

LIFE AND WRITINGS OF SULPITIUS SEVERUS

by Sulpitius Severus

An introduction to the life and literary works of Sulpitius Severus, the early Christian historian and biographer best known for his Life of St. Martin of Tours. The work provides historical context for Severus's contributions to early Christian literature.

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Life And Writings Of Sulpitius Severus

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Sulpitius (or Sulpicius) Severus was born in Aquitania about a.d.363, and died, as is generally supposed, in a.d.420. He was thus a contemporary of the two great Fathers of the Church, St. Jerome and St. Augustine. The former refers to him in his Commentary on the 36th chapter of Ezekiel as "our friend Severus." St. Augustine, again, having occasion to allude to him in his 205th letter, describes him as "a man excelling in learning and wisdom." Sulpitius belonged to an illustrious family. He was very carefully educated, and devoted himself in his early years to the practice of oratory. He acquired a high reputation at the bar; but, while yet in the prime of life, he resolved to leave it, and seek, in company with some pious friends, contentment and peace in a life of retirement and religious exercises. The immediate occasion of this resolution was the premature death of his wife, whom he had married at an early age, and to whom he was deeply attached. His abandonment of the pleasures and pursuits of the world took place about a.d.392; and, notwithstanding all the entreaties and expostulations of his father, he continued, from that date to his death, to lead a life of the strictest seclusion. Becoming a Presbyter of the Church, he attached himself to St. Martin of Tours, for whom he ever afterwards cherished the profoundest admiration and affection, and whose extraordinary career he has traced with a loving pen in by far the most interesting of his works. It is stated by some ancient writers that Sulpitius ultimately incurred the charge of heresy, having, to some extent, embraced Pelagian opinions. And there have not been wanting those in modern times who thought they could detect traces of such errors in his works. But it seems to us that there is no ground for any such conclusion. Sulpitius constantly presents himself to us as a most strenuous upholder of "catholic" or "orthodox" doctrines. It is evident that his whole heart was engaged in the love and maintenance of these doctrines: he counts as his "friends" those only who consistently adhered to them; and, while by no means in favor of bitterly prosecuting or severely punishing "heretics," he shrunk with abhorrence from all thought of communion with them. Perhaps the most striking impression we receive from a perusal of his writings is his sincerity. We may often feel that he is over-credulous in his acceptance of the miraculous; and we may lament his narrowness in clinging so tenaciously to mere ecclesiastical formulæ; but we are always impressed with the genuineness of his convictions, and with his fervent desire to bring what he believed to be truth under the attention of his readers. The style of Sulpitius is, upon the whole, marked by a considerable degree of classical purity and clearness. He has been called "the Christian Sallust," and there are not a few obvious resemblances between the two writers. But some passages occur in Sulpitius which are almost, if not entirely, unintelligible. This is owing partly to the uncertainty of the text, and partly to the use of terms which had sprung up since classical times, and the exact import of which it is impossible to determine. In executing our version of this author (now for the first time, we believe, translated into English), we have had constantly before us the editions of Sigonius (1609), of Hornius (1664), of Vorstius (1709), and of Halm (1866). We have also consulted a very old French translation of the *Historia Sacra*, published at Rouen in 1580. The order in which we have arranged the writings of Sulpitius is as follows: -- 1. Life of St. Martin. 2. Letters (undoubted). 3. Dialogues. 4. Letters (doubtful). 5. Sacred History. By far the most attractive of these works are those bearing on the life

and achievements of St. Martin. Sulpitius delights to return again and again to this wonderful man, and cannot find language sufficiently strong in which to extol his merits. Hence, not only in the professed Life, but also in the Letters and Dialogues, we have him brought very fully before us. The reader will find near the beginning of the Vita as translated by us, a note bearing upon the solemn asseverations of Sulpitius as to the reality of the miracles which Martin performed. Most of the Letters here given are deemed spurious by Halm, the latest editor of our author. He has, nevertheless, included the whole of them in his edition, and we have thought it desirable to follow his example in our translation. The Sacred History of Sulpitius has for its object to present a compendious history of the world from the Creation down to the year a.d.400. The first and longer portion of the work is simply an abridgment of the Scripture narrative. The latter part is more interesting and valuable, as it deals with events lying outside of Scripture, and respecting which we are glad to obtain information from all available sources. Unfortunately, however, Sulpitius is not always a trustworthy authority. His inaccuracies in the first part of his work are very numerous, and will be found pointed out in our version. The following are some of the Estimates which have been formed of our author. Paulinus, a contemporary of Sulpitius, and bishop of Nola, addressed to him about fifty letters, in the fifth of which he thus writes: "It certainly would not have been given to thee to draw up an account of Martin, unless by a pure heart thou hadst rendered thy mouth worthy of uttering his sacred praises. Thou art blessed, therefore, of the Lord, inasmuch as thou hast been able, in worthy style, and with proper feeling, to complete the history of so great a priest, and so illustrious a confessor. Blessed, too, is he, in accordance with his merits, who has obtained a historian worthy of his faith and of his life; and who has become consecrated to the Divine glory by his own virtues, and to human memory by thy narrative regarding him." Gennadius (died a.d.496), in his "Catalogue of illustrious men," says: "The Presbyter Severus, whose cognomen was Sulpitius, belonged to the province of Aquitania. He was a man distinguished both for his family and learning, and was remarkable for his love of poverty and humility. He was also a great friend of some holy men, such as Martin, bishop of Tours, and Paulinus, bishop of Nola; and his works are by no means to be neglected." In modern times, J. J. Scaliger has said of Sulpitius, "He is the purest of all the ecclesiastical writers." And Vossius, referring to some remarks of Baronius on Sulpitius, says: "I differ from him (Baronius) in this, that, without sufficient care, he calls Gennadius the contemporary of Severus, since Gennadius flourished seventy years, more or less, after Severus. For he dedicated his book *On Faith*' (as he himself tells us) to Pope Gelasius, who became bishop of Rome in a.d.492. But he greatly extols the holiness of Sulpitius; and in the Roman martyrology his memory (i.e. of Sulpitius) is celebrated on the 29th of January." Archdeacon Farrar has recently remarked concerning Martin and Sulpitius, "Owing partly to the eloquent and facile style of his (Martin's) biographer, Sulpicius Severus, his name was known from Armenia to Egypt more widely than that of any other monk or bishop of his day." -- *Lives of the Fathers*, i.628.

Preface to Desiderius.

Severus to his dearest brother Desiderius sendeth greeting. I had determined, my like-minded brother, to keep private, and confine within the walls of my own house, the little treatise which I had written concerning the life of St. Martin. I did so, as I am not gifted with much talent, and shrank from the criticisms of the world, lest (as I think will be the case) my somewhat unpolished style should displease my readers, and I should be deemed highly worthy of general reprehension for having too boldly laid hold of a subject which ought to have been reserved for truly eloquent writers. But I have not been able to refuse your request again and again presented. For what could there be which I would not grant in deference to your love, even at the expense of my own modesty? However, I have submitted the work to you on the sure understanding that you will reveal it to no other, having received your promise to that effect. Nevertheless, I have my fears that you will become the means of its publication to the world; and I well know that, once issued, it can never [1] be recalled. If this shall happen, and you come to know that it is read by some others, you will, I trust, kindly ask the readers to attend to the facts related, rather than the language in which they are set forth. You will beg them not to be offended if the style chances unpleasantly to affect their ears, because the kingdom of God consists not of eloquence, but faith. Let them also bear in mind that salvation was preached to the world, not by orators, but by fishermen, although God could certainly have adopted the other course, had it been advantageous. For my part, indeed, when I first applied my mind to writing what follows, because I thought it disgraceful that the excellences of so great a man should remain concealed, I resolved with myself not to feel ashamed on account of solecisms of language. This I did because I had never attained to any great knowledge of such things; or, if I had formerly some taste of studies of the kind, I had lost the whole of that, through having neglected these matters for so long a course of time. But, after all, that I may not have in future to adopt such an irksome mode of self-defense, the best way will be that the book should be published, if you think right, with the author's name suppressed. In order that this may be done, kindly erase the title which the book bears on its front, so that the page may be silent; and (what is quite enough) let the book proclaim its subject-matter, while it tells nothing of the author.

Chapter I. Reasons for writing the Life of St. Martin.

Most men being vainly devoted to the pursuit of worldly glory, have, as they imagined, acquired a memorial of their own names from this source; viz. devoting their pens to the embellishment of the lives of famous men. This course, although it did not secure for them a lasting reputation, still has undoubtedly brought them some fulfilment of the hope they cherished. It has done so, both by preserving their own memory, though to no purpose, and because, through their having presented to the world the examples of great men, no small emulation has been excited in the bosoms of their readers. Yet, notwithstanding these things, their labors have in no degree borne upon the blessed and never-ending life to which we look forward. For what has a glory, destined to perish with the world, profited those men themselves who have written on mere secular matters? Or what benefit has posterity derived from reading of Hector as a warrior, or Socrates as an expounder of philosophy? There can be no profit in such things, since it is not only folly to imitate the persons referred to, but absolute madness not to assail them with the utmost severity. For, in truth, those persons who estimate human life only by present actions, have consigned their hopes to fables, and their souls to the tomb. In fact, they gave themselves up to be perpetuated simply in the memory of mortals, whereas it is the duty of man rather to seek after eternal life than an eternal memorial and that, not by writing, or fighting, or philosophizing, but by living a pious, holy, and religious life. This erroneous conduct of mankind, being enshrined in literature, has prevailed to such an extent that it has found many who have been emulous either of the vain philosophy or the foolish excellence which has been celebrated. For this reason, I think I will accomplish something well worth the necessary pains, if I write the life of a most holy man, which shall serve in future as an example to others; by which, indeed, the readers shall be roused to the pursuit of true knowledge, and heavenly warfare, and divine virtue. In so doing, we have regard also to our own advantage, so that we may look for, not a vain remembrance among men, but an eternal reward from God. For, although we ourselves have not lived in such a manner that we can serve for an example to others, nevertheless, we have made it our endeavor that he should not remain unknown who was a man worthy of imitation. I shall therefore set about writing the life of St. Martin, and shall narrate both what he did previous to his episcopate, and what he performed as a bishop. At the same time, I cannot hope to set forth all that he was or did. Those excellences of which he alone was conscious are completely unknown, because, as he did not seek for honor from men, he desired, as much as he could accomplish it, that his virtues should be concealed. And even of those which had become known to us, we have omitted a great number, because we have judged it enough if only the more striking and eminent should be recorded. At the same time, I had in the interests of readers to see to it that, no undue amount of instances being set before them should make them weary of the subject. But I implore those who are to read what follows to give full faith to the things narrated, and to believe that I have written nothing of which I had not certain knowledge and evidence. I should, in fact, have preferred to be silent rather than to narrate things which are false. [2]

Chapter II. Military Service of St. Martin.

Martin, then, was born at Sabaria [3] in Pannonia, but was brought up at Ticinum, [4] which is situated in Italy. His parents were, according to the judgment of the world, of no mean rank, but were heathens. His father was at first simply a soldier, but afterwards a military tribune. He himself in his youth following military pursuits was enrolled in the imperial guard, first under king Constantine, and then under Julian Cæsar. This, however, was not done of his own free will, for, almost from his earliest years, the holy infancy of the illustrious boy aspired rather to the service of God. [5] For, when he was of the age of ten years, he betook himself, against the wish of his parents, to the Church, and begged that he might become a catechumen. Soon afterwards, becoming in a wonderful manner completely devoted to the service of God, when he was twelve years old, he desired to enter on the life of a hermit; and he would have followed up that desire with the necessary vows, had not his as yet too youthful age prevented. His mind, however, being always engaged on matters pertaining to the monasteries or the Church, already meditated in his boyish years what he afterwards, as a professed servant of Christ, fulfilled. But when an edict was issued by the ruling powers [6] in the state, that the sons of veterans should be enrolled for military service, and he, on the information furnished by his father, (who looked with an evil eye on his blessed actions) having been seized and put in chains, when he was fifteen years old, was compelled to take the military oath, then showed himself content with only one servant as his attendant. And even to him, changing places as it were, he often acted as though, while really master, he had been inferior; to such a degree that, for the most part, he drew off his [servant's] boots and cleaned them with his own hand; while they took their meals together, the real master, however, generally acting the part of servant. During nearly three years before his baptism, he was engaged in the profession of arms, but he kept completely free from those vices in which that class of men become too frequently involved. He showed exceeding kindness towards his fellow-soldiers, and held them in wonderful affection; while his patience and humility surpassed what seemed possible to human nature. There is no need to praise the self-denial which he displayed: it was so great that, even at that date, he was regarded not so much as being a soldier as a monk. By all these qualities he had so endeared himself to the whole body of his comrades, that they esteemed him while they marvelously loved him. Although not yet made a new creature [7] in Christ, he, by his good works, acted the part of a candidate for baptism. This he did, for instance, by aiding those who were in trouble, by furnishing assistance to the wretched, by supporting the needy, by clothing the naked, while he reserved nothing for himself from his military pay except what was necessary for his daily sustenance. Even then, far from being a senseless hearer of the Gospel, he so far complied with its precepts as to take no thought about the morrow.

Chapter III. Christ appears to St. Martin.

Accordingly, at a certain period, when he had nothing except his arms and his simple military dress, in the middle of winter, a winter which had shown itself more severe than ordinary, so that the extreme cold was proving fatal to many, he happened to meet at the gate of the city of Amiens [8] a poor man destitute of clothing. He was entreating those that passed by to have compassion upon him, but all passed the wretched man without notice, when Martin, that man full of God, recognized that a being to whom others showed no pity, was, in that respect, left to him. Yet, what should he do? He had nothing except the cloak in which he was clad, for he had already parted with the rest of his garments for similar purposes. Taking, therefore, his sword with which he was girt, he divided his cloak into two equal parts, and gave one part to the poor man, while he again clothed himself with the remainder. Upon this, some of the by-standers laughed, because he was now an unsightly object, and stood out as but partly dressed. Many, however, who were of sounder understanding, groaned deeply because they themselves had done nothing similar. They especially felt this, because, being possessed of more than Martin, they could have clothed the poor man without reducing themselves to nakedness. In the following night, when Martin had resigned himself to sleep, he had a vision of Christ arrayed in that part of his cloak with which he had clothed the poor man. He contemplated the Lord with the greatest attention, and was told to own as his the robe which he had given. Ere long, he heard Jesus saying with a clear voice to the multitude of angels standing round -- "Martin, who is still but a catechumen, clothed [9] me with this robe." The Lord, truly mindful of his own words (who had said when on earth -- "Inasmuch [10] as ye have done these things to one of the least of these, ye have done them unto me), declared that he himself had been clothed in that poor man; and to confirm the testimony he bore to so good a deed, he condescended to show him himself in that very dress which the poor man had received. After this vision the sainted man was not puffed up with human glory, but, acknowledging the goodness of God in what had been done, and being now of the age of twenty years, he hastened to receive baptism. He did not, however, all at once, retire from military service, yielding to the entreaties of his tribune, whom he admitted to be his familiar tent-companion. [11] For the tribune promised that, after the period of his office had expired, he too would retire from the world. Martin, kept back by the expectation of this event, continued, although but in name, to act the part of a soldier, for nearly two years after he had received baptism.

Chapter IV. Martin retires from Military Service.

In the meantime, as the barbarians were rushing within the two divisions of Gaul, Julian Cæsar, [12] bringing an army together at the city [13] of the Vaugiones, began to distribute a donative to the soldiers. As was the custom in such a case, they were called forward, one by one, until it came to the turn of Martin. Then, indeed, judging it a suitable opportunity for seeking his discharge -- for he did not think it would be proper for him, if he were not to continue in the service, to receive a donative -- he said to Cæsar, "Hitherto I have served you as a soldier: allow me now to become a soldier to God: let the man who is to serve thee receive thy donative: I am the soldier of Christ: it is not lawful for me to fight." Then truly the tyrant stormed on hearing such words, declaring that, from fear of the battle, which was to take place on the morrow, and not from any religious feeling, Martin withdrew from the service. But Martin, full of courage, yea all the more resolute from the danger that had been set before him, exclaims, "If this conduct of mine is ascribed to cowardice, and not to faith, I will take my stand unarmed before the line of battle tomorrow, and in the name of the Lord Jesus, protected by the sign of the cross, and not by shield or helmet, I will safely penetrate the ranks of the enemy." He is ordered, therefore, to be thrust back into prison, determined on proving his words true by exposing himself unarmed to the barbarians. But, on the following day, the enemy sent ambassadors to treat about peace and surrendered both themselves and all their possessions. In these circumstances who can doubt that this victory was due to the saintly man? It was granted him that he should not be sent unarmed to the fight. And although the good Lord could have preserved his own soldier, even amid the swords and darts of the enemy, yet that his blessed eyes might not be pained by witnessing the death of others, he removed all necessity for fighting. For Christ did not require to secure any other victory in behalf of his own soldier, than that, the enemy being subdued without bloodshed, no one should suffer death.

Chapter V. Martin converts a Robber to the Faith.

From that time quitting military service, Martin earnestly sought after the society of Hilarius, bishop of the city Pictava, [14] whose faith in the things of God was then regarded as of high renown, and in universal esteem. For some time Martin made his abode with him. Now, this same Hilarius, having instituted him in the office of the diaconate, endeavored still more closely to attach him to himself, and to bind him by leading him to take part in Divine service. But when he constantly refused, crying out that he was unworthy, Hilarius, as being a man of deep penetration, perceived that he could only be constrained in this way, if he should lay that sort of office upon him, in discharging which there should seem to be a kind of injury done him. He therefore appointed him to be an exorcist. Martin did not refuse this appointment, from the fear that he might seem to have looked down upon it as somewhat humble. Not long after this, he was warned in a dream that he should visit his native land, and more particularly his parents, who were still involved in heathenism, with a regard for their religious interests. He set forth in accordance with the expressed wish of the holy Hilarius, and, after being adjured by him with many prayers and tears, that he would in due time return. According to report Martin entered on that journey in a melancholy frame of mind, after calling the brethren to witness that many sufferings lay before him. The result fully justified this prediction. For, first of all, having followed some devious paths among the Alps, he fell into the hands of robbers. And when one of them lifted up his axe and poised it above Martin's head, another of them met with his right hand the blow as it fell; nevertheless, having had his hands bound behind his back, he was handed over to one of them to be guarded and stripped. The robber, having led him to a private place apart from the rest, began to enquire of him who he was. Upon this, Martin replied that he was a Christian. The robber next asked him whether he was afraid. Then indeed Martin most courageously replied that he never before had felt so safe, because he knew that the mercy of the Lord would be especially present with him in the midst of trials. He added that he grieved rather for the man in whose hands he was, because, by living a life of robbery, he was showing himself unworthy of the mercy of Christ. And then entering on a discourse concerning Evangelical truth, he preached the word of God to the robber. Why should I delay stating the result? The robber believed; and, after expressing his respect for Martin, he restored him to the way, entreating him to pray the Lord for him. That same robber was afterwards seen leading a religious life; so that, in fact, the narrative I have given above is based upon an account furnished by himself.

Chapter VI. The Devil throws himself in the Way of Martin.

Martin, then, having gone on from thence, after he had passed Milan, the devil met him in the way, having assumed the form of a man. The devil first asked him to what place he was going. Martin having answered him to the effect that he was minded to go whithersoever the Lord called him, the devil said to him, "Wherever you go, or whatever you attempt, the devil will resist you." Then Martin, replying to him in the prophetic word, said, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear what man can do unto me." [15] Upon this, his enemy immediately vanished out of his sight; and thus, as he had intended in his heart and mind, he set free his mother from the errors of heathenism, though his father continued to cleave to its evils. However, he saved many by his example. After this, when the Arian heresy had spread through the whole world, and was especially powerful in Illyria, and when he, almost single-handed, was fighting most strenuously against the treachery of the priests, and had been subjected to many punishments (for he was publicly scourged, and at last was compelled to leave the city), again betaking himself to Italy, and having found the Church in the two divisions of Gaul in a distracted condition through the departure also of the holy Hilarius, whom the violence of the heretics had driven into exile, he established a monastery for himself at Milan. There, too, Auxentius, the originator and leader of the Arians, bitterly persecuted him; and, after he had assailed him with many injuries, violently expelled him from the city. Thinking, therefore, that it was necessary to yield to circumstances, he withdrew to the island Gallinaria, [16] with a certain presbyter as his companion, a man of distinguished excellences. Here he subsisted for some time on the roots of plants; and, while doing so, he took for food hellebore, which is, as people say, a poisonous kind of grass. But when he perceived the strength of the poison increasing within him, and death now nearly at hand, he warded off the imminent danger by means of prayer, and immediately all his pains were put to flight. And not long after having discovered that, through penitence on the part of the king, permission to return had been granted to holy Hilarius, he made an effort to meet him at Rome, and, with this view, set out for that city.

Chapter VII. Martin restores a Catechumen to Life.

As Hilarius had already gone away, so Martin followed in his footsteps; and having been most joyously welcomed by him, he established for himself a monastery not far from the town. At this time a certain catechumen joined him, being desirous of becoming instructed in the doctrines [17] and habits of the most holy man. But, after the lapse only of a few days, the catechumen, seized with a languor, began to suffer from a violent fever. It so happened that Martin had then left home, and having remained away three days, he found on his return that life had departed from the catechumen; and so suddenly had death occurred, that he had left this world without receiving baptism. The body being laid out in public was being honored by the last sad offices on the part of the mourning brethren, when Martin hurries up to them with tears and lamentations. But then laying hold, as it were, of the Holy Spirit, with the whole powers of his mind, he orders the others to quit the cell in which the body was lying; and bolting the door, he stretches himself at full length on the dead limbs of the departed brother. Having given himself for some time to earnest prayer, and perceiving by means of the Spirit of God that power was present, [18] he then rose up for a little, and gazing on the countenance of the deceased, he waited without misgiving for the result of his prayer and of the mercy of the Lord. And scarcely had the space of two hours elapsed, when he saw the dead man begin to move a little in all his members, and to tremble with his eyes opened for the practice of sight. Then indeed, turning to the Lord with a loud voice and giving thanks, he filled the cell with his ejaculations. Hearing the noise, those who had been standing at the door immediately rush inside. And truly a marvelous spectacle met them, for they beheld the man alive whom they had formerly left dead. Thus being restored to life, and having immediately obtained baptism, he lived for many years afterwards; and he was the first who offered himself to us both as a subject that had experienced the virtues [19] of Martin, and as a witness to their existence. The same man was wont to relate that, when he left the body, he was brought before the tribunal of the Judge, and being assigned to gloomy regions and vulgar crowds, he received a severe [20] sentence. Then, however, he added, it was suggested by two angels of the Judge that he was the man for whom Martin was praying; and that, on this account, he was ordered to be led back by the same angels, and given up to Martin, and restored to his former life. From this time forward, the name of the sainted man became illustrious, so that, as being reckoned holy by all, he was also deemed powerful and truly apostolical.

Chapter VIII. Martin restores one that had been strangled.

Not long after these events, while Martin was passing by the estate of a certain man named Lupicinus, who was held in high esteem according to the judgment of the world, he was received with shouting and the lamentations of a wailing crowd. Having, in an anxious state of mind gone up to that multitude, and enquired what such weeping meant, he was told that one of the slaves of the family had put an end to his life by hanging. Hearing this, Martin entered the cell in which the body was lying, and, excluding all the multitude, he stretched himself upon the body, and spent some little time in prayer. Ere long, the deceased, with life beaming in his countenance, and with his drooping eyes fixed on Martin's face, is aroused; and with a gentle effort attempting to rise, he laid hold of the right hand of the saintly man, and by this means stood upon his feet. In this manner, while the whole multitude looked on, he walked along with Martin to the porch of the house.

Chapter IX. High Esteem in which Martin was held.

Nearly about the same time, Martin was called upon to undertake the episcopate of the church at Tours; [21] but when he could not easily be drawn forth from his monastery, a certain Ruricius, one of the citizens, pretending that his wife was ill, and casting himself down at his knees, prevailed on him to go forth. Multitudes of the citizens having previously been posted by the road on which he traveled, he is thus under a kind of guard escorted to the city. An incredible number of people not only from that town, but also from the neighboring cities, had, in a wonderful manner, assembled to give their votes. [22] There was but one wish among all, there were the same prayers, and there was the same fixed opinion to the effect that Martin was most worthy of the episcopate, and that the church would be happy with such a priest. A few persons, however, and among these some of the bishops, who had been summoned to appoint a chief priest, were impiously offering resistance, asserting forsooth that Martin's person was contemptible, that he was unworthy of the episcopate, that he was a man despicable in countenance, that his clothing was mean, and his hair disgusting. This madness of theirs was ridiculed by the people of sounder judgment, inasmuch as such objectors only proclaimed the illustrious character of the man, while they sought to slander him. Nor truly was it allowed them to do anything else, than what the people, following the Divine will, desired [23] to be accomplished. Among the bishops, however, who had been present, a certain one of the name Defensor is said to have specially offered opposition; and on this account it was observed that he was at the time severely censured in the reading from the prophets. For when it so happened that the reader, whose duty it was to read in public that day, being blocked out by the people, failed to appear, the officials falling into confusion, while they waited for him who never came, one of those standing by, laying hold of the Psalter, seized upon the first verse which presented itself to him. Now, the Psalm ran thus: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise because of thine enemies, that thou mightest destroy the enemy and the avenger." [24] On these words being read, a shout was raised by the people, and the opposite party were confounded. It was believed that this Psalm had been chosen by Divine ordination, that Defensor [25] might hear a testimony to his own work, because the praise of the Lord was perfected out of the mouth of babes and sucklings in the case of Martin, while the enemy was at the same time both pointed out and destroyed.

Chapter X. Martin as Bishop of Tours.

And now having entered on the episcopal office, it is beyond my power fully to set forth how Martin distinguished himself in the discharge of its duties. For he remained with the utmost constancy, the same as he had been before. There was the same humility in his heart, and the same homeliness in his garments. Full alike of dignity and courtesy, he kept up the position of a bishop properly, yet in such a way as not to lay aside the objects and virtues of a monk. Accordingly he made use, for some time, of the cell connected with the church; but afterwards, when he felt it impossible to tolerate the disturbance caused by the numbers of those visiting it, he established a monastery for himself about two miles outside the city. This spot was so secret and retired that he enjoyed in it the solitude of a hermit. For, on one side, it was surrounded by a precipitous rock of a lofty mountain, while the river Loire had shut in the rest of the plain by a bay extending back for a little distance; and the place could be approached only by one, and that a very narrow passage. Here, then, he possessed a cell constructed of wood. Many also of the brethren had, in the same manner, fashioned retreats for themselves, but most of them had formed these out of the rock of the overhanging mountain, hollowed into caves. There were altogether eighty disciples, who were being disciplined after the example of the saintly master. No one there had anything which was called his own; all things were possessed in common. It was not allowed either to buy or to sell anything, as is the custom among most monks. No art was practiced there, except that of transcribers, and even this was assigned to the brethren of younger years, while the elders spent their time in prayer. Rarely did any one of them go beyond the cell, unless when they assembled at the place of prayer. They all took their food together, after the hour of fasting was past. No one used wine, except when illness compelled them to do so. Most of them were clothed in garments of camels' hair. [26] Any dress approaching to softness [27] was there deemed criminal, and this must be thought the more remarkable, because many among them were such as are deemed of noble rank. These, though far differently brought up, had forced themselves down to this degree of humility and patient endurance, and we have seen numbers of these afterwards made bishops. For what city or church would there be that would not desire to have its priests from among those in the monastery of Martin?

Chapter XI. Martin demolishes an Altar consecrated to a Robber.

But let me proceed to a description of other excellences which Martin displayed as a bishop. There was, not far from the town, a place very close to the monastery, which a false human opinion had consecrated, on the supposition that some martyrs had been buried together there. For it was also believed that an altar had been placed there by former bishops. But Martin, not inclined to give a hasty belief to things uncertain, often asked from those who were his elders, whether among the presbyters or clerics, that the name of the martyr, or the time when he suffered, should be made known to him. He did so, he said, because he had great scruples on these points, inasmuch as no steady tradition respecting them had come down from antiquity. Having, therefore, for a time kept away from the place, by no means wishing to lessen the religious veneration with which it was regarded, because he was as yet uncertain, but, at the same time not lending his authority to the opinion of the multitude, lest a mere superstition should obtain a firmer footing, he one day went out to the place, taking a few brethren with him as companions. There standing above the very sepulchre, Martin prayed to the Lord that he would reveal, who the man in question was, and what was his character or desert. Next turning to the left-hand side, he sees standing very near a shade of a mean and cruel appearance. Martin commands him to tell his name and character. Upon this, he declares his name, and confesses his guilt. He says that he had been a robber, and that he was beheaded on account of his crimes; that he had been honored simply by an error of the multitude; that he had nothing in common with the martyrs, since glory was their portion, while punishment exacted its penalties from him. Those who stood by heard, in a wonderful way, the voice of the speaker, but they beheld no person. Then Martin made known what he had seen, and ordered the altar which had been there to be removed, and thus he delivered the people from the error of that superstition.

Chapter XII. Martin causes the Bearers of a Dead Body to stop.

Now, it came to pass some time after the above, that while Martin was going a journey, he met the body of a certain heathen, which was being carried to the tomb with superstitious funeral rites. Perceiving from a distance the crowd that was approaching, and being ignorant as to what was going on, he stood still for a little while. For there was a distance of nearly half a mile between him and the crowd, so that it was difficult to discover what the spectacle he beheld really was. Nevertheless, because he saw it was a rustic gathering, and when the linen clothes spread over the body were blown about by the action of the wind, he believed that some profane rites of sacrifice were being performed. This thought occurred to him, because it was the custom of the Gallic rustics in their wretched folly to carry about through the fields the images of demons veiled with a white covering. Lifting up, therefore, the sign of the cross opposite to them, he commanded the crowd not to move from the place in which they were, and to set down the burden. Upon this, the miserable creatures might have been seen at first to become stiff like rocks. Next, as they endeavored, with every possible effort, to move forward, but were not able to take a step farther, they began to whirl themselves about in the most ridiculous fashion, until, not able any longer to sustain the weight, they set down the dead body. Thunderstruck, and gazing in bewilderment at each other as not knowing what had happened to them they remained sunk in silent thought. But when the saintly man discovered that they were simply a band of peasants celebrating funeral rites, and not sacrifices to the gods, again raising his hand, he gave them the power of going away, and of lifting up the body. Thus he both compelled them to stand when he pleased, and permitted them to depart when he thought good.

Chapter XIII. Martin escapes from a Falling Pine-tree.

Again, when in a certain village he had demolished a very ancient temple, and had set about cutting down a pine-tree, which stood close to the temple, the chief priest of that place, and a crowd of other heathens began to oppose him. And these people, though, under the influence of the Lord, they had been quiet while the temple was being overthrown, could not patiently allow the tree to be cut down. Martin carefully instructed them that there was nothing sacred in the trunk of a tree, and urged them rather to honor God whom he himself served. He added that there was a moral necessity why that tree should be cut down, because it had been dedicated to a demon. Then one of them who was bolder than the others says, "If you have any trust in thy God, whom you say you worship, we ourselves will cut down this tree, and be it your part to receive it when falling; for if, as you declare, your Lord is with you, you will escape all injury." Then Martin, courageously trusting in the Lord, promises that he would do what had been asked. Upon this, all that crowd of heathen agreed to the condition named; for they held the loss of their tree a small matter, if only they got the enemy of their religion buried beneath its fall. Accordingly, since that pine-tree was hanging over in one direction, so that there was no doubt to what side it would fall on being cut, Martin, having been bound, is, in accordance with the decision of these pagans, placed in that spot where, as no one doubted, the tree was about to fall. They began, therefore, to cut down their own tree, with great glee and joyfulness, while there was at some distance a great multitude of wondering spectators. And now the pine-tree began to totter, and to threaten its [28] own ruin by falling. The monks at a distance grew pale, and, terrified by the danger ever coming nearer, had lost all hope and confidence, expecting only the death of Martin. But he, trusting in the Lord, and waiting courageously, when now the falling pine had uttered its expiring crash, while it was now falling, while it was just rushing upon him, simply holding up his hand against it, he put in its way the sign of salvation. Then, indeed, after the manner of a spinning-top (one might have thought it driven [29] back), it swept round to the opposite side, to such a degree that it almost crushed the rustics, who had taken their places there in what was deemed a safe spot. Then truly, a shout being raised to heaven, the heathen were amazed by the miracle, while the monks wept for joy; and the name of Christ was in common extolled by all. The well-known result was that on that day salvation came to that region. For there was hardly one of that immense multitude of heathens who did not express a desire for the imposition of hands, and abandoning his impious errors, made a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus. Certainly, before the times of Martin, very few, nay, almost none, in those regions had received the name of Christ; but through his virtues and example that name has prevailed to such an extent, that now there is no place thereabouts which is not filled either with very crowded churches or monasteries. For wherever he destroyed heathen temples, there he used immediately to build either churches or monasteries.

Chapter XIV. Martin destroys Heathen Temples and Altars.

