith, but he had been converted to the way of truth, and he laboured afterwards in the service of the brethren, and supplied their needs. And on one occasion Satan came unto him in the form of a woman, who appeared to be anxious to work in the service of the brethren, and the blessed man happened at the time to be working at his trade, and he took up the red-hot iron and thrust it into the woman's face, and burned it so severely that she shrieked out, and the brethren who were in the chambers heard her cries. And from that time forward the blessed man was able to hold red-hot iron in his hands without being hurt. And this man also received us, and gave us refreshment, and he related unto us the histories of the men who had lived with him in that country, and of those who still lived there, and said :—

There is in this desert one of our brethren whose name is John, who is now exceedingly old, and whose works of ascetic excellence are superior to those of all the other monks in the country. No man can find him at once, because he wandereth about from place to place in the desert. During the early period [of his life] he stood for three whole years praying, and he never sat down or went to sleep, but he was in the habit of snatching a little sleep as he stood. A certain priest used to bring him the Offering (i.e., sacramental bread) from Sunday to Sunday, and besides that he ate nothing. And one day the devil stood up in the form of a priest, and was exceedingly anxious to bring him a woman, but as soon as the blessed John had recognized him, he said unto him, "Out upon thee, O thou who art full of guile, thou father of all falsehood, thou enemy of all righteousness! Wilt thou never cease to lead astray the souls of Christians? And dost thou dare to trample underfoot even the Holy Mysteries? Then the Devil said unto him, "A very little more, and I should have been master over thee in thy fall, for thus have I led many a man astray, and I have driven him out of his mind and made him mad, but when many holy men made supplication to God on his behalf in their prayers, he came back to his senses.

And having said these things unto him the Devil departed from him. Now the legs of the blessed man burst open because of standing over much upon them, and a discharge of water and pus ran from them; but the angel [of the Lord] drew nigh unto him and said, " The Lord shall be thy meat and the Holy Spirit thy drink, and thou mayest be certain that this spiritual food shall suffice for thee. And having healed his wounds he made him to pass from that place. Then the blessed man went about in the desert and fed himself upon roots, and he used to come Sunday by Sunday to his place and partake of the Holy [Offering].

Now a certain man who was paralysed wished to go to him and be healed, and immediately his legs touched the back of the ass which he was going to ride, through his faith only they were healed, before the holy man had offered up even a prayer on his behalf. On one occasion the holy man John begged the priest who ministered unto him to bring him a few palm leaves, as it were for pleasure, and he brought them to him, and the blessed man plaited them together; and the priest took some of the plaits and made a girth of them for his ass. Now there was a certain paralytic who wished to go to the blessed man and be healed, and he entreated the priest to carry him to him; and the priest took him and set him upon the ass, and immediately his legs touched the back of the ass which he was going to ride and the girth which the blessed man John had plaited, through his faith only they were healed, before the holy man had offered up even a prayer on his behalf. (Such is the story as told in another manuscript.) On another occasion he sent a gift (or blessing) to those who were ill, and immediately they had tasted it they were healed of their sicknesses.

And on another occasion it was revealed to him that some of the brethren of his monasteries were not upright in their lives and works; and he wrote an epistle to them all, and accused the elders of being negligent, and the brethren of running after adulation, and it was known that this really was so. And he wrote also to the fathers who were neglectful, and who held lightly the salvation of the brethren who were with them, and he told the others to amend their lives, and to make their deeds better, and he revealed [to them] also how that a reward (or penalty) was laid up for both groups of them. And he called the others to perfection in the spiritual life and its works, and he reminded them that they must neglect the things which are visible, and follow after those which are invisible. "For it is time that we shewed forth the manner of our life and the works thereof, and it is meet that we should not pass the whole period of our lives [as] children and youths, but we must draw nigh unto the perfection of knowledge, and take up our stand upon the majesty of [its] glory." These and many other things did our father, the holy man Apollo, relate to us concerning the blessed John, and we marvelled at the greatness thereof. Now we have not written them all down, not because they were not true, but because of the want of faith of various men; but we ourselves believe them to be true, and we are fully persuaded that they are so, because those who related unto us the wonderful things of his life and deeds had certainly seen them with their own eyes, and these men were both numerous and great.

Chapter 12. The Triumphs of Abba Paphnutius, the Spiritual Merchant

And we saw also the place of the dwelling of the blessed Paphnutius, a great and glorious man who had departed from this world, and had brought his life to a close but a very short time before in the district of Herakleia which is in Thebaïs; and concerning this man many men relate very many mighty things. For after he had performed great spiritual deeds, he entreated God to inform him which of the saints whose lives had been pleasing unto Him he resembled; and an angel appeared unto him and said, "Thou art like such and such a singer who liveth in such and such a city." Then the blessed man made his way to the singer with great zeal and diligence, and having found him, he asked him about his deeds, and made enquiries [concerning his life]. And the singer made answer unto him, telling him at the same time what was actually the truth, saying, "I am a sinner, and a miserable wretch, and a whoremonger, and it is only a short time ago since I gave up a life of theft and became as I am." And when Paphnutius enquired of him, "What hast thou done which is good?" he made answer unto him, saying, "I did not know that I had ever done anything good except once. When I was a thief I saw a certain virgin of God being forced by thieves, and she was nearly seduced, and I rescued her from them and carried her by night to the city.

"And on another occasion I found a beautiful woman wandering about in the desert, and she had fled from the men of the company of the general and counsellor because of a debt for taxes which her husband had incurred; and she was crying to herself because of her troubles, and because she was compelled to roam about and wander in the desert, and when I saw her I asked her the cause of her weeping. And she made answer unto me and said, 'My lord, ask me no questions, and make no enquiries about a miserable woman [like myself], but take me to be thine handmaiden, and carry me whithersoever thou pleasest. My husband oweth a debt of three hundred darics for taxes to the governor, and behold, during the whole of the past two years he hath been scourged and kept in prison; my three beloved children have been sold into slavery, and I myself have been seized on several occasions, and carried off and beaten cruelly, and [finally] I escaped and fled, and I have been cast forth from place

to place. And now I am here wandering about in this desert, and behold, for the last three days I have eaten nothing whatsoever.' Thereupon I had compassion upon the woman, and I took her to my cave, and gave unto her three hundred dinârs, and then I carried her off to the city so that she might be able to free herself, and to redeem her children and her husband."

Then the blessed Paphnutius made answer unto him, and said, "I do not know in myself that any such thing as this hath been done by me, but thou must have heard concerning my labours and that I am famous, for I have never passed my life in negligence; now God revealed unto me concerning thee and told me that thou wast not inferior to me in thy works. Since the care which God hath for thee is not small, even as He Himself hath shewn me, O brother, neglect not thyself as if thou wert of no account." And immediately the singer cast away from him the reed pipe which he was holding in his hands, and he abandoned the songs which he used to sing to cheer the workmen, and he turned to the sweet words of the Holy Spirit, and he clung to Paphnutius and departed to the desert. And having passed three years in strenuous labour [there] he brought to an end the period of his life with praises and prayers, and with other works of ascetic excellence, and he travelled the road of the heavenly beings, and was numbered among the company of the holy ones and among the army of the righteous, and went to his rest.

And having despatched this man unto God with good and glorious works, and since he had added excellence to his own labours, Paphnutius asked God again to inform him which of the saints he resembled. And again a divine voice came to him, and said, "Thou art like unto a certain chief of a village which 'is near thee"; and straightway Paphnutius went down thereto, and when he had knocked at the door, the master of the house came nigh, as was his wont, to receive strangers, and he opened the door, and brought him inside, and he washed his feet, and set a table before him and entreated him to eat. And the blessed man asked him, saying, "Tell me, O man, 'what fair deeds and actions thou doest, for, according to what God hath made known to me, thou art more excellent than many monks. Then the man said unto him concerning himself, "I am a sinner, and I am not worthy of the heaven 'of the monks. And the blessed man having made enquiries of him persistently, the man answered and said unto him, "I 'do not feel constrained overmuch to relate to thee the history of my deeds, but since thou hast said, I have been sent by God', I will shew thee what I have done. Behold, for the 'last thirty years I have kept myself away from my wife, and three times only have I had intercourse with her; I have three children by her, and they minister unto my affairs.

But to this very day I have never ceased to receive strangers, and no man in my village can boast that he hath excelled me in hospitality to strangers, and no poor man and no stranger have ever departed from me with an empty hand, or without having been suitably supplied by me with provisions for the way. I have never neglected to comfort with my gifts the poor man who hath been brought low. I have never accepted the person of my son in judgement. The possessions of strangers have never entered my house. No strife hath ever taken place

near me which I have not ended peacefully. The members of my house have never been blamed for the committal of abominable deeds, and my flocks and herds have never drawn nigh to the fruits of strangers. I have never sowed my fields except for the poor, and I have set them aside for the pleasure of every man, and I have gathered in that which remained over. I have never allowed the poor man to be carried away by the rich man by force. I have never made a man to grieve in [all] my life. And I have never passed a decree of wickedness upon any man. These, according to the will of God, I know within myself that I have done."

And when the blessed Paphnutius heard the glorious character of the life and works of the man, he kissed him upon the head, and said unto him, "May the Lord bless thee out of Zion, and mayest thou look upon the prosperity of Jerusalem! (Psalm cxxviii, 5.) For these things thou hast performed well, but thou art lacking one of the prime virtues, that is to say, the knowledge of the wisdom of God, which thou wilt not be able to acquire without any labour whatsoever, for a man must deny the world and himself, and must take up the Cross of our Lord, and follow Him." And when that man had heard these things, straightway, without taking counsel with the children of his house, he clung to the blessed man, and went forth with him to the mountain. And when they had come to the bank of the river, and found that there was no boat to be seen, the blessed Paphnutius commanded that they should pass over it on foot, a thing which no man had ever done at this place because of the depth of the stream. And as they were passing over at that place, the water reached up to their backs; and when they had passed over, Paphnutius left him at the place in that country where he, the first one, went to his rest and completed [his life].

Now when he had gone from him a little way, Paphnutius entreated God that he might see which was the most excellent of these, and after the short period of three years, he saw an gels carrying the soul of that man up to heaven, and praising God, and saying, "Blessed is the man in whom Thou hast pleasure, and whom Thou bringest to dwell in Thy habitation" (Psalm lxv, 4); and the righteous were also returning answer, and saying, "May the peace of those who love Thy law increase" (Psalm cxix, 165); and Paphnutius knew that that man had filled full his measure.

And when he had continued in prayer, and had fasted for very long periods, he prayed to God and again entreated Him to shew him which of the saints he resembled, and again the Divine Voice said unto him, "Thou art like unto a merchant who is seeking for beautiful pearls. But arise, and make no long tarrying, for thou shalt meet a man who resembleth thee." So the blessed man went down [from the mountain], and he saw a certain God-fearing Alexandrian merchant, who was trafficking with twenty thousand [pieces of] gold and three ships, and who had come down from the upper part of the Thebaid, and he used to give all his possessions and merchandise to the poor, and to the brethren [and] monks, and he and his household used to take up ten sacks of garden herbs to the blessed man every year. Now when the blessed Paphnutius saw him, he said unto him, "What [meaneth] this, O my beloved?" And the merchant said unto him, "The fruits of my trafficking are for the relief of the righteous, and I offer them unto God." Then the blessed man said unto him, "Wherefore

is it that thou art not honoured by the same name as that which we have?" And the merchant answered and said unto him, "I confess that I have great anxiety so to be called"; and the blessed man said unto him, "How long wilt thou occupy thyself with such earthly things, and wilt not draw nigh unto the things of heaven? Leave, even this very moment, such things to others, and do thou cling to Christ in the things which are [more] excellent, for after a little thou shalt depart unto God."

Then the merchant with joy commanded the members of his household to distribute the remainder of his possessions among the poor, and he went up the mountain, and he confined himself to that place wherein the two men had been crowned, and he awaited God with prayers, and tears, and abundant fastings. And after a short time he also left his corruptible body, and became a son of the city of the heavenly beings. Now since Paphnutius had escorted this man also to heaven, he asked for death for himself also, after the manner of one who was not able to live the life of the upright and glorious deeds which are exalted in majesty; and an angel stood by his side, and said unto him, "Come now, O blessed old man, and take thy rest in the everlasting tabernacles which God hath prepared for the blessed, who stand there [waiting] to receive thee, that is to say, the Prophets in their companies, and the Apostles in their grades; these are they whom thou resemblest. I did not reveal this unto thee earlier, lest through being exalted [overmuch] thou mightest lose somewhat of thine honour." Now after these words Paphnutius lived one day only. And when all the things which had been done by him had been narrated in the presence of the elders who had come unto him through a revelation, he delivered up his soul, and those same priests, after his death, plainly saw him carried upwards with the companies of the saints, and with angels who were praising God.