Nor did he show less eminence, much about the same time, in other transactions of a like kind. For, having in a certain village set fire to a very ancient and celebrated temple, the circle of flames was carried by the action of the wind upon a house which was very close to, yea, connected with, the temple. When Martin perceived this, he climbed by rapid ascent to the roof of the house, presenting himself in front of the advancing flames. Then indeed might the fire have been seen thrust back in a wonderful manner against the force of the wind, so that there appeared a sort of conflict of the two elements fighting together. Thus, by the influence of Martin, the fire only acted in the place where it was ordered to do so. But in a village which was named Leprosum, when he too wished to overthrow a temple which had acquired great wealth through the superstitious ideas entertained of its sanctity, a multitude of the heathen resisted him to such a degree that he was driven back not without bodily injury. He, therefore, withdrew to a place in the vicinity, and there for three days, clothed in sackcloth [30] and ashes fasting and praying the whole time, he besought the Lord, that, as he had not been able to overthrow that temple by human effort, Divine power might be exerted to destroy it. Then two angels, with spears and shields after the manner of heavenly warriors, suddenly presented themselves to him, saying that they were sent by the Lord to put to flight the rustic multitude, and to furnish protection to Martin, lest, while the temple was being destroyed, any one should offer resistance. They told him therefore to return, and complete the blessed work which he had begun. Accordingly Martin returned to the village; and while the crowds of heathen looked on in perfect quiet as he razed the pagan temple even to the foundations, he also reduced all the altars and images to dust. At this sight the rustics, when they perceived that they had been so astounded and terrified by an intervention of the Divine will, that they might not be found fighting against the bishop, almost all believed in the Lord Jesus. They then began to cry out openly and to confess that the God of Martin ought to be worshiped, and that the idols should be despised, which were not able to help them.

Chapter XV. Martin offers his Neck to an Assassin.

I shall also relate what took place in the village of the Ædvi. When Martin was there overthrowing a temple, a multitude of rustic heathen rushed upon him in a frenzy of rage. And when one of them, bolder than the rest, made an attack upon him with a drawn sword, Martin, throwing back his cloak, offered his bare neck to the assassin. Nor did the heathen delay to strike, but in the very act of lifting up his right arm, he fell to the ground on his back, and being overwhelmed by the fear of God, he entreated for pardon. Not unlike this was that other event which happened to Martin, that when a certain man had resolved to wound him with a knife as he was destroying some idols, at the very moment of fetching the blow, the weapon was struck out of his hands and disappeared. Very frequently, too, when the pagans were addressing him to the effect that he would not overthrow their temples, he so soothed and conciliated the minds of the heathen by his holy discourse that, the light of truth having been revealed to them, they themselves overthrew their own temples.

Chapter XVI. Cures effected by St. Martin.

Moreover, the gift [31] of accomplishing cures was so largely possessed by Martin, that scarcely any sick person came to him for assistance without being at once restored to health. This will clearly appear from the following example. A certain girl at Treves [32] was so completely prostrated by a terrible paralysis that for a long time she had been quite unable to make use of her body for any purpose, and being, as it were, already dead, only the smallest breath of life seemed still to remain in her. Her afflicted relatives were standing by, expecting nothing but her death, when it was suddenly announced that Martin had come to that city. When the father of the girl found that such was the case, he ran to make a request in behalf of his all but lifeless child. It happened that Martin had already entered the church. There, while the people were looking on, and in the presence of many other bishops, the old man, uttering a cry of grief, embraced the saint's knees and said: "My daughter is dying of a miserable kind of infirmity; and, what is more dreadful than death itself, she is now alive only in the spirit, her flesh being already dead before the time. I beseech thee to go to her, and give her thy blessing; for I believe that through you she will be restored to health." Martin, troubled by such an address, was bewildered, and shrank back, saying that this was a matter not in his own hands; that the old man was mistaken in the judgment he had formed; and that he was not worthy to be the instrument through whom the Lord should make a display of his power. The father, in tears, persevered in still more earnestly pressing the case, and entreated Martin to visit the dying girl. At last, constrained by the bishops standing by to go as requested, he went down to the home of the girl. An immense crowd was waiting at the doors, to see what the servant of the Lord would do. And first, betaking himself to his familiar arms in affairs of that kind, he cast himself down on the ground and prayed. Then gazing earnestly upon the ailing girl, he requests that oil should be given him. After he had received and blessed this, he poured the powerful sacred liquid into the mouth of the girl, and immediately her voice returned to her. Then gradually, through contact with him, her limbs began, one by one, to recover life, till, at last, in the presence of the people, she arose with firm steps.

Chapter XVII. Martin casts out Several Devils.

At the same time the servant of one Tetradius, a man of proconsular rank, having been laid hold of by a demon, was tormented with the most miserable results. Martin, therefore, having been asked to lay his hands on him, ordered the servant to be brought to him; but the evil spirit could, in no way, be brought forth from the cell in which he was: he showed himself so fearful, with ferocious teeth, to those who attempted to draw near. Then Tetradius throws himself at the feet of the saintly man, imploring that he himself would go down to the house in which the possessed of the devil was kept. But Martin then declared that he could not visit the house of an unconverted heathen. For Tetradius, at that time, was still involved in the errors of heathenism. He, therefore, pledges his word that if the demon were driven out of the boy, he would become a Christian. Martin, then, laying his hand upon the boy, cast the evil spirit out of him. On seeing this, Tetradius believed in the Lord Jesus, and immediately became a catechumen, while, not long after, he was baptized; and he always regarded Martin with extraordinary affection, as having been the author of his salvation. About the same time, having entered the dwelling of a certain householder in the same town, he stopped short at the very threshold, and said, that he perceived a horrible demon in the courtyard of the house. When Martin ordered it to depart, it laid hold of a certain member of the family, who was staying in the inner part of the house; and the poor wretch began at once to rage with his teeth, and to lacerate whomsoever he met. The house was thrown into disorder; the family was in confusion; and the people present took to flight. Martin threw himself in the way of the frenzied creature, and first of all commanded him to stand still. But when he continued to gnash with his teeth, and, with gaping mouth, was threatening to bite, Martin inserted his fingers into his mouth, and said, "If you possess any power, devour these." But then, as if red-hot iron had entered his jaws, drawing his teeth far away he took care not to touch the fingers of the saintly man; and when he was compelled by punishments and tortures, to flee out of the possessed body, while he had no power of escaping by the mouth, he was cast out by means of a defluxion of the belly, leaving disgusting traces behind him.

Chapter XVIII. Martin performs Various Miracles.

In the meanwhile, as a sudden report had troubled the city as to the movement and inroad of the barbarians, Martin orders a possessed person to be set before him, and commanded him to declare whether this message was true or not. Then he confessed that there were sixteen demons who had spread this report among the people, in order that by the fear thus excited, Martin might have to flee from the city, but that, in fact, nothing was less in the minds of the barbarians than to make any inroad. When the unclean spirit thus acknowledged these things in the midst of the church, the city was set free from the fear and tumult which had at the time been felt. At Paris, again, when Martin was entering the gate of the city, with large crowds attending him, he gave a kiss to a leper, of miserable appearance, while all shuddered at seeing him do so; and Martin blessed him, with the result that he was instantly cleansed from all his misery. On the following day, the man appearing in the church with a healthy skin, gave thanks for the soundness of body which he had recovered. This fact, too, ought not to be passed over in silence, that threads from Martin's garment, or such as had been plucked from the sackcloth which he wore, wrought frequent miracles upon those who were sick. For, by either being tied round the fingers or placed about the neck, they very often drove away diseases from the afflicted.

Chapter XIX. A Letter of Martin effects a Cure, with Other Miracles.

Further, Arborius, an ex-prefect, and a man of a very holy and faithful character, while his daughter was in agony from the burning fever of a quartan ague, inserted in the bosom of the girl, at the very paroxysm of the heat, a letter of Martin which happened to have been brought to him, and immediately the fever was dispelled. This event had such an influence upon Arborius, that he at once consecrated the girl to God, and devoted her to perpetual virginity. Then, proceeding to Martin, he presented the girl to him, as an obvious living example of his power of working miracles, inasmuch as she had been cured by him though absent; and he would not suffer her to be consecrated by any other than Martin, through his placing upon her the dress characteristic of virginity. Paulinus, too, a man who was afterwards to furnish a striking example of the age, having begun to suffer grievously in one of his eyes, and when a pretty thick skin [33] having grown over it had already covered up its pupil, Martin touched his eye with a painter's brush, and, all pain being removed, thus restored it to its former soundness. He himself also, when, by a certain accident, he had fallen out of an upper room, and tumbling down a broken, uneven stair, had received many wounds, as he lay in his cell at the point of death, and was tortured with grievous sufferings, saw in the night an angel appear to him, who washed his wounds, and applied healing ointment to the bruised members of his body. As the effect of this, he found himself on the morrow restored to soundness of health, so that he was not thought to have suffered any harm. But because it would be tedious to go through everything of this kind, let these examples suffice, as a few out of a multitude; and let it be enough that we do not in striking cases [of miraculous interposition] detract from the truth, while, having so many to choose from, we avoid exciting weariness in the reader.

Chapter XX. How Martin acted towards the Emperor Maximus.

And here to insert some smaller matters among things so great (although such is the nature of our times in which all things have fallen into decay and corruption, it is almost a pre-eminent virtue for priestly firmness not to have yielded to royal flattery), when a number of bishops from various parts had assembled to the Emperor Maximus, a man of fierce character, and at that time elated with the victory he had won in the civil wars, and when the disgraceful flattery of all around the emperor was generally remarked, while the priestly dignity had, with degenerate submissiveness, taken a second place to the royal retinue, in Martin alone, apostolic authority continued to assert itself. For even if he had to make suit to the sovereign for some things, he commanded rather than entreated him; and although often invited, he kept away from his entertainments, saying that he could not take a place at the table of one who, out of two emperors, had deprived one of his kingdom, and the other of his life. At last, when Maximus maintained that he had not of his own accord assumed the sovereignty, but that he had simply defended by arms the necessary requirements [34] of the empire, regard to which had been imposed upon him by the soldiers, according to the Divine appointment, and that the favor of God did not seem wanting to him who, by an event seemingly so incredible, had secured the victory, adding to that the statement that none of his adversaries had been slain except in the open field of battle, at length, Martin, overcome either by his reasoning or his entreaties, came to the royal banquet. The king was wonderfully pleased because he had gained this point. Moreover, there were guests present who had been invited as if to a festival; men of the highest and most illustrious rank, -- the prefect, who was also consul, named Evodius, one of the most righteous men that ever lived; two courtiers possessed of the greatest power, the brother and uncle of the king, while between these two, the presbyter of Martin had taken his place; but he himself occupied a seat which was set quite close to the king. About the middle of the banquet, according to custom, one of the servants presented a goblet to the king. He orders it rather to be given to the very holy bishop, expecting and hoping that he should then receive the cup from his right hand. But Martin, when he had drunk, handed the goblet to his own presbyter, as thinking no one worthier to drink next to himself, and holding that it would not be right for him to prefer either the king himself, or those who were next the king, to the presbyter. And the emperor, as well as all those who were then present, admired this conduct so much, that this very thing, by which they had been undervalued, gave them pleasure. The report then ran through the whole palace that Martin had done, at the king's dinner, what no bishop had dared to do at the banquets of the lowest judges. And Martin predicted to the same Maximus long before, that if he went into Italy to which he then desired to go, waging war, against the Emperor Valentinianus, it would come to pass that he should know he would [35] indeed be victorious in the first attack, but would perish a short time afterwards. And we have seen that this did in fact take place. For, on his first arrival Valentinianus had to betake himself to flight but recovering his strength about a year afterwards, Maximus was taken and slain by him within the walls of Aquileia.

Chapter XXI. Martin has to do both with Angels and Devils.

It is also well known that angels were very often seen by him, so that they spoke in turns with him in set speech. As to the devil, Martin held him so visible and ever under the power of his eyes, that whether he kept himself in his proper form, or changed himself into different shapes of spiritual wickedness, he was perceived by Martin, under whatever guise he appeared. The devil knew well that he could not escape discovery, and therefore frequently heaped insults upon Martin, being unable to beguile him by trickery. On one occasion the devil, holding in his hand the bloody horn of an ox, rushed into Martin's cell with great noise, and holding out to him his bloody right hand, while at the same time he exulted in the crime he had committed, said: "Where, O Martin, is thy power? I have just slain one of your people." Then Martin assembled the brethren, and related to them what the devil had disclosed, while he ordered them carefully to search the several cells in order to discover who had been visited with this calamity. They report that no one of the monks was missing, but that one peasant, hired by them, had gone to the forest to bring home wood in his wagon. Upon hearing this, Martin instructs some of them to go and meet him. On their doing so, the man was found almost dead at no great distance from the monastery. Nevertheless, although just drawing his last breath, he made known to the brethren the cause of his wound and death. He said that, while he was drawing tighter the thongs which had got loose on the oxen yoked together, one of the oxen, throwing his head free, had wounded him with his horn in the groin. And not long after the man expired. You [36] see with what judgment of the Lord this power was given to the devil. This was a marvelous feature in Martin that not only on this occasion to which I have specially referred, but on many occasions of the same kind, in fact as often as such things occurred, he perceived them long beforehand, and [37] disclosed the things which had been revealed to him to the brethren.

Chapter XXII. Martin preaches Repentance even to the Devil.

Now, the devil, while he tried to impose upon the holy man by a thousand injurious arts, often thrust himself upon him in a visible form, but in very various shapes. For sometimes he presented himself to his view changed into the person of Jupiter, often into that of Mercury and Minerva. Often, too, were heard words of reproach, in which the crowd of demons assailed Martin with scurrilous expressions. But knowing that all were false and groundless, he was not affected by the charges brought against him. Moreover, some of the brethren bore witness that they had heard a demon reproaching Martin in abusive terms, and asking why he had taken back, on their subsequent repentance, certain of the brethren who had, some time previously, lost their baptism by falling into various errors. The demon set forth the crimes of each of them; but they added that Martin, resisting the devil firmly, answered him, that by-past sins are cleansed away by the leading of a better life, and that through the mercy of God, those are to be absolved from their sins who have given up their evil ways. The devil saying in opposition to this that such guilty men as those referred to did not come within the pale of pardon, and that no mercy was extended by the Lord to those who had once fallen away, Martin is said to have cried out in words to the following effect: "If thou, thyself, wretched being, wouldst but desist from attacking mankind, and even, at this period, when the day of judgment is at hand, wouldst only repent of your deeds, I, with a true confidence in the Lord, would promise you the mercy of Christ." [38] O what a holy boldness with respect to the loving-kindness of the Lord, in which, although he could not assert authority, he nevertheless showed the feelings dwelling within him! And since our discourse has here sprung up concerning the devil and his devices, it does not seem away from the point, although the matter does not bear immediately upon Martin, to relate what took place; both because the virtues of Martin do, to some extent, appear in the transaction, and the incident, which was worthy of a miracle, will properly be put on record, with the view of furnishing a caution, should anything of a similar character subsequently occur.

Chapter XXIII. A Case of Diabolic Deception.

There was a certain man, Clarus by name, a most noble youth, who afterwards became a presbyter, and who is now, through his happy departure from this world, numbered among the saints. He, leaving all others, betook himself to Martin, and in a short time became distinguished for the most exalted faith, and for all sorts of excellence. Now, it came to pass that, when he had erected an abode for himself not far from the monastery of the bishop, and many brethren were staying with him, a certain youth, Anatolius by name, having, under the profession of a monk, falsely assumed every appearance of humility and innocence, came to him, and lived for some time on the common store along with the rest. Then, as time went on, he began to affirm that angels were in the habit of talking with him. As no one gave any credit to his words, he urged a number of the brethren to believe by certain signs. At length he went to such a length as to declare that angels passed between him and God; and now he wished that he should be regarded as one of the prophets. Clarus, however, could by no means be induced to believe. He then began to threaten Clarus with the anger of God and present afflictions, because he did not believe one of the saints. At the last, he is related to have burst forth with the following declaration: "Behold, the Lord will this night give me a white robe out of heaven, clothed in which, I will dwell in the midst of you; and that will be to you a sign that I am the Power of God, inasmuch as I have been presented with the garment of God." Then truly the expectation of all was highly raised by this profession. Accordingly, about the middle of the night, it was seen, by the noise of people moving eagerly about, that the whole monastery in the place was excited. It might be seen, too, that the cell in which the young man referred to lived was glittering with numerous lights; and the whisperings of those moving about in it, as well as a kind of murmur of many voices, could be heard. Then, on silence being secured, the youth coming forth calls one of the brethren, Sabatius by name, to himself, and shows him the robe in which he had been clothed. He again, filled with amazement, gathers the rest together, and Clarus himself also runs up; and a light being obtained, they all carefully inspect the garment. Now, it was of the utmost softness, of marvelous brightness, and of glittering purple, and yet no one could discover what was its nature, or of what sort of fleece it had been formed. However, when it was more minutely examined by the eyes or fingers, it seemed nothing else than a garment. In the meantime, Clarus urges upon the brethren to be earnest in prayer, that the Lord would show them more clearly what it really was. Accordingly, the rest of the night was spent in singing hymns and psalms. But when day broke, Clarus wished to take the young man by the hand, and bring him to Martin, being well aware that he could not be deceived by any arts of the devil. Then, indeed, the miserable man began to resist and refuse, and affirmed that he had been forbidden to show himself to Martin. And when they compelled him to go against his will, the garment vanished from among the hands of those who were conducting him. Wherefore, who can doubt that this, too, was an illustration of the power of Martin, so that the devil could no longer dissemble or conceal his own deception, when it was to be submitted to the eyes of Martin?

Chapter XXIV. Martin is tempted by the Wiles of the Devil.

It was found, again, that about the same time there was a young man in Spain, who, having by many signs obtained for himself authority among the people, was puffed up to such a pitch that he gave himself out as being Elias. And when multitudes had too readily believed this, he went on to say that he was actually Christ; and he succeeded so well even in this delusion that a certain bishop named Rufus worshiped him as being the Lord. For so doing, we have seen this bishop at a later date deprived of his office. Many of the brethren have also informed me that at the same time one arose in the East, who boasted that he was John. We may infer from this, since false prophets of such a kind have appeared, that the coming of Antichrist is at hand; for he is already practicing in these persons the mystery of iniquity. And truly I think this point should not be passed over, with what arts the devil about this very time tempted Martin. For, on a certain day, prayer [39] having been previously offered, and the fiend himself being surrounded by a purple light, in order that he might the more easily deceive people by the brilliance of the splendor assumed, clothed also in a royal robe, and with a crown of precious stones and gold encircling his head, his shoes too being inlaid with gold, while he presented a tranquil countenance, and a generally rejoicing aspect, so that no such thought as that he was the devil might be entertained -- he stood by the side of Martin as he was praying in his cell. The saint being dazzled by his first appearance, both preserved a long and deep silence. This was first broken by the devil, who said: "Acknowledge, Martin, who it is that you behold. I am Christ; and being just about to descend to earth, I wished first to manifest myself to thee." When Martin kept silence on hearing these words, and gave no answer whatever, the devil dared to repeat his audacious declaration: "Martin, why do you hesitate to believe, when you see? I am Christ." Then Martin, the Spirit revealing the truth to him, that he might understand it was the devil, and not God, replied as follows: "The Lord Jesus did not predict that he would come clothed in purple, and with a glittering crown upon his head. I will not believe that Christ has come, unless he appears with that appearance and form in which he suffered, and openly displaying the marks of his wounds upon the cross." On hearing these words, the devil vanished like smoke, and filled the cell with such a disgusting smell, that he left unmistakable evidences of his real character. This event, as I have just related, took place in the way which I have stated, and my information regarding it was derived from the lips of Martin himself; therefore let no one regard it as fabulous. [40]

Chapter XXV. Intercourse of Sulpitius with Martin.

For since I, having long heard accounts of his faith, life and virtues, burned with a desire of knowing him, I undertook what was to me a pleasant journey for the purpose of seeing him. At the same time, because already my mind was inflamed with the desire of writing his life, I obtained my information partly from himself, in so far as I could venture to question him, and partly from those who had lived with him, or well knew the facts of the case. And at this time it is scarcely credible with what humility and with what kindness he received me; while he cordially wished me joy, and rejoiced in the Lord that he had been held in such high estimation by me that I had undertaken a journey owing to my desire of seeing him. Unworthy me! (in fact, I hardly dare acknowledge it), that he should have deigned to admit me to fellowship with him! He went so far as in person to present me with water to wash my hands, and at eventide he himself washed my feet; nor had I sufficient courage to resist or oppose his doing so. In fact, I felt so overcome by the authority he unconsciously exerted, that I deemed it unlawful to do anything but acquiesce in his arrangements. His conversation with me was all directed to such points as the following: that the allurements of this world and secular burdens were to be abandoned in order that we might be free and unencumbered in following the Lord Jesus; and he pressed upon me as an admirable example in present circumstances the conduct of that distinguished man Paulinus, of whom I have made mention above. Martin declared of him that, by parting with his great possessions and following Christ, as he did, he showed himself almost the only one who in these times had fully obeyed the precepts of the Gospel. He insisted strongly that that was the man who should be made the object of our imitation, adding that the present age was fortunate in possessing such a model of faith and virtue. For Paulinus, being rich and having many possessions, by selling them all and giving them to the poor according to the expressed will of the Lord, had, he said, made possible by actual proof what appeared impossible of accomplishment. What power and dignity there were in Martin's words and conversation! How active he was, how practical, and how prompt and ready in solving questions connected with Scripture! And because I know that many are incredulous on this point, -- for indeed I have met with persons who did not believe me when I related such things, -- I call to witness Jesus, and our common hope as Christians, that I never heard from any other lips than those of Martin such exhibitions of knowledge and genius, or such specimens of good and pure speech. But yet, how insignificant is all such praise when compared with the virtues which he possessed! Still, it is remarkable that in a man who had no claim to be called learned, even this attribute [of high intelligence] was not wanting.

Chapter XXVI. Words cannot describe the Excellences of Martin.

But now my book must be brought to an end, and my discourse finished. This is not because all that was worthy of being said concerning Martin is now exhausted, but because I, just as sluggish poets grow less careful towards the end of their work, give over, being baffled by the immensity of the matter. For, although his outward deeds could in some sort of way be set forth in words, no language, I truly own, can ever be capable of describing his inner life and daily conduct, and his mind always bent upon the things of heaven. No one can adequately make known his perseverance and self-mastery in abstinence and fastings, or his power in watchings and prayers, along with the nights, as well as days, which were spent by him, while not a moment was separated from the service of God, either for indulging in ease, or engaging in business. But, in fact, he did not indulge either in food or sleep, except in so far as the necessities of nature required. I freely confess that, if, as the saying is, Homer himself were to ascend from the shades below, he could not do justice to this subject in words; to such an extent did all excellences surpass in Martin the possibility of being embodied in language. Never did a single hour or moment pass in which he was not either actually engaged in prayer; or, if it happened that he was occupied with something else, still he never let his mind loose from prayer. In truth, just as it is the custom of blacksmiths, in the midst of their work to beat their own anvil as a sort of relief to the laborer, so Martin even when he appeared to be doing something else, was still engaged in prayer. O truly blessed man in whom there was no guile -- judging no man, condemning no man, returning evil for evil to no man! He displayed indeed such marvelous patience in the endurance of injuries, that even when he was chief [41] priest, he allowed himself to be wronged by the lowest clerics with impunity; nor did he either remove them from the office on account of such conduct, or, as far as in him lay, repel them from a place in his affection.

Chapter XXVII. Wonderful Piety of Martin.

No one ever saw him enraged, or excited, or lamenting, or laughing; he was always one and the same: displaying a kind of heavenly happiness in his countenance, he seemed to have passed the ordinary limits of human nature. Never was there any word on his lips but Christ, and never was there a feeling in his heart except piety, peace, and tender mercy. Frequently, too, he used to weep for the sins of those who showed themselves his revilers -- those who, as he led his retired and tranquil life, slandered him with poisoned tongue and a viper's mouth. And truly we have had experience of some who were envious of his virtues and his life -- who really hated in him what they did not see in themselves, and what they had not power to imitate. And -- O wickedness worthy of deepest grief and groans! -- some of his calumniators, although very few, some of his maligners, I say, were reported to be no others than bishops! Here, however, it is not necessary to name any one, although a good many of these people are still venting [42] their spleen against myself. I shall deem it sufficient that, if any one of them reads this account, and perceives that he is himself pointed at, he may have the grace to blush. But if, on the other hand, he shows anger, he will, by that very fact, own that he is among those spoken of, though all the time perhaps I have been thinking of some other person. I shall, however, by no means feel ashamed if any people of that sort include myself in their hatred along with such a man as Martin. I am quite persuaded of this, that the present little work will give pleasure to all truly good men. And I shall only say further that, if any one read this narrative in an unbelieving spirit, he himself will fall into sin. I am conscious to myself that I have been induced by belief in the facts, and by the love of Christ, to write these things; and that, in doing so, I have set forth what is well known, and recorded what is true; and, as I trust, that man will have a reward prepared by God, not who shall read these things, but who shall believe them. [43]

Letter I. To Eusebius.

Against Some Envious Assailants of Martin. Yesterday a number of monks having come to me, it happened that amid endless fables, and much tiresome discourse, mention was made of the little work which I published concerning the life of that saintly man Martin, and I was most happy to hear that it was being eagerly and carefully read by multitudes. In the meantime, however, I was told that a certain person, under the influence of an evil spirit, had asked why Martin, who was said to have raised the dead and to have rescued houses from the flames, had himself recently become subject to the power of fire, and thus been exposed to suffering of a dangerous character. Wretched man, whoever he is, that expressed himself thus! We recognize his perfidious talk in the words of the Jews of old, who reviled the Lord, when hanging upon the cross, in the following terms: "He saved others; himself he cannot save." [44] Truly it is clear that, whoever be the person referred to, if he had lived in those times, he would have been quite prepared to speak against the Lord in these terms, inasmuch as he blasphemes a saint of the Lord, after a like fashion. How then, I ask thee, whosoever thou art, how does the case stand? Was Martin really not possessed of power, and not a partaker of holiness, because he became exposed to danger from fire? O thou blessed man, and in all things like to the Apostles, even in the reproaches which are thus heaped upon thee! Assuredly those Gentiles are reported to have entertained the same sort of thought respecting Paul also, when the viper had bitten him, for they said, "This man must be a murderer, whom, although saved from the sea, the fates do not permit to live." [45] But he, shaking off the viper into the fire, suffered no harm. They, however, imagined that he would suddenly fall down, and speedily die; but when they saw that no harm befell him, changing their minds, they said that he was a God. But, O thou most miserable of men, you ought, even from that example to have yourself been convinced of your falsity; so that, if it had proved a stumbling-block to thee that Martin appeared touched by the flame of fire, you should, on the other hand, have ascribed his being merely touched to his merits and power, because, though surrounded by flames, he did not perish. For acknowledge, thou miserable man, acknowledge what you seem ignorant of, that almost all the saints have been more remarkable for [46] the dangers they encountered, than even for the virtues they displayed. I see, indeed, Peter strong in faith, walking over the waves of the sea, in opposition to the nature of things, and that he pressed the unstable waters with his footprints. But not on that account does the preacher of the Gentiles [47] seem to me a smaller man, whom the waves swallowed up; and, after three days [48] and three nights, the water restored him emerging from the deep. Nay, I am almost inclined to think that it was a greater thing to have lived in the deep, than to have walked along the depths of the sea. But, thou foolish man, you had not, as I suppose, read these things; or, having read them, had not understood them. For the blessed Evangelist would not have recorded in holy writ an incident of that kind -- under divine guidance -- (except that, from such cases, the human mind might be instructed as to the dangers connected with shipwrecks and serpents!) and, as the Apostle relates, who gloried in his nakedness, and hunger, and perils from robbers, all these things are indeed to be endured in common by holy men, but that it has always been the chief excellence of the righteous in enduring and conquering such things, while amid all their trials, being patient and ever unconquerable, they

overcame them all the more courageously, the heavier was the burden which they had to bear. Hence this event which is ascribed to the infirmity of Martin is, in reality, full of dignity and glory, since indeed, being tried by a most dangerous calamity, he came forth a conqueror. But let no one wonder that the incident referred to was omitted by me in that treatise which I wrote concerning his life, since in that very work I openly acknowledged that I had not embraced all his acts; and that for the good reason that, if I had been minded to narrate them all, I must have presented an enormous volume to my readers. And indeed, his achievements were not of so limited a number that they could all be comprehended in a book. Nevertheless, I shall not leave this incident, about which a question has arisen, to remain in obscurity, but shall relate the whole affair as it occurred, lest I should appear perchance to have intentionally passed over that which might be put forward in calumny of the saintly man. Martin having, about the middle of winter, come to a certain parish, [49] according to the usual custom for the bishops to visit the churches in the diocese, the clerics had prepared an abode for him in the private [50] part of the church, and had kindled a large fire beneath the floor which was decayed and very thin. [51] They also erected for him a couch consisting of a large amount of straw. Then, when Martin betook himself to rest, he was annoyed with the softness of the too luxurious bed, inasmuch as he had been accustomed to lie on the bare ground with only a piece of sackcloth stretched over him. Accordingly, influenced by the injury which had, as it were, been done him, he threw aside the whole of the straw. Now, it so happened that part of the straw which he had thus removed fell upon the stove. He himself, in the meantime, rested, as was his wont, upon the bare ground, tired out by his long journey. About midnight, the fire bursting up through the stove which, as I have said, was far from sound, laid hold of the dry straw. Martin, being wakened out of sleep by this unexpected occurrence, and being prevented by the pressing danger, but chiefly, as he afterwards related, by the snares and urgency of the devil, was longer than he ought to have been in having recourse to the aid of prayer. For, desiring to get outside, he struggled long and laboriously with the bolt by which he had secured the door. Ere long he perceived that he was surrounded by a fearful conflagration; and the fire had even laid hold of the garment with which he was clothed. At length recovering his habitual conviction that his safety lay not in flight, but in the Lord, and seizing the shield of faith and prayer, committing himself entirely to the Lord, he lay down in the midst of the flames. Then truly, the fire having been removed by divine interposition, he continued to pray amid a circle of flames that did him no harm. But the monks, who were before the door, hearing the sound of the crackling and struggling fire, broke open the barred door; and, the fire being extinguished, they brought forth Martin from the midst of the flames, all the time supposing that he must ere then have been burnt to ashes by a fire of so long continuance. Now, as the Lord is my witness, he himself related to me, and not without groans, confessed that he was in this matter beguiled by the arts of the devil; in that, when roused from sleep, he did not take the wise course of repelling the danger by means of faith and prayer. He also added that the flames raged around him all the time that, with a distempered mind, he strove to throw open the door. But he declared that as soon as he again sought assistance from the cross, and tried the weapons of prayer, the central flames gave way, and that he then felt them shedding a dewy refreshment over him, after having just experienced how cruelly they burned him. Considering all which, let every one who reads this letter understand that Martin was indeed tried by that danger, but passed through it with true acceptance. [52]

Letter II. To the Deacon Aurelius.

Sulpitius has a Vision of St. Martin. Sulpitius Severus to Aurelius the Deacon sendeth greeting, --

[53] After you had departed from me in the morning, I was sitting alone in my cell; and there occurred to me, as often happens, that hope of the future which I cherish, along with a weariness of the present world, a terror of judgment, a fear of punishment, and, as a consequence, indeed as the source from which the whole train of thought had flowed, a remembrance of my sins, which had rendered me worn and miserable. Then, after I had placed on my couch my limbs fatigued with the anguish of my mind, sleep crept upon me, as frequently happens from melancholy; and such sleep, as it is always somewhat light and uncertain in the morning hours, so it pervaded my members only in a hovering and doubtful manner. Thus it happens, what does not occur in a different kind of slumber, that one can feel he is dreaming while almost awake. In these circumstances, I seemed suddenly to see St. Martin appear to me in the character of a bishop, clothed in a white robe, with a countenance as of fire, with eyes like stars, and with purple hair.