Chapter 13. The Triumphs of the Blessed Eulogius

And we saw also another mighty elder whose name was Eulogius, who entreated God to give him at the time when he was about to offer up the Offering such knowledge that he might be able to know the mind of each and every one of the monks who drew nigh to [partake of] the Holy Things; and on several occasions this man saw monks prepared to draw nigh to the Holy and Glorious Mysteries, and restrained them, saying, "How is it that ye dare to draw nigh to the Holy Mysteries [seeing that] ye have evil minds?" And to another of them also he said, "This night thou hast pondered in thy mind about filthy fornication." And to another he said, "Thou hast thought in thy mind that whether a man be righteous or wicked there is nothing to hinder thee from drawing nigh to the goodness of God." And to another he said, "Thou hast had doubt in thy mind whether the Holy Things are able to sanctify those who draw nigh to them; therefore keep thou away for a little from the Holy Mysteries, and repent with all thy soul, so that thou mayest obtain remission of [thy] sins, and thou mayest be held worthy of association with Christ. For if ye do not cleanse your thoughts before ye draw nigh [to them] ye will be unable to [obtain forgiveness]."

Here endeth the Triumph of Eulogius Chapter xiv. The Triumph of Isidore

And we also saw in Thebaïs the monastery of the blessed Isidore, which was a strong building with a high brick wall, and in it dwelt thousands of monks; in it also were a well, and a garden, and whatsoever was required for the food of its inhabitants. None of the monks ever went forth from the monastery, for they had as a doorkeeper a certain elder who would neither permit any man to depart, nor to come in, except him who had determined in his mind to remain there until the day of his death, and never to leave. And this doorkeeper had a small house by the side of the gate wherein he received such strangers as came [by night], and in the morning he would give them a blessing (i.e., a gift) and dismiss them in peace. Now there were two of the elders who used to go outside the building, and they did so to sell the work of the brethren, and to bring in such things as were required by them. And the elder who was always at the door was in the habit of saying that all the monks who dwelt within the building were so holy that all of them could work miracles, and that it was impossible for any one of them to fall into sickness before the day of his departure from the

world, and that whensoever the end of any of them was coming he knew it beforehand, and told all the the brethren about it, and then he lay down and died.

Here end the Triumphs of Isidore Chapter xv. The Triumph of Dioscurus

And we saw also another holy man in Thebaïs, whose name was Dioscurus, and he was the Abbâ of one hundred monks. And when the monks were about to draw nigh to the gracious gift of the Mysteries, he would say to them, "Peradventure there is a man among you who dareth to draw nigh to the Holy Things, in whose mind the lust for women hath risen up during the night. The nocturnal pollution which is not of the thoughts, is a customary though involuntary emission, and it is not the result of desire, for it is a natural result, and is derived from the actual substance of the body; therefore we are not guilty of sin. On the other hand, the filthy vision proceedeth from the mind, and the evil desire is the cause of the same." And Dioscurus used to say, "It is right that a monk should be superior to the law of nature, and that the smallest impurity whatsoever should not be in his body; but he should humble himself in such wise that owing to much fasting the physical matter of the body may not be able to increase. And it is not right for a monk to approach lusts, for if he doth, in what respect are we superior to the men of this world whom we see in several cases curbing their lusts, either for the sake of the health of the body, or for other befitting causes? How much more, then, is it fitting for a monk to take care concerning the health of his mind, and of his soul, and of his spirit?"

Chapter 14. The Triumphs of Abba Copres and of the Blessed Petarpemotis

And again we saw another holy man whose name was Copres, and he dwelt in the desert, and was the archimandrite of fifty men; he used to perform many mighty deeds, for he could cure many sicknesses and diseases of various kinds, and he cast out devils, and drove away evil spirits, and did other wonderful works, some of which we saw with our own eyes. Now when he saw us, he saluted us, and prayed over us, and washed our feet, and he began to ask us questions about the world and the affairs thereof, but we entreated him to relate to us the story of his life and works first of all, and how it came to pass that God gave him such gifts, and by what kind of works he had become worthy of the same. And the blessed man, in whose mind there existed not the smallest degree of pride, began to tell us about his own life and works, and also about those of the great, and wonderful, and perfect fathers, the examples of whose lives and works he strove both to imitate and to emulate; and he answered and said unto us:— O my sons, my manner of life and my mourning are not to be compared with those of the early fathers.

For there was here before me a certain man, whose name was Petarpemōtis, who was first and chief of all the monks who dwelt in this place; it was he who first made manifest (i.e., wore) this garb, and it was he who invented it. Now formerly he had been a thief, and a plunderer of the tombs of the heathen, and he had a great reputation for committing wickednesses of every kind connected with robbery and theft, and the following matter was the cause of [his finding] life. He once went to rob the religious house of a certain blessed woman who dwelt therein chastely, and without knowing it he found himself upon the roof of her house; and being unable to go into her house and plunder it, because the roofs of the house were as flat as the ground and they had no rain water pipes [leading thereto], for there is no rain in Thebaïs, and there was no place on the roof whereby he could enter the house, or by which he could leave it again, and he was neither able to descend nor to escape from it, he [was obliged to] stay there until the morning, and he wondered meanwhile in his mind what he should do until the daylight came. And whilst he was there he sank into a

light sleep, and he saw in the form of a man an angel who said unto him, "Devote thou not such close attention, and diligence, and watching to thy life of thievery.

If thou 'wishest to change thy wickedness into a life of good deeds thou must serve with the service of angels before Christ the King, and thou shalt receive from Him this power and authority. And immediately he had heard [these things] he received [them] from him with gladness, and he who had appeared unto him in the form of an angel shewed him a company of monks, and commanded that he should have dominion over them.

And when he woke up from his slumber, he saw the nun standing before him, and saying unto him, "O man, what 'doest thou here? And what is thy report? Whence comest thou? Who art thou? He saith unto her, "I know not, but 'I beseech thee to shew me the church. And when she had shewn him the church, he went and fell down before the feet of the elders, and he entreated them that he might become a Christian, so that he might find an occasion for repentance. Now when the elders knew who he was, they marvelled at him, and they began to admonish him that henceforth he must not be a slayer of men; and he begged them that he might [be allowed] to learn the Psalms, and when he had learned three verses of the first Psalm, he said, "These are sufficient for me 'to learn. And he tarried with the elders for three days, and straightway he went forth from them, and departed into the desert. And when he had lived [there] for five weeks without bread, a man came to him carrying bread and water, and he entreated him to eat thereof and to refresh himself. Now Petarpemôtis lived there for three years in prayer and tears, and he fed himself upon the roots which were in the desert, and wandered about eating them;

and after three years he returned to the church, and repeated before the fathers the belief and all the doctrine of the Church, and although he had never learned letters, he could repeat the Scriptures by heart. Then the elders marvelled at him and wondered how a man of his kind could have attained such a degree of learning and asceticism, and they gave him further light in respect of speech and learning, and when they had bestowed baptism upon him, they entreated him to remain with them. And he tarried with them for seven days more, and he went forth and departed to the desert, where he lived for a further period of seven years; and this blessed man was held to be worthy of a constant [gift of] bread, which was found every Sunday in his pillow-cloth. When he had prayed and given thanks, he would partake thereof, and then he would fast again until the following Sunday without in any way suffering.

And he came back again from that wilderness with works of spiritual excellence, and he departed from the desert, and made manifest his rule of abstinence and self-denial, and he incited many to follow after him. Now there drew nigh unto him a certain young man who entreated him that he might become his disciple, and having received him Petarpemôtis dressed him in the way that he himself was dressed, that is to say, he wore a shirt with short sleeves, and an outer garment, and he placed a cowl upon his head, and tied a napkin about his loins, and he showed him the way and the rules of a life of mourning, and he trained him [in the life and deeds of the monks], and he placed a cape on his shoulders.

Now the custom of the blessed man was as follows: When a Christian died he remained with him the whole night long in vigil and prayer, and he would reverently dress him and bury him. And when that disciple saw him dressing the Christians who died in this way, he said unto him, "Wilt thou also dress me in this manner when I die, O master?" And he said unto him, "I will dress thee in this fashion, and I will wrap thee in a shroud until thou shalt say unto me, 'I have enough.'" Now after no great length of time that disciple died, and the words of his master were indeed fulfilled, for Petarpemôtis dressed him reverently in the fear of God, as was right, and he said in a loud voice before all those who were standing [there], "Have I dressed thee well, O my son, or dost thou still lack anything?" And the dead man sent forth a voice, and they all heard it, saying, "Thou hast dressed me, O my father, thou hast fulfilled thy promise, and hast completed thine undertaking"; and wonder laid hold upon all those who were standing there, and they glorified God. Then the blessed man departed into the desert according to his custom, and he went that he might occupy himself in his daily round of devotion, even as a man who fleeth from vainglory.

And after these things he went forth from the desert and departed to work for the brethren who were his disciples, and who were sick; now one of these was nigh unto death, and this God had revealed unto him, and the day wherein he would pass away was nigh, and the village was far away. And because he did not wish to enter therein by night (for he suspected evil), and because he would fulfil the word of our Lord, which said, "Walk in the light whilst ye have the light, and he who walketh in the light shall not be tripped up" (St. John xii, 35), when he saw that the day was declining, he answered and said unto [the sun], "Tarry thou on the path of thy course, and wait for me a short time until I can come to the village"; and the sun stood still for a while, and went not down, and remained in his place, and he neither set nor went to rest until Petarpemôtis had entered the village. Now this appearance was known unto all those who dwelt in the village, and they all ran, and stood still, and gazed for a long time at the sun, which set not. And when they saw Petarpemôtis coming from the desert, they asked him, "What is the meaning of the sign of this sun which goeth not down?" Then he said unto them, "Do ye not remember the word of our Lord which said, 'If ye have in you faith like unto a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall work miracles which shall be greater and more excellent than these'?" (St. Matthew xvii, 20.) Now when they heard these things great fear laid hold upon them, and they knew immediately that it was he who had held back the sun, and large numbers of them remained with him and became his disciples.

And he went into the house of one of his disciples who had been sick, and found that he was dead, and he drew nigh to the bier whereon the dead man was lying, and he prayed, and kissed him, and said unto him, "Dost thou desire to depart to God now, O my son, or wouldst thou remain alive in the body?" And the dead man sat up, and made answer unto him, saying, "It is better for me to leave the body that I may be with Christ, for I have no desire to live in the body"; and the blessed man said unto him, "Then die in peace, my son, and make entreaty before God on my behalf that thou mayest go unto Him." And immediately the blessed man had said these words the man died on his bier. Then fear fell

upon all those who were standing there, and they said, "Verily this is a man of God"; and when the blessed man had dressed him carefully (or well), he kept vigil the whole night [by him] and prayed and sang Psalms, and [then] he buried him in a proper manner.

And Petarpemôtis went and visited another brother who was sick, and he saw that he was dying with difficulty, and that he was troubled in his mind; now his mind was rebuking him, and his conscience was pricking him because of his wickednesses. And the blessed man said unto him, "How canst thou go to God seeing that thou art prepared to carry with thee the accusation of neglect of thy works, that is to say, lax intentions in respect of thy manner of life?" Then that brother begged and entreated him to pray to God on his behalf, that there might be given unto him a little longer period of life so that he might amend his ways and deeds. And he answered and said unto him, "Now that thy life hath come to an end thou askest for time for repentance! What hast thou been doing all thy life long? Wast thou not able to heal thy blemishes? Yet thou hast added others to thy negligence!" But the man made supplication the more to him, and begged and entreated him to pray that he might rise up [again from his bed of sickness]. And Petarpemôtis said unto him, "If thou wilt not add sins to thy sins, but wilt seek with all thy soul to repent, I will entreat God on thy behalf, for He is good and merciful, and ask Him to grant thee time and life that thou mayest pay back all that thou owest." And when he had prayed he said unto him, "God hath granted thee to live in the body for three years longer, but only through earnest supplication (?)"; then he took him by the hand and raised him up from his sickness straightway, and he led him away with him and carried him off to the desert, where he lived with him for three years.

And when the three years were ended, he brought him back to his village, and set him before God, not as an ordinary man merely, but as a messenger who had been chosen by God, and they all marvelled at his works. And when the brethren were gathered together to him, Petarpemôtis set that brother in the midst, and he narrated unto them the doctrine of life the whole night long; and suddenly he sank into a slumber, wherein he departed from this life to our Lord. Then the blessed man dressed him for burial, and he accompanied him to the grave with prayers.

Now they used to say that very many wonderful works were wrought by him, and they testified that on several occasions he walked upon the waters. And besides this he was once found in an upper chamber with the brethren, although the doors had been shut, for he had come in to them in the air by the power of angels. And they also said that he obtained from God everything which he asked for, and that he had the power to go whithersoever he pleased and whensoever he pleased, without trouble. And the blessed Petarpemôtis once related to the brethren a story of how, on one occasion when he had gone out from the desert, he saw in his dream as if he had been taken up into heaven, and he saw there the good things that were prepared for the monks, and that the mouth of man could not describe, and that could not be uttered thereby. And he also said, "I saw Paradise with the eyes of this body, and I saw there the many multitudes of the saints, and I tasted the fruits of Paradise." And

he produced a proof of his assertion, that he might shew that the things which had been said by him were true, for he gave his disciples to eat [of the fruit of] a great, and marvellous, and extraordinarily large fig-tree, which possessed an odour that was different from any other smell in the world.