[54] He thus appeared to me with that aspect and form of body which I had known, so that I find it almost difficult to say what I mean -- he could not be steadfastly beheld, though he could be clearly recognized. Well, directing a gentle smile towards me, he held out in his right hand the small treatise which I had written concerning his life. I, for my part, embraced his sacred knees, and begged for his blessing according to custom. Upon this, I felt his hand placed on my head with the sweetest touch, while, amid the solemn words of benediction, he repeated again and again the name of the cross so familiar to his lips. Ere long, while my eyes were earnestly fixed upon him, and when I could not satisfy myself with gazing upon his countenance, he was suddenly taken away from me and raised on high. At last, having passed through the vast expanse of the air, while my straining eyes followed him ascending in a rapidly moving cloud, he could no longer be seen by me gazing after him. And not long after, I saw the holy presbyter Clarus, a disciple of Martin's who had lately died, ascend in the same way as I had seen his master. I, impudently desiring to follow, while I aim at and strive after such lofty steps, suddenly wake up; and, being roused from sleep, I had begun to rejoice over the vision, when a boy, a servant in the family, enters to me with a countenance sadder than is usual with one who gives utterance to his grief in words. "What," I enquire of him, "do you wish to tell me with so melancholy an aspect?" "Two monks," he replied, "have just been here from Tours, and they have brought word that Martin is dead." I confess that I was cut to the heart; and bursting into tears, I wept most abundantly. Nay, even now, as I write these things to you, brother, my tears are flowing, and I find no consolation for my all but unbearable sorrow. And I should wish you, when this news reaches you, to be a partaker in my grief, as you were a sharer with me in his love. Come then, I beg of you, to me without delay, that we may mourn in common him whom in common we love. And yet I am well aware that such a man ought not to be mourned over, to whom, after his victory and triumph over the world, there has now at last been given the crown of righteousness. Nevertheless, I cannot so command myself as to keep from grieving. I have, no doubt, sent on before me one who will plead my cause in heaven, but I have, at the same time, lost my great source of consolation in this present life; yet if grief would yield to the influence of reason, I certainly ought to rejoice. For he is now mingling

among the Apostles and Prophets, and (with all respect for the saints on high be it said) he is second to no one in that assembly of the righteous as I firmly hope, believe, and trust, being joined especially to those who washed their robes in the blood of the [55] Lamb. He now follows the Lamb as his guide, free from all spot of defilement. For although the character [56] of our times could not ensure him the honor of martyrdom, yet he will not remain destitute of the glory of a martyr, because both by vow and virtues he was alike able and willing to be a martyr. But if he had been permitted, in the times of Nero and of Decius, [57] to take part in the struggle which then went on, I take to witness the God of heaven and earth that he would freely have submitted [58] to the rack of torture, and readily surrendered himself to the flames: yea, worthy of being compared to the illustrious Hebrew youths, amid the circling flames, and though in the very midst of the furnace, he would have sung a hymn of the Lord. But if perchance it had pleased the persecutor to inflict upon him the punishment which Isaiah endured, he would never have shown himself inferior to the prophet, nor would have shrunk from having his members torn in pieces by saws and swords. And if impious fury had preferred to drive the blessed man over precipitous rocks or steep mountains, I maintain that, clinging [59] to the testimony of truth he would willingly have fallen. But if, after the example of the teacher of the Gentiles, [60] as indeed often happened, he had been included among other victims who were condemned [61] to die by the sword, he would have been foremost to urge on the executioner to his work that he might obtain the crown [62] of blood. And, in truth, far from shrinking from a confession of the Lord, in the face of all those penalties and punishments, which frequently prove too much for human infirmity, he would have stood so immovable as to have smiled with joy and gladness over the sufferings and torments he endured, whatever might have been the tortures inflicted upon him. But although he did in fact suffer none of these things, yet he fully attained to the honor of martyrdom without shedding his blood. For what agonies of human sufferings did he not endure in behalf of the hope of eternal life, in hunger, in watchings, in nakedness, in fastings, in reproachings of the malignant, in persecutions of the wicked, in care for the weak, in anxiety for those in danger? For who ever suffered but Martin suffered along with him? Who was made to stumble and he burnt not? Who perished, and he did not mourn deeply? Besides those daily struggles which he carried on against the various conflicts with human and spiritual wickedness, while invariably, as he was assailed with divers temptations, there prevailed in his case fortitude in conquering, patience in waiting, and placidity in enduring. O man, truly indescribable in piety, mercy, love, which daily grows cold even in holy men through the coldness of the world, but which in his case increased onwards to the end, and endured from day to day! I, for my part, had the happiness of enjoying this grace in him even in an eminent degree, for he loved me in a special manner, though I was far from meriting such affection. And, on the remembrance, yet again my tears burst forth, while groans issue from the bottom of my heart. In what man shall I for the future find such repose for my spirit as I did in him? and in whose love shall I enjoy like consolation? Wretched being that I am, sunk in affliction, can I ever, if life be spared me, cease to lament that I have survived Martin? Shall there in future be to me any pleasure in life, or any day or hour free from tears; or can I ever, my dearest brother, make mention of him to you without lamentation? And yet, in conversing with you, can I ever talk of any other subject than him? But why do I stir you up to tears and lamentations? So I now desire you to be comforted, although I am unable to console myself. He will not be absent from us; believe me, he will never, never forsake us, but will be present with us as we discourse regarding him, and will be near to us as we pray; and the happiness which he has even to-day deigned to bestow, even

that of seeing him in his glory, he will frequently in future afford; and he will protect us, as he did but a little while ago, with his unceasing benediction. Then again, according to the arrangement of the vision, he showed that heaven was open to those following him, and taught us to what we ought to follow him; he instructed us to what objects our hope should be directed, and to what attainment our mind should be turned. Yet, my brother, what is to be done? For, as I am myself well aware, I shall never be able to climb that difficult ascent, and penetrate into those blessed regions. To such a degree does a miserable burden press me down; and while I cannot, through the load of sin which overwhelms me, secure an ascent to heaven, the cruel pressure rather sinks me in my misery to the place of despair. [63] Nevertheless, hope remains, one last and solitary hope, that, what I cannot obtain of myself, I may, at any rate, be thought worthy of, through the prayers of Martin in my behalf. But why, brother, should I longer occupy your time with a letter which has turned out so garrulous, and thus delay you from coming to me? At the same time, my page being now filled, can admit no more. This, however, was my object in prolonging my discourse to a somewhat undue extent, that, since this letter conveys to you a message of sorrow, it might also furnish you with consolation, through my sort of friendly conversation with you.

Letter III. To Bassula, His Mother-In-Law.

How St. Martin passed from this Life to Life Eternal. Sulpitius Severus to Bassula, his venerable parent, sendeth greeting. If it were lawful that parents should be summoned to court by their children, clearly I might drag you with a righteous thong [64] before the tribunal of the prætor, on a charge of robbery and plunder. For why should I not complain of the injury which I have suffered at your hands? You have left me no little bit of writing at home, no book, not even a letter -- to such a degree do you play the thief with all such things and publish them to the world. If I write anything in familiar style to a friend; if, as I amuse myself I dictate anything with the wish at the same time that it should be kept private, all such things seem to reach you almost before they have been written or spoken. Surely you have my secretaries [65] in your [66] debt, since through them any trifles I compose are made known to you. And yet I cannot be moved with anger against them if they really obey you, and have invaded my rights under the special influence of your generosity to them, and ever bear in mind that they belong to you rather than to me. Yes, thou alone art the culprit -- thou alone art to blame -- inasmuch as you both lay your snares for me, and cajole them with your trickery, so that without making any [67] selection, pieces written familiarly, or let out of hand without care, are sent to thee quite unelaborated and unpolished. For, to say nothing about other writings, I beg to ask how that letter could reach you so speedily, which I recently wrote to Aurelius the Deacon. For, as I was situated at Toulouse, [68] while you were dwelling at Treves, and were so far distant from your native land, owing to the anxiety felt on account of your son, what opportunity, I should like to know, did you avail yourself of, to get hold of that familiar [69] epistle? For I have received your letter in which you write that I ought in the same epistle in which I made mention of the death of our master, Martin, to have described the manner in which that saintly man left this world. As if, indeed, I had either given forth that epistle with the view of its being read by any other except him to whom it purported to be sent; or as if I were fated to undertake so great a work as that all things which should be known respecting Martin are to be made public through me particularly as the writer. Therefore, if you desire to learn anything concerning the end of the saintly bishop, you should direct your enquiries rather to those who were present when his death occurred. I for my part have resolved to write nothing to you lest you publish me [70] everywhere. Nevertheless if you pledge your word that you will read to no one what I send you, I shall satisfy your desire in a few words. Accordingly I shall communicate [71] to you the following particulars which are comprised within my own knowledge. I have to state, then, that Martin was aware of the period of his own death long before it occurred, and told the brethren that his departure from the body was at hand. In the meantime, a reason sprang up which led him to visit the church at Condate. [72] For, as the clerics of that church were at variance among themselves, Martin, wishing to restore peace, although he well knew that the end of his own days was at hand, yet he did not shrink from undertaking the journey, with such an object in view. He did, in fact, think that this would be an excellent crown to set upon his virtues, if he should leave behind him peace restored to a church. Thus, then, having set out with that very numerous and holy crowd of disciples who usually accompanied him, he perceives in a river a number of water-fowl busy in capturing fishes, and notices that a voracious appetite was urging them on to

frequent seizures of their prey. "This," exclaimed he, "is a picture of how the demons act: they lie in wait for the unwary and capture them before they know it: they devour their victims when taken, and they can never be satisfied with what they have devoured." Then Martin, with a miraculous [73] power in his words, commands the birds to leave the pool in which they were swimming, and to betake themselves to dry and desert regions; using with respect to those birds that very same authority with which he had been accustomed to put demons to flight. Accordingly, gathering themselves together, all those birds formed a single body, and leaving the river, they made for the mountains and woods, to no small wonder of many who perceived such power in Martin that he could even rule the birds. Having then delayed some time in that village or church to which he had gone, and peace having been restored among the clerics, when he was now meditating a return to his monastery, he began suddenly to fail in bodily strength, and, assembling the brethren, he told them that he was on the point of dissolution. Then indeed, sorrow and grief took possession of all, and there was but one voice of them lamenting, and saying: "Why, dear father, will you leave us? Or to whom can you commit us in our desolation? Fierce wolves will speedily attack thy flock, and who, when the shepherd has been smitten, will save us [74] from their bites? We know, indeed, that you desire to be with Christ; but thy reward above is safe, and will not be diminished by being delayed; rather have pity upon us, whom you are leaving desolate." Then Martin, affected by these lamentations, as he was always, in truth, full [75] of compassion, is said to have burst into tears; and, turning to the Lord, he replied to those weeping round him only in the following words, "O Lord, if I am still necessary to thy people, I do not shrink from toil: thy will be done." Thus hovering as he did between [76] desire and love, he almost doubted which he preferred; for he neither wished to leave us, nor to be longer separated from Christ. However, he placed no weight upon his own wishes, nor reserved anything to his own will, but committed himself wholly to the will and power of the Lord. Do you not think you hear him speaking in the following few words which I repeat? "Terrible, indeed, Lord, is the struggle of bodily warfare, and surely it is now enough that I have continued the fight till now; but, if thou dost command me still to persevere in the same toil for the defense [77] of thy flock, I do not refuse, nor do I plead against such an appointment my declining years. Wholly given to thee, I will fulfill whatever duties thou dost assign me, and I will serve under thy standard as long as thou shalt prescribe. Yea, although release is sweet to an old man after lengthened toil, yet my mind is a conqueror over my years, and I have no desire [78] to yield to old age. But if now thou art merciful to my many years, good, O Lord, is thy will to me; and thou thyself wilt guard over those for whose safety I fear." O man, whom no language can describe, unconquered by toil, and unconquerable even by death, who didst show no personal preference for either alternative, and who didst neither fear to die nor refuse to live! Accordingly, though he was for some days under the influence of a strong fever, he nevertheless did not abandon the work of God. Continuing in supplications and watchings through whole nights, he compelled his worn-out limbs to do service to his spirit as he lay on his glorious [79] couch upon sackcloth and ashes. And when his disciples begged of him that at least he should allow some common straw to be placed beneath him, he replied: "It is not fitting that a Christian should die except among ashes; and I have sinned if I leave you a different example." However, with his hands and eyes steadfastly directed towards heaven, he never released his unconquerable spirit from prayer. And on being asked by the presbyters who had then gathered round him, to relieve his body a little by a change of side, he exclaimed: "Allow me, dear brother, to fix my looks rather on heaven than on earth, so that my spirit which is just about to depart on its own journey may be

directed towards the Lord." Having spoken these words, he saw the devil standing close at hand, and exclaimed: "Why do you stand here, thou bloody monster? Thou shalt find nothing in me, thou deadly one: Abraham's bosom is about to receive me." As he uttered these words, his spirit fled; and those who were there present have testified to us that they saw his face as if it had been the face [80] of an angel. His limbs too appeared white as snow, so that people exclaimed, "Who would ever believe that man to be clothed in sackcloth, or who would imagine that he was enveloped with ashes?" For even then he presented such an appearance, as if he had been manifested in the glory of the future resurrection, and with the nature of a body which had been changed. But it is hardly credible what a multitude of human beings assembled at the performance of his funeral rites: the whole city poured forth to meet his body; all the inhabitants of the district and villages, along with many also from the neighboring cities, attended. O how great was the grief of all! how deep the lamentations in particular of the sorrowing monks! They are said to have assembled on that day almost to the number of two thousand, -- a special glory of Martin, -- through his example so numerous plants had sprung up for the service of the Lord. Undoubtedly the shepherd was then driving his own flocks before him -- the pale crowds of that saintly multitude -- bands arrayed in cloaks, either old men whose life-labor was finished, or young soldiers who had just taken the oath of allegiance to Christ. Then, too, there was the choir of virgins, abstaining out of modesty from weeping; and with what holy joy did they conceal the fact of their affliction! No doubt faith would prevent the shedding of tears, yet affection forced out groans. For there was as sacred an exultation over the glory to which he had attained, as there was a pious sorrow on account of his death. One would have been inclined to pardon those who wept, as well as to congratulate those who rejoiced, while each single person preferred that he himself should grieve, but that another should rejoice. Thus then this multitude, singing hymns of heaven, attended the body of the sainted man onwards to the place of sepulture. Let there be compared with this spectacle, I will not say the worldly [81] pomp of a funeral, but even of a triumph; and what can be reckoned similar to the obsequies of Martin? Let your worldly great men lead before their chariots captives with their hands bound behind their backs. Those accompanied the body of Martin who, under his guidance, had overcome the world. Let madness honor these earthly warriors with the united praises of nations. Martin is praised with the divine psalms, Martin is honored in heavenly hymns. Those worldly men, after their triumphs here are over, shall be thrust into cruel Tartarus, while Martin is joyfully received into the bosom of Abraham. Martin, poor and insignificant on earth, has a rich entrance granted him into heaven. From that blessed region, as I trust, he looks upon me, as my guardian, while I am writing these things, and upon you while you read them. [82]

Dialogue I. Concerning the Virtues of the Monks of the East.

Chapter I. When I and a Gallic friend had assembled in one place

When I and a Gallic friend had assembled in one place, this Gaul being a man very dear to me, both on account of his remembrance of Martin (for he had been one of his disciples), and on account of his own merits, my friend Postumianus joined us. He had just, on my account, returned from the East, to which, leaving his native country, he had gone three years before. Having embraced this most affectionate friend, and kissed both his knees and his feet, we were for a moment or two, as it were, astounded; and, shedding mutual tears of joy, we walked about a good deal. But by and by we sat down on our garments of sackcloth laid upon the ground. Then Postumianus, directing his looks towards me is the first to speak, and says, -- "When I was in the remote parts of Egypt, I felt a desire to go on as far as the sea. I there met with a merchant vessel, which was ready to set sail with the view of making for Narbonne. [83] The same night you seemed in a dream to stand beside me, and laying hold of me with your hand, to lead me away that I should go on board that ship. Ere long, when the dawn dispersed the darkness, and when I rose up in the place in which I had been resting, as I revolved my dream in my mind, I was suddenly seized with such a longing after you, that without delay I went on board the ship. Landing on the thirtieth day at Marseilles, I came on from that and arrived here on the tenth day -- so prosperous a voyage was granted to my dutiful desire of seeing you. Do thou only, for whose sake I have sailed over so many seas, and have traversed such an extent of land, yield yourself over to me to be embraced and enjoyed apart from all others." "I truly," said I, "while you were still staying in Egypt, was ever holding fellowship with you in my mind and thoughts, and affection for you had full possession of me as I meditated upon you day and night. Surely then, you cannot imagine that I will now fail for a single moment to gaze with delight upon you, as I hang upon your lips. I will listen to you, I will converse with you, while no one at all is admitted to our retirement, which this remote cell of mine furnishes to us. For, as I suppose, you will not take amiss the presence of this friend of ours, the Gaul, who, as you perceive, rejoices with his whole heart over this arrival of yours, even as I do myself." "Quite right," said Postumianus, "that Gaul will certainly be retained in our company; who, although I am but little acquainted with him, yet for this very reason that he is greatly beloved by you, cannot fail also to be dear to me. This must especially be the case, since he is of the school of Martin; nor will I grudge, as you desire, to talk with you in connected discourse, since I came hither for this very purpose, that I should, even at the risk of being tedious, respond to the desire of my dear Sulpitius " -- and in so speaking he affectionately took hold of me with both his hands.

Chapter II. [Truly] said I, [you have clearly proved how much a sincere love can accomplish

"Truly" said I, "you have clearly proved how much a sincere love can accomplish, inasmuch as, for my sake, you have traveled over so many seas, and such an extent of land, journeying, so to speak, from the rising of the sun in the East to where he sets in the West. Come, then, because we are here in a retired spot by ourselves, and not being otherwise occupied, feel it our duty to attend to your discourse, come, I pray thee, relate to us the whole history of your wanderings. Tell us, if you please, how the faith of Christ is flourishing in the East; what peace the saints enjoy; what are the customs of the monks; and with what signs and miracles Christ is working in his servants. For assuredly, because in this region of ours and amid the circumstances in which we are placed, life itself has become a weariness to us, we shall gladly hear from you, if life is permitted to Christians even in the desert." In reply to these words, Postumianus declares, "I shall do as I see you desire. But I beg you first to tell me, whether all those persons whom I left here as priests, continue the same as I knew them before taking my departure." Then I exclaim, "Forbear, I beseech thee, to make any enquiry on such points, which you either, I think, know as well as I do, or if you are ignorant of them, it is better that you should hear nothing regarding them. I cannot, however, help saying, that not only are those, of whom you enquire, no better than they were when you knew them, but even that one man, who was formerly a great friend of mine, and in whose affection I was wont to find some consolation from the persecutions of the rest, has shown himself more unkind towards me than he ought to have been. However, I shall not say anything harsher regarding him, both because I once esteemed him as a friend, and loved him even when he was deemed my enemy. I shall only add that while I was silently meditating on these things in my thoughts, this source of grief deeply afflicted me, that I had almost lost the friendship of one who was both a wise and a religious man. But let us turn away from these topics which are full of sorrow, and let us rather listen to you, according to the promise which you gave some time ago." "Let it be so," exclaimed Postumianus. And on his saying this, we all kept silence, while, moving his robe of sackcloth, on which he had sat down, a little nearer me, he thus began.

Chapter III. |Three years ago, Sulpitius, at which time, leaving this neighborhood

"Three years ago, Sulpitius, at which time, leaving this neighborhood, I bade thee farewell, after setting sail from Narbonne, on the fifth day we entered a port of Africa: so prosperous, by the will of God, had been the voyage. I had in my mind a great desire to go to Carthage, to visit those localities connected with the saints, and, above all, to worship at the tomb [84] of the martyr Cyprian. On the fifth day we returned to the harbor, and launched forth into the deep. Our destination was Alexandria; but as the south wind was against us, we were almost driven upon the Syrtis; [85] the cautious sailors, however, guarding against this, stopped the ship by casting anchor. The continent of Africa then lay before our eyes; and, landing on it in boats, when we perceived that the whole country round was destitute of human cultivation, I penetrated farther inland, for the purpose of more carefully exploring the locality. About three miles from the sea-coast, I beheld a small hut in the midst of the sand, the roof of which, to use the expression [86] of Sallust, was like the keel of a ship. It was close to [87] the earth, and was floored with good strong boards, not because any very heavy rains are there feared (for, in fact, such a thing as rain has there never even been heard of), but because, such is the strength of the winds in that district, that, if at any time only a little breath of air begins there to be felt, even when the weather is pretty mild, a greater wreckage takes place in those lands than on any sea. No plants are there, and no seeds ever spring up, since, in such shifting soil, the dry sand is swept along with every motion of the winds. But where some promontories, back from the sea, act as a check to the winds, the soil, being somewhat more firm, produces here and there some prickly grass, and that furnishes fair pasturage for sheep. The inhabitants live on milk, while those of them that are more skillful, or, so to speak, more wealthy, make use of barley bread. That is the only kind of grain which flourishes there, for barley, by the quickness of its growth in that sort of soil, generally escapes the destruction caused by the fierce winds. So rapid is its growth that we are told it is ripe on the thirtieth day after the sowing of the seed. But there is no reason why men should settle there, except that all are free from the payment of taxes. The sea-coast of the Cyrenians is indeed the most remote, bordering upon that desert which lies between Egypt and Africa, [88] and through which Cato formerly, when fleeing from Cæsar, led an army. [89]

Chapter IV. I therefore bent my steps toward the hut which I had beheld from a distance.

I therefore bent my steps toward the hut which I had beheld from a distance. There I find an old man, in a garment made of skins, turning a mill with his hand. He saluted and received us kindly. We explain to him that we had been forced to land on that coast, and were prevented by the continued raging of the sea [90] from being able at once to pursue our voyage; that, having made our way on shore, we had desired, as is in keeping with ordinary human nature, to become acquainted with the character of the locality, and the manners of the inhabitants. We added that we were Christians, and that the principal object of our enquiry was whether there were any Christians amid these solitudes. Then, indeed, he, weeping for joy, throws himself at our feet; and, kissing us over and over again, invites us to prayer, while, spreading on the ground the skins of sheep, he makes us sit down upon them. He then serves up a breakfast truly luxurious, [91] consisting of the half of a barley cake. Now, we were four, while he himself constituted the fifth. He also brought in a bundle of herbs, of which I forget the name, but they were like mint, were rich in leaves, and yielded a taste like honey. We were delighted with the exceedingly sweet taste of this plant, and our hunger was fully satisfied." Upon this I smiled, and said to my friend the Gaul, "What, Gaul, do you think of this? Are you pleased with a bundle of herbs and half a barley cake as a breakfast for five men?" Then he, being an exceedingly modest person, and blushing somewhat, while he takes my [92] joke in good part, says, "You act, Sulpitius, in a way like yourself, for you never miss any opportunity which is offered you of joking us on the subject of our fondness for eating. But it is unkind of you to try to force us Gauls to live after the fashion of angels; and yet, through my own liking for eating, I could believe that even the angels are in the habit of eating; for such is my appetite that I would be afraid even singly to attack that half barley cake. However, let that man of Cyrene be satisfied with it, to whom it is either a matter of necessity or nature always to feel hungry; or, again, let those be content with it from whom, I suppose, their tossing at sea had taken away all desire for food. We, on the other hand, are at a distance from the sea; and, as I have often testified to you, we are, in one word, Gauls. But instead of wasting time over such matters, let our friend here rather go on to complete his account of the Cyrenian."

Chapter V. [Assuredly,] continues Postumianus, [I shall take care in future not to mention the abstinence of

"Assuredly," continues Postumianus, "I shall take care in future not to mention the abstinence of any one, in case the difficult example should quite offend our friends the Gauls. I had intended, however, to give an account also of the dinner of that man of Cyrene -- for we were seven days with him -- or some of the subsequent feasts; but these things had better be passed over, lest the Gaul should think that he was jeered at. However, on the following day, when some of the natives had come together to visit us, we discovered that that host of ours was a Presbyter -- a fact which he had concealed from us with the greatest care. We then went with him to the church, which was about two miles distant, and was concealed from our view by an intervening mountain. We found that it was constructed of common and worthless trees, and was not much more imposing than the hut of our host, in which one could not stand without stooping. On enquiring into the customs of the men of the district, we found that they were not in the habit of either buying or selling anything. They knew not the meaning of either fraud or theft. As to gold and silver, which mankind generally deem the most desirable of all things, they neither possess them, nor do they desire to possess them. For when I offered that Presbyter ten gold coins, he refused them, declaring, with profound wisdom, that the church was not benefited but rather [93] injured by gold. We presented him, however, with some pieces of clothing.

Chapter VI. |After he had kindly accepted our gifts, on the sailors calling us back to the

"After he had kindly accepted our gifts, on the sailors calling us back to the sea, we departed; and after a favorable passage, we arrived at Alexandria on the seventh day. There we found a disgraceful strife raging between the bishops and monks, the cause or occasion of which was that the priests were known when assembled together often to have passed decrees in crowded synods to the effect that no one should read or possess the books of Origen. He was, no doubt, regarded as a most able disputant on the sacred Scriptures. But the bishops maintained that there were certain things in his books of an unsound character; and his supporters, not being bold enough to defend these, rather took the line of declaring that they had been inserted by the heretics. They affirmed, therefore, that the other portions of his writings were not to be condemned on account of those things which justly fell under censure, since the faith of readers could easily make a distinction, so that they should not follow what had been forged, and yet should keep hold of those points which were handled in accordance with the Catholic faith. They remarked that there was nothing wonderful if, in modern and recent writings, heretical guile had been at work; since it had not feared in certain places to attack even Gospel truth. The bishops, struggling against these positions to the utmost extent of their power, insisted that what was quite correct in the writings of Origen should, along with the author himself, and even his whole works, be condemned, because those books were more than sufficient which the church had received. They also said that the reading was to be avoided of such works as would do more harm to the unwise than they would benefit the wise. For my part, on being led by curiosity to investigate some portions of these writings, I found very many things which pleased me, but some that were to be blamed. I think it is clear that the author himself really entertained these impious opinions, though his defenders maintain that the passages have been forged. I truly wonder that one and the same man could have been so different from himself as that, in the portion which is approved, he has no equal since the times of the Apostles, while in that which is justly condemned, no one can be shown to have erred more egregiously.

Chapter VII. For while many things in his books which were extracted from them by the bishops

For while many things in his books which were extracted from them by the bishops were read to show that they were written in opposition to the Catholic faith, that passage especially excited bad feeling against him, in which we read in his published works that the Lord Jesus, as he had come in the flesh for the redemption of mankind, and suffering upon the cross for the salvation of man, had tasted death to procure eternal life for the human race, so he was, by the same course of suffering, even to render the devil a partaker of redemption. He maintained this on the ground that such a thing would be in harmony with his goodness and beneficence, inasmuch as he who had restored fallen and ruined man, would thus also set free an angel who had previously fallen. When these and other things of a like nature were brought forward by the bishops, a tumult arose owing to the zeal of the different parties; and when this could not be quelled by the authority of the priests, the governor of the city was called upon to regulate the discipline of the church by a perverse precedent; and through the terror which he inspired, the brethren were dispersed, while the monks took to flight in different directions; so that, on the decrees being published, they were not permitted to find lasting acceptance [94] in any place. This fact influenced me greatly, that Hieronymus, a man truly Catholic and most skillful in the holy law, was thought at first to have been a follower of Origen, yet now, above most others, went the length of condemning the whole of his writings. Assuredly, I am not inclined to judge rashly in regard to any one; but even the most learned men were said to hold different opinions in this controversy. However, whether that opinion of Origen was simply an error, as I think, or whether it was a heresy, as is generally supposed, it not only could not be suppressed by multitudes of censures on the part of the priests, but it never could have spread itself so far and wide, had it not gathered strength from their contentions. Accordingly, when I came to Alexandria, I found that city in a ferment from disturbances connected with the matter in question. The Bishop, indeed, of that place received me very kindly, and in a better spirit than I expected, and even endeavored to retain me with him. But I was not at all inclined to settle there, where a recent outbreak of ill-will had resulted in a destruction of the brethren. For, although perhaps it may seem that they ought to have obeyed the bishops, yet such a multitude of persons, all living in an open confession of Christ, ought not for that reason to have been persecuted, especially by bishops.

Chapter VIII. Accordingly, setting out from that place, I made for the town of Bethlehem

Accordingly, setting out from that place, I made for the town of Bethlehem, which is six miles distant from Jerusalem, but requires sixteen stoppages [95] on the part of one journeying from Alexandria. The presbyter Jerome [96] rules the church of this place; for it is a parish of the bishop who has possession of Jerusalem. Having already in my former journey become acquainted with Hieronymus, he had easily brought it about that I with good reason deemed no one more worthy of my regard and love. For, besides the merit due to him on account of his Faith, and the possession of many virtues, he is a man learned not only in Latin and Greek, but also Hebrew, to such a degree that no one dare venture to compare himself with him in all knowledge. I shall indeed be surprised if he is not well known to you also through means of the works which he has written, since he is, in fact, read the whole world over." "Well," says the Gaul at this point, "he is, in truth, but too well known to us. For, some five years ago, I read a certain book of his, in which the whole tribe of our monks is most vehemently assaulted and reviled by him. For this reason, our Belgian friend is accustomed to be very angry, because he has said that we are in the habit of cramming ourselves even to repletion. But I, for my part, pardon the eminent man; and am of opinion that he had made the remark rather about Eastern than Western monks. For the love of eating is gluttony in the case of the Greeks, whereas among the Gauls it is owing to the nature they possess." Then exclaimed I, "You defend your nation, my Gallic friend, by means of rhetoric; but I beg to ask whether that book condemns only this vice in the case of the monks?" "No indeed," replies he; "the writer passed nothing over, which he did not blame, scourge, and expose: in particular, he inveighed against avarice and no less against arrogance. He discoursed much respecting pride, and not a little about superstition; and I will freely own that he seemed to me to draw a true picture of the vices of multitudes."

Chapter IX. |But as to familiarities which take place between virgins and monks

"But as to familiarities which take place between virgins and monks, or even clerics, how true and how courageous were his words! And, on account of these, he is said not to stand high in favor with certain people whom I am unwilling to name. For, as our Belgian friend is angry that we were accused of too great fondness for eating, so those people, again, are said to express their rage when they find it written in that little work, -- The virgin despises her true unmarried brother, and seeks a stranger." Upon this I exclaim, "You are going too far, my Gallic friend: take heed lest some one who perhaps owns to these things, hear what you are saying, and begin to hold you, along with Hieronymus, in no great affection. For, since you are a learned [97] man, not unreasonably will I admonish you in the verse of that comic poet who says, -- Submission procures friends, while truth gives rise to hatred.' Let rather, Postumianus, your discourse to us about the East, so well begun, now be resumed." "Well," says he, "as I had commenced to relate, I stayed with Hieronymus six months, who carried on an unceasing warfare against the wicked, and a perpetual struggle in opposition to the deadly hatred of ungodly men. The heretics hate him, because he never desists from attacking them; the clerics hate him, because he assails their life and crimes. But beyond doubt, all the good admire and love him; for those people are out of their senses, who suppose that he is a heretic. Let me tell the truth on this point, which is that the knowledge of the man is Catholic, and that his doctrine is sound. He is always occupied in reading, always at his books with his whole heart: he takes no rest day or night; he is perpetually either reading or writing something. In fact, had I not been resolved in mind, and had promised to God first to visit [98] the desert previously referred to, I should have grudged to depart even for the shortest time from so great a man. Handing over, then, and entrusting to him all my possessions and my whole family, which having followed me against my own inclination, kept me in a state of embarrassment, and thus being in a sort of way delivered from a heavy burden, and restored to freedom of action, I returned to Alexandria, and having visited the brethren there I set out from the place for upper Thebais, that is for the farthest off confines of Egypt. For a great multitude of monks were said to inhabit the widely extending solitudes of that wilderness. But here it would be tedious, were I to seek to narrate all the things which I witnessed: I shall only touch lightly on a few points.

Chapter X. |Not far from the desert, and close to the Nile

"Not far from the desert, and close to the Nile, there are numerous monasteries. For the most part, the monks there dwell together in companies of a hundred; and their highest rule is to live under the orders of their Abbot, to do nothing by their own inclination, but to depend in all things on his will and authority. If it so happens that any of them form in their minds a lofty ideal of virtue, so as to wish to betake themselves to the desert to live a solitary life, they do not venture to act on this desire except with the permission of the Abbot. In fact, this is the first of virtues in their estimation, -- to live in obedience to the will of another. To those who betake themselves to the desert, bread or some other kind of food is furnished by the command of that Abbot. Now, it so happened that, in those days during which I had come thither, the Abbot had sent bread to a certain person who had withdrawn to the desert, and had erected a tent for himself not more than six miles from the monastery. This bread was sent by the hands of two boys, the elder of whom was fifteen, and the younger twelve years of age. As these boys were returning home, an asp of remarkable size encountered them, but they were not the least afraid on meeting it; and moving up to their very feet, as if charmed by some melody, it laid down its dark-green neck before them. The younger of the boys laid hold of it with his hand, and, wrapping it in his dress, went on his way with it. Then, entering the monastery with the air of a conqueror, and meeting with the brethren, while all looked on, he opened out his dress, and set down the imprisoned beast, not without some appearance of boastfulness. But while the rest of the spectators extolled the faith and virtue of the children, the Abbot, with deeper insight, and to prevent them at such a tender age from being puffed up with pride, subjected both to punishment. This he did after blaming them much for having publicly revealed what the Lord had wrought through their instrumentality. He declared that that was not to be attributed to their faith, but to the Divine power; and added that they should rather learn to serve God in humility, and not to glory in signs and wonders; for that a sense of their own weakness was better than any vainglorious exhibition of power.

Chapter XI. |When the monk whom I have mentioned heard of this

"When the monk whom I have mentioned heard of this, -- when he learned both that the children had encountered danger through meeting the snake, and that moreover, having got the better of the serpent, they had received a sound beating, -- he implored the Abbot that henceforth no bread or food of any kind should be sent to him. And now the eighth day had passed since that man of Christ had exposed himself to the danger of perishing from hunger; his limbs were growing dry with fasting, but his mind fixed upon heaven could not fail; his body was wearing away with abstinence, but his faith remained firm. In the meantime, the Abbot was admonished by the Spirit to visit that disciple. Under the influence of a pious solicitude, he was eager to learn by what means of preserving life that faithful man was supported, since he had declined any human aid in ministering to his necessities. Accordingly, he sets out in person to satisfy himself on the subject. When the recluse saw from a distance the old man coming to him, he ran to meet him: he thanks him for the visit, and conducts him to his cell. As they enter the cell together, they behold a basket of palm branches, full of hot bread, hanging fixed at the door-post. And first the smell of the hot bread is perceived; but on touching it, it appears as if just a little before it had been taken from the oven. At the same time, they do not recognize the bread as being of the shape common in Egypt. Both are filled with amazement, and acknowledge the gift as being from heaven. On the one side, the recluse declared that this event was due to the arrival of the Abbot; while, on the other side, the Abbot ascribed it rather to the faith and virtue of the recluse; but both broke the heaven-sent bread with exceeding joy. And when, on his return to the monastery, the old man reported to the brethren what had occurred, such enthusiasm seized the minds of all of them, that they vied with each other in their haste to betake themselves to the desert, and its sacred seclusion; while they declared themselves miserable in having made their abode only too long amid a multitude, where human fellowship had to be carried on and endured.