And whilst this holy man Copres was relating unto us all these things concerning Petarpemôtis, he said, "I have seen in my youth [portions] of that fig-tree in the hands of his disciples, and I kissed them, and wonder at the odour thereof laid hold upon me; and the tree remained with his disciples for many years as a manifestation [of the truth of his words] unto many. For it was great beyond measure, and it had such wonderful properties that any sick person who inhaled its odour was straightway healed of his sickness."

Now they say that at the beginning of his going into the desert, when he had not tasted food of any kind whatsoever for five weeks he found a man in the parched desert carrying bread and water, who begged of him to eat, and when he had done so he removed himself from him. And on another occasion the Evil One shewed him some fine gold which [in quantity] surpassed the treasures of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he answered and said unto him that showed him the gold, "May thou and thy money go to hell." These and suchlike great things were, according to what they said, performed by Abbâ Petarpemôtis, and they spake many other things before us the which [if written] the world could not contain. And, according to what these men said, Petarpemôtis spake unto us, saying, "If we who are little people perform things which are little, like unto ourselves, that is to say, if we heal the halt and the blind, which selfsame things the physicians do by means of their art, in what consisteth the greatness?" Now whilst Copres, the elder, was relating these things unto us, one of us slumbered and fell into a sleep, and this man did not believe the things which he had heard the blessed man say. And having fallen asleep, he saw a marvellous book, and the book was laid upon the knees of this elder, and it was written wholly in gold, and above it there stood an old man who said unto him

369 in a very threatening manner, "Didst thou not hear well what was being said that thou didst fall asleep?" Then immediately the man awoke from his sleep, and told us in the Greek tongue what he had seen.

Now whilst our brother was relating this dream to us, a certain villager was found to be standing there before him bearing upon his shoulders a bucket of sand, and he was waiting there to hear the end of his story; and we begged him to tell us why he was carrying the sand, and why he stood there, and what he wanted. Then Abbâ Copres answered and said unto us, "My sons, it is not seemly for us to boast, but it is fitting that we should declare before you the triumphs of the fathers, so that we may not be unduly exalted in our minds, and so lose our reward. Nevertheless, because of the earnestness, and for the sake of the welfare of you who have come unto us from a distance, we will not deprive you of benefit, and we will relate before your brotherhood whatsoever God hath wrought by our hands. At one time the land which is about us produced nothing, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the villagers who owned it were able to gather from it as much again as they sowed,

for the worms were produced in the ears, and they destroyed all their harvest. Now some of those husband-men had been converted by us, and they begged us to pray for their harvest, and we said unto them, 'If ye have faith in Godeven this desert sand shall bring forth crops for you'.

Then, without any doubt whatsoever, they filled their bosoms with the sand which is trodden under our feet, and they entreated us to bless it, and when we had prayed that it might be unto them even according to their faith, they went and mixed it with the wheat and sowed it in their fields, and immediately their land produced for them abundant crops, and they were larger than the crops obtained from the other lands in Egypt. Thus it became the custom for them [to bring sand] each year, and to trouble us [to bless it]."

And he also related unto us a certain wonderful thing which the Lord had wrought for us when large numbers of the brethren were gathered together, and he said, "On one occasion I went down to the city, and I found there a certain Manichean who was leading the multitudes into error, and because I was unable to rebuke and convince him openly I turned towards the multitudes, and said unto them, 'Kindle ye a large fire, and let the two of us go into it when it is burning brightly, and he who remaineth in the fire without being burnt shall be the man who possesseth the true faith.' And when this had been done, and the crowd had lit a fire with ready zeal, I urged the Manichean to go with me into it, but he said, 'Let each of us go in by himself, and, moreover, it is meet that thou shouldst be the first to go in because thou didst give the command to have it made.' Then, having made upon myself the sign of the Cross in the Name of Jesus Christ, I went into the fire, and was unharmed thereby, for the flame parted asunder on this side and on that, and it vexed me in no wise. And when I had remained in the fire for half an hour, and the multitudes had seen the wonderful thing, they cried out, and gave thanks to God, and compelled the Manichean to go into the fire, and when, because of his fear, he was unwilling to go into it, the crowd took him, and pushed him into the fire, and he was wholly consumed. As for me they took me, and escorted me to the church, and ascribed praise to God as they went.

"And on another occasion when I was passing by a certain heathen temple, the heathen were offering up sacrifices to their idols; and I said unto them, 'Why do ye who are rational beings offer up sacrifices to things which are dumb? Are ye of your own will dumb that ye sacrifice to dumb things?' And they admitted that what I said was good, and they came after me, and believed in Christ. "And, moreover, we had a garden in a certain neighbouring place which was [intended] for the pleasure of the brethren who came unto us from afar off, and a certain poor man used to work therein. And one of the heathen went into the garden and stole some vegetables and departed; but he was not able to cook them, for although he kept the fire burning under the saucepan for three hours, they remained in the same state as when they were taken from the garden, and even the water would not boil! And when the man came to his senses he took the vegetables and brought them to us, and he begged that he might be forgiven the offence, and become a Christian; and he actually became one. Now on that very day certain brethren came unto us from a distance, and it is probable that

those vegetables were brought on their account, so that they might enjoy them; and when we had tasted them, we gave thanks unto our Lord, for we had a twofold joy, first, because of the redemption of the soul of the man who had stolen them, and secondly, because the brethren who had come to us enjoyed them."

These and many other wonderful things did our holy father Copres relate to us, and when he had made us rest, he took us into his garden and shewed us the palms and other fruit trees which Kopris [sic] had planted with his own hands for the encouragement of those husbandmen who believed in Christ, and to whom he had said that this desert was able to bring forth fruit for those who believed in God; "And," said he, when "I saw that they had sown sand, and that their crops were abundant, I also planted this garden for the enjoyment of the brethren, and it has come to its present state [of perfection]."

Chapter 15. The Triumphs of Abba Hôr, and Isaiah, and Paul, and Nôpi, the Confessors

On a certain occasion it happened that Abbâ Hôr and Isaiah, and Paul met each other by chance by the side of a great river, and all three of them were chaste and perfect ascetics, who were going to visit a certain great confessor whose name was Nôpi, who lived at a place which was three stages distant, and they said to each other, "Let each of us shew the other his triumphs, and in what way, and to what extent he is, on account of his deeds, honoured by God." And Abbâ Hôr said unto them, "I beg God for this gift—that we may journey to the place in that country by the might of the Holy Spirit, without any labour [on our part]"; and immediately he had prayed, a boat was found to be ready, and a wind favourable for its journey was blowing, and they sailed up against the stream, and in a short time found themselves at that place.

And when they had gone up from the river, Isaiah said unto them, "O my beloved, would it not be a greater [display of the power of] God if that man whom we are going to see were to come to us and meet us, and were to describe to each of us his life and works?" And Paul said unto them, "God hath revealed unto me that after three days He will take him, and that the man whom we are going to see will depart from this world into life." Now when they had journeyed onwards a short distance from that place, the man himself met them, and saluted them; and Paul said unto him, "Brother, explain to us thy manner of life and works, for the day after to-morrow thou wilt go to God." And Abbâ Nôpi said unto them, "Blessed be God, Who hath also revealed these things unto me, and hath shewn me concerning your coming and concerning your life and works." And when he had described the upright dealings of each one of them, and how they lived, and how they laboured, he afterwards began to speak and to describe his own life and works, and he spake thus:—

"Since the day wherein I confessed the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and God, no falsehood whatsoever hath gone forth from my mouth on earth, and I have never taken any earthly thing, for an angel hath fed me each day with heavenly food. In my heart I have never had any other desire than that which is of God; and God hath not hidden

from me anything which is honourable and glorious; and I have never been deprived of or lacked the light of mine eyes. I have never gone to sleep in the daytime, and during the night season I have never rested from making supplication to God, and the angel of God hath accompanied me always and hath shewn me the might of the world which is to come, and His light hath never gone out in my mind. Every request which I made unto God I have received straightway. At all times I have seen myriads of angels standing before God. I have seen the companies of the saints. I have seen the congregations of the martyrs. I have seen the triumphs of the monks who mourn. I have seen the works of the solitary brethren, and the congregations of the righteous. I have seen all created things glorifying God. I have seen Satan delivered over to the burning fire. I have also seen his angels suffering torments, and the righteous enjoying the happiness which hath no cessation." And, having told us these things, and many others which were like unto them, on the third day he delivered up his soul; and straightway the angels and the armies of the martyrs received it, and took it up into heaven, and we saw them singing praises and heard them.

Here end the Triumphs of Abba Dor, and Isaiah, and Paul, and Ropi, the Confessors

Chapter 16. The Triumph of Evagrius

And we also saw Evagrius, who was a man of great ability and learning, and who, through the experience of the matters which had passed over him, had acquired the discernment of good thoughts; and he had on several occasions gone down to the city of Alexandria and shut the mouths of the heathen philosophers. Now he commanded the brethren who were with us not to drink their fill of water, because devils were always to be found in the places where there were fountains of water, even according to the word of our Lord, Who said, "When the evil spirit hath gone forth from a man, it departeth and wandereth about in the places wherein there is no water seeking rest, which it findeth not" (St. Matthew xii, 43). And he spake unto us many things concerning the labours of ascetic excellence, and he confirmed our souls in the faith. Now many of the monks neither ate bread nor fruit (God forbid!), but bitter herbs and vegetables soaked in vinegar; and some of them never slept at all during the night, but, either sitting up or standing, they continued to pray until the morning.

Here endeth the Triumph of Evagrius

Chapter 17. The Triumph of Abba Pithyrion

And we also saw in Thebaïs a certain high mountain which lay by the river, and it was an exceedingly terrible mountain with high barren peaks, and in the caves thereof there dwelt many monks; and these men had as Abbâ one Pithyrion, who was a disciple of the holy man Anthony. He was the third who had received that place from Anthony, and he used to perform many mighty deeds, and to carry on the persecution of devils openly; and since he was the man who had received the place of Anthony, the blessed and great man, and of Ammonius his disciple, he received also, and rightly so, the inheritance of his labours. Now Pithyrion spake many other things, and he discoursed with power, especially on the faculty of discerning spirits, saying, "There are certain devils which cling to the passions, and on several occasions they turn our good desires into evil; therefore, O my sons, those of you who wish to drive away devils must first of all bring into subjection your lusts, for a man must vanquish not only every lust, but he must drive away the devil thereof. It is right that ye should overcome your lusts little by little, so that in the same way ye may drive away the devils which appertain thereto. There is a devil which belongeth to a wasteful and dissolute life, and he who is able to conquer the desire therefor is also able to drive away that devil." And this man used to eat twice a week, that is to say on Sunday, and on Thursday, and his food consisted of a little flour and some water which he baked into a thin cake; and he was unable to eat anything else, because his nature was thus.

Chapter 18. The Triumphs of the Blessed Fathers

And we also saw many other fathers and monks in several places throughout Egypt who used to work mighty deeds and miracles, but they were so many in number that we cannot mention them all, and we therefore only narrate a few things out of many. For what shall we say of the upper part of the Thebaïd, namely that [which is near] Syene, wherein live many wonderful men, and countless monks, who lead lives which are wholly beyond the nature of ordinary men? For at the present time they raise the dead, and, like Peter, they walk upon the water, and, to this very day, everything which our Redeemer performed by His saints is performed by these holy men. Now because of the great danger which we should run of thieves and barbarians falling upon us, we did not dare to go up the Nile any further to the south than Lycus, and therefore could not see the holy men who were there. Now we were not able to know even the fathers of whom we have spoken above without toil and tribulation, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that we were able to narrate their histories, for in order to do this we had to suffer much, and we were within a very little of having to endure many tribulations; but at length we were worthy to see these men. For on seven occasions we were delivered, and on the eighth evil came not nigh unto us, because, at all times, God protected us.

On the first occasion we nearly perished of hunger and thirst whilst we were wandering about in the desert [without food] for five days and five nights. On the second occasion we fell among savage, rugged mountains until our feet were pierced by the stones, and we suffered very great pain, and very nearly had to yield up our souls. On the third occasion we sank in the mud several times up to our backs, and there was none to help [us], and we cried out the words of the blessed David, ”Save me, O God, for the waters have come even unto my soul, I have sunk into a dark abyss, wherein is no place on which to stand. Save me from the mire that I sink not” (Psalm lxix, 1, 2). On the fourth occasion a flood of many waters burst upon us at the period of the inundation of the Nile, and we walked about in the water, and we sank down very nearly to the nostrils [of the animal which we rode], and we cried out and said, ”Drown us not, O Lord, in a whirlpool of waters, and let not the abyss swallow us up, and let not the pit close its mouth over us” (Psalm lxix, 14, 15).