Chapter XII. |In this monastery I saw two old men who were said to have already lived

"In this monastery I saw two old men who were said to have already lived there for forty years, and in fact never to have departed from it. I do not think that I should pass by all mention of these men, since, indeed, I heard the following statement made regarding their virtues on the testimony of the Abbot himself, and all the brethren, that in the case of one of them, the sun never beheld him feasting, and in the case of the other, the sun never saw him angry." Upon this, the Gaul looking at me exclaims: "Would that a friend of yours -- I do not wish to mention his name -- were now present; I should greatly like him to hear of that example, since we have had too much experience of his bitter anger in the persons of a great many people. Nevertheless, as I hear, he has lately forgiven his enemies; and, in these circumstances, were he to hear of the conduct of that man, he would be more and more strengthened in his forgiving course by the example thus set before him, and would feel that it is an admirable virtue not to fall under the influence of anger. I will not indeed deny that he had just reasons for his wrath; but where the battle is hard, the crown of victory is all the more glorious. For this reason, I think, if you will allow me to say so, that a certain man was justly to be praised, because when an ungrateful freedman abandoned him he rather pitied than inveighed against the fugitive. And, indeed, he was not even angry with the man by whom he seems to have been carried off." [99] Upon this I remarked: "Unless Postumianus had given us that example of overcoming anger, I would have been very angry on account of the departure of the fugitive; but since it is not lawful to be angry, all remembrance of such things, as it annoys us, ought to be blotted from our minds. Let us rather, Postumianus, listen to what you have got to say." "I will do," says he, "Sulpitius, what you request, as I see you are all so desirous of hearing me. But remember that I do not address my speech to you without hope of a larger recompense; I shall gladly perform what you require, provided that, when ere long my turn comes, you do not refuse what I ask." "We indeed," said I, "have nothing by means of which we can return the obligation we shall lie under to you even without a larger return. [100] However, command us as to anything you have thought about, provided you satisfy our desires, as you have already begun to do, for your speech conveys to us true delight." "I will stint nothing," said Postumianus, "of your desires; and inasmuch as you have recognized the virtue of one recluse, I shall go on to relate to you some few things about more such persons.

Chapter XIII. | Well then, when I entered upon the nearest parts of the desert

"Well then, when I entered upon the nearest parts of the desert, about twelve miles from the Nile, having as my guide one of the brethren who was well acquainted with the localities, we arrived at the residence of a certain old monk who dwelt at the foot of a mountain. In that place there was a well, which is a very rare thing in these regions. The monk had one ox, the whole labor of which consisted in drawing water by moving a machine worked with a wheel. This was the only way of getting at the water, for the well was said to be a thousand or more feet deep. There was also a garden there full of a variety of vegetables. This, too, was contrary to what might have been expected in the desert where, all things being dry and burnt up by the fierce rays of the sun produce not even the slenderest root of any plant. But the labor which in common with his ox, the monk performed, as well as his own special industry, produced such a happy state of things to the holy man; for the frequent irrigation in which he engaged imparted such a fertility to the sand that we saw the vegetables in his garden flourishing and coming to maturity in a wonderful manner. On these, then, the ox lived as well as its master; and from the abundance thus supplied, the holy man provided us also with a dinner. There I saw what ye Gauls, perchance, may not believe -- a pot boiling without fire [101] with the vegetables which were being got ready for our dinner: such is the power of the sun in that place that it is sufficient for any cooks, even for preparing the dainties of the Gauls. Then after dinner, when the evening was coming on, our host invites us to a palm-tree, the fruit of which he was accustomed to use, and which was at a distance of about two miles. For that is the only kind of tree found in the desert, and even these are rare, though they do occur. I am not sure whether this is owing to the wise foresight of former ages, or whether the soil naturally produces them. It may indeed be that God, knowing beforehand that the desert was one day to be inhabited by the saints, prepared these things for his servants. For those who settle within these solitudes live for the most part on the fruit of such trees, since no other kinds of plants thrive in these quarters. Well, when we came up to that tree to which the kindness of our host conducted us, we there met with a lion; and on seeing it, both my guide and myself began to tremble; but the holy man went up to it without delay, while we, though in great terror, followed him. As if commanded by God, the beast modestly withdrew and stood gazing at us, while our friend, the monk, plucked some fruit hanging within easy reach on the lower branches. And, on his holding out his hand filled with dates, the monster ran up to him and received them as readily as any domestic animal could have done; and having eaten them, it departed. We, beholding these things, and being still under the influence of fear, could not but perceive how great was the power of faith in his case, and how weak it was in ourselves.

Chapter XIV. |We found another equally remarkable man living in a small hut

"We found another equally remarkable man living in a small hut, capable only of containing a single person. Concerning him we were told that a she-wolf was accustomed to stand near him at dinner; and that the beast could by no means be easily deceived so as to fail to be with him at the regular hour when he took refreshment. It was also said that the wolf waited at the door until he offered her the bread which remained over his own humble dinner; that she was accustomed to lick his hand, and then, her duty being, as it were, fulfilled, and her respects paid to him, she took her departure. But it so happened that that holy man, while he escorted a brother who had paid him a visit, on his way home, was a pretty long time away, and only returned under night. [102] In the meanwhile, the beast made its appearance at the usual dinner time. Having entered the vacant cell and perceived that its benefactor was absent, it began to search round the hut with some curiosity to discover, if possible, the inhabitant. Now it so happened that a basket of palm-twigs was hanging close at hand with five loaves of bread in it. Taking one of these, the beast devoured it, and then, having committed this evil deed, went its way. The recluse on his return found the basket in a state of disorder, and the number of loaves less than it should have been. He is aware of the loss of his household goods, and observes near the threshold some fragments of the loaf which had been stolen. Considering all this, he had little doubt as to the author of the theft. Accordingly, when on the following days the beast did not, in its usual way, make its appearance (undoubtedly hesitating from a consciousness of its audacious deed to come to him on whom it had inflicted injury), the recluse was deeply grieved at being deprived of the happiness he had enjoyed in its society. At last, being brought back through his prayers, it appeared to him as usual at dinner time, after the lapse of seven days. But to make clear to every one the shame it felt, through regret for what had been done, not daring to draw very near, and with its eyes, from profound self-abasement, cast upon the earth, it seemed, as was plain to the intelligence of every one, to beg in a sort of way, for pardon. The recluse, pitying its confusion, bade it come close to him, and then, with a kindly hand, stroked its head; while, by giving it two loaves instead of the usual one, he restored the guilty creature to its former position; and, laying aside its misery on thus having obtained forgiveness, it betook itself anew to its former habits. Behold, I beg of you, even in this case, the power of Christ, to whom all is wise that is irrational, and to whom all is mild that is by nature savage. A wolf discharges duty; a wolf acknowledges the crime of theft; a wolf is confounded with a sense of shame: when called for, it presents itself; it offers its head to be stroked; and it has a perception of the pardon granted to it, just as if it had a feeling of shame on account of its misconduct, -- this is thy power, O Christ -- these, O Christ, are thy marvelous works. For in truth, whatever things thy servants do in thy name are thy doings; and in this only we find cause for deepest grief that, while wild beasts acknowledge thy majesty, intelligent beings fail to do thee reverence.

Chapter XV. |But lest this should perchance seem incredible to any one

"But lest this should perchance seem incredible to any one, I shall mention still greater things. I call Christ [103] to witness that I invent nothing, nor will I relate things published by uncertain authors, but will set forth facts which have been vouched for to me by trustworthy men. "Numbers of those persons live in the desert without any roofs over their heads, whom people call anchorites. [104] They subsist on the roots of plants; they settle nowhere in any fixed place, lest they should frequently have men visiting them; wherever night compels them they choose their abode. Well, two monks from Nitria directed their steps towards a certain man living in this style, and under these conditions. They did so, although they were from a very different quarter, because they had heard of his virtues, and because he had formerly been their dear and intimate friend, while a member of the same monastery. They sought after him long and much; and at length, in the seventh month, they found him staying in that far-distant wilderness which borders upon Memphis. He was said already to have dwelt in these solitudes for twelve years; but although he shunned intercourse with all men, yet he did not shrink from meeting these friends; on the contrary, he yielded himself to their affection for a period of three days. On the fourth day, when he had gone some distance escorting them in their return journey, they beheld a lioness of remarkable size coming towards them. The animal, although meeting with three persons, showed no uncertainty as to the one she made for, but threw herself down at the feet of the anchorite: and, lying there with a kind of weeping and lamentation, she manifested mingled feelings of sorrow and supplication. The sight affected all, and especially him who perceived that he was sought for: he therefore sets out, and the others follow him. For the beast stopping from time to time, and, from time to time looking back, clearly wished it to be understood that the anchorite should follow wherever she led. What need is there of many words? We arrived at the den of the animal, where she, the unfortunate mother, was nourishing five whelps already grown up, which, as they had come forth with closed eyes from the womb of their dam, so they had continued in persistent blindness. Bringing them out, one by one, from the hollow of the rock, she laid them down at the feet of the anchorite. Then at length the holy man perceived what the creature desired; and having called upon the name of God, he touched with his hand the closed eyes of the whelps; and immediately their blindness ceased, while light, so long denied them, streamed upon the open eyes of the animals. Thus, those brethren, having visited the anchorite whom they were desirous of seeing, returned with a very precious reward for their labor, inasmuch as, having been permitted to be eye-witnesses of such power, they had beheld the faith of the saint, and the glory of Christ, to which they will in future bear testimony. But I have still more marvels to tell: the lioness, after five days, returned to the man who had done her so great a kindness, and brought him, as a gift, the skin of an uncommon animal. Frequently clad in this, as if it were a cloak, that holy man did not disdain to receive that gift through the instrumentality of the best; while, all the time, he rather regarded Another as being the giver.

Chapter XVI. |There was also an illustrious name of another anchorite in those regions

"There was also an illustrious name of another anchorite in those regions, a man who dwelt in that part of the desert which is about Syene. This man, when first he betook himself to the wilderness, intended to live on the roots of plants which the sand here and there produces, of a very sweet and delicious flavor; but being ignorant of the nature of the herbs, he often gathered those which were of a deadly character. And, indeed, it was not easy to discriminate between the kind of the roots by the mere taste, since all were equally sweet, but many of them, of a less known nature, contained within them a deadly poison. When, therefore, the poison within tormented him on eating these, and all his vitals were tortured with terrific pains, while frequent vomitings, attended by excruciating agonies, were shattering the very citadel of life, his stomach being completely exhausted, he was in utter terror of all that had to be eaten for sustaining existence. Having thus fasted for seven days, he was almost at the point of death when a wild animal called an Ibex came up to him. To this creature standing by him, he offered a bundle of plants which he had collected on the previous day, yet had not ventured to touch; but the beast, casting aside with its mouth those which were poisonous, picked out such as it knew to be harmless. In this way, that holy man, taught by its conduct what he ought to eat, and what to reject, both escaped the danger of dying of hunger and of being poisoned by the plants. But it would be tedious to relate all the facts which we have either had personal knowledge of, or have heard from others, respecting those who inhabit the desert. I spent a whole year, and nearly seven months more, of set purpose, within these solitudes, being, however, rather an admirer of the virtues of others, than myself making any attempt to manifest the extraordinary endurance which they displayed. For the greater part of the time I lived with the old man whom I have mentioned, who possessed the well and the ox.

Chapter XVII. | I visited two monasteries of St.

"I visited two monasteries of St. Anthony, which are at the present day occupied by his disciples. I also went to that place in which the most blessed Paul, the first of the eremites, had his abode. I saw the Red Sea and the ridges of Mount Sinai, the top of which almost touches heaven, and cannot, by any human effort, be reached. An anchorite was said to live somewhere within its recesses: and I sought long and much to see him, but was unable to do so. He had for nearly fifty years been removed from all human fellowship, and used no clothes, but was covered with bristles growing on his own body, while, by Divine gift, he knew not of his own nakedness. As often as any pious men desired to visit him, making hastily for the pathless wilderness, he shunned all meeting with his kind. To one man only, about five years before my visit, he was said to have granted an interview; and I believe that man obtained the favor through the power of his faith. Amid much talk which the two had together, the recluse is said to have replied to the question why he shunned so assiduously all human beings, that the man who was frequently visited by mortals like himself, could not often be visited by angels. From this, not without reason, the report had spread, and was accepted by multitudes, that that holy man enjoyed angelic fellowship. Be this as it may, I, for my part, departed from Mount Sinai, and returned to the river Nile, the banks of which, on both sides, I beheld dotted over with numerous monasteries. I saw that, for the most part, as I have already said, the monks resided together in companies of a hundred; but it was well known that so many as two or three thousand sometimes had their abode in the same villages. Nor indeed would one have any reason to think that the virtue of the monks there dwelling together in great numbers, was less than that of those was known to be, who kept themselves apart from human fellowship. The chief and foremost virtue in these places, as I have already said, is obedience. In fact, any one applying for admission is not received by the Abbot of the monastery on any other condition than that he be first tried and proved; it being understood that he will never afterwards decline to submit to any injunction of the Abbot, however arduous and difficult, and though it may seem something unworthy to be endured.

Chapter XVIII. |I will relate two wonderful examples of almost incredible obedience

"I will relate two wonderful examples of almost incredible obedience, and two only, although many present themselves to my recollection; but if, in any case, a few instances do not suffice to rouse readers to an imitation of the like virtues, many would be of no advantage. Well then, when a certain man having laid aside all worldly business, and having entered a monastery of very [105] strict discipline, begged that he might be accepted as a member, the Abbot began to place many considerations before him, -- that the toils of that order were severe; that his own requirements were heavy, and such as no one's endurance could easily comply with; that he should rather enquire after another monastery where life was carried on under easier conditions; and that he should not try to attempt that which he was unable to accomplish. But he was in no degree moved by these terrors; on the contrary, he all the more promised obedience, saying that if the Abbot should order him to walk into the fire, he would not refuse to enter it. The Master then, having accepted that profession of his, did not delay putting it to the test. It so happened that an iron vessel was close at hand, very hot, as it was being got ready by a powerful fire for cooking some loaves of bread: the flames were bursting forth from the oven broken open, and fire raged without restraint within the hollows of that furnace. The Master, at this stage of affairs, ordered the stranger to enter it, nor did he hesitate to obey the command. Without a moment's delay he entered into the midst of the flames, which, conquered at once by so bold a display of faith, subsided at his approach, as happened of old to the well-known Hebrew children. Nature was overcome, and the fire gave way; so that he, of whom it was thought that he would be burned to death, had reason to marvel at himself, besprinkled, as it were, with a cooling dew. But what wonder is it, O Christ, that that fire did not touch thy youthful soldier? The result was that, neither did the Abbot regret having issued such harsh commands, nor did the disciple repent having obeyed the orders received. He, indeed, on the very day on which he came, being tried in his weakness, was found perfect; deservedly happy, deservedly glorious, having been tested in obedience, he was glorified through suffering.

Chapter XIX. |In the same monastery, the fact which I am about to narrate was said to

"In the same monastery, the fact which I am about to narrate was said to have occurred within recent memory. A certain man had come to the same Abbot in like manner with the former, in order to obtain admission. When the first law of obedience was placed before him, and he promised an unflinching patience for the endurance of all things however extreme, it so happened that the Abbot was holding in his hand a twig of storax already withered. This the Abbot fixed in the ground, and imposed this work upon the visitor, that he should continue to water the twig, until (what was against every natural result) that dry piece of wood should grow green in the sandy soil. Well, the stranger, being placed under the authority of unbending law, conveyed water every day on his own shoulders -- water which had to be taken from the river Nile, at almost two miles' distance. And now, after a year had run its course, the labor of that workman had not yet ceased, but there could be no hope of the good success of his undertaking. However, the grace of obedience continued to be shown in his labor. The following year also mocked the vain labor of the (by this time) weakened brother. At length, as the third annual circle was gliding by, while the workman ceased not, night or day, his labor in watering, the twig began to show signs of life. I have myself seen a small tree sprung from that little rod, which, standing at the present day with green branches in the court of the monastery, as if for a witness of what has been stated, shows what a reward obedience received, and what a power faith can exert. But the day would fail me before I could fully enumerate the many different miracles which have become known to me in connection with the virtues of the saints.

Chapter XX. I will, however, still further give you an account of two extraordinary marvels.

"I will, however, still further give you an account of two extraordinary marvels. The one of these will be a notable warning against the inflation of wretched vanity, and the other will serve as no mean guard against the display of a spurious righteousness. "A certain saint, then, endowed with almost incredible power in casting out demons from the bodies of those possessed by them, was, day by day, performing unheard-of miracles. For, not only when present, and not merely by his word, but while absent also, he, from time to time, cured possessed bodies, by some threads taken from his garment, or by letters which he sent. He, therefore, was to a wonderful degree visited by people who came to him from every part of the world. I say nothing about those of humbler rank; but prefects, courtiers, and judges of various ranks often lay at his doors. Most holy bishops also, laying aside their priestly dignity, and humbly imploring him to touch and bless them, believed with good reason that they were sanctified, and illumined with a divine gift, as often as they touched his hand and garment. He was reported to abstain always and utterly from every kind of drink, and for food (I will whisper this, Sulpitius, into your ear lest our friend the Gaul hear it), to subsist upon only six dried figs. But in the meantime, just as honor accrued to the holy man from his excellence, [106] so vanity began to steal upon him from the honor which was paid him. When first he perceived that this evil was growing upon him, he struggled long and earnestly to shake it off, but it could not be thoroughly got rid of by all his efforts, since he still had a secret consciousness of being under the influence of vanity. Everywhere did the demons acknowledge his name, while he was not able to exclude from his presence the number of people who flocked to him. The hidden poison was, in the meantime, working in his breast, and he, at whose beck demons were expelled from the bodies of others, was quite unable to cleanse himself from the hidden thoughts of vanity. Betaking himself, therefore, with fervent supplication to God, he is said to have prayed that, power being given to the devil over him for five months, he might become like to those whom he himself had cured. Why should I delay with many words? That most powerful man, -- he, renowned for his miracles and virtues through all the East, he, to whose threshold multitudes had gathered, and at whose door the highest dignitaries of that age had prostrated themselves -- laid hold of by a demon, was kept fast in chains. It was only after having suffered all those things which the possessed are wont to endure, that at length in the fifth month he was delivered, not only from the demon, but (what was to him more useful and desirable) from the vanity which had dwelt within him.

Chapter XXI. |But to me reflecting on these things, there occurs the thought of our own unhappiness

"But to me reflecting on these things, there occurs the thought of our own unhappiness and our own infirmity. For who is there of us, whom if one despicable creature of a man has humbly saluted, or one woman has praised with foolish and flattering words, is not at once elated with pride and puffed up with vanity? This will bring it about that even though one does not possess a consciousness of sanctity, yet, because through the flattery, or, it may be, the mistake of fools, he is said to be a holy man, he will, in fact, deem himself most holy! And then, if frequent gifts are sent to him, he will maintain that he is so honored by the munificence of God, inasmuch as all necessary things are bestowed upon him when sleeping and at rest. But further, if some signs of any kind of power fall to him even in a low degree, he will think himself no less than an angel. And even if he is not marked out from others either by acts or excellence, but is simply made a cleric, he instantly enlarges the fringes of his dress, delights in salutations, is puffed up by people visiting him, and himself gads about everywhere. Nay, the man who had been previously accustomed to travel on foot, or at most to ride on the back of an ass, must needs now ride proudly on frothing steeds; formerly content to dwell in a small and humble cell, he now builds a lofty fretted ceiling; he constructs many rooms; he cuts and carves doors; he paints wardrobes; he rejects the coarser kind of clothing, and demands soft garments; and he gives such orders as the following to dear widows and friendly virgins, that the one class weave for him an embroidered cloak, and the other a flowing robe. But let us leave all these things to be described more pungently by that blessed man Hieronymus; and let us return to the object more immediately in view." "Well," says our Gallic friend upon this, "I know not indeed what you have left to be said by Hieronymus; you have within such brief compass comprehended all our practices, that I think these few words of yours, if they are taken in good part, and patiently considered, will greatly benefit those in question, so that they will not require in future to be kept in order by the books of Hieronymus. But do thou rather go on with what you had begun, and bring forward an example, as you said you would do, against spurious righteousness; for to tell you the truth, we are subject to no more destructive evil than this within the wide boundaries of Gaul." "I will do so," replied Postumianus, "nor will I any longer keep you in a state of expectation."

Chapter XXII. |A certain young man from Asia, exceedingly wealthy, of distinguished family

"A certain young man from Asia, exceedingly wealthy, of distinguished family, and having a wife and little son, happening to have been a tribune in Egypt, and in frequent campaigns against the Blembi to have touched on some parts of the desert, and having also seen several tents of the saints, heard the word of salvation from the blessed John. And he did not then delay to show his contempt for an unprofitable military life with its vain honor. Bravely entering into the wilderness, he in a short time became distinguished as being perfect in every kind of virtue. Capable of lengthened fasting, conspicuous for humility, and steadfast in faith, he had easily obtained a reputation in the pursuit of virtue equal to that of the monks of old. But by and by, the thought (proceeding from the devil) entered his mind that it would be more proper for him to return to his native land and be the means of saving his only son and his family along with his wife; which surely would be more acceptable to God than if he, content with only rescuing himself from the world, should, not without impiety, neglect the salvation of his friends. Overcome by the plausible appearance of that kind of spurious righteousness, the recluse, after a period of nearly four years, forsook his cell and the end to which he had devoted his life. But on arriving at the nearest monastery, which was inhabited by many brethren, he made known to them, in reply to their questionings, the reason of his departure and the object he had in view. All of them, and especially the Abbot of that place, sought to keep him back; but the intention he had unfortunately formed could not be rooted out of his mind. Accordingly with an unhappy obstinacy he went forth, and, to the grief of all, departed from the brethren. But scarcely had he vanished from their sight, when he was taken possession of by a demon, and vomiting bloody froth from his mouth, he began to lacerate himself with his own teeth. Then, having been carried back to the same monastery on the shoulders of the brethren, when the unclean spirit could not be restrained within its walls, he was, from dire necessity, loaded with iron fetters, being bound both in hands and feet -- a punishment not undeserved by a fugitive, inasmuch as chains now restrained him whom faith had not restrained. At length, after two years, having been set free from the unclean spirit by the prayers of the saints, he immediately returned to the desert from which he had departed. In this way he was both himself corrected and was rendered a warning to others, that the shadow of a spurious righteousness might neither delude any one, nor a shifting fickleness of character induce any one, with unprofitable inconstancy, to forsake the course on which he has once entered. And now let it suffice for you to learn these things respecting the various operations of the Lord which he has carried on in the persons of his servants; with the view either of stimulating others to a like kind of conduct, or of deterring them from particular actions. But since I have by this time fully satisfied your ears -- have, in fact, been more lengthy than I ought to have been -- do you now (upon this he addressed himself to me) -- pay me the recompense you owe, by letting us hear you, after your usual fashion, discoursing about your friend Martin, for my longings after this have already for a long time been strongly excited."

Chapter XXIII. [What,] replied I, [is there not enough about my friend Martin in that book of

"What," replied I, "is there not enough about my friend Martin in that book of mine which you know that I published respecting his life and virtues?" "I own it," said Postumianus, "and that book of yours is never far from my right hand. For if you recognize it, look here -- (and so saying he displayed the book which was concealed in his dress) -- here it is. This book," added he, "is my companion both by land and sea: it has been my friend and comforter in all my wanderings. But I will relate to you to what places that book has penetrated, and how there is almost no spot upon earth in which the subject of so happy a history is not possessed as a well-known narrative. Paulinus, a man who has the strongest regard for you, was the first to bring it to the city of Rome; and then, as it was greedily laid hold of by the whole city, I saw the booksellers rejoicing over it, inasmuch as nothing was a source of greater gain to them, for nothing commanded a readier sale, or fetched a higher price. This same book, having got a long way before me in the course of my traveling, was already generally read through all Carthage, when I came into Africa. Only that presbyter of Cyrene whom I mentioned did not possess it; but he wrote down its contents from my description. And why should I speak about Alexandria? for there it is almost better known to all than it is to yourself. It has passed through Egypt, Nitria, the Thebaid, and the whole of the regions of Memphis. I found it being read by a certain old man in the desert; and, after I told him that I was your intimate friend, this commission was given me both by him and many other brethren, that, if I should ever again visit this country, and find you well, I should constrain you to supply those particulars which you stated in your book you had passed over respecting the virtues of the sainted man. Come then, as I do not desire you to repeat to me those things which are already sufficiently known from what you have written, let those other points, at my request and that of many others, be fully set forth, which at the time of your writing you passed over, to prevent, as I believe, any feeling of weariness on the part of your readers."

Chapter XXIV. |Indeed, Postumianus,| replied I, |while I was listening attentively

"Indeed, Postumianus," replied I, "while I was listening attentively, all this time, to you talking about the excellences of the saints, in my secret thoughts I had my mind turned to my friend Martin, observing on the best of grounds that all those things which different individuals had done separately, were easily and entirely accomplished by that one man alone. For, although you certainly related lofty deeds, I really heard nothing from your lips (may I say it, without offence to these holy men), in which Martin was inferior to any one of them. And while I hold that the excellence of no one of these is ever to be compared with the merits of that man, still this point ought to be attended to, that it is unfair he should be compared, on the same terms, with the recluses of the desert, or even with the anchorites. For they, at freedom from every hindrance, with heaven only and the angels as witnesses, were clearly instructed to perform admirable deeds; he, on the other hand, in the midst of crowds and intercourse with human beings -- among quarrelsome clerics, and among furious bishops, while he was harassed with almost daily scandals on all sides, nevertheless stood absolutely firm with unconquerable virtue against all these things, and performed such wonders as not even those accomplished of whom we have heard that they are, or at one time were, in the wilderness. But even had they done things equal to his, what judge would be so unjust as not, on good grounds, to decide that he was the more powerful? For put the case that he was a soldier who fought on unfavorable ground, and yet turned out a conqueror, and compare them, in like manner, to soldiers, who however, contended on equal terms, or even on favorable terms, with the enemy. What then? Although the victory of all is one and the same, the glory of all certainly cannot be equal. And even though you have narrated marvelous things, still you have not stated that a dead man was recalled to life by any one. In this one particular undoubtedly, it must be owned that no one is to be compared with Martin.

Chapter XXV. |For, if it is worthy of admiration that the flames did not touch that Egyptian

"For, if it is worthy of admiration that the flames did not touch that Egyptian of whom you have spoken, Martin also not infrequently proved his power over fire. If you remind us that the savagery of wild beasts was conquered by, and yielded to, the anchorites, Martin, for his part, was accustomed to keep in check both the fury of wild beasts and the poison of serpents. But, if you bring forward for comparison him who cured those possessed of unclean spirits, by the authority of his word, or even through the instrumentality of threads from his dress, there are many proofs that Martin was not, even in this respect, inferior. Nay, should you have recourse to him, who, covered with his own hair instead of a garment, was thought to be visited by angels, with Martin angels were wont to hold daily discourse. Moreover, he bore so unconquerable a spirit against vanity and boastfulness, that no one more determinedly disdained these vices, and that, although he often, while absent, cured those who were filled with unclean spirits, and issued his commands not only to courtiers or prefects, but also to kings themselves. This was indeed a very small thing amid his other virtues, but I should wish you to believe that no one ever contended more earnestly than he did against not only vanity, but also the causes and the occasions of vanity. I shall also mention what is indeed a small point, but should not be passed over, because it is to the credit of a man who, being possessed of the highest power, manifested such a pious desire to show his regard for the blessed Martin. I remember, then, that Vincentius the prefect, an illustrious man, and one of the most eminent in all Gaul for every kind of virtue, when he had occasion to be in the vicinity of Tours, often begged of Martin that he would allow him to stay with him in the monastery. In making this request, he brought forward the example of Saint Ambrose, the bishop, who was generally spoken of at that time as being in the habit of entertaining both consuls and prefects. But Martin, with deeper judgment, refused so to act, lest by so doing some vanity and inflation of spirit might steal upon him. You, therefore, must acknowledge that there existed in Martin the virtues of all those men whom you have mentioned, but there were not found in all of them the virtues by which Martin was distinguished."

Chapter XXVI. |Why do you,| here exclaimed Postumianus, |speak to me in such a manner? As if

"Why do you," here exclaimed Postumianus, "speak to me in such a manner? As if I did not hold the same opinion as yourself, and had not always been of the same mind. I, indeed, as long as I live, and retain my senses, will ever celebrate the monks of Egypt: I will praise the anchorites; I will admire the eremites; but I will place Martin in a position of his own: I do not venture to compare to him any one of the monks, far less any of the bishops. Egypt owns this: Syria and Æthiopia have discovered this: India has heard this; Parthia and Persia have known this; not even Armenia is ignorant of it; the remote Bosphorus is aware of it; and in a word, those are acquainted with it who visit the Fortunate Islands or the Arctic Ocean. All the more wretched on this account is this country of ours, which has not been found worthy to be acquainted with so great a man, although he was in its immediate vicinity. However, I will not include the people at large in this censure: only the clerics, only the priests know nothing of him; and not without reason were they, in their ill-will, disinclined to know him, inasmuch as, had they become acquainted with his virtues they must have recognized their own vices. I shudder to state what I have lately heard, that a miserable man (I know him not), has said that you have told many lies in that book of yours. This is not the voice of a man, but of the devil; and it is not Martin who is, in this way, injured, but faith is taken from the Gospels themselves. For, since the Lord himself testified of works of the kind which Martin accomplished, that they were to be performed by all the faithful, he who does not believe that Martin accomplished such deeds, simply does not believe that Christ uttered such words. But the miserable, the degenerate, the somnolent, are put to shame, that the things which they themselves cannot do, were done by him, and prefer rather to deny his virtues than to confess their own inertness. But let us, as we hasten on to other matters, let go all remembrance of such persons: and do you rather, as I have for a long time desired, proceed to narrate the still untold deeds of Martin." "Well," said I, "I think that your request would more properly be directed to our friend the Gaul, since he is acquainted with more of Martin's doings than I am -- for a disciple could not be ignorant of the deeds of his master -- and who certainly owes a return of kindness, not only to Martin, but to both of us, inasmuch as I have already published my book, and you have, so far, related to us the doings of our brethren in the East. Let then, our friend the Gaul commence that detailed account which is due from him: because, as I have said, he both owes us a return in the way of speaking, and will, I believe, do this much for his friend Martin -- that he shall, not unwillingly, give a narrative of his deeds."

Chapter XXVII. [Well,] said the Gaul, [I, for my part, though I am unequal to so great

"Well," said the Gaul, "I, for my part, though I am unequal to so great a task, feel constrained by those examples of obedience which have been related above by Postumianus, not to refuse that duty which you impose upon me. But when I reflect that I, a man of Gaul, [107] am about to speak in the presence of natives of Aquitania, I fear lest my somewhat rude form of speech should offend your too delicate ears. However, you will listen to me as a foolish sort [108] of man, who says nothing in an affected or stilted fashion. For if you have conceded to me that I was a disciple of Martin, grant me this also that I be allowed, under the shelter of his example, to despise the vain trappings of speech and ornaments of words." "Certainly," replied Postumianus, "speak either in Celtic, or in Gaulish, if you prefer it, provided only you speak of Martin. But for my part, I believe, that, even though you were dumb, words would not be wanting to you, in which you might speak of Martin with eloquent lips, just as the tongue of Zacharias was loosed at the naming of John. But as you are, in fact, an orator, [109] you craftily, like an orator, begin by begging us to excuse your unskillfulness, because you really excel in eloquence. But it is not fitting either that a monk should show such cunning, or that a Gaul should be so artful. But to work rather, and set forth what you have still got to say, for we have wasted too much time already in dealing with other matters; and the lengthening shadow of the declining sun warns us that no long portion of day remains till night be upon us. Then, after we had all kept silence for a little, the Gaul thus begins -- "I think I must take care in the first place not to repeat those particulars about the virtues of Martin, which our friend Sulpitius there has related in his book. For this reason, I shall pass over his early achievements, when he was a soldier; nor will I touch on those things which he did as a layman and a monk. At the same time, I shall relate nothing which I simply heard from others, but only events of which I myself was an eye-witness."

Dialogue II. Concerning the Virtues of St.

Concerning the Virtues of St. Martin.

Chapter I. | Well then, when first, having left the schools, I attached myself to the blessed man

"Well then, when first, having left the schools, I attached myself to the blessed man, a few days after doing so, we followed him on his way to the church. In the way, a poor man, half-naked in these winter-months, met him, and begged that some clothing might be given him. Then Martin, calling for the chief-deacon, gave orders that the shivering creature should be clothed without delay. After that, entering a private apartment, and sitting down by himself, as his custom was -- for he secured for himself this retirement even in the church, liberty being granted to the clerics, since indeed the presbyters were seated in another apartment, either spending their time in mutual [110] courtesies, or occupied in listening to affairs of business. But Martin kept himself in his own seclusion up to the hour at which custom required that the sacred rites should be dispensed to the people. And I will not pass by this point that, when sitting in his retirement, he never used a chair; and, as to the church, no one ever saw him sitting there, as I recently saw a certain man (God is my witness), not without a feeling of shame at the spectacle, seated on a lofty throne, yea, in its elevation, a kind of royal tribunal; but Martin might be seen sitting on a rude little stool, such as those in use by the lowest of servants, which we Gallic country-people call tripets, [111] and which you men of learning, or those at least who are from Greece, call tripods. Well, that poor man who had been chanced upon, as the chief-deacon delayed to give him the garment, rushed into this private apartment of the blessed man, complaining that he had not been attended to by the cleric, and bitterly mourning over the cold he suffered. No delay took place: the holy man, while the other did not observe, secretly drew off his tunic which was below his outer [112] garment, and clothing the poor man with this, told him to go on his way. Then, a little after, the chief-deacon coming in informs him, according to custom, that the people were waiting in the church, and that it was incumbent on him to proceed to the performance of the sacred rites. Martin said to him in reply that it was necessary that the poor man -- referring to himself -- should be clothed, and that he could not possibly proceed to the church, unless the poor man received a garment. But the deacon, not understanding the true state of the case -- that Martin, while outwardly clad with a cloak, was not seen by him to be naked underneath, at last begins to complain that the poor man does not make his appearance. Let the garment which has been got ready,' said Martin, be brought to me; there will not be wanting the poor man requiring to be clothed.' Then, at length, the cleric, constrained by necessity, and now in not the sweetest temper, hurriedly procures a rough [113] garment out of the nearest shop, short and shaggy, and costing only five pieces of silver, and lays it, in wrath at the feet of Martin. See,' cries he, there is the garment, but the poor man is not here.' Martin, nothing moved, bids him go to the door for a little, thus obtaining secrecy, while, in his nakedness, he clothes himself with the garment, striving with all his might to keep secret what he had done. But when do such things remain concealed in the case of the saints desiring that they should be so? Whether they will or not, all are brought to light.

Chapter II. |Martin, then, clothed in this garment, proceeds to offer the sacrifice to God.

"Martin, then, clothed in this garment, proceeds to offer the sacrifice [114] to God. And then on that very day -- I am about to narrate something wonderful -- when he was engaged in blessing the altar, as is usual, we beheld a globe of fire dart from his head, so that, as it rose on high, the flame produced a hair of extraordinary length. And, although we saw this take place on a very famous day in the midst of a great multitude of people, only one of the virgins, one of the presbyters, and only three of the monks, witnessed the sight: but why the others did not behold it is a matter not to be decided by our judgment. "About the same time, when my uncle Evanthius, a highly Christian man, although occupied in the affairs of this world, had begun to be afflicted with a very serious illness, to the extreme danger of his life, he sent for Martin. And, without any delay, Martin hastened towards him; but, before the blessed man had completed the half of the distance between them, the sick man experienced the power of him that was coming; and, being immediately restored to health, he himself met us as we were approaching. With many entreaties, he detained Martin, who wished to return home on the following day; for, in the meantime, a serpent had struck with a deadly blow a boy belonging to my uncle's family; and Evanthius himself, on his own shoulders, carried him all but lifeless through the force of the poison, and laid him at the feet of the holy man, believing that nothing was impossible to him. By this time, the serpent had diffused its poison through all the members of the boy: one could see his skin swollen in all his veins, and his vitals strung up like a leather-bottle. Martin stretched forth his hand, felt all the limbs of the boy, and placed his finger close to the little wound, at which the animal had instilled the poison. Then in truth -- I am going to tell things wonderful -- we saw the whole poison, drawn from every part of the body, gather quickly together to Martin's finger; and next, we beheld the poison mixed with blood press through the small puncture of the wound, just as a long line of abundant milk is wont to flow forth from the teats of goats or sheep, when these are squeezed by the hand of shepherds. The boy rose up quite well. We were amazed by so striking a miracle; and we acknowledged -- as, indeed, truth compelled us to do -- that there was no one under heaven who could equal the deeds of Martin.

Chapter III. |In the same way, some time afterwards, we made a journey with him while he

"In the same way, some time afterwards, we made a journey with him while he visited the various parishes in his diocese. He had gone forward a little by himself, some necessity or other, I know not what, compelling us to keep behind. In the meantime, a state-conveyance, full of military men, was coming along the public highway. But when the animals near the side beheld Martin in his shaggy garment, with a long black cloak over it, being alarmed, they swerved a little in the opposite direction. Then, the reins getting entangled, they threw into confusion those extended lines in which, as you have often seen, those wretched creatures are held together; and as they were with difficulty rearranged, delay, of course, was caused to those people hastening forward. Enraged by this injury, the soldiers, with hasty leaps, made for the ground. And then they began to belabor Martin with whips and staves; and as he, in silence and with incredible patience, submitted his back to them smiting him, this roused the greater fury in these wretches, for they became all the more violent from the fact, that he, as if he did not feel the blows showered upon him, seemed to despise them. He fell almost lifeless to the earth; and we, ere long, found him covered with blood, and wounded in every part of his body. Lifting him up without delay, and placing him upon his own ass, while we execrated the place of that cruel bloodshed, we hastened, off as speedily as possible. In the meantime, the soldiers having returned to their conveyance, after their fury was satisfied, urge the beasts to proceed in the direction in which they had been going. But they all remained fixed to the spot, as stiff as if they had been brazen statues, and although their masters shouted at them, and the sound of their whips echoed on every side, still the animals never moved. These men next all fall to with lashes; in fact, while punishing the mules, they waste all the Gallic whips they had. The whole of the neighboring wood is laid hold of, and the beasts are beaten with enormous cudgels; but these cruel hands still effected nothing: the animals continued to stand in one and the same place like fixed effigies. The wretched men knew not what to do, and they could no longer conceal from themselves that, in some way or other, there was a higher power at work in the bosoms of these brutes, so that they were, in fact, restrained by the interposition of a deity. At length, therefore, returning to themselves, they began to enquire who he was whom but a little before they had scourged at the same place; and when, on pursuing the investigation, they ascertained from those on the way that it was Martin who had been so cruelly beaten by them, then, indeed, the cause of their misfortune appeared manifest to all; and they could no longer doubt that they were kept back on account of the injury done to that man. Accordingly, they all rush after us at full speed, and, conscious of what they had done and deserved, overwhelmed with shame, weeping, and having their heads and faces smeared with the dust with which they themselves had besprinkled their bodies, they cast themselves at Martin's feet, imploring his pardon, and begging that he would allow them to proceed. They added that they had been sufficiently punished by their conscience alone, and that they deeply felt that the earth might swallow them alive in that very spot, or that rather, they, losing all sense, might justly be stiffened into immovable rocks, just as they had seen their beasts of burden fixed to the places in

which they stood; but they begged and entreated him to extend to them pardon for their crime, and to allow them to go on their way. The blessed man had been aware, before they came up to us, that they were in a state of detention, and had already informed us of the fact; however, he kindly granted them forgiveness; and, restoring their animals, permitted them to pursue their journey.

Chapter IV. | I have often noticed this, Sulpitius, that Martin was accustomed to say to you

"I have often noticed this, Sulpitius, that Martin was accustomed to say to you, that such an abundance [115] of power was by no means granted him while he was a bishop, as he remembered to have possessed before he obtained that office. Now, if this be true, or rather since it is true, we may imagine how great those things were which, while still a monk, he accomplished, and which, without any witness, he effected apart by himself; since we have seen that, while a bishop, he performed so great wonders before the eyes of all. Many, no doubt, of his former achievements were known to the world, and could not be hid, but those are said to have been innumerable which, while he avoided boastfulness, he kept concealed and did not allow to come to the knowledge of mankind; for, inasmuch as he transcended the capabilities of mere man, in a consciousness of his own eminence, and trampling upon worldly glory, he was content simply to have heaven as a witness of his deeds. That this is true we can judge even from these things which are well known to us, and could not be hid; since e.g. before he became a bishop he restored two dead men to life, facts of which your book has treated pretty fully, but, while he was bishop, he raised up only one, a point which I am surprised you have not noticed. I myself am a witness to this latter occurrence; but, probably, you have no doubts about the matter being duly testified. At any rate, I will set before you the affair as it happened. For some reason, I know not what, we were on our way to the town of the Carnutes. [116] In the meantime, as we pass by a certain village most populous in inhabitants, an enormous crowd went forth to meet us, consisting entirely of heathen; for no one in that village was acquainted with a Christian. Nevertheless, owing to the report of the approach of so great a man, a multitude of those streaming to one point had filled all the widely spreading plains. Martin felt that some work was to be performed; and as the spirit within him was thus moving him, he was deeply excited. He at once began to preach to the heathen the word of God, so utterly different from that of man, often groaning that so great a crowd should be ignorant of the Lord the Saviour. In the meantime, while an incredible multitude had surrounded us, a certain woman, whose son had recently died, began to present, with outstretched hands, the lifeless body to the blessed man, saying, "We know that you are a friend of God: restore me my son, who is my only one." The rest of the multitude joined her, and added their entreaties to those of the mother. Martin perceiving, as he afterwards told us, that he could manifest power, in order to the salvation of those waiting for its display, received the body of the deceased into his own hands; and when, in the sight of all, he had fallen on his knees, and then arose, after his prayer was finished, he restored to its mother the child brought back to life. Then, truly, the whole multitude, raising a shout to heaven, acknowledged Christ as God, and finally began to rush in crowds to the knees of the blessed man, sincerely imploring that he would make them Christians. Nor did he delay to do so. As they were in the middle of the plain, he made them all catechumens, by placing his hand upon the whole of them; while, at the same time, turning to us, he said that, not without reason, were these made catechumens in that plain where the martyrs were wont to be consecrated."

Chapter V. |You have conquered, O Gaul,| said Postumianus, |you have conquered

"You have conquered, O Gaul," said Postumianus, "you have conquered, although certainly not me, who am, on the contrary, an upholder of Martin, and who have always known and believed all these things about that man; but you have conquered all the eremites and anchorites. For no one of them, like your friend, or rather our friend, Martin, ruled over deaths of all [117] kinds. And Sulpitius there justly compared him to the apostles and prophets, inasmuch as the power of his faith, and the works accomplished by his power, bear witness that he was, in all points, like them. But go on, I beg of you, although we can hear nothing more striking than we have heard -- still, go on, O Gaul, to set forth what still remains of what you have to say concerning Martin. For the mind is eager to know even the least and commonest of his doings, since there is no doubt that the least of his actions surpass the greatest deeds of others." "I will do so," replies the Gaul, "but I did not myself witness what I am about to relate, for it took place before I became an associate of Martin's; still, the fact is well known, having been spread through the world by the accounts given by faithful brethren, who were present on the occasion. Well, just about the time when he first became a bishop, a necessity arose for his visiting the imperial [118] court. Valentinian, the elder, then was at the head of affairs. When he came to know that Martin was asking for things which he did not incline to grant, he ordered him to be kept from entering the doors of the palace. Besides his own unkind and haughty temper, his wife Arriana had urged him to this course, and had wholly alienated him from the holy man, so that he should not show him the regard which was due to him. Martin, accordingly, when he had once and again endeavored to procure an interview with the haughty prince, had recourse to his well-known weapons -- he clothes himself in sackcloth, scatters ashes upon his person, abstains from food and drink, and gives himself, night and day, to continuous prayer. On the seventh day, an angel appeared to him, and tells him to go with confidence to the palace, for that the royal doors, although closed against him, would open of their own accord, and that the haughty spirit of the emperor would be softened. Martin, therefore, being encouraged by the address of the angel who thus appeared to him, and trusting to his assistance, went to the palace. The doors stood open, and no one opposed his entrance; so that, going in, he came at last into the presence of the king, without any one seeking to hinder him. The king, however, seeing him at a distance as he approached, and gnashing his teeth that he had been admitted, did not, by any means, condescend to rise up as Martin advanced, until fire covered the royal seat, and until the flames seized on a part of the royal person. In this way the haughty monarch is driven from his throne, and, much against his will, rises up to receive Martin. He even gave many embraces to the man whom he had formerly determined to despise, and, coming to a better frame of mind, he confessed that he perceived the exercise of Divine power; without waiting even to listen to the requests of Martin, he granted all he desired before being asked. Afterwards the king often invited the holy man both to conferences and entertainments; and, in the end, when he was about to depart, offered him many presents, which, however, the blessed man, jealously maintaining his own poverty, totally refused, as he did on all similar occasions.

Chapter VI. |And as we have, once for all, entered the palace

"And as we have, once for all, entered the palace, I shall string together events which there took place, although they happened at different times. And, indeed, it does not seem to me right that I should pass unmentioned the example of admiration for Martin which was shown by a faithful queen. Maximus then ruled the state, a man worthy of being extolled in [119] his whole life, if only he had been permitted to reject a crown thrust upon him by the soldiery in an illegal tumult, or had been able to keep out of civil war. But the fact is, that a great empire can neither be refused without danger, nor can be preserved without war. He frequently sent for Martin, received him into the palace, and treated him with honor; his whole speech with him was concerning things present, things to come, the glory of the faithful, and the immortality of the saints; while, in the meantime, the queen hung upon the lips of Martin, and not inferior to her mentioned in the Gospel, washed the feet of the holy man with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Martin, though no woman had hitherto touched him, could not escape her assiduity, or rather her servile attentions. She did not think of the wealth of the kingdom, the dignity of the empire, the crown, or the purple; only stretched upon the ground, she could not be torn away from the feet of Martin. At last she begs of her husband (saying that both of them should constrain Martin to agree) that all other attendants should be removed from the holy man, and that she alone should wait upon him at meals. Nor could the blessed man refuse too obstinately. His modest entertainment is got up by the hands of the queen; she herself arranges his seat for him; places his table; furnishes him with water for his hands; and serves up the food which she had herself cooked. While he was eating, she, with her eyes fixed on the ground, stood motionless at a distance, after the fashion of servants, displaying in all points the modesty and humility of a ministering servant. She herself mixed for him his drink and presented it. When the meal was over, she collected the fragments and crumbs of the bread that had been used, preferring with true faithfulness these remains to imperial banquets. Blessed woman! worthy, by the display of so great piety, of being compared to her who came from the ends of the earth to hear Solomon, if we merely regard the plain letter of the history. But the faith of the two queens is to be compared (and let it be granted me to say this, setting aside the majesty of the secret [120] truth implied): the one obtained her desire to hear a wise man; the other was thought worthy not only to hear a wise man, but to wait upon him."

Chapter VII. To these sayings Postumianus replies: |While listening to you

To these sayings Postumianus replies: "While listening to you, O Gaul, I have for a long time been admiring the faith of the queen; but to what does that statement of yours lead, that no woman was ever said to have stood more close to Martin? For let us consider that that queen not only stood near him, but even ministered unto him. I really fear lest those persons who freely mingle among women should to some extent defend themselves by that example." Then said the Gaul: "Why do you not notice, as grammarians are wont to teach us, the place, the time, and the person? For only set before your eyes the picture of one kept in the palace of the emperor importuned by prayers, constrained by the faith of the queen, and bound by the necessities of the time, to do his utmost that he might set free those shut up in prison, might restore those who had been sent into exile, and might recover goods that had been taken away, -- of how much importance do you think that these things should have appeared to a bishop, so as to lead him, in order to the accomplishment of them all, to abate not a little of the rigor of his general scheme of life? However, as you think that some will make a bad use of the example thus furnished them, I shall only say that those will be truly happy if they do not fall short of the excellence of the example in question. For let them consider that the facts of the case are these: once in his life only, and that when in his seventieth year, was Martin served and waited upon at his meals, not by a free sort of widow, nor by a wanton virgin, but by a queen, who lived under the authority of a husband, and who was supported in her conduct by the entreaties of her husband, that she might be allowed so to act. It is further to be observed that she did not recline with Martin at the entertainment, nor did she venture even to partake in the feast, but simply gave her services in waiting upon him. Learn, therefore, the proper course; let a matron serve thee, and not rule thee; and let her serve, but not recline along with thee; just as Martha, of whom we read, waited upon the Lord without being called to partake in the feast: nay, she who chose rather simply to hear the word was preferred to her that served. But in the case of Martin, the queen spoken of fulfilled both parts: she both served like Martha and listened like Mary. If any one, then, desires to make use of this example, let him keep to it in all particulars; let the cause be the same, the person the same, the service the same, and the entertainment the same, -- and let the thing occur once only in one's whole life."

Chapter VIII. [Admirably,] exclaimed Postumianus, [does your speech bind those friends of ours from going beyond the

"Admirably," exclaimed Postumianus, "does your speech bind those friends of ours from going beyond the example of Martin; but I own to you my belief that these remarks of yours will fall upon deaf ears. For if we were to follow the ways of Martin, we should never need to defend ourselves in the case of kissing, and we should be free from all the reproaches of sinister opinion. But as you are wont to say, when you are accused of being too fond of eating, 'We are Gauls,' so we, for our part, who dwell in this district, will never be reformed either by the example of Martin, or by your dissertations. But while we have been discussing these points at so great length, why do you, Sulpitius, preserve such an obstinate silence?" "Well, for my part," replied I, "I not only keep silence, but for a long time past I have determined to be silent upon such points. For, because I rebuked a certain spruce gadding-about widow, who dressed expensively, and lived in a somewhat loose manner, and also a virgin, who was following somewhat indecently a certain young man who was dear to me, -- although, to be sure, I had often heard her blaming others who acted in such a manner, -- I raised up against me such a degree of hatred on the part of all the women and all the monks, that both bands entered upon sworn war against me. Wherefore, be quiet, I beg of you, lest even what we are saying should tend to increase their animosity towards me. Let us entirely blot out these people from our memory, and let us rather return to Martin. Do thou, friend Gaul, as you have begun, carry out the work you have taken in hand." Then says he: "I have really related already so many things to you, that my speech ought to have satisfied your desires; but, because I am not at liberty to refuse compliance with your wishes, I shall continue to speak as long as the day lasts. For, in truth, when I glance at that straw, which is being prepared for our beds, there comes into my mind a recollection respecting the straw on which Martin had lain, that a miracle was wrought in connection with it. The affair took place as follows. Claudiomagus is a village on the confines of the Bituriges and the Turoni. The church there is celebrated for the piety of the saints, and is not less illustrious for the multitude of the holy virgins. Well, Martin, being in the habit of passing that way, had an apartment in the private part of the church. After he left, all the virgins used to rush into that retirement: they kiss [121] every place where the blessed man had either sat or stood, and distribute among themselves the very straw on which he had lain. One of them, a few days afterwards, took a part of the straw which she had collected for a blessing to herself, and hung it from the neck of a possessed person, whom a spirit of error was troubling. There was no delay; but sooner than one could speak the demon was cast out, and the person was cured.

Chapter IX. |About the same time, a cow which a demon harassed met Martin as he was

"About the same time, a cow which a demon harassed met Martin as he was returning from Treves. That cow, leaving its proper herd, was accustomed to attack human beings, and had already seriously gored many with its horns. Now, when she was coming near us, those who followed her from a distance began to warn us, with a loud voice, to beware of her. But after she had in great fury come pretty near to us, with rage in her eyes, Martin, lifting up his hand, ordered the animal to halt, and she immediately stood stock-still at his word. Upon this, Martin perceived a demon sitting upon her back, and reproving it, he exclaimed, Begone, thou deadly being; leave the innocent beast, and cease any longer to torment it.' The evil spirit obeyed and departed. And the heifer had sense enough to understand that she was set free; for, peace being restored to her, she fell at the feet of the holy man; and on Martin directing her, she made for her own herd, and, quieter than any sheep, she joined the rest of the band. This also was the time at which he had no sensation of being burnt, although placed in the midst of the flames; but I do not think it necessary for me to give an account of this, because Sulpitius there, though passing over it in his book, has nevertheless pretty fully narrated it in the epistle which he sent to Eusebius, who was then a presbyter, and is now a bishop. I believe, Postumianus, you have either read this letter, or, if it is still unknown to you, you may easily obtain it, when you please, from the bookcase. I shall simply narrate particulars which he has omitted. "Well, on a certain occasion, when he was going round the various parishes, we came upon a band of huntsmen. The dogs were pursuing a hare, and the little animal was already much exhausted by the long run it had had. When it perceived no means of escape in the plains spreading far on every side, and was several times just on the point of being captured, it tried to delay the threatened death by frequent doublings. Now the blessed man pitied the danger of the creature with pious feelings, and commanded the dogs to give up following it, and to permit it to get safe away. Instantly, at the first command they heard, they stood quite still: one might have thought them bound, or rather arrested, so as to stand immovable in their own footprints. In this way, through her pursuers being stopped as if tied together, the hare got safe away.

Chapter X. |Moreover, it will be worth while to relate also some of his familiar sayings

"Moreover, it will be worth while to relate also some of his familiar sayings, since they were all salted with spiritual instruction. He happened to see a sheep [122] that had recently been sheared; and, See,' says he, she has fulfilled the precept of the Gospel: she had two coats, and one of them she has given to him who had none: thus, therefore, ye ought also to do.' Also, when he perceived a swineherd in a garment of skin, cold and, in fact, all but naked, he exclaimed: Look at Adam, cast out of Paradise, how he feeds his swine in a garment of skin; but let us, laying aside that old Adam, who still remains in that man, rather put on the new Adam.' Oxen had, in one part, eaten up the grass of the meadows; pigs also had dug up some portions of them with their snouts; while the remaining portion, which continued uninjured, flourished, as if painted with variously tinted flowers. That part,' said he, which has been eaten down by cattle, although it has not altogether lost the beauty of grass, yet retains no grandeur of flowers, conveys to us a representation of marriage; that part, again, which the pigs, unclean animals, had dug up, presents a loathsome picture of fornication; while the remaining portion, which had sustained no injury, sets forth the glory of virginity; -- it flourishes with abundance of grass; the fruits of the field abound in it; and, decked with flowers to the very extreme of beauty, it shines as if adorned with glittering gems. Blessed is such beauty and worthy of God; for nothing is to be compared with virginity. Thus, then, those who set marriage side by side with fornication grievously err; and those who think that marriage is to be placed on an equal footing with virginity are utterly wretched and foolish. But this distinction must be maintained by wise people, that marriage belongs to those things which may be excused, while virginity points to glory, and fornication must incur punishment unless its guilt is purged away through atonement.'

Chapter XI. |A certain soldier had renounced the military life in the Church

"A certain soldier had renounced the military [123] life in the Church, having professed himself a monk, and had erected a cell for himself at a distance in the desert, as if with the purpose of leading the life of an eremite. But in course of time the crafty adversary harassed his unspiritual [124] nature with various thoughts, to the effect that, changing his mind, he should express a desire that his wife, whom Martin had ordered to have a place in the nunnery [125] of the young women, should rather dwell along with him. The courageous eremite, therefore, visits Martin, and makes known to him what he had in his mind. But Martin denied very strongly that a woman could, in inconsistent fashion, be joined again to a man who was now a monk, and not a husband. At last, when the soldier was insisting on the point in question; asserting that no evil would follow from carrying out his purpose; that he simply desired to possess the solace of his wife's company; and that there was no fear of his again returning to his own pursuits; adding that he was a soldier of Christ, and that she also had taken the oath of allegiance in the same service; and that the bishop therefore should allow to serve as soldiers together people who were saints, and who, in virtue of their faith, totally ignored the question of sex, -- then Martin (I am going to repeat his very words to you) exclaimed: Tell me if you have ever been in war, and if you have ever stood in the line of battle?' In answer he said, Frequently; I have often stood in line of battle, and been present in war.' On this Martin replies: Well, then, tell me, did you ever in a line which was prepared with arms for battle, or, having already advanced near, was fighting against a hostile army with drawn sword -- did you ever see any woman standing there, or fighting?' Then at length the soldier became confused and blushed, while he gave thanks that he had not been permitted to follow his own evil counsel, and at the same time had not been put right by the use of any harsh language, but by a true and rational analogy, connected with the person of a soldier. Martin, for his part, turning to us (for a great crowd of brethren had surrounded him), said: Let not a woman enter the camp of men, but let the line of soldiers remain separate, and let the females, dwelling in their own tent, be remote from that of men. For this renders an army ridiculous, if a female crowd is mixed with the regiments of men. Let the soldier occupy the line, let the soldier fight in the plain, but let the woman keep herself within the protection of the walls. She, too, certainly has her own glory, if, when her husband is absent, she maintains her chastity; and the first excellence, as well as completed victory of that, is, that she should not be seen.'

Chapter XII. ¶ I believe, my dear Sulpitius, that you remember with what emphasis he extolled to us

"I believe, my dear Sulpitius, that you remember with what emphasis he extolled to us (when you too were present) that virgin who had so completely withdrawn herself from the eyes of all men, that she did not admit to her presence Martin himself, when he wished to visit her in the discharge of duty. For when he was passing by the little property, within which for several years she had chastely confined herself, having heard of her faith and excellence, he turned out of his way that, as a bishop, he might honor, with pious respect, a gift of such eminent merit. We who journeyed with him thought that that virgin would rejoice, inasmuch as she was to obtain such a testimony to her virtue, while a priest of so great reputation, departing from his usual rigor of conduct, paid her a visit. But she did not relax those bonds of a most severe method of life, which she had imposed upon herself, even by allowing herself to see Martin. And thus the blessed man, having received, through another woman, her praiseworthy apology, joyfully departed from the doors of her who had not permitted herself to be seen or saluted. O glorious virgin, who did not allow herself to be looked upon even by Martin! O blessed Martin, who did not regard that repulse as being any insult to himself, but, extolling with exultant heart her excellence, rejoiced in an example only too rare in that locality! Well, when approaching night had compelled us to stay at no great distance from her humble dwelling, that same virgin sent a present to the blessed man; and Martin did what he had never done before (for he accepted a present or gift from nobody), he refused none of those things which the estimable virgin had sent him, declaring that her blessing was by no means to be rejected by a priest, since she was indeed to be placed before many priests. Let, I beg, virgins listen to that example, so that they shall, if they desire to close their doors to the wicked, even shut them against the good; and that the ill-disposed may have no free access to them, they shall not fear even to exclude priests from their society. Let the whole world listen attentively to this: a virgin did not permit herself to be looked upon by Martin. And it was no common [126] priest whom she repulsed, but the girl refused to come under the eyes of a man whom it was the salvation of onlookers to behold. But what priest, besides Martin, would not have regarded this as doing an injury to him? What irritation and fury would he have conceived in his mind against that virgin? He would have deemed her a heretic; and would have resolved that she should be laid under an anathema. And how surely would such a man have preferred to that blessed soul those virgins who are always throwing themselves in the way of the priest, who get up sumptuous entertainments, and who recline at table with the rest! But whither is my speech carrying me? That somewhat too free manner of speaking must be checked, lest perchance it may give offense to some; for words of reproach will not profit the unfaithful, while the example quoted will be enough for the faithful. At the same time, I wish so to extol the virtue of this virgin, as nevertheless to think that no deduction is to be made from the excellence of those others, who often came from remote regions for the purpose of seeing Martin, since indeed, with the same object in view, even angels oftentimes visited the blessed man.

Chapter XIII. |But in what I am now about to narrate

"But in what I am now about to narrate, I possess you, Sulpitius" (here he looked at me) "as a fellow-witness. One day, I and Sulpitius there were watching before Martin's door, and had already sat in silence for several hours. We did so with deep reverence and awe, as if we were carrying out a watch prescribed to us before the tent of an angel; while, all the time, the door of his cell being closed, he did not know that we were there. Meanwhile, we heard the sound of people conversing, and by and by we were filled with a kind of awe and amazement, for we could not help perceiving that something divine was going on. After nearly two hours, Martin comes out to us; and then our friend Sulpitius (for no one was accustomed to speak to him more familiarly) began to entreat him to make known to us, piously enquiring on the subject, what meant that sort of Divine awe which we confessed we had both felt, and with whom he had been conversing in his cell. We added that, as we stood before the door, we had undoubtedly heard a feeble sound of people talking, but had scarcely understood it. Then he after a long delay (but there was really nothing which Sulpitius could not extort from him even against his will: I am about to relate things somewhat difficult of belief, but, as Christ is my witness, I lie not, unless any one is so impious as to think that Martin himself lied) said: I will tell you, but I beg you will not speak of it to any one else. Agnes, Thecla, and Mary were there with me.' He proceeded to describe to us the face and general aspect of each. And he acknowledged that, not merely on that day, but frequently, he received visits from them. Nor did he deny that Peter also and Paul, the Apostles, were pretty frequently seen by him. Moreover, he was in the habit of rebuking the demons by their special names, according as they severally came to him. He found Mercury a cause of special annoyance, while he said that Jupiter was stupid and doltish. I am aware that these things seemed incredible even to many who dwelt in the same monastery; and far less can I expect that all who simply hear of them will believe them. For unless Martin had lived such an inestimable life, and displayed such excellence, he would by no means be regarded among us as having been endowed with so great glory. And yet it is not at all wonderful that human infirmity doubted concerning the works of Martin, when we see that many at the present day do not even believe the Gospels. But we have ourselves had personal knowledge and experience, that angels often appeared and spoke familiarly with Martin. As bearing upon this, I am to narrate a matter, of small importance indeed, but still I will state it. A synod, composed of bishops, was held at Nemausus, and while he had refused to attend it, he was nevertheless desirous of knowing what was done at it. It so happened that our friend Sulpitius was then on board ship with him, but, as was his custom, he kept his place at a distance from the rest, in a retired part of the vessel. There an angel announced to him what had taken place in the synod. And when, afterwards, we carefully enquired into the time at which the council was held, we found, beyond all doubt, that that was the very day of the council, and that those things were there decreed by the bishops which the angel had announced to Martin.

Chapter XIV. |But when we questioned him concerning the end of the world

"But when we questioned him concerning the end of the world, he said to us that Nero and Antichrist have first to come; that Nero will rule in the Western portion of the world, after having subdued ten kings; and that a persecution will be carried on by him, with the view of compelling men to worship the idols of the Gentiles. He also said that Antichrist, on the other hand, would first seize upon the empire of the East, having his seat and the capital of his kingdom at Jerusalem; while both the city and the temple would be restored by him. He added that his persecution would have for its object to compel men to deny Christ as God, while he maintained rather that he himself was Christ, and ordered all men to be circumcised, according to the law. He further said that Nero was to be destroyed by Antichrist, and that the whole world, and all nations, were to be reduced under the power of Antichrist, until that impious one should be overthrown by the coming of Christ. He told us, too, that there was no doubt but that Antichrist, having been conceived by an evil spirit, was already born, and had, by this time, reached the years of boyhood, while he would assume power as soon as he reached the proper age. Now, this is the eighth year since we heard these words from his lips: you may conjecture, then, how nearly about to happen are those things which are feared in the future." As our friend the Gaul was emphatically speaking thus, and had not yet finished what he intended to relate, a boy of the family entered with the announcement that the presbyter Refrigerius was standing at the door. We began to doubt whether it would be better to hear the Gaul further, or to go and welcome that man whom we so greatly loved, and who had come to pay his respects to us, when our friend the Gaul remarked: "Even although this most holy priest had not arrived, this talk of ours would have had to be cut short, for the approach of night was itself urging us to finish the discourse which has been so far continued. But inasmuch as all things bearing upon the excellences of Martin have by no means yet been mentioned, let what you have heard suffice for to-day: to-morrow we shall proceed to what remains." This promise of our Gallic friend being equally acceptable to us all, we rose up.

Dialogue III. The Virtues of Martin Continued.

The Virtues of Martin Continued.

Chapter I. |It is daylight, our Gallic friend, and you must get up.

"It is daylight, our Gallic friend, and you must get up. For, as you see, both Postumianus is urgent, and this presbyter, who was yesterday admitted to hear what was going on, expects that what you put off narrating with regard to our beloved Martin till to-day, you should now, in fulfillment of your promise, proceed to tell. He is not, indeed, ignorant of all the things which are to be related, but knowledge is sweet and pleasant even to one who goes over again things already known to him; since, indeed, it has been so arranged by nature that one rejoices with a better conscience in his knowledge of things which he is sure, through the testimony borne to them by many, are not in any degree uncertain. For this man, too, having been a follower of Martin from his early youth, has indeed been acquainted with all his doings; but he gladly hears over again things already known. And I will confess to thee, O Gaul, that the virtues of Martin have often been heard of by me, since, in fact, I have committed to writing many things regarding him; but through the admiration I feel for his deeds, those things are always new to me which, although I have already heard them, are, over and over again, repeated concerning him. Wherefore, we congratulate you that Refrigerius has been added to us as a hearer, all the [127] more earnestly that Postumianus is manifesting such eagerness, because he hastens, as it were, to convey a knowledge of these things to the East, and is now to hear the truth from you confirmed, so to speak, by witnesses." As I was saying these words, and as the Gaul was now ready to resume his narrative, there rushes in upon us a crowd of monks, Evagrius the presbyter, Aper, Sabbatius, Agricola; and, a little after, there enters the presbyter Ætherius, with Calupio the deacon, and Amator the subdeacon; lastly, Aurelius the presbyter, a very dear friend of mine, who came from a longer distance, rushes up out of breath. "Why," I enquire, "do you so suddenly and unexpectedly run together to us from so many different quarters, and at so early an hour in the morning?" "We," they reply, "heard yesterday that your friend the Gaul spent the whole day in narrating the virtues of Martin, and, as night overtook him, put off the rest until to-day: wherefore, we have made haste to furnish him with a crowded audience, as he speaks about such interesting matters." In the meantime, we are informed that a multitude of lay people are standing at the door, not venturing to enter, but begging, nevertheless, that they might be admitted. Then Aper declares, "It is by no means proper that these people should be mixed up with us, for they have come to hear, rather from curiosity than piety." I was grieved for the sake of those who ought not, as he thought, to be admitted, but all that I could obtain, and with difficulty, was that they should admit Eucharius from among the lieutenants, [128] and Celsus, a man of consular rank, while the rest were kept back. We then place the Gaul in the middle seat; and he, after long keeping silence, in harmony with his well-known modesty, at length began as follows.

Chapter II. |You have assembled, my pious and eloquent friends, to hear me

"You have assembled, my pious and eloquent friends, to hear me; but, as I presume, you have brought to the task religious rather than learned ears; for you are to listen to me simply as a witness to the faith, and not as speaking with the fluency of an orator. Now, I shall not repeat the things which were spoken yesterday: those who did not hear them can become acquainted with them by means of the written records. Postumianus expects something new, intending to make known what he hears to the East, that it may not, when Martin is brought into comparison, esteem itself above the West. And first, my mind inclines to set forth an incident respecting which Refrigerius has just whispered in my ear: the affair took place in the city of Carnutes. A certain father of a family ventured to bring to Martin his daughter of twelve years old, who had been dumb from her birth, begging that the blessed man would loose, by his pious merits, her tongue, which was thus tied. He, giving way to the bishops Valentinus and Victricius, who then happened to be by his side, declared that he was unequal to so great an undertaking, but that nothing was impossible to them, as if holier than himself. But they, adding their pious entreaties, with suppliant voices, to those of the father, begged Martin to accomplish what was hoped for. He made no further delay, -- being admirable in both respects, in the display, first of all, of humility, and then in not putting off a pious duty, -- but orders the crowd of people standing round to be removed; and while the bishops only, and the father of the girl, were present, he prostrates himself in prayer, after his usual fashion. He then blesses a little oil, while he utters the formula of exorcism; and holding the tongue of the girl with his fingers, he thus pours the consecrated liquid into her mouth. Nor did the result of the power thus exerted disappoint the holy man. He asks her the name of her father, and she instantly replied. The father cries out, embracing the knees of Martin, with a mixture of joy and tears; and while all around are amazed, he confesses that then for the first time he listened to the voice of his daughter. And that this may not appear incredible to any one, let Evagrius, who is here, furnish you with a testimony of its truth; for the thing took place in his very presence.

Chapter III. [The following is a small matter which I learned lately from the narration of Arpagius

"The following is a small matter which I learned lately from the narration of Arpagius the presbyter, but I do not think it ought to be passed over. The wife of the courtier Avitianus had sent some oil to Martin, that he might bless it (such is the custom) so as to be ready when needful to meet different causes of disease. It was contained in a glass jar of a shape which, round throughout, gradually bulges [129] out towards the middle, with a long neck; but the hollow of the extended neck was not filled, because it is the custom to fill vessels of the kind in such a way that the top may be left free for the knobs which stop up the jar. The presbyter testified that he saw the oil increase under the blessing of Martin, so much that, the abundance of it overflowing the jar, it ran down from the top in every direction. He added that it bubbled up with the same [130] effect, while the vessel was being carried back to the mistress of the household; for the oil so steadily flowed over in the hands of the boy carrying it, that the abundance of the liquid, thus pouring down, covered all his garment. He said, moreover, that the lady received the vessel so full even to the brim, that (as the same presbyter tells [131] us at the present day) there was no room in that jar for inserting the stopper by which people are accustomed to close those vessels, the contents of which are to be preserved with special care. That, too, was a remarkable thing that happened to this man." Here he looked at me. "He had set down a glass vessel containing oil blessed by Martin in a pretty high window; and a boy of the family, not knowing that a jar was there, drew towards him the cloth covering it, with rather much violence. The vessel, in consequence, fell down on the marble pavement. Upon this, all were filled with dread lest the blessing of God, bestowed on the vessel by Martin, had been lost; but the jar was found as safe as ever, just as if it had fallen on the softest feathers. Now, this result should be ascribed, not so much to chance, as to the power of Martin, whose blessing could not possibly perish. "There is this, too, which was effected by a certain person, whose name, because he is present, and has forbidden it to be mentioned, shall be suppressed: Saturninus too, who is now with us, was present on the occasion referred to. A dog was barking at us in a somewhat disagreeable manner. 'I command thee,' said the person in question, in the name of Martin, to be quiet.' The dog -- his barking seemed to stick in his throat, and one might have thought that his tongue had been cut out -- was silent. Thus it is really a small matter that Martin himself performed miracles: believe me that other people also have accomplished many things in his name.

Chapter IV. |You knew the too barbarous and, beyond measure, bloody ferocity of Avitianus

"You knew the too barbarous and, beyond measure, bloody ferocity of Avitianus, a former courtier. He enters the city of the Turones with a furious spirit, while rows of people, laden with chains, followed him with melancholy looks, orders various kinds of punishments to be got ready for slaying them; and to the grave amazement of the city, he arranges them for the sad work on the following day. When this became known to Martin, he set out all alone, a little before midnight, for the palace of that beast. But when, in the silence of the depths of the night, and as all were at rest, no entrance was possible through the bolted doors, he lays himself down before that cruel threshold. In the meantime, Avitianus, buried in deep sleep, is smitten by an assailing angel, who says to him, Does the servant of God lie at your threshold, and do you continue sleeping?' He, on listening to these words, rises, in much disturbance, from his bed; and calling his servants, he exclaims in terror, Martin is at the door: go immediately, and undo the bolts, that the servant of God may suffer no harm.' But they, in accordance with the tendency of all servants, having scarcely stepped beyond the first threshold, and laughing at their master as having been mocked by a dream, affirm that there was no one at the door. This they did as simply inferring from their own disposition, that no one could be keeping watch through the night, while far less did they believe that a priest was lying at the threshold of another man during the horror of that night. Well, they easily persuaded Avitianus of the truth of their story. He again sinks into sleep; but, being ere long struck with greater violence than before, he exclaimed that Martin was standing at the door, and that, therefore, no rest either of mind or body was allowed him. As the servants delayed, he himself went forward to the outer threshold; and there he found Martin, as he had thought he would. The wretched man, struck by the display of so great excellence, exclaimed, Why, sir, have you done this to me? There is no need for you to speak: I know what you wish: I see what you require: depart as quickly as possible, lest the anger of heaven consume me on account of the injury done you: I have already suffered sufficient punishment. Believe me, that I have firmly determined in my own mind how I should now proceed.' So then, after the departure of the holy man, he calls for his officials and orders all the prisoners to be set free, while presently he himself went his way. Thus Avitianus being put to flight, the city rejoiced, and felt at liberty.

Chapter V. |While these are certain facts, since Avitianus related them to many persons

"While these are certain facts, since Avitianus related them to many persons, they are further confirmed on this ground that Refrigerius the presbyter, whom you see here present, lately had them narrated to him, under an appeal to the Divine majesty, by Dagridus, a faithful man among the tribunes, who swore that the account was given him by Avitianus himself. But I do not wish you to wonder that I do to-day what I did not do yesterday; viz. that I subjoin to the mention of every individual wonder the names of witnesses, and mention persons to whom, if any one is inclined to disbelieve, he may have recourse, because they are still in the body. The unbelief of very many has compelled that; for they are said to hesitate about some things which were related yesterday. Let these people, then, accept as witnesses persons who are still alive and well, and let them give more credit to such, inasmuch as they doubt our good faith. But really, if they are so unbelieving, I give it as my opinion that they will not believe even the witnesses named. And yet I am surprised that any one, who has even the least sense of religion, can venture on such wickedness as to think that any one could tell lies concerning Martin. Be that far from every one who lives in obedience to God; for, indeed, Martin does not require to be defended by falsehoods. But, O Christ, we lay the truth of our whole discourse before thee, to the effect that we neither have said, nor will say, anything else than what either we ourselves have witnessed, or have learned from undoubted authorities, and, indeed, very frequently from Martin himself. But although we have adopted the form of a dialogue, in order that the style might be varied to prevent weariness, still we affirm that we are really setting forth [132] a true history in a dutiful spirit. The unbelief of some has compelled me, to my great regret, to insert in my narrative these remarks which are apart from the subject in hand. But let the discourse now return to our assembly; in which since I saw that I was listened to so eagerly, I found it necessary to acknowledge that Aper acted properly in keeping back the unbelieving, under the conviction he had that those only ought to be allowed to hear who were of a believing spirit.

Chapter VI. ¶I am enraged in heart, believe me, and, through vexation

"I am enraged in heart, believe me, and, through vexation, I seem to lose my senses: do Christian men not believe in the miraculous powers of Martin, which the demons acknowledged? "The monastery of the blessed man was at two miles' distance from the city; but if, as often as he was to come to the church, he only had set his foot outside the threshold of his cell, one could perceive the possessed roaring through the whole church, and the bands of guilty [133] ones trembling as if their judge were coming, so that the groanings of the demons announced the approach of the bishop to the clerics, who were not previously aware that he was coming. I saw a certain man snatched up into the air on the approach of Martin, and suspended there with his hands stretched upwards, so that he could in no way touch the ground with his feet. But if at any time Martin undertook the duty of exorcising the demons, he touched no one with his hands, and reproached no one in words, as a multitude of expressions is generally rolled forth by the clerics; but the possessed, being brought up to him, he ordered all others to depart, and the doors being bolted, clothed in sackcloth and sprinkled with ashes, he stretched himself on the ground in the midst of the church, and turned to prayer. Then truly might one behold the wretched beings tortured with various results -- some hanging, as it were, from a cloud, with their feet turned upwards, and yet their garments did not fall down over their faces, lest the part of their body which was exposed should give rise to shame; while in another part of the church one could see them tortured without any question being addressed to them, and confessing their crimes. They revealed their names, too, of their own accord; one acknowledged that he was Jupiter, and another that he was Mercury. Finally, one could see all the servants of the devil suffering agony, along with their master, so that we could not help acknowledging that in Martin there was fulfilled that which is written that the saints shall judge angels.'

Chapter VII. [There was a certain village in the country of the Senones which was every year

"There was a certain village in the country of the Senones which was every year annoyed with hail. The inhabitants, constrained by an extreme of suffering, sought help from Martin. A highly respectable embassy was sent to him by Auspicius, a man of the rank of prefect, whose fields the storm had been wont to smite more severely than it did those of others. But Martin, having there offered up prayer, so completely freed the whole district from the prevailing plague, that for twenty years, in which he afterwards remained in the body, no one in those places suffered from hail. And that this may not be thought to be accidental, but rather effected by Martin, the tempest, returning afresh, once more fell upon the district in the year in which he died. The world thus felt the departure of a believing man to such a degree, that, as it justly rejoiced in his life, so it also bewailed his death. But if any hearer, weak in faith, demands also witnesses to prove those things which we have said, I will bring forward, not one man, but many thousands, and will even summon the whole region of the Senones to bear witness to the power which was experienced. But not to speak of this, you, presbyter Refrigerius, remember, I believe, that we lately had a conversation, concerning the matter referred to, with Romulus, the son of that Auspicius I mentioned, an honored and religious man. He related the points in question to us, as if they had not been previously known; and as he was afraid of constant losses in future harvests, he did, as you yourself beheld, regret, with much lamentation, that Martin was not preserved up to this time.

Chapter VIII. |But to return to Avitianus: while at every other place

"But to return to Avitianus: while at every other place, and in all other cities, he displayed marks of horrible cruelty, at Tours alone he did no harm. Yes, that beast, which was nourished by human blood, and by the slaughter of unfortunate creatures, showed himself meek and peaceable in the presence of the blessed man. I remember that Martin one day came to him, and having entered his private apartment, he saw a demon of marvelous size sitting behind his back. Blowing upon him from a distance (if I may, as a matter of necessity, make use of a word which is hardly Latin [134] , Avitianus thought that he was blowing at him, and exclaimed, Why, thou holy man, dost thou treat me thus?' But then Martin said, It is not at you, but at him who, in all his terribleness, leans over your neck.' The devil gave way, and left his familiar seat; and it is well known that, ever after that day, Avitianus was milder, whether because he now understood that he had always been doing the will of the devil sitting by him, or because the unclean spirit, driven from his seat by Martin, was deprived of the power of attacking him; while the servant was ashamed of his master, and the master did not force on his servant. "In a village of the Ambatienses, that is in an old stronghold, which is now largely inhabited by brethren, you know there is a great idol-temple built up with labor. The building had been constructed of the most polished stones and furnished with turrets; and, rising on high in the form of a cone, it preserved the superstition of the place by the majesty of the work. The blessed man had often enjoined its destruction on Marcellus, who was there settled as presbyter. Returning after the lapse of some time, he reproved the presbyter, because the edifice of the idol-temple was still standing. He pleaded in excuse that such an immense structure could with difficulty be thrown down by a band of soldiers, or by the strength of a large body of the public, and far less should Martin think it easy for that to be effected by means of weak clerics or helpless monks. Then Martin, having recourse to his well-known auxiliaries, spent the whole night in watching and prayer -- with the result that, in the morning, a storm arose, and cast down even to its foundations the idol-temple. Now let this narrative rest on the testimony of Marcellus.

Chapter IX. ¶I will make use of another not dissimilar marvel in a like kind of work

"I will make use of another not dissimilar marvel in a like kind of work, having the concurrence of Refrigerius in doing so. Martin was prepared to throw down a pillar of immense size, on the top of which an idol stood, but there was no means by which effect could be given to his design. Well, according to his usual practice, he betakes himself to prayer. It is undoubted that then a column, to a certain degree like the other, rushed down from heaven, and falling upon the idol, it crushed to powder the whole of the seemingly indestructible mass: this would have been a small matter, had he only in an invisible way made use of the powers of heaven, but these very powers were beheld by human eyes serving Martin in a visible manner. "Again, the same Refrigerius is my witness that a woman, suffering from an issue of blood, when she had touched the garment of Martin, after the example of the woman mentioned in the Gospel, was cured in a moment of time. "A serpent, cutting its way through a river, was swimming towards the bank on which we had taken our stand. In the name of the Lord,' said Martin, I command thee to return.' Instantly, at the word of the holy man, the venomous beast turned round, and while we looked on, swam across to the farther bank. As we all perceived that this had not happened without a miracle; he groaned deeply, and exclaimed, Serpents hear me, but men will not hear.'

Chapter X. |Being accustomed to eat fish at the time of Easter

"Being accustomed to eat fish at the time of Easter, he enquired a little before the hour for refreshment, whether it was in readiness. Then Cato, the deacon, to whom the outward management of the monastery belonged, and who was himself a skillful fisher, tells him that no capture had fallen to his lot the whole day, and that other fishers, who used to sell what they caught, had also been able to do nothing. Go,' said he, let down your line, and a capture will follow.' As Sulpitius there has already described, we had our dwelling close to the river. We all went, then, as these were holidays, to see our friend fishing, with the hopes of all on the stretch, that the efforts would not be in vain by which, under the advice of Martin himself, it was sought to obtain fish for his use. At the first throw the deacon drew out, in a very small net, an enormous pike, and ran joyfully back to the monastery, with the feeling undoubtedly to which some poet gave utterance (for we use a learned verse, inasmuch as we are conversing with learned people) -- And brought his captive boar [135] to wondering Argos.' "Truly that disciple of Christ, imitating the miracles performed by the Saviour, and which he, by way of example, set before the view of his saints, showed Christ also working in him, who, glorifying his own holy follower everywhere, conferred upon that one man the gifts of various graces. Arborius, of the imperial bodyguard, testifies that he saw the hand of Martin as he was offering sacrifice, clothed, as it seemed, with the noblest gems, while it glittered with a purple light; and that, when his right hand was moved, he heard the clash of the gems, as they struck together.

Chapter XI. **¶ I will now come to an event which he always concealed**

"I will now come to an event which he always concealed, owing to the character of the times, but which he could not conceal from us. In the matter referred to, there is this of a miraculous nature, that an angel conversed, face to face, with him. The Emperor Maximus, while in other respects doubtless a good man, was led astray by the advices of some priests after Priscillian had been put to death. He, therefore, protected by his royal power Ithacius the bishop, who had been the accuser of Priscillian, and others of his confederates, whom it is not necessary to name. The emperor thus prevented every one from bringing it as a charge against Ithacius, that, by his instrumentality, a man of any sort had been condemned to death. Now Martin, constrained to go to the court by many serious causes of people involved in suffering, incurred the whole force of the storm which was there raging. The bishops who had assembled at Treves were retained in that city, and daily communicating with Ithacius, they had made common cause with him. When it was announced to them expecting no such information, that Martin was coming, completely losing courage, they began to mutter and tremble among themselves. And it so happened that already, under their influence, the emperor had determined to send some tribunes armed with absolute power into the two Spains, to search out heretics, and, when found, to deprive them of their life or goods. Now there was no doubt that that tempest would also make havoc of multitudes of the real saints, little distinction being made between the various classes of individuals. For in such circumstances, a judgment was formed simply by appearances, so that one was deemed a heretic rather on his turning pale from fear, or wearing a particular garment, than by the faith which he professed. And the bishops were well aware that such proceedings would by no means please Martin; but, conscious of evil as they were, this was a subject of deep anxiety to them, lest when he came, he should keep from communion with them; knowing well as they did, that others would not be wanting who, with his example to guide them, would follow the bold course adopted by so great a man. They therefore form a plan with the emperor, to this effect, that, officials of the court being sent on to meet him, Martin should be forbidden to come any nearer to that city, unless he should declare that he would maintain peace with the bishops who were living there. But he skillfully frustrated their object, by declaring that he would come among them with the peace of Christ. And at last, having entered during the night, he went to the church, simply for the purpose of prayer. On the following day he betakes himself to the palace. Besides many other petitions which he had to present, and which it would be tedious to describe, the following were the principal: entreaties in behalf of the courtier Narses, and the president Leucadius, both of whom had belonged to the party of Gratianus, and that, with more than ordinary zeal, upon which this is not the time to dilate, and who had thus incurred the anger of the conqueror; but his chief request was, that tribunes, with the power of life and death, should not be sent into the Spains. For Martin felt a pious solicitude not only to save from danger the true Christians in these regions, who were to be persecuted in connection with that expedition, but to protect even heretics themselves. But on the first and second day the wily emperor kept the holy man in suspense, whether that he might impress on him the importance of the affair, or because, being obnoxious to the bishops, he could not be reconciled to them, or because, as most people thought at the time, the emperor opposed

his wishes from avarice, having cast a longing eye on the property of the persons in question. For we are told that he was really a man distinguished by many excellent actions, but that he was not successful in contending against avarice. This may, however, have been due to the necessities of the empire at the time, for the treasury of the state had been exhausted by former rulers; and he, being almost constantly in the expectation of civil wars, or in a state of preparation for them, may easily be excused for having, by all sorts of expedients, sought resources for the defense of the empire.

Chapter XII. |In the meantime, those bishops with whom Martin would not hold communion went in terror

"In the meantime, those bishops with whom Martin would not hold communion went in terror to the king, complaining that they had been condemned beforehand; that it was all over with them as respected the status of every one of them, if the authority of Martin was now to uphold the pertinacity of Theognitus, who alone had as yet condemned them by a sentence publicly pronounced; that the man ought not to have been received within the walls; that he was now not merely the defender of heretics, but their vindicator; and that nothing had really been accomplished by the death of Priscillian, if Martin were to act the part of his avenger. Finally, prostrating themselves with weeping and lamentation, they implored the emperor [136] to put forth his power against this one man. And the emperor was not far from being compelled to assign to Martin, too, the doom of heretics. But after all, although he was disposed to look upon the bishops with too great favor, he was not ignorant that Martin excelled all other mortals in faith, sanctity, and excellence: he therefore tries another way of getting the better of the holy man. And first he sends for him privately, and addresses him in the kindest fashion, assuring him that the heretics were condemned in the regular course of public trials, rather than by the persecutions of the priests; and that there was no reason why he should think that communion with Ithacius and the rest of that party was a thing to be condemned. He added that Theognitus had created disunion, rather by personal hatred, than by the cause he supported; and that, in fact, he was the only person who, in the meantime, had separated himself from communion: while no innovation had been made by the rest. He remarked further that a synod, held a few days previously, had decreed that Ithacius was not chargeable with any fault. When Martin was but little impressed by these statements, the king then became inflamed with anger, and hurried out of his presence; while, without delay, executioners are appointed for those in whose behalf Martin had made supplication.

Chapter XIII. |When this became known to Martin, he rushed to the palace

"When this became known to Martin, he rushed to the palace, though it was now night. He pledges himself that, if these people were spared, he would communicate; only let the tribunes, who had already been sent to the Spains for the destruction of the churches, be recalled. There is no delay: Maximus grants all his requests. On the following day, the ordination of Felix as bishop was being arranged, a man undoubtedly of great sanctity, and truly worthy of being made a priest in happier times. Martin took part in the communion of that day, judging it better to yield for the moment, than to disregard the safety of those over whose heads a sword was hanging. Nevertheless, although the bishops strove to the uttermost to get him to confirm the fact of his communicating by signing his name, he could not be induced to do so. On the following day, hurrying away from that place, as he was on the way returning, he was filled with mourning and lamentation that he had even for an hour been mixed up with the evil communion, and, not far from a village named Andethanna, where remote woods stretch [137] far and wide with profound solitude, he sat down while his companions went on a little before him. There he became involved in deep thought, alternately accusing and defending the cause of his grief and conduct. Suddenly, an angel stood by him and said, 'Justly, O Martin, do you feel compunction, but you could not otherwise get out of your difficulty. Renew your virtue, resume your courage, lest you not only now expose your fame, but your very salvation, to danger.' Therefore, from that time forward, he carefully guarded against being mixed up in communion with the party of Ithacius. But when it happened that he cured some of the possessed more slowly and with less grace than usual, he at once confessed to us with tears that he felt a diminution of his power on account of the evil of that communion in which he had taken part for a moment through necessity, and not with a cordial spirit. He lived sixteen years after this, but never again did he attend a synod, and kept carefully aloof from all assemblies of bishops.

Chapter XIV. |But clearly, as we experienced, he repaired, with manifold interest

"But clearly, as we experienced, he repaired, with manifold interest, his grace, which had been diminished for a time. I saw afterwards a possessed person brought to him at the gate [138] of the monastery; and that, before the man touched the threshold, he was cured. "I lately heard one testifying that, when he was sailing on the Tuscan Sea, following that course which leads to Rome, whirlwinds having suddenly arisen, all on board were in extreme peril of their lives. In these circumstances, a certain Egyptian merchant, who was not yet a Christian, cried out, Save us, O God of Martin,' upon which the tempest was immediately stilled, and they held their desired course, while the pacified ocean continued in perfect tranquillity. "Lycontius, a believing man belonging to the lieutenants, when a violent disease was afflicting his family, and sick bodies were lying all through his house in sad proof of unheard-of calamity, implored the help of Martin by a letter. At this time the blessed man declared that the thing asked was difficult to be obtained, for he knew in his spirit that that house was then being scourged by Divine appointment. Yet he did not give up an unbroken course of prayer and fasting for seven whole days and as many nights, so that he at last obtained that which he aimed at in his supplications. Speedily, Lycontius, having experienced the Divine kindness, flew to him, at once reporting the fact and giving thanks, that his house had been delivered from all danger. He also offered a hundred pounds of silver, which the blessed man neither rejected nor accepted; but before the amount of money touched the threshold of the monastery, he had, without hesitation, destined it for the redemption of captives. And when it was suggested to him by the brethren, that some portion of it should be reserved for the expenses of the monastery, since it was difficult for all of them to obtain necessary food, while many of them were sorely in need of clothing, he replied, Let the church both feed and clothe us, as long as we do not appear to have provided, in any way, for our own wants.' "There occur to my mind at this point many miracles of that illustrious man, which it is more easy for us to admire than to narrate. You all doubtless recognize the truth of what I say: there are many doings of his which cannot be set forth in words. For instance, there is the following, which I rather think cannot be related by us just as it took place. A certain one of the brethren (you are not ignorant of his name, but his person must be concealed, lest we should cause shame to a godly man), -- a certain one, I say, having found abundance of coals for his stove, drew a stool to himself, and was sitting, with outspread legs and exposed person, beside that fire, when Martin at once perceived that an improper thing was done under the sacred roof, and cried out with a loud voice, Who, by exposing his person, is dishonoring our habitation?' When our brother heard this, and felt from his own conscience, that it was he who was rebuked, he immediately ran to us almost in a fainting condition, and acknowledged his shame; which was done, however, only through the forth-putting of the power of Martin.

Chapter XV. |Again, on a certain day, after he had sat down on that wooden seat of

"Again, on a certain day, after he had sat down on that wooden seat of his (which you all know), placed in the small open court which surrounded his abode, he perceived two demons sitting on the lofty rock which overhangs the monastery. He then heard them, in eager and gladsome tones, utter the following invitation, Come hither, Briccio, come hither, Briccio.' I believe they perceived the miserable man approaching from a distance, being conscious how great frenzy of spirit they had excited within him. Nor is there any delay: Briccio rushes in in absolute fury; and there, full of madness, he vomits forth a thousand reproaches against Martin. For he had been reprovved by him on the previous day, because he who had possessed nothing before he entered the clerical office, having, in fact, been brought up in the monastery by Martin himself, was now keeping horses and purchasing slaves. For at that time, he was accused by many of not only having bought boys belonging to barbarous nations, but girls also of a comely appearance. The miserable man, moved with bitter rage on account of these things, and, as I believe, chiefly instigated by the impulse received from those demons, made such an onset upon Martin as scarcely to refrain from laying hands upon him. The holy man, on his part, with a placid countenance and a tranquil mind, endeavored by gentle words to restrain the madness of the unhappy wretch. But the spirit of wickedness so prevailed within him, that not even his own mind, at best a very vain one, was under his control. With trembling lips, and a changing countenance, pale with rage, he rolled forth the words of sin, asserting that he was a holier man than Martin who had brought him up, inasmuch as from his earliest years he had grown up in the monastery amid the sacred institutions of the Church, while Martin had at first, as he could not deny, been tarnished with the life of a soldier, and had now entirely sunk into dotage by means of his baseless superstitions, and ridiculous fancies about visions. After he had uttered many things like these, and others of a still more bitter nature, which it is better not to mention, going out, at length, when his rage was satisfied he seemed to feel as if he had completely vindicated his conduct. But with rapid steps he rushed back by the way he had gone out, the demons having, I believe, been, in the meantime, driven from his heart by the prayers of Martin, and he was now brought back to repentance. Speedily, then, he returns, and throws himself at the feet of Martin, begging for pardon and confessing his error, while, at length restored to a better mind, he acknowledges that he had been under the influence of a demon. It was no difficult business for Martin to forgive the suppliant. And then the holy man explained both to him and to us all, how he had seen him driven on by demons, and declared that he was not moved by the reproaches which had been heaped upon him; for they had, in fact, rather injured the man who uttered them. And subsequently, when this same Briccio was often accused before him of many and great crimes, Martin could not be induced to remove him from the presbyterate, lest he should be suspected of revenging the injury done to himself, while he often repeated this saying: If Christ bore with Judas, why should not I bear with Briccio?"

Chapter XVI. Upon this, Postumianus exclaims, |Let that well-known man in our immediate neighborhood

Upon this, Postumianus exclaims, "Let that well-known man in our immediate neighborhood, listen to that example, who, when he is wise, takes no notice either of things present or future, but if he has been offended, falls into utter fury, having no control over himself. He then rages against the clerics, and makes bitter attacks upon the laity, while he stirs up the whole world for his own revenge. He will continue in this state of contention for three years without intermission, and refuse to be mollified either by time or reason. The condition of the man is to be lamented and pitied, even if this were the only incurable evil by which he is afflicted. But you ought, my Gallic friend, to have frequently recalled to his mind such examples of patience and tranquillity, that he might know both how to be angry and how to forgive. And if he happens to hear of this speech of mine which has been briefly interpolated into our discourse, and. directed against himself, let him know that I spoke, not more with the lips of an enemy than the mind of a friend; because I should wish, if the thing were possible, that he should be spoken of rather as being like the bishop Martin, than the tyrant Phalaris. But let us pass away from him, since the mention of him is far from pleasant, and let us return, O Gaul, to our friend Martin."

Chapter XVII. Then said I, since I perceived by the setting sun that evening was at hand

Then said I, since I perceived by the setting sun that evening was at hand: "The day is gone, Postumianus; we must rise up; and at the same time some refreshment is due to these so zealous listeners. And as to Martin, you ought not to expect that there is any limit to one talking about him: he extends too far to be comprised fully in any conversation. In the meantime, you will convey to the East the things you have now heard about that famous man; and as you retrace your steps to your former haunts, and pass along by various coasts, places, harbors, islands, and seas, see that you spread among the peoples the name and glory of Martin. Especially remember that you do not omit Campania; and although your route will take you far off the beaten track, still any expenditure from delay will not be to you of so much importance as to keep you from visiting in that quarter Paulinus, a man renowned and praised throughout the whole world. I beg you first to unroll to him the volume of discourse which we either completed yesterday, or have said to-day. You will relate all to him; you will repeat all to him; that in due time, by his means, Rome may learn the sacred merits of this man, just as he spread that first little book of ours not only through Italy, but even through the whole of Illyria. He, not jealous of the glories of Martin, and being a most pious admirer of his saintly excellences in Christ, will not refuse to compare our leading man with his own friend Felix. Next, if you happen to cross over to Africa, you will relate what you have heard to Carthage; and, although, as you yourself have said, it already knows the man, yet now pre-eminently it will learn more respecting him, that it may not admire its own martyr Cyprian alone, although consecrated by his sacred blood. And then, if carried down a little to the left, you enter the gulf of Achaia, let Corinth know, and let Athens know, that Plato in the academy was not wiser, and that Socrates in the prison was not braver, than Martin. You will say to them that Greece was indeed happy which was thought worthy to listen to an apostle pleading, but that Christ has by no means forsaken Gaul, since he has granted it to possess such a man as Martin. But when you have come as far as Egypt, although it is justly proud of the numbers and virtues of its own saints, yet let it not disdain to hear how Europe will not yield to it, or to all Asia, in having only Martin.

Chapter XVIII. |But when you have again set sail from that place with the view of making

"But when you have again set sail from that place with the view of making for Jerusalem, I enjoin upon you a duty connected with our grief, that, if you ever come to the shore of renowned Ptolemais, you enquire most carefully where Pomponius, that friend of ours, is buried, and that you do not refuse to visit his remains on that foreign soil. There shed many tears, as much from the working of your own feelings, as from our tender affection; and although it is but a worthless gift, scatter the ground there with purple flowers and sweet-smelling grass. And you will say to him, but not roughly, and not harshly, -- with the address of one who sympathizes, and not with the tone of one who reproaches, -- that if he had only been willing to listen to you at one time, or to me constantly, and if he had invited Martin rather than that man whom I am unwilling to name, he would never have been so cruelly separated from me, or covered by a heap of unknown dust, having suffered death in the midst of the sea with the lot of a ship-wrecked pirate, and with difficulty securing burial on a far-distant shore. Let those behold this as their own work, who, in seeking to revenge him, have wished to injure me, let them behold their own glory, and being avenged, let them henceforth cease to make any attacks upon me." Having uttered these sad words in a very mournful voice, and while the tears of all the others were drawn forth by our laments, we at length departed, certainly with a profound admiration for Martin, but with no less sorrow from our own lamentations.

Chapter 95

Letter I. A Letter of the Holy Presbyter Severus to His Sister Claudia Concerning the Last Judgment.

A Letter of the Holy Presbyter Severus to His Sister Claudia Concerning the Last Judgment.

Chapter I. On reading your letters, my feelings were, in many ways

On reading your letters, my feelings were, in many ways, deeply moved, and I could not refrain from tears. For I both wept for joy because I could perceive from the very language of your letters, that you were living according to the precepts of the Lord God, and out of my exceeding desire after you, I could not help lamenting that, without any fault on my part, I was parted from you; and I would have felt this still more strongly had you not sent me a letter. Should I not, then, enjoy the company of such a sister? But I call your salvation to witness, that I have very often wished to come to you, but have up till now been prevented, through the opposition of him [139] who is accustomed to hinder us. For, in my eager desire, I was both urgent to satisfy my wishes by seeing you; and we seemed, if we should meet, likely to accomplish more effectually the work of the Lord, since by comforting one another we should live with the heavy load of this world trodden under our feet. But I do not now fix the day or time of visiting you, because, as often as I have done so, I have not been able to fulfil my purpose. I shall wait on the will of the Lord, and hope that, by my supplications and your prayers, he may bring it about that we reap some advantage from our perseverance. [140]

Chapter II. But because you have desired from me in all my letters which I had sent

But because you have desired from me in all my letters which I had sent to you precepts to nourish your life and faith, it has come to pass that, through the frequency of my writings to you, I have now exhausted language of that kind; and I can really write nothing new to you, so as to avoid what I have written before. And in truth, through the goodness of God, you do not now need to be exhorted, inasmuch as, perfecting your faith at the very beginning of your saintly life, you display a devoted love in Christ. One thing, however, I do press upon you, that you do not go back on things you have already passed away from, that you do not long again for things you have already scorned, and that, having put your hand to the plow, you do not look back [141] again, retracing your steps; for, undoubtedly, by falling into this fault, your furrow will lose its straightness, and the cultivator will not receive his own proper reward. Moreover, he does not secure even a measure of the reward, if he has, in a measure, failed. For, as we must flee from sin to righteousness, so he who has entered on the practice of righteousness must beware lest he lay himself open to sin. For it is written that "his righteousness shall not profit the righteous on the day on which he has gone astray." [142] For this, then, we must take our stand, for this we must labor, that we, who have escaped from sins, do not lose the prepared rewards. For the enemy stands ready against us, that he may at once strike the man who has been stripped of the shield of faith. Our shield, therefore, is not to be cast aside, lest our side be exposed to attack; and our sword is not to be put away, lest the enemy then begin to give up all fear: moreover, we know that if he sees a man fully armed, he will retreat. Nor are we ignorant that it is a hard and difficult thing daily to fight against the flesh and the world. But if you reflect upon eternity, and if you consider the kingdom of heaven, which undoubtedly the Lord will condescend to bestow upon us although we are sinners, what suffering, I ask, is sufficiently great, by which we may merit such things? And besides, our struggle in this world is but for a short time; for although death do not speedily overtake us, old age will come. The years flow on, and time glides by; while, as I hope, the Lord Jesus will speedily call us to himself, as being dear to his heart.