On the fifth occasion we fell in with some river thieves whilst we were walking along on the river banks to go into the city of Dekapliôs, and they pursued us and sought to capture us, until very little breath was left in our nostrils, for they chased us for a distance of ten miles. On the sixth occasion we were sailing on the Nile when the boat capsized and sank under us. On the seventh occasion we were arriving at Lake Mareotis, and we were cast up on a small desert island, where the papyrus plant groweth, and we passed there three whole days and nights under the open sky in severe cold and with the rain falling upon us; now the season was the days of the Epiphany.

The story of the eighth occasion may be superfluous, but it is helpful. For when we were going to Nitria we passed a great deep place in one of the fields, which was full of water, and after the waters had run off the fields several crocodiles remained therein; now three very large crocodiles were stretched out on the edge of the pool, and we drew nigh to them that we might see them, because we thought they were dead. But they ran after us very fast, and we cried out with a loud voice, saying, "In the name of Jesus Christ, spare our souls," whereupon the crocodiles, as if they had been driven away from us by angels, cast themselves into the water. And we made our way to Nitria with all possible haste, and as we went we meditated upon the words of the righteous man Job, who said, "Seven times He shall deliver thee from tribulation, and on the eighth evil shall not draw nigh unto thee" (Job v, 19). Therefore we gave thanks unto our Lord, who had redeemed us out of all tribulations, and had made manifest unto us great and marvellous revelations by the hands of his believing saints and monks.

Chapter 19. The Triumphs of the Monks who were in Nitria

And we came also to the district of Nitria, where we saw many great disciples who had departed from the world, and some were natives of the country, and some were strangers (i.e., foreigners), who were more excellent in glory than the others, and they were emulating each other in the beautiful deeds of strenuousness, and were striving to outstrip each other in their noble and glorious lives and works. Now some of them possessed divine vision, and others works of ascetic excellence. And as we were coming from the desert some of their number saw us when we were afar off, and they met us on the way, and some of them brought water, and others washed our feet, and others washed our garments, and others entreated us to eat, and others called us to the doctrine of glory, and others to the vision of divine knowledge, and each one of them wished to help us so far as it lay in his power to do so. And however much a man might speak about their glorious life, it would be impossible for him to describe it as it really is.

For they dwell in a waste place, and their dwellings are remote, and the men live apart from each other so that one man may not be known to his fellow, and that he may neither be seen readily nor his voice heard, and they live in the strictest silence, and each one of them is secluded within his cell, and only on Saturday and Sunday do they assemble in the church, and so meet each other. On several occasions many of them have been found dying in their chambers without ever having seen each other except when assembled for service in the church; for some of them only assembled once every three or four months, and thus they were remote from each other. Now these monks have much affection both for each other and for the rest of the brethren, for each one of them would be exceedingly anxious to give up his chamber to any man who wished to seek for grace.

Chapter 20. The Triumph of Ammon the First

There was in the early times in Nitria a certain man whose name was Ammon, whose soul the blessed Anthony saw being taken up to heaven, and this man became the chief of the monks who were in Nitria. He belonged to a noble family, and because his parents were exceedingly rich, they urged him to marry a wife, although he was unwilling to do so; and having persisted in urging him [he did so], but in the wedding chamber he persuaded the maiden who became his bride to keep [her] virginity, and he promised to do the same. Now after a few days he departed to the country of Nitria, and the maiden herself called all the members of her household to virginity, and turned her house into a nunnery. Now the blessed Ammon was living by himself in the country of Nitria, and they brought unto him a certain young man who had been seized with madness and he was bound with chains; a mad dog had bitten him, and the madness of the animal had entered into him, and his body was torn by the severe pain which was in it. And when the blessed man saw that the relatives of the young man were making supplication unto him, he said unto them, "What are ye bringing to me, O men? Ye are seeking from me what is greater than my power, and besides it lieth in your own hands to help and to heal the young man. Get ye gone, and restore [the value of] the widow's bull which ye slew secretly, and your son shall be given back to you healed." Then they, as people who had been rebuked, fulfilled his commandment with gladness, and he prayed straightway, and their son was healed.

And on one occasion certain people came to visit the blessed Ammon, and he, having learned their mind, said unto them, "Bring hither to me a large potter's vessel, so that there may be an abundance of water for the people who come here." Now, although they promised him that they would do so, one of them, as soon as he had gone to his village, took counsel and said unto his companion, "I am not going to carry the potter's vessel on my camel and kill it"; and when the other man heard this, he saddled his asses, and carried the vessel to the holy man with great labour. And the blessed man Ammon said unto the man before he could speak, saying, "What [is this]? Behold, thy friend's camel died whilst thou wast coming here"; and when the man returned he found that the camel had been killed by wolves. And many [other] miracles were worked by this man.

Chapter 21. The Triumph of another Ammon who was in Nitria

And we also saw there a certain Abbâ whose name also was Ammon, and he possessed [a number of] small houses which were exceedingly beautiful, and a courtyard, and a well of water, and other things for use; and a certain brother, who wished earnestly to obtain mercy, came to him, and said unto the blessed man, "Build me a little house wherein I may dwell." Then the holy man, like one who was going forth [to do] this, ordered him not to depart from these chambers until he could find one which would be convenient for him; and he left to him everything he had, together with the chambers, and went and shut himself up in a house which was far away from that place. And if the brethren who came to him seeking to have mercy shown to them were many, he would assemble the whole brotherhood, and [tell] one to draw water, and another to bring bricks, and a house for them would be completed in a day. Then the brethren would invite those who were ready to inhabit the chambers to refresh themselves in the church, and whilst they were resting there he would fill his cloak, and baskets also, with bread and with other things which they would want to make use of, and would carry them to the new house, and it was not known to any man that he was the source (or head) of the gifts of each one of them. And at eventide the brethren who were ready to take up their abode in these [new] chambers would come there, and would find ready before them whatsoever they required.

Chapter 22. The Triumph of Didymus

And we also saw there another blessed man whose name was Didymus, and he was very far advanced in years, and his countenance was beautiful; and this man used to kill scorpions and other venomous reptiles with his feet, which no other man dared to do.

Chapter 23. The Triumph of Chronius

And we also saw another brother among the monks whose name was Chronius, and he had arrived at a good old age, and was one of the first men who were contemporaneous with Abbâ Anthony; he was about one hundred and ten years of age, and he comforted us greatly and admonished us by his humility, which he had preserved even in his old age.