Chapter III. O how happy shall be that departure of ours

O how happy shall be that departure of ours, when Christ shall receive us into his own abode after we have been purged [143] from the stains of sin through the experience [144] of a better life! Martyrs and prophets will meet with us, apostles will join themselves to us, angels will be glad, archangels will rejoice, and Satan, being conquered, will look pale, though still retaining his cruel countenance, inasmuch as he will lose all [145] advantage from our sins which he had secured for himself in us. He will see glory granted us through mercy, and merits honored by means of glory. We shall triumph over our conquered foe. Where shall now the wise men of the world appear? Where shall the covetous man, where shall the adulterer, where shall the irreligious, where shall the drunkard, where shall the evil-speaker be recognized? What shall these wretched beings say in their own defense? "We did not know thee, Lord; we did not see that thou wast in the world: thou didst not send the prophets: thou didst not give the law to the world: we did not see the patriarchs: we did not read the lives of the saints. Thy Christ never was upon the earth: Peter was silent: Paul refused to preach: no Evangelist taught. There were no martyrs whose example we should follow: no one predicted thy future judgment: no one commanded us to clothe the poor: no one enjoined us to restrain lust: no one persuaded us to fight against covetousness: we fell through ignorance, not knowing what we did."

Chapter IV. Against these, from among the company of the saints

Against these, from among the company of the saints, righteous Noah shall first proclaim, "I, Lord, predicted that a deluge was about to come on account of the sins of men, and after the deluge I set an example to the good in my own person; since I did not perish with the wicked who perished, that they might know both what was the salvation of the innocent, and what the punishment of sinners." After him, faithful Abraham will say in opposition to them, "I, Lord, about the mid-time [146] of the age of the world, laid the foundation of the faith by which the human race should believe in thee; I was chosen as the father of the nations, that they might follow my example; I did not hesitate, Lord, to offer Isaac, while yet a youth, as a sacrifice to thee, that they might understand that there is nothing which ought not to be presented to the Lord, when they perceived that I did not spare even my only son: I left, Lord, my country, and my family, at thy command, that they also might have an example teaching them to leave the wickedness of the world and the age: I, Lord, was the first to recognize thee, though under a corporeal [147] form, nor did I hesitate to believe who it was that I beheld, although thou didst appear to me in a different form from thine own, that these might learn to judge, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit." Him the blessed Moses will support in his pleadings, saying: "I Lord, delivered the law to all these, at thy command, that those whom a free [148] faith did not influence, the spoken law at least might restrain: I said, Thou shalt not [149] commit adultery,' in order that I might prevent the licentiousness of fornication: I said, Thou shalt love [150] thy neighbor,' that affection might abound; I said, Thou shalt worship the Lord alone,' [151] in order that these might not sacrifice to idols, or allow temples to exist; I commanded that false witness should not be spoken, that I might shut the lips of these people against all falsehood. I set forth the things which had been done and said from the beginning of the world, through the working within me of the spirit of thy power, that a knowledge of things past might convey to these people instruction about things to come. I predicted, O Lord Jesus, thy coming, that it might not be an unexpected thing to these people, when they were called to acknowledge him whom I had before announced as about to come." [152]

Chapter V. After him, there will stand up David worthy of his descendant the Lord

After him, there will stand up David worthy of his descendant the Lord, and declare: "I, Lord, proclaimed thee by every means; I set forth that only thy name was to be worshiped; I said, Blessed is the man [153] who fears the Lord'; I said too, The saints shall [154] be joyful in glory'; and I said, The desire of the wicked [155] shall perish,' that these people might acknowledge thee and cease to sin. I, when I had become possessed of royal power, clothed in sackcloth, with dust spread beneath me, and with the emblems of my greatness laid aside, lay down in my clothes, that an example might be given to these people of gentleness and humility. I spared my enemies who desired to slay me, that these people might approve of my mercifulness, as worthy of being imitated." After him, Isaiah, who was worthy of the Spirit of God, will not be silent; but will say: "I, Lord, whilst thou wast speaking through my mouth, gave this warning, -- Woe to those [156] who join house to house,' that I might set a limit to covetousness. I bore witness that thine anger came upon the wicked, that at any rate fear of punishment, if not hope of reward, might keep back these people from their evil deeds."

Chapter VI. After these, and several others who have discharged for us the duties of instruction

After these, and several others who have discharged for us the duties of instruction, the Son of God himself will speak thus: "I, certainly, exalted on a lofty seat, holding heaven in my hand, and the earth in my fist, extended within and without, in the inside of all things which are produced, and on the outside of all [157] things that move, inconceivable, infinite in the power [158] of nature, invisible to sight, inaccessible to touch, in order that I might exist as the least of you (for the purpose of subduing the hardness of your heart and for softening your faithlessness by sound doctrines), condescended to be born in flesh, and, having laid aside the glory of God, I assumed the form of a servant, so that, sharing with you in bodily infirmity, I might in turn bring you to a participation in my glory, through obedience to the precept of salvation. I restored health to the sick and infirm, hearing to the deaf, sight to the blind, the power of speech to the dumb, and the use of their feet to the lame; that I might influence you, by heavenly signs, all the more easily to believe in me, and in those things which I had announced, I promised you the kingdom of heaven; I also, in order that you might have an example of escape from punishment, placed in Paradise the robber who acknowledged me almost at the moment of his death, that ye might follow even the faith of him who had been thought worthy of having his sins forgiven him. And that by my example in your behalf, ye yourselves also might be able to suffer; I suffered for you, that no man might hesitate to suffer for himself what God [159] had endured for man. I showed myself after my resurrection, in order that your faith might not be overthrown. I admonished the Jews in the person of Peter; I preached to the Gentiles in the person of Paul; and I do not regret doing so, for good results followed. The good have understood my work; the faithful have perfected it; the righteous have completed it; the merciful have consummated it: there have been a large number of martyrs, and a large number of saints. Those to whom I thus refer were undoubtedly in the same body and in the same world as you. Why, then, do I find no good work in you, ye descendants of vipers? Ye have shown no repentance for your wicked deeds, even at the very end of your earthly course. And what does it profit that ye honor me with your lips, when you deny me by your deeds and works? Where are now your riches, where your honors, where your powers, and where your pleasures? I pronounce no new sentence over you: you simply incur the judgment which I formerly predicted."

Chapter VII. Then will the Evangelist repeat this to the wretched beings

Then will the Evangelist repeat this to the wretched beings, "Go ye [160] into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." O ye miserable men, whom these words do not now impress! They shall then see their own punishment, and the glory of others. Let them use this present world, provided they do not enjoy that eternity which is prepared for the saints. Let them abound in riches: let them rest on gold; provided that there they be found needy and destitute. Let them be wealthy in this world, provided they be poor in eternity, for it is written regarding them, "The rich were in [161] want, and suffered hunger." But the Scripture has added what follows respecting the good, -- "but those who seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." Therefore, my sister, although those people mock at us, and although they call us foolish and unhappy, let us all the more joyfully exult in such reproaches, by which glory is heaped up for us, and punishment for them. And do not let us laugh at their folly, but rather grieve over their unhappiness; because there is among them a large number of our own people, whom if we win over, our glory shall be increased. But however they may conduct themselves, let them be to us as Gentiles and publicans; but let us keep ourselves safe and sound. If they rejoice now over us lamenting, it will be our turn afterwards to rejoice over their suffering. Farewell, dearest sister, and tenderly beloved in Christ.

Letter II. A Letter of Sulpitius Severus to His Sister Claudia Concerning Virginit.

A Letter of Sulpitius Severus to His Sister Claudia Concerning Virginit.

Chapter I. How great blessedness, among heavenly gifts, belongs to holy virginity

How great blessedness, among heavenly gifts, belongs to holy virginity, besides the testimonies of the Scriptures, we learn also from the practice of the Church, by which we are taught that a peculiar merit belongs to those who have devoted themselves to it by special consecration. For while the whole multitude of those that believe receive equal gifts of grace, and all rejoice in the same blessings of the sacraments, those who are virgins possess something above the rest, since, out of the holy and unstained company of the Church, they are chosen by the Holy Spirit, and are presented by the bishop [162] at the altar of God, as if being more holy and pure sacrifices, on account of the merits of their voluntary dedication. This is truly a sacrifice worthy of God, inasmuch as it is the offering of so precious a being, and none will please him more than the sacrifice of his own image. For I think that the Apostle especially referred to a sacrifice of this kind, when he said, "Now, I beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable [163] to God." Virginity, therefore, possesses both that which others have, and that which others have not; while it obtains both common and special grace, and rejoices (so to speak) in its own peculiar privilege of consecration. For ecclesiastical authority permits us to style virgins also the brides of Christ; while, after the manner of brides, it veils those whom it consecrates to the Lord, openly exhibiting those as very especially about to possess spiritual marriage who have fled away from carnal fellowship. And those are worthily united, after a spiritual manner, to God, in accordance with the analogy of marriage, who, from love to him, have set at nought human alliances. In their case, that saying of the apostle finds its fullest possible fulfillment, "He who is joined to the Lord, [164] is one spirit."

Chapter II. For it is a great and a divine thing

For it is a great and a divine thing, almost beyond a corporeal nature, to lay aside [165] luxury, and to extinguish, by strength of mind, the flame of concupiscence, kindled by the torch of youth; to put down by spiritual effort the force of natural delight; to live in opposition to the practice of the human race; to despise the comforts of wedlock; to disdain the sweet enjoyments derived from children; and to regard as nothing, in the hope of future blessedness, everything that is reckoned among the advantages of this present life. This is, as I have said, a great and admirable virtue, and is not undeservedly destined to a vast reward, in proportion to the greatness of its labor. The Scripture says, "I will give to the eunuchs, saith the Lord, a place in my house and within my walls, a place counted better than [166] sons and daughters; I will give them an eternal name, and it shall not [167] fail." The Lord again speaks concerning such eunuchs in the Gospel, saying, "For there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." [168] Great, indeed, is the struggle connected with chastity, but greater is the reward; the restraint is temporal, but the reward will be eternal. For the blessed Apostle John also speaks concerning these, saying that "they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." [169] This, I think, is to be understood to the following effect, that there will be no place in the court of heaven closed against them, but that all the habitations of the divine mansions will be thrown open before them.

Chapter III. But that the merit of virginity may shine forth more clearly

But that the merit of virginity may shine forth more clearly, and that there may be a better understanding as to how worthy it is of God, let this be considered, that the Lord God, our Saviour, when, for the salvation of the human race, he condescended to assume mankind, chose no other than a virgin's womb, that he might show how virtue of this kind especially pleased him; and that he might point out the blessedness of chastity to both sexes, he had a virgin mother, while he himself was ever to remain in a like condition. He thus furnished in his own person to men, and in the person of his mother to women, an example of virginity, by which it might be proved, with respect to both sexes, that the blessed state of purity possessed the fullness of divinity, [170] for whatever dwelt in the Son was also wholly in the mother. But why should I take pains to make known the excellent and surpassing merit of chastity, and to set forth the glorious good of virginity, when I am not ignorant that many have discoursed on this subject, and have proved its blessedness by most conclusive reasons, and since it can never be a matter of doubt to any reflecting mind, that a thing has all the more merit, the more difficult it is of accomplishment? For if any one judges chastity to be of no moment or only of small consequence, it is certain that he is either ignorant of the matter, or is not willing to incur the trouble it implies. Hence it comes to pass that those always derogate from the importance of chastity, who either do not possess it, or who are unwillingly compelled to maintain it.

Chapter IV. Now, therefore, since we have set forth, although in few words

Now, therefore, since we have set forth, although in few words, both the difficulty and the merit of purity, great care must be taken lest a matter which in itself implies great virtue, and is also destined to a vast reward, should fail to produce its proper fruits. For the more precious every sort of thing is, the more it is guarded with anxious solicitude. And since there are many things which fail to secure their proper excellence, unless they are assisted by the aid of other things, as is, for instance, the case with honey, which, unless it is preserved by the protection of wax, and by the cells of the honeycombs, and is indeed, to state the matter more truly, sustained by these, loses its deliciousness and cannot exist apart by itself; and again as it is with wine, which, unless it be kept in vessels of a pleasant odor, and with the pitch frequently renewed, loses the power of its natural sweetness; so great care must be taken lest perchance some things may be necessary also to virginity, without which it can by no means produce its proper fruits, and thus a matter of so great difficulty may be of no advantage (while all the time it is believed to be of advantage), because it is possessed without the other necessary adjuncts. For unless I am mistaken, chastity is preserved in its entirety, for the sake of the reward to be obtained in the kingdom of heaven, which it is perfectly certain no one can obtain who does [171] not deserve eternal life. But that eternal life cannot be merited except by the keeping of all the divine commandments, the Scripture testifies, saying, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." [172] Therefore no one has that life, except the man who has kept all the precepts of the law, and he who has not such life cannot be a possessor of the kingdom of heaven, in which it is not the dead, but the living who shall reign. Therefore virginity, which hopes for the glory of the kingdom of heaven, will profit nothing by itself, unless it also possess that to which eternal life is promised, by means of which the reward of the kingdom of heaven is possessed. Above all things, therefore, the commandments which have been enjoined upon us must be kept by those who preserve chastity in its entirety, and who are hoping for its reward from the justice of God, lest otherwise the pains taken to maintain a glorious chastity and continence come to nothing. No one acquainted with the law does not know that virginity is above [173] the commandment or precept, as the Apostle says, "Now, as to virgins, I have no precept of the Lord, but I give my advice." [174] When, therefore, he simply gives advice about maintaining virginity, and lays down no precept, he acknowledges that it is above the commandment. Those, therefore, who preserve virginity, do more than the commandment requires. But it will then only profit you to have done more than was commanded, if you also do that which is commanded. For how can you boast that you have done more, if, in respect to some point, you do less? Desiring to fulfill the Divine counsel, see that, above all things, you keep the commandment: wishing to attain to the reward of virginity, see that you keep fast hold of what is necessary to merit life, that your chastity may be such as can receive a recompense. For as the observance of the commandments ensures life, so, on the other hand, does the violation give rise to death. And he who through disobedience has been doomed to death cannot hope for the crown pertaining to virginity; nor, when really handed over to punishment, can he expect the reward

promised to chastity.

Chapter V. Now, there are three kinds of virtue, by means of which the possession of the

Now, there are three kinds of virtue, by means of which the possession of the kingdom of heaven is secured. The first is chastity, the second, contempt of the world, and the third, righteousness, which, as when joined together, they very greatly benefit their possessors, so, when separated, they can hardly be of any advantage, since every one of them is required, not for its own sake only, but for the sake of another. First of all, then, chastity is demanded, that contempt of the world may more easily follow, because the world can be more easily despised by those who are not held fast in the bonds of matrimony. Contempt of the world, again, is required, in order that righteousness may be maintained, which those can with difficulty fully preserve who are involved in desires after worldly advantages, and in the pursuit of mundane pleasures. Whosoever, therefore, possesses the first kind of virtue, chastity, but does not, at the same time, have the second, which is contempt of the world, possesses the first almost to no purpose, since he does not have the second, for the sake of which the first was required. And if any one possesses the first and second, but is destitute of the third which is righteousness, he labors in vain, since the former two are principally required for the sake of the third. For what profits it to possess chastity in order to contempt of the world, and yet not to have that on account of which you have the other? Or why should you despise the things of the world, if you do not observe righteousness, for the sake of which it is fitting that you should possess chastity, as well as contempt for the world? For as the first kind of virtue is on account of the second, and the second on account of the third, so the first and the second are on account of the third; and if it does not exist, neither the first nor the second will prove of any advantage.

Chapter VI. But you perhaps say here, |Teach me, then, what righteousness is

But you perhaps say here, "Teach me, then, what righteousness is, so that knowing it, I may be able more easily to fully practice it." Well, I shall briefly explain it to you, as I am able, and shall use the simplicity of common words, seeing that the subject of which we treat is such as ought by no means to be obscured by attempts at eloquent description, but should be opened up by the simplest forms of expression. For a matter which is necessary to all in common ought to be set forth in a common sort of speech. Righteousness, then, is nothing else than not to commit sin; and not to commit sin is just to keep the precepts of the law. Now, the observance of these precepts is maintained in a two-fold way -- thus, that one do none of those things which are forbidden, and that he strive to fulfill the things which are commanded. This is the meaning of the following statement: "Depart from evil, and do [175] good." For I do not wish you to think that righteousness consists simply in not doing evil, since not to do good is also evil, and a transgression of the law takes place in both, since he who said, "Depart from evil" said also, "and do good." If you depart from evil, and do not do good, you are a transgressor of the law, which is fulfilled, not simply by abhorring all evil deeds, but also by the performance of good works. For, indeed, you have not merely received this commandment, that you should not deprive one who is clothed of his garments, but that you should cover with your own the man who has been deprived of his; nor that you should not take away bread of his own from one who has it, but that you should willingly impart of your bread to him who has none; nor that you should not simply not drive away a poor man from a shelter of his own, but that you should receive him when he has been driven out, and has no shelter, into your own. For the precept which has been given us is "to weep with them that [176] weep." But how can we weep with them, if we share in none of their necessities, and afford no help to them in those matters on account of which they lament? For God does not call for the fruitless moisture of our tears; but, because tears are an indication of grief, he wishes you to feel the distresses of another as if they were your own. And just as you would wish aid to be given you if you were in such tribulation, so should you help another in accordance with the statement, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so [177] to them." For to weep with one that weeps, and at the same time to refuse to help, when you can, him that weeps, is a proof of mockery, and not of piety. In short, our Saviour wept with Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, and proved the feeling of infinite compassion within him by the witness of his tears. But works, as the proofs of true affection soon followed, when Lazarus, for whose sake the tears were shed, was raised up and restored to his sisters. This was sincerely to weep with those who wept, when the occasion of the weeping was removed. But he did it, you will say, as having the power. Well, nothing is demanded of you which it is impossible for you to perform: he has fulfilled his entire duty who has done what he could.

Chapter VII. But as we had begun to remark it is not sufficient for a Christian to

But (as we had begun to remark) it is not sufficient for a Christian to keep himself from wickedness, unless he also has fulfilled the duties implied in good works, as is very distinctly proved by that statement in which the Lord threatened that those will be doomed to eternal fire, who, although they have done no evil, have not done all that is good, declaring, "Then will the king say to those who are on his right hand: depart from me, ye cursed, into eternal fire, which my Father has prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and ye gave me not to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no [178] drink," with what follows. He did not say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, because ye have committed murder, or adultery, or theft"; for it is not because they had done evil, but because they had not done good, that they are condemned, and doomed to the punishments of the eternal Gehenna; nor because they had committed things which were forbidden, but because they had not been willing to do those things which had been commanded. And from this it is to be observed what hope those can have, who, in addition, do some of those things which are forbidden, when even such are doomed to eternal fire as have simply not done the things which are commanded. For I do not wish you to flatter yourself in this way, -- if you have not done certain things, because you have done certain other things, since it is written, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, has become guilty of all." [179] For Adam sinned once, and died; and do you think that you can live, when you are often doing that which killed another person, when he had only done it once? Or do you imagine that he committed a great crime, and was therefore justly condemned to a severer punishment? Let us consider, then, what it was he really did. He ate of the fruit of the tree, contrary to the commandment. What then? Did God punish man with death for the sake of the fruit of a tree? No: not on account of the fruit of the tree, but on account of the contempt of the commandment. The question, therefore, is not about the nature of the offense, but about the transgression of the commandment. And the same being who told Adam not to eat of the fruit of the tree, has commanded you not to speak evil, not to lie, not to detract, not to listen to a detractor, to swear not at all, not to covet, not to envy, not to be drunken, not to be greedy, not to render evil for evil to any one, to love your enemies, to bless them that curse you, to pray for them that malign and persecute you, to turn the other cheek to one smiting you, and not to go to law before a worldly tribunal, so that, if any one seeks to take away your goods, you should joyfully lose them, to flee from the charge of avarice, to beware of the sin of all pride and boastfulness, and live, humble and meek, after the example of Christ, avoiding fellowship with the wicked so completely that you will not even eat with fornicators, or covetous persons, or those that speak evil of others, or the envious, or detractors, or the drunken, or the rapacious. Now, if you despise him in any such matter, then, if he spared Adam, he will also spare you. Yea, he might have been spared with better reason than you, inasmuch as he was still ignorant and inexperienced, and was restrained by the example of no one who had previously sinned, and who had died on account of his sin. But after such examples as you possess, after the law, after the prophets, after the gospels, and after the apostles, if you still set your mind on

transgressing, I see not in what way pardon can be extended to you.

Chapter VIII. Do you flatter yourself on account of the attribute of virginity? Remember Adam and Eve

Do you flatter yourself on account of the attribute of virginity? Remember Adam and Eve fell when they were virgins, and that the perfect purity of their bodies did not profit them when they sinned. The virgin who sins is to be compared to Eve, and not to Mary. We do not deny that, in the present life, there is the remedy of repentance, but we remind you rather to hope for reward, than to look for pardon. For it is disgraceful that those should ask for indulgence who are expecting the crown of virginity, and that those should commit anything unlawful who have even cut themselves off from things lawful; for it must be remembered that it is lawful to contract an alliance by marriage. And as those are to be praised who, from love to Christ, and for the glory of the kingdom of heaven, have despised the tie of wedlock, so those are to be condemned who, through the pleasure of incontinence, after they have vowed themselves to God, have recourse to the Apostolic remedy. Therefore, as we have said, those who decline marriage despise not things unlawful, but things lawful. And if that class of people swear, if they speak evil of others, if they are detractors, or if they patiently listen to detractors, if they return evil for evil, if they incur the charge of covetousness with respect to other people's property, or of avarice in regard to their own, if they cherish the poison of revenge or envy, if they either say or think anything unbecoming against the institutions of the law or the Apostles, if with a desire of pleasing in the flesh, they exhibit themselves dressed up and adorned, if they do any other unlawful things, as is only too common, what will it profit them to have spurned what is lawful, while they practice what is not lawful? If you wish it to be of advantage to you, that you have despised things lawful, take care that you do not any of those things which are not lawful. For, it is foolish to have dreaded that which is in its nature less, and not to dread that which is intrinsically more [or not to avoid those things [180] which are interdicted, while such things as are permitted meet with contempt]. For the Apostle says, "She that is unmarried careth for the things of the Lord, how she may please God, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but she who is married careth for the things of this world, how she may please [181] her husband." He thus affirms that the married woman pleases her husband by thinking of worldly things, while the unmarried woman pleases God, inasmuch as she has no anxiety about the things of the world. Let him tell me, then, whom she desires to please, who has no husband, and yet cares for the things of the world? Shall not the married woman, in such a case, be preferred to her? Yes, since she by caring for the things of the world pleases at least her husband, but the other neither pleases her husband, since she does not have one, nor can she please God. [182] But it is not fitting that we should pass over in silence that which he said: "The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, how she may please God, that she may be holy both in body and spirit" [she careth, he says, for the things of the Lord; she does not care for the things of the world, or of men, but for the things of God]. What, then, are the things of the Lord? Let the Apostle tell: "Whatsoever [183] things are holy, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise of doctrine": these are the things of the Lord, which holy and truly apostolic

virgins meditate upon, and think of, day and night, without any interval of time. Of the Lord is the resurrection of the dead, of the Lord is immortality, of the Lord is incorruption, of the Lord is that splendor of the sun which is promised to the saints, as it is written in the Gospel, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father": [184] of the Lord are the many mansions of the righteous in the heavens, of the Lord is the fruit which is produced, whether thirty fold, or sixty fold, or an hundred fold. Those virgins who think on these things, and by what works they may be able to merit them, think of the things of the Lord. Of the Lord, too, is the law of the new and old testament, in which shine forth the holy utterances of his lips; and if any virgins meditate without intermission on these things, they think of the things of the Lord. In that case, there is fulfilled in them the saying of the prophet: "The eternal [185] foundations are upon a solid rock, and the commands of God are in the heart of the holy woman."

Chapter IX. There follows the clause |how she may please God

There follows the clause "how she may please God," -- God, I say, not men, -- "that she may be holy both in body and spirit." He does not say that she may be holy only in a member or in the body, but that she may be holy in body and spirit. For a member is only one part of the body, but the body is a union of all the members. When, therefore, he says that she may be holy in the body, he testifies that she ought to be sanctified in all her members, because the sanctification of the other members will not avail, if corruption be found remaining in one. Also, she will not be holy in body (which consists of all the members), who is defiled by the pollution of even one of them. But in order that what I say may be made more obvious and clear, suppose the case of a woman who is purified by the sanctification of all her other members, and sins only with her tongue, inasmuch as she either speaks evil [186] of people or bears false testimony, will all her other members secure the acquittal of one, or will all the rest be judged on account of the one? If, therefore, the sanctification of the other members will not avail, even when one only is at fault, how much more, if all are corrupted by the guilt of various sins, will the perfection of one be of no avail?

Chapter X. Wherefore, I beseech you, O virgin, do not flatter yourself on the ground of your

Wherefore, I beseech you, O virgin, do not flatter yourself on the ground of your purity alone, and do not trust in the perfection of one member; but according to the Apostle, maintain the sanctity of your body throughout. Cleanse thy head from all defilement, because it is a disgrace that it, after the sanctifying oil has been applied to it, should be polluted with the juice or powder of either crocus, or any other pigment, or should be adorned with gold or gems or any other earthly ornament, because it already shines with the radiance of heavenly adornment. It is undoubtedly a grave insult to Divine grace to prefer to it any mundane and worldly ornament. And next, cleanse thy forehead, that it may blush at human, and not at Divine works, and may display that shame which gives rise not to sin, but to the favor of God, as the sacred Scripture declares, "There is a shame that causes sin, and there is a shame that brings with it the favor [187] of God." Cleanse, too, thy neck, that it may not carry thy [188] locks in a golden net and necklaces hung round it, but may rather bear about it those ornaments of which the Scripture says, "Let not [189] mercy and faith depart from thee," and hang them upon thy heart as upon thy neck. Cleanse thine eyes, whilst thou dost withdraw them from all concupiscence, and dost never turn them away from the sight of the poor, and dost keep them from all dyes, in that purity in which they were made by God. Cleanse thy tongue from falsehood, because "a mouth [190] which tells lies destroys the soul": cleanse it from detraction, from swearing, and from perjury. I beg you not to think it is an inverted order that I have said the tongue should be cleansed from swearing before perjury, for one will then the more easily escape perjury, if he swears not at all, so that there may be fulfilled in him that statement, "Keep [191] thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile." And be mindful of the Apostle who says, "Bless, and [192] curse not." But often call to mind the following words, "See that no one render evil for evil to any man, or cursing for cursing, but on the contrary, do ye bless them, because to this ye have been called, that ye should possess a blessing [193] by inheritance"; and this other passage, "If any [194] one offend not in tongue, he is a perfect man." For it is shameful that those lips, by which you confess God, pray to him, bless him, and praise him, should be defiled by the pollution of any sin. I know not with what conscience any one can pray to God with that tongue with which he either speaks falsehood, or calumniates, or detracts. God listens to holy lips, and speedily answers those prayers which an unpolluted tongue pours forth. Cleanse also thine ears, so that they may not listen except to holy and true discourse, that they never admit into them obscene, or infamous, or worldly words, or tolerate any one detracting from another, on account of that which is written, "Hedge up [195] thine ears with thorns, and do not listen to a wicked tongue, that you may have your part with him, of whom it is said, that he was [196] righteous in hearing and seeing; i.e. he sinned neither with his eyes nor his ears. Cleanse, too, thy hands, "that they be not stretched out to receive, but shut against giving," and that they [197] be not prompt to strike, but ever ready for all the works of mercy and piety. In fine, cleanse thy feet, that they follow not the broad and ample way which leads to grand and costly worldly banquets, but that they tread rather the difficult and narrow path, which guides to heaven, for it is

written, "Make a [198] straight path for your feet." Acknowledge that your members were formed for you by God the Maker, not for vices, but for virtues; and, when you have cleansed the whole of your limbs from every stain of sin, and they have become sanctified throughout your whole body, then understand that this purity will profit you, and look forward with all confidence to the prize of virginity.

Chapter XI. I believe that I have now set forth, briefly indeed

I believe that I have now set forth, briefly indeed, but, at the same time, fully, what is implied in a woman's purity of body: it remains that we should learn what it is to be pure also in spirit; i.e. that what it is unlawful for one to do in act, it is also unlawful for one even to imagine in thought. For she is holy, alike in body and in spirit, who sins neither in mind nor heart, knowing that God is one who examines also the heart; and, therefore, she takes every pains to possess a mind as well as a body free from sin. Such a person is aware that it is written, "Keep thy [199] heart with all diligence"; and again, "God loveth [200] holy hearts, and all the undefiled are acceptable to him"; and elsewhere, "Blessed [201] are those of a pure heart; for they shall see God." I think that this last statement is made regarding those whom conscience accuses of the guilt of no sin; concerning whom I think that John also spoke in his Epistle when he said, "If our heart [202] condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God, and whatsoever we ask we shall receive from him." I do not wish you to think that you have escaped the accusation of sin, although act does not follow desire, since it is written, "Whosoever [203] looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." And do not say, "I had the thought, indeed, but I did not carry it out in act"; for it is unlawful even to desire that which it is unlawful to do. Wherefore also blessed Peter issues a precept to this effect: "purify your [204] souls"; and if he had not been aware of such a thing as defilement of the soul, he would not have expressed a desire that it should be purified. But we should also very carefully consider that passage which says, "These [205] are they who did not defile themselves with women, for they remained virgins, and they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth"; and should reflect whether, if these are joined to the Divine retinue, and traverse all the regions of the heavens, through the merit of chastity and purity alone, there may be also other means by which virginity being assisted may attain to the glory of so great blessedness. But whence shall we be able to know this? From the following passages (if I mistake not) in which it is written, "These were [206] purchased from among men as the first fruits to God and the Lamb, and in their mouth there was found no falsehood, for they are without spot before the throne of God." You see, then, that they are spoken of as closely following in the footsteps of the Lord, not in virtue of one member only, but those are said to do so, who, besides virginity, had passed a life freed from all the pollution of sin. Wherefore, let the virgin especially despise marriage on this account, that, while she is safer than others, she may the more easily accomplish what is also required from those who are married; viz. keep herself from all sin, and obey all the commandments of the law. For if she does not marry, and nevertheless indulges in those things from which even married women are enjoined to keep themselves free, what will it profit her not to have married? For although it is not allowed to any Christian to commit sin, and it befits all without exception who are purified through the sanctification of the spiritual bath, to lead an unstained life, that they may be thoroughly identified [207] with the Church, which is described as being "without [208] spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," much more is it requisite that a virgin should reach this standard, whom neither the existence of a husband, nor of sons, nor of any other necessity, prevents from fully carrying out the demands of holy Scripture; nor shall she be able, if she fail, to defend herself by any sort of excuse.

Chapter XII. O Virgin, maintain thy purpose which is destined for a great reward.

O Virgin, maintain thy purpose which is destined for a great reward. Eminent with the Lord is the virtue of virginity and purity, if it be not disfigured by other kinds of lapses into sins and wickedness. Realize your state, realize your position, realize your purpose. You are called the bride of Christ; see that you commit no act which is unworthy of him to whom you profess to be betrothed. He will quickly write a bill of divorcement, if he perceive in you even one act of unfaithfulness. Accordingly, whosoever receives those gifts which, as an earnest, are bestowed in the case of human betrothals, immediately begins earnestly and diligently to enquire of domestics, intimates, and friends, what is the character of the young man, what he especially loves, what he receives, in what style he lives, what habits he practices, what luxuries he indulges in, and in what pursuits he finds his chief pleasure and delight. And when she has learned these things, she so conducts herself, in all respects, that her service, her cheerfulness, her diligence, and her whole mode of life, may be in harmony with the character of her betrothed. And do thou, who hast Christ as thy bridegroom, enquire from the domestics and intimates of that bridegroom of thine what is his character; yes, do thou zealously and skillfully enquire in what things he specially delights, what sort of arrangement he loves in thy dress, and what kind of adornment he desires. Let his most intimate associate Peter tell thee, who does not allow personal adorning even to married women, as he has written in his epistle, "Let wives, [209] in like manner, be subject to their own husbands, so that, if any believe not the word, they may, without the word, be won over by the conduct of their wives, contemplating their chaste behavior in the fear of God; and let theirs not be an outward adornment of the hair, or the putting on of gold, or elegance in the apparel which is adopted, but let there be the hidden man of the heart in the stainlessness [210] of a peaceful and modest spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Let another apostle also tell thee, the blessed Paul, who, writing to Timothy, gives his approval to the same things in regard to the conduct of believing women: "Let wives [211] in like manner adorn themselves with the ornament of a habit of modesty and sobriety, not with curled hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array, but as becomes women that profess chastity, with good and upright behavior."

Chapter XIII. But perhaps you say, [Why did not the Apostles enjoin these things on virgins?] Because

But perhaps you say, "Why did not the Apostles enjoin these things on virgins?" Because they did not think that necessary, lest such an exhortation, if given to them, might rather seem an insult than a means of edification. Nor, in fact, would they have believed that virgins could ever proceed to such an extreme of hardihood, as to claim for themselves carnal and worldly ornaments, not permitted even to married women. Undoubtedly, the virgin ought to adorn and array herself; for how can she be able to please her betrothed, if she does not come forth in a neat and ornamental form? Let her be adorned by all means, but let her ornaments be of an internal and spiritual kind, and not of a carnal nature; for God desires in her a beauty not of the body, but of the soul. Do thou, therefore, who desirest that thy soul should be loved and dwelt in by God, array it with all diligence, and adorn it with spiritual garments. Let nothing unbecoming, nothing repulsive, be seen in it. Let it shine with the gold of righteousness, and gleam with the gems of holiness, and glitter with the most precious pearl of purity; instead of fine linen and silk, let it be arrayed in the robe of mercifulness and piety, according to what is written, "Put ye [212] on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved bowels of mercy, kindness, humility," and so forth. And let the virgin not ask for the beauty due to ceruse, [213] or any other pigment, but let her have the brightness of innocence and simplicity, the rosy hue of modesty, and the purple glow of honorable shamefacedness. Let her be washed with the nitre of heavenly doctrine, and purified by all spiritual lavements. [214] Let no stain of malice or sin be left in her. And lest, at any time, she should give forth the evil odor of sin, let her be imbued, through and through, with the most pleasant ointment of wisdom and knowledge.

Chapter XIV. God seeks for adornment of this kind, and desires a soul arrayed in such a

God seeks for adornment of this kind, and desires a soul arrayed in such a manner. Remember that you are called the daughter of God, according to what he says, "Hearken, [215] O daughter, and consider." But you yourself also, as often as you call God your Father, bear witness that you are the daughter of God. Wherefore, if you are the daughter of God, take care that you do none of those things which are unworthy of God, your Father; but do all things as being the daughter of God. Reflect how the daughters of nobles in this world conduct themselves, to what habits they are accustomed and by what exercises they train themselves. In some of them, there is so great modesty, so great dignity, so great self-restraint, that they excel the habits of other human beings in regard to human nobleness, and, lest they should attach any mark of disgrace on their honorable parents by their failure, they strive to acquire another [216] nature for themselves by the mode of their acting in the world. And do you, therefore, have regard to your origin, consider your descent, attend to the glory of your nobility. Acknowledge that you are not merely the daughter of man, but of God, and adorned with the nobility of a divine birth. So present yourself to the world that your heavenly birth be seen in you, and your divine nobleness shine clearly forth. Let there be in you a new dignity, an admirable virtue, a notable modesty, a marvelous patience, a gait becoming a virgin with a bearing of true shamefacedness, speech always modest, and such as is uttered only at the proper time, so that whosoever beholds you may admiringly exclaim: "What is this exhibition of new dignity among men? What is this striking modesty, what this well-balanced excellence, what this ripeness of wisdom? This is not the outcome of human training or of mere human discipline. Something heavenly sheds its fragrance on me in that earthly body. I really believe that God does reside in some human beings." And when he comes to know that you are a handmaid of Christ, he will be seized with the greater amazement, and will reflect how marvelous must be the Master, when his handmaid manifests such excellence.

Chapter XV. If you wish, then, to be with Christ, you must live according to the example

If you wish, then, to be with Christ, you must live according to the example of Christ, who was so far removed from all evil and wickedness, that he did not render a recompense even to his enemies, but rather even prayed for them. For I do not wish you to reckon those souls Christian, who (I do not say) hate either their brothers or sisters, but who do not, before God as a witness, love their neighbors with their whole heart and conscience, since it is a bounden duty for Christians, after the example of Christ himself, even to love their enemies. If you desire to possess fellowship with the saints, cleanse your heart from the thought of malice and sin. Let no one circumvent you; let no one delude you by beguiling speech. The court of heaven will admit none except the holy, and righteous, and simple, and innocent, and pure. Evil has no place in the presence of God. It is necessary that he who desires to reign with Christ should be free from all wickedness and guile. Nothing is so offensive, and nothing so detestable to God, as to hate any one, to wish to harm any one; while nothing is so acceptable to him as to love all men. The prophet knowing this bears witness to it when he teaches, "Ye who [217] love the Lord, hate evil."

Chapter XVI. Take heed that ye love not human glory in any respect

Take heed that ye love not human glory in any respect, lest your portion also be reckoned among those to whom it was said, "How [218] can ye believe, who seek glory, one from another?" and of whom it is said through the prophet, "Increase [219] evils to them; increase evils to the boastful of the earth"; and elsewhere, "Ye are confounded [220] from your boasting, from your reproaching in the sight of the Lord." For I do not wish you to have regard to those, who are virgins of the world, and not of Christ; who unmindful of their purpose and profession, rejoice in delicacies, are delighted with riches, and boast of their descent from a merely carnal nobility; who, if they assuredly believed themselves to be the daughters of God, would never, after their divine ancestry, admire mere human nobility, nor glory in any honored earthly father: if they felt that they had God as their Father, they would not love any nobility connected with the flesh. Why, thou foolish woman, dost thou flatter thyself about the nobleness of thy descent, and take delight in it? God, at the beginning, created two human beings, from whom the whole multitude of the human race has descended; and thus it is not the equity of nature, but the ambition of evil desire, which has given rise to worldly nobility. Unquestionably, we are all rendered equal by the grace of the divine [221] bath, and there can be no difference among those, whom the second birth has generated, by means of which alike the rich man and the poor man, the free man and the slave, the nobly born and the lowly born, is rendered a son of God. Thus mere earthly rank is overshadowed by the brilliance of heavenly glory, and henceforth is taken no account of, while those who formerly had been unequal in worldly honors are now equally arrayed in the glory of a heavenly and divine nobility. There is now among such no place for lowness of birth; nor is any one inferior to another whom the majesty of the divine birth adorns; except in the estimation of those who do not think that the things of heaven are to be preferred to those of earth. There can be no worldly boasting among them, if they reflect how vain a thing it is that they should, in smaller matters, prefer themselves to those whom they know to be equal to themselves in greater matters, and should regard, as placed below themselves on earth, those whom they believe to be equal to themselves in what relates to heaven. But do thou, who art a virgin of Christ, and not of the world, flee from all the glory of this present life, that thou mayest attain to the glory which is promised in the world to come.

Chapter XVII. Avoid words of contention and causes of animosity: flee also from all occasions of discord

Avoid words of contention and causes of animosity: flee also from all occasions of discord and strife. For if, according to the doctrine of the Apostle "the servant [222] of the Lord must not strive," how much more does this become the handmaid of the Lord, whose mind ought to be more gentle, as her sex is more bashful and retiring. Restrain thy tongue from evil speaking, and put the bridle of the law upon thy mouth; so that you shall speak, if you speak at all, only when it would be a sin to be silent. Beware lest you utter anything which might be justly found fault with. A word once spoken is like a stone which has been thrown: wherefore it should be long thought over before it is uttered. Blessed, assuredly, are the lips, which never utter what they would wish to recall. The talk of a chaste mind ought itself also to be chaste, such as may always rather edify than injure the hearers, according to that commandment of the Apostle when he says, "Let no [223] corrupt communications proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good for the edification of faith, that it may convey grace to them that hear." Precious to God is that tongue which knows not to form words except about divine things, and holy is that mouth from which heavenly utterances continually flow forth. Put down by the authority of Scripture calumniators of those who are absent, as being evil-minded persons, because the prophet mentions this also as among the virtues of a perfect man, if, in the presence of the righteous an evil-minded man, who brings forward things against his neighbor which cannot be proved, is brought down to nothing. For it is not lawful for you patiently to listen to evil-speaking against another, inasmuch as you would not wish that to be done by others when directed against yourself. Certainly, everything is unrighteous which goes against the Gospel of Christ, and that is the case, if you quietly permit anything to be done to another, which you would feel painful, if done by any one to yourself. Accustom your tongue always to speak about those who are good, and lend your ears rather to listen to the praises of good men than to the condemnation of such as are wicked. Take heed that all the good actions you perform are done for the sake of God, knowing that for every such deed you will only receive a reward, so far as you have done it out of regard to his fear and love. Study rather to be holy than to appear so, because it is of no avail to be reckoned what you are not; and the guilt of a twofold sin is contracted when you do not have what you are credited with having, and when you pretend to possess what you do not possess.

Chapter XVIII. Delight thyself rather in fastings than in feastings, mindful of that widow who did not

Delight thyself rather in fastings than in feastings, mindful of that widow who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers day and night. Now, if she who was a widow, and a Jewish widow, proved herself such, what is it fitting that a virgin of Christ should now attain to? Love more than any other thing the feast of the divine word, and desire that you be filled with spiritual dainties, while you seek for such food as refreshes the soul, rather than for that which only pleases the body. Flee from all kinds of flesh and wine, as being the sources of heat and provocatives to lust. And only then, if need be, use a little wine, when the stomach's uneasiness, or great infirmity of body, requires you to do so. Subdue anger, restrain enmity, and whatever there may be which gives rise to remorse when it is done, avoid as an abomination giving rise [224] to immediate sin. It is fitting that that mind should be very tranquil and quiet, as well as free from all the tumults of anger, which desires to be the dwelling-place of God, as he testifies through the prophet, saying, "Upon [225] what other man shall I rest than upon him who is humble and quiet, and who trembleth at my words?" Believe that God is a witness of all thy deeds and thoughts, and take good heed lest you either do or think anything which is unworthy of the divine eyesight. When you desire to engage in prayer, show yourself in such a frame of mind as becomes one who is to speak with the Lord.

Chapter XIX. When you repeat a psalm, consider whose words you are repeating and delight yourself more

When you repeat [226] a psalm, consider whose words you are repeating and delight yourself more with true contrition of soul, than with the pleasantness of a trilling voice. For God sets a higher value on the tears of one thus praising [227] him, than on the beauty of his voice; as the prophet says, "Serve [228] the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling." Now, where there are fear and trembling, there is no lifting up of the voice, but humility of mind with lamentation and tears. Display diligence in all thy doings; for it is written, "Cursed [229] is the man who carelessly performs the work of the Lord." Let grace grow in you with years; let righteousness increase with age; and let your faith appear the more perfect the older you become; for Jesus, who has left us an example how to live, increased not only in years as respected his body, but in wisdom and spiritual grace before God and men. Reckon all the time in which you do not perceive yourself growing better as positively lost. Maintain to the last that purpose of virginity which you have formed; for it is the part of virtue not merely to begin, but to finish, as the Lord says in the Gospel, "Whosoever [230] shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved." Beware, therefore, lest you furnish to any one an occasion even of evil desire, because thy God, betrothed to thee, is jealous; for an adulteress against Christ is more guilty than one against her husband. Be thou, therefore, a model of life to all; be an example; and excel in actual conduct those whom you precede in your consecration [231] to chastity. Show thyself in all respects a virgin; and let no stain of corruption be brought as a charge against thy person. And let one whose body is perfect in its purity be also irreproachable in conduct. Now, as we said in the beginning of this letter, that you have become a sacrifice pertaining to God, such a sacrifice as undoubtedly imparts its own sanctity also to others, that, as every one worthily receives from it, he himself also may be a partaker of sanctification, so then, let the other virgins also be sanctified through you, as by means of a divine offering. Show yourself to them so holy in all things, that, whosoever comes in contact with thy life, whether by hearing or seeing, may experience the power of sanctification, and may feel that such an amount of grace passes to him from your manner of acting, that, while he desires to imitate thee, he himself becomes worthy of being a sacrifice devoted to God.

Letter III. A Letter of Severus to Holy Paul the Bishop.

A Letter of Severus to Holy Paul the Bishop. After I learned that all thy cooks had given [232] up thy kitchen (I believe because they felt indignant at having to fulfill the duty towards cheap dishes of pulse [233]), I sent a little boy to you out of our own workshop. He is quite skillful enough to cook pale beans and to pickle homely beet-root, with vinegar and sauce, as well as to prepare cheap porridge for the jaws of the hungry monks. He knows nothing, however, of pepper or of laser, [234] but he is quite at home with cumin, and is especially clever in plying the noisy mortar with sweetly smelling plants. He has one fault, that he is no kindly foe to admit to any garden; for if let in, he will mow down with a sword all things within his reach, and he will never be satisfied with the slaughter simply of mallows. However, in furnishing himself with fuel he will not swindle you. He will burn whatever comes in his way; he will cut down and not hesitate to lay hands upon buildings, and to carry off old beams from the household. We present him, then, to you, with this character and these virtues; and we wish you to regard him not as a servant, but as a son, because you are not ashamed to be the father of very small creatures. I myself would have wished to serve you instead of him; but if good-will may be taken as in some measure standing for the deed do you only, in return, take care to remember me amid your breakfasts and delightful dinners because it is more proper to be your slave, than the master of others. Pray for me. [235]

Letter IV. To the Same, on His Wisdom and Gentleness.

To the Same, on His Wisdom and Gentleness. The faithful exponent of our holy religion so arranges all things that no place be found in future for transgressors: for what else do you, for instance, promise us by so great sanctity of character, than that, all errors being laid aside, we should lead a blessed life? In this matter, I see that the greatest praise befits thy virtues, because you have changed even an uninstructed mind by your exhortations, and drawn it over to an excellent condition. But it would not seem so wonderful, if you had simply strengthened educated minds by instilling wisdom into them; for intelligent men have a sort of relationship to devotion, but rustic natures are not easily won over to the side of severity. [236] Just as those who shape the forms of animals out of stone, undertake a business of a pretty difficult kind, when they strike very hard rocks with their chisels, while those who make their attempts on substances of a softer nature feel that their hands are aided by the ease of fashioning these materials, and it is deemed proper that the labor of the workman; when difficult, should be held in the highest honor, so, Sir, singular commendation ought so be given to you, because you have made unpolished and rustic minds, set free from the darkness of sin, both to think what is human, and to understand what is divine. No less is Xenocrates, by far the most learned of the philosophers, held in estimation, who succeeded by severe exhortations in having luxury conquered. For when a certain Polemo, heavy with wine, staggered openly out of a nocturnal revel at the time when his hearers were flocking to the school of Xenocrates, he, too, entered the place, and impudently took his seat among the crowd of disciples, in that dress in which he had come forth from the banquet. A chaplet of flowers covered his head, and yet he did not feel ashamed that he would seem unlike all the others, because, in truth, indulgence in a long drinking-bout had upset his brains, which are the seat of reason. As the rest of those there present began to murmur grievously, because so unsuitable a hearer had found his way in among a multitude of men of letters, the master himself was not in the slightest degree disturbed, but, on the contrary, began to discourse on the science of morals, and the laws of moderation. And so powerful proved the influence of the teacher that the mind of that impudent intruder was persuaded to the love of modesty. First of all, then, Polemo, in utter confusion, took off the chaplet from his head, and professed himself a disciple. And in course of time he conformed himself so thoroughly to the duties implied in dignity, and surrendered himself so entirely to the exhibition of modesty, that a glorious amendment of character threw a cloak over the habits of his former life. Now we admire this very thing in your instructions, that, without the use of any threats, and without having recourse to terrors of any kind, you have turned infatuated minds to the worship of God; so that even a badly ordered intellect should believe it preferable [237] to live well and happily with all, rather than to hold unrighteous opinions with a few.

Letter V. To an Unknown Person, Entreating Him to Deal Gently with His Brother.

To an Unknown Person, Entreating Him to Deal Gently with His Brother. Although my lord and brother has already begged of your nobleness that you would see that Tutus should be most [238] safe, yet it has been allowed to me to commend the same person in a letter, in order that, by the petition being doubled, he may be held all the safer. For let it be granted that a youthful fault and error of a yet unsettled age has injured him, so as to inflict a stain on his early years; still one, who did not yet know what was due to right conduct, has gone wrong almost without contracting blame. For when he came to a right state of mind and to reflection, he understood on better thoughts that a theatrical life was to be condemned. However, he could not be completely cleared of his fault, unless he should wash its guilt away by the aid [239] of Deity, since, by the remedy obtained through the Catholic religion, changing his views, he has denied himself the enjoyment of a less honorable place, and has withdrawn himself from the eyes of the people. Of the Master as Above. [240] Since, therefore, both divine and state laws do not permit a faithful body and sanctified minds to exhibit disgraceful though pleasing spectacles, and to set forth vulgar means of enjoyment, especially since an injury seems in some degree to accrue to the chaste dedication of one's self, in case any one who has been renewed by holy baptism should fall back upon his old licentiousness, it behooves your Excellency to show favor to good intentions, so that he who, by the goodness of God, has entered on a pious duty, should not be forced to sink into the pitfall of the theatre. He does not, however, refuse compliance with the judgment of you all, if you enjoin other fitting actions on his part in behalf of the requirements of our common country. [241]

Letter VI. To Salvius: a Complaint that the Country People Were Harassed

To Salvius: a Complaint that the Country People Were Harassed, and Their Possessions Plundered. Forensic excitement ought to be at full heat during the time of business in the law-courts; for it is fitting that the arms of industry, as it struggles daily, should display energetic movements. But when loud-toned eloquence has sounded a retreat, and has retired to peaceful groves and pleasant dwelling-places, it is right that one lay aside idle murmurs, and cease to utter ineffectual threats. For we know that palm-bearing steeds, when they have retired from the circus, rest with the utmost quietness in their stables. Neither constant fear nor doubtful palms of victory distress them, but at length, haltered to the peaceful cribs, they now no longer stand in awe of the master urging them on, enjoying sweet oblivion of the restless rivalry which had prevailed. In like manner, let it delight the boastful soldier after his term of service is completed, to hang up his trophies, and patiently to bear the burden of age. But I do not quite understand why you should take a delight in terrifying miserable husbandmen; and I do not comprehend why you wish to harass my rustics with the fear of want of sustenance; [242] as if, indeed, I did not know how to console them, and to deliver them from fear, and to show them that there is not so great a reason to fear as you pretend. I confess that, while we were occupied in the plain, I was often frightened by the arms of your eloquence, but frequently I returned you corresponding blows, as far as I was able. I certainly learned along with you, by what right, and in what order, the husbandmen are demanded back, to whom a legal process is competent, and to whom the issue of a process is not competent. You say that the Volusians wished you brought back, and frequently, in your wrath, you repeat that you will withdraw the country people from my little keep; and you, the very man, as I hope and desire, bound to me by the ties of old relationship, now rashly threaten that, casting our agreement to the winds, you will lay hold upon my men. I ask of your illustrious knowledge, whether there is one law for advocates, and another for private persons, whether one thing is just at Rome, and quite another thing at Matarum. In the meantime, I do not know that you were ever lord of the Volusian property, since Dionysius is said to have preserved the right of possession to it, and he never wanted heirs; who, while he lived, was accustomed to hurl the envenomed jibes of his low language upon a multitude of individuals. [243] There was, at that time, one Porphyrius, the son of Zibberinus, and yet he was not properly named the son of Zibberinus. He kept hidden, by military service, the question as to his birth, and, that he might dispel the cloud from his forehead, he took part in officious services and willing acts of submission. He was much with me both at home and in the forum, having often employed me as his defender with my father, and as his advocate before the judge. Sometimes I even kept back Dionysius, feeling that he ought not, for the sake of twenty acres to discharge vulgar abuse upon Porphyrius. See, here is the reason why thy remarkable prudence threatened my agents, so that, though you are not the owner of the place, you everywhere make mention of my husbandmen. But if you give yourself out as the successor of Porphyrius, you must know that the narrow space of twenty acres cannot certainly be managed by one cultivator, or, if mindful of your proper dignity and determined to maintain it, you

shrink from naming yourself the heir of Porphyrius, it is certain and obvious that he can commence proceedings, [244] to whom the right of doing so belongs, so as to go to law with those who have no property in that land. But if you diligently look into the matter, you will see that the endeavor to recover it most especially devolves on me. Wherefore, my much esteemed lord and brother, it behooves you to be at peace, and to return to friendship with me, while you condescend to come to a private conference. Cease, I pray you, to disturb inactive and easily frightened persons, and utter your boastful words at a distance. Believe me, however, that I am delighted with your high spirit, and by no means offended; for we are neither of a harsh disposition, nor destitute of learning. Let Maximinus at least render you gentle. [245]

Letter VII. To an Unknown Person, Begging the Favor of a Letter.

To an Unknown Person, Begging the Favor of a Letter. The faith and piety of souls, no doubt, remain, but this should be made known by the evidence of a letter, in order that an increase of affection may be gained by such mutual courtesy. For just as a fertile field cannot bring forth abundant fruits, if its cultivation has been neglected, and the good qualities of soil are lost through the indolence of one who rests, instead of working, so I think that the love and kindly feelings of the mind grow feeble, unless those who are absent are visited, as if present, by means of a letter. [246]

Chapter I. I address myself to give a condensed account of those things which are set forth

I address myself to give a condensed account of those things which are set forth in the sacred Scriptures from the beginning of the world and to tell of them, with distinction of dates and according to [247] their importance, down to period within our own remembrance. Many who were anxious to become acquainted with divine things by means of a compendious treatise, have eagerly entreated me to undertake this work. I, seeking to carry out their wish, have not spared my labor, and have thus succeeded in comprising in two short books things which elsewhere filled many volumes. At the same time, in studying brevity, I have omitted hardly any of the facts. Moreover, it seemed to me not out of place that, after I had run through the sacred history down to the crucifixion of Christ, and the doings of the Apostles, I should add an account of events which subsequently took place. I am, therefore, to tell of the destruction of Jerusalem, the persecutions of the Christian people, the times of peace which followed, and of all things again thrown into confusion by the intestine dangers of the churches. But I will not shrink from confessing that, wherever reason required, I have made use of profane historians to fix dates and preserve the series of events unbroken, and have taken out of these what was wanting to a complete knowledge of the facts, that I might both instruct the ignorant and carry conviction to the learned. Nevertheless, as to those things which I have condensed from the sacred books, I do not wish so to present myself as an author to my readers, that they, neglecting the source from which my materials have been derived, should be satisfied with what I have written. My aim is that one who is already familiar with the original should recognize here what he has read there; for all the mysteries of divine things cannot be brought out except from the fountain-head itself. I shall now enter upon my narrative.

Chapter II. The world was created by God nearly six thousand years ago

The world was created by God nearly six [248] thousand years ago, as we shall set forth in the course of this book; although those who have entered upon and published a calculation of the dates, but little agree among themselves. As, however, this disagreement is due either to the will of God or to the fault of antiquity, it ought not to be a matter of censure. After the formation of the world man was created, the male being named Adam, and the female Eve. Having been placed in Paradise, they ate of the tree from which they were interdicted, and therefore were cast forth as exiles into our earth. [249] To them were born Cain and Abel; but Cain, being an impious man, slew his brother. He had a son called Enoch, by whom a city was first built, [250] and was called after the name of its founder. From him Irad, and from him again Maüiahel was descended. He had a son called Mathusalam, and he, in turn, begat Lamech, by whom a young man is said to have been slain, without, however, the name of the slain man being mentioned -- a fact which is thought by the wise to have presaged a future mystery. Adam, then, after the death of his younger son, begat another son called Seth, when he was now two hundred and thirty years old: he lived altogether eight hundred and thirty years. Seth begat Enos, Enos Cainan, Cainan Malaleel, Malaleel Jared, and Jared Enoch, who on account of his righteousness is said to have been translated by God. His son was called Mathusalam who begat Lamech; from whom Noah was descended, remarkable for his righteousness, and above all other mortals dear and acceptable to God. When by this time the human race had increased to a great multitude, certain angels, whose habitation was in heaven, were captivated by the appearance of some beautiful virgins, and cherished illicit desires after them, so much so, that falling beneath their own proper nature and origin, they left the higher regions of which they were inhabitants, and allied themselves in earthly marriages. These angels gradually spreading wicked habits, corrupted the human family, and from their alliance giants are said to have sprung, for the mixture with them of beings of a different nature, as a matter of course, gave birth to monsters.

Chapter III. God being offended by these things, and especially by the wickedness of mankind

God being offended by these things, and especially by the wickedness of mankind, which had gone beyond measure, had determined to destroy the whole human race. But he exempted Noah, a righteous man and of blameless life, from the destined doom. He being warned by God that a flood was coming upon the earth, built an ark of wood of immense size, and covered it with pitch so as to render it impervious to water. He was shut into it along with his wife, and his three sons and his three daughters-in-law. Pairs of birds also and of the different kinds of beasts were likewise received into it, while all the rest were cut off by a flood. Noah then, when he understood that the violence of the rain had ceased, and that the ark was quietly floating on the deep, thinking (as really was the case) that the waters were decreasing, sent forth first a raven for the purpose of enquiring into the matter, and on its not returning, having settled, as I conjecture, on the dead bodies, he then sent forth a dove. It, not finding a place of rest, returned to him and being again sent out, it brought back an olive leaf, in manifest proof that the tops of the trees were now to be seen. Then being sent forth a third time, it returned no more, from which it was understood that the waters had subsided; and Noah accordingly went out from the ark. This was done, as I reckon, two thousand two hundred [251] and forty-two years after the beginning of the world.

Chapter IV. Then Noah first of all erected an altar to God

Then Noah first of all erected an altar to God, and offered sacrifices from among the birds. [252] Immediately afterwards he was blessed by God along with his sons, and received a command that he should not eat blood, or shed the blood of any human being, because Cain, having no such precept, had stained the first age of the world. Accordingly, the sons of Noah were alone left in the then vacant world; for he had three, Shem, Ham, and Japhet. But Ham, because he had mocked his father when senseless with wine, incurred his father's curse. His son, Chas by name, begat the giant Nebroth, [253] by whom the city of Babylon is said to have been built. Many other towns are related to have been founded at that time, which I do not here intend to name one by one. But although the human race was now multiplied, and men occupied different places and islands, nevertheless all made use of one tongue, as long as the multitude, afterwards to be scattered through the whole world, kept itself in one body. These, after the manner of human nature, formed the design of obtaining a great name by constructing some great work before they should be separated from one another. They therefore attempted to build a tower which should reach up to heaven. But by the ordination of God, in order that the labors of those engaged in the work might be hindered, they began to speak in a kind of languages very different from their accustomed form of speech, while no one understood the others. This led to their being all the more readily dispersed, because, regarding each other as foreigners, they were easily induced to separate. And the world was so divided to the sons of Noah, that Shem occupied the East, Japhet the West, and Ham the intermediate parts. After this, till the time of Abraham, [254] their genealogy presented nothing very remarkable or worthy of record.

Chapter V. Abraham, whose father was Thara, was born in the one thousand and seventeenth year after

Abraham, whose father was Thara, was born in the one thousand and seventeenth year after the deluge. His wife was called Sara, and his dwelling-place was at first in the country [255] of the Chaldæans. He then dwelt along with his father at Charræ. Being at this time spoken to by God, he left his country and his father, and taking with him Lot, the son of his brother, he came into the country of the Canaanites, and settled at a place named Sychem. Ere long, owing to the want of corn, he went into Egypt, and again returned. Lot, owing to the size of the household, parted from his uncle, that he might take advantage of more spacious territories in what was then a vacant region, and settled at Sodom. That town was infamous on account of its inhabitants, males forcing themselves upon males, and it is said on that account to have been hateful to God. At that period the kings of the neighboring peoples were in arms, though previously there had been no [256] war among mankind. But the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah and of the adjacent territories went forth to battle against those who were making war upon the regions round about, and being routed at the first onset, yielded the victory to the opposite side. Then Sodom was plundered and made a spoil of by the victorious enemy, while Lot was led into captivity. When Abraham heard of this, he speedily armed his servants, to the number of three hundred and eighteen, and, stripping of their spoils and arms the kings flushed with victory, he put them to flight. Then he was blessed by Melchisedech the priest, and gave him tithes of the spoil. He restored the remainder to those from whom it had been taken.

Chapter VI. At the same time God spoke to Abraham, and promised that his seed was to

At the same time God spoke to Abraham, and promised that his seed was to be multiplied as the sand of the sea; and that his predicted seed would live in a land not his own, while his posterity would endure slavery in a hostile country for four hundred years, but would afterwards be restored to liberty. Then his name was changed, as well as that of his wife, by the addition of one letter; so that instead of Abram [257] he was called Abraham, and, instead of Sara, she was called Sarra. The mystery involved in this is by no means trifling, but it is not the part of this work to treat of it. At the same time, the law of circumcision was enjoined on Abraham, and he had by a maid-servant a son called Ishmael. Moreover, when he himself was a hundred years old, and his wife ninety, God promised that they should have a son Isaac, the Lord having come to him along with two angels. Then the angels being sent to Sodom, found Lot sitting in the gate of the city. He supposed them to be human beings, and welcomed them to share in his hospitality, and provided an entertainment for them in his house, but the wicked youth of the town demanded the new arrivals for impure purposes. Lot offered them his daughters in place of his guests, but they did not accept the offer, having a desire rather for things forbidden, and then Lot himself was laid hold of with vile designs. The angels, however, speedily rescued him from danger, by causing blindness to fall upon the eyes of these unchaste sinners. Then Lot, being informed by his guests that the town was to be destroyed, went away from it with his wife and daughters; but they were commanded not to look back upon it. His wife, however, not obeying this precept (in accordance with that evil tendency of human nature which renders it difficult to abstain from things forbidden), turned back her eyes, and is said to have been at once changed into a monument. As for Sodom, it was burned to ashes by fire from heaven. And the daughters of Lot, imagining that the whole human race had perished, sought a union with their father while he was intoxicated, and hence sprung the race of Moab and Ammon.

Chapter VII. Almost at the same time, when Abraham was now a hundred years old

Almost at the same time, when Abraham was now a hundred years old, his son Isaac was born. Then Sara expelled the maid-servant by whom Abraham had had a son; and she is said to have dwelt in the desert along with her son, and defended by the help of God. Not long after this, God tried the faith of Abraham, and required that his son Isaac should be sacrificed to him by his father. Abraham did not hesitate to offer him, and had already laid the lad upon the altar, and was drawing the sword to slay him, when a voice came from heaven commanding him to spare the young man; and a ram was found at hand to be for a victim. When the sacrifice was offered, God spoke to Abraham, and promised him those things which he had already said he would bestow. But Sara died in her one hundred and twenty-seventh year, and her body was, through the care of her husband, buried in Hebron, a town of the Canaanites, for Abraham was staying in that place. Then Abraham, seeing that his son Isaac was now of youthful [258] age, for he was, in fact, in his fortieth year, enjoined his servant to seek a wife for him, but only from that tribe and territory from which he himself was known to be descended. He was instructed, however, on finding the girl, to bring her into the land of the Canaanites, and not to suppose that Isaac would return into the country of his father for the purpose of obtaining a wife. In order that the servant might carry out those instructions zealously, Abraham administered an oath to him, while his hand rested on the thigh of his master. The servant accordingly set out for Mesopotamia, and came to the town of Nachor, the brother of Abraham. He entered into the house of Bathuel, the Syrian, son of Nachor; and having seen Rebecca, a beautiful virgin, the daughter of Nachor, he asked for her, and brought her to his master. After this, Abraham took a wife named Kethurah, who is called in the Chronicles his concubine, and begat children by her. But he left his possessions to Isaac, the son of Sara, while, at the same time, he distributed gifts to those whom he had begotten by his concubines; and thus they were separated from Isaac. Abraham died after a life of a hundred and seventy-five years; and his body was laid in the tomb of Sara his wife.

Chapter VIII. Now, Rebecca, having long been barren, at length, through the unceasing prayers of her husband

Now, Rebecca, having long been barren, at length, through the unceasing prayers of her husband to the Lord, brought forth twins about twenty years after the time of her marriage. These are said to have often leaped [259] in the womb of their mother; and it was announced by the answer of the Lord on this subject, that two peoples were foretold in these children, and that the elder would, in rank, be inferior to the younger. Well, the first that was born, bristling over with hair, was called Esau, while Jacob was the name given to the younger. At that time, a grievous famine had taken place. Under the pressure of this necessity, Isaac went to Gerar, to King Abimelech, having been warned by the Lord not to go down into Egypt. There he is promised the possession of the whole land, and is blessed, and having been greatly increased in cattle and every kind of substance, he is, under the influence of envy, driven out by the inhabitants. Thus expelled from that region, he sojourned by the well, known as "the well [260] of the oath." By and by, being advanced in years, and his eyesight being gone, as he made ready to bless his son Esau, Jacob through the counsel of his mother, Rebecca, presented himself to be blessed in the place of his brother. Thus Jacob is set before his brother as the one to be honored by the princes and the peoples. Esau, enraged by these occurrences