Chapter 24. The Triumph of Three Brethren

Nd we saw there also three brethren who were learned in speech and glorious in their lives and deeds, and because of their splendid works they were about to be raised to the grade of the episcopate. They had cut off their ears in the fear of God, but although they had done this with great boldness (or presumption), the object with which they had done it was a good one, for [they wished] that henceforth no man might vex them.

Chapter 25. The Triumph of Philemon

Nd we also saw there a certain elder who was exceedingly holy and humble, and he was constantly seeing revelations, and his name was Philemon; and when this man was offering unto God the service [due] to him, he saw an angel standing at the right hand of the altar. He used to write and set down in a book the names of those brethren who drew nigh to the Gift of Grace, and he took care that the names of those who did not come to the congregation were erased, and such men, after three days, died. On several occasions the devils beat this man, and they brought so many sicknesses upon him that he was unable to stand by the altar, and could not even offer up the Offering; but an angel came and took him by the hand, and straightway he received strength, and the angel made him to stand up healed before the altar. And the brethren saw the scars made by his beatings, and marvelled.

Chapter 26. The Triumph of John

And we saw another blessed man whose name was John, and he was an Abbâ of the monks in the city of Dikâpôlis; and grace clung to him even as unto Abraham, and his beard flowed down like that of Aaron. He worked many mighty deeds and cures, and he healed those who were afflicted with gout, and the sick, and those who were paralytics.

Chapter 27. The Triumph of Serapion

And we also saw in the regions of Arsinoïtes a certain elder whose name was Serapion; he was the father of all the monasteries, and the head of numerous brotherhoods, which contained about ten thousand men, and he took the greatest care in providing for the wants of all the brethren. And in the season of harvest he would make those who worked for hire from year to year bring and gather together to him twelve ardebs of wheat, that is to say, forty bushels, that it might serve for his ministrations to those in want, and might be distributed by his hands, so that in that district no destitute man might be found, and he sent to the needy in Alexandria the Great their gifts. Now the fathers of whom we have already spoken did not at any time neglect to visit the whole of Egypt, but as a result of the toil of the brethren they used to fill boats with food and apparel, and send them year after year to the poor who were in Alexandria, because the poor and needy who lived round about them were too few [to exhaust their benevolence]. And we saw in the region of Babylon and Memphis many great fathers, and many, yea innumerable, monks who were adorned with works which were glorious before God.

Chapter 28. The Triumphs of Apollo the Less, the Reader and Martyr

And we saw also the granaries of Joseph (i.e., the Pyramids of Gizah) wherein he collected grain in the time of famine. And there was there, in Thebes, a certain monk whose name was Apollo, and he made manifest many mighty deeds, and led a life of great works; he was held to be worthy of the office of deacon, and his works of spiritual excellence were as glorious and renowned as [those of] the famous monks of old. During the period of the persecution he made many martyrs by putting courage into the hearts of the confessors of Christ, but at length he himself was seized and put under ward in the prison-house, and the wickedest men among the heathen used to come to him and heap words of hatred and blasphemy upon him. Now one of those who behaved thus was a certain singer, who was a famous man, and was beloved by all the people; and this man drew nigh and reviled the blessed Apollo, and called him a wicked man, and a liar, and a hater of all mankind, and said that he was guilty of death before all the people. Then to him the blessed man Apollo made answer, and he said unto him, "O man, may God have mercy upon thee, and may the sin which hath been uttered by thee not be accounted unto thee as anything."

Now when the man who was a singer, whose name was Philemon, had heard these things, he repented at the words of the blessed man, because he had gone into the place where he was, and caused him pain, and he went down immediately, and stood up before the throne of the judge, and in the presence of all the people said unto him, "O judge, thou art acting wickedly in tormenting the servants of God without a cause, for the Christians neither say nor do wicked things, on the contrary, they even bless their enemies." Now when the judge heard the things which Philemon was saying, he thought at first that he had gone mad through his pride, and that having gone mad he had spoken; but as soon as the judge perceived that he persisted in his words, he answered and said unto him, "Thou art mad, O man, and hast suddenly become a fool." And Philemon made answer to him and said, "I have not gone mad, O thou wicked judge, but I am a Christian, and I fear the God of heaven." And the judge and all the people wished to persuade him [to be quiet] by means of flattering speeches,

but, when they saw that he would not yield to them, they applied to him all kinds of wicked tortures. And after these things they seized the blessed and holy Apollo, and brought him [there], and they laid many stripes upon him, and they scourged him as men scourge those who are wicked and who lead the people into error.

Then the blessed Apollo spake unto the judge, saying, "I pray God that thou also, O judge, and all those who are here present with thee may follow after my error"; and when the judge perceived that he had spoken such words unto him, he commanded that both Apollo and Philemon should be delivered over to be burnt by fire in the presence of all the multitude. And when they were in the blazing fire before the judge the blessed Apollo cried out with a loud voice unto God, so that all the assembly and even the judge himself might hear, saying, "O Lord, give not to be broken the souls which confess Thee, but make us to see Thy deliverance boldly." Then straightway a brilliant cloud, which was laden with dew, appeared, and it enveloped these men and quenched the flames of fire; and the crowds and the judge marvelled and cried out, saying, "One is the God of the Christians."

And certain wicked men made known the things which had taken place to the governor of Alexandria, and he chose out from among his bodyguard some savage and merciless men, and sent them for all those who were with the judge, and for Philemon, and the blessed Apollo, and other confessors came with them. And as they were going along the road, the gracious gift of the Spirit lighted upon Apollo, and he began to teach the soldiers, and as he spake they hearkened unto him, and they repented at his words, and believed in Christ, and they all stood up with the prisoners before the throne. And as soon as the governor perceived and knew that they could not be changed from the faith of Christ, he commanded that they should be cast into the depth of the sea; and since they were drowned of their own will for Christ's sake, this became unto them a sign of baptism. Now the sea refused to keep them, and it brought them together near the shore, and on the spot where they had lain a temple was built in their honour, and in it great miracles were wrought; and such grace was found with the blessed man, and he was so greatly honoured that he was heard by Christ in respect of the things for which he prayed and made supplication. And we ourselves saw the martyrium wherein he and those who had testified with him were laid, and we prayed and worshipped God, and also touched their dead bodies, for they were not as yet buried because of the inundation of the Nile, but lay embalmed upon their biers in Thebaïs, and for this reason we made ready to insert here the history of the man.

Here end the Triumph of Apollo, the Monk and Martyr, and the other Histories of the Holy Men which were written by Hieronymus the Monk. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, now, and always, and for ever and ever. End of Volume the First

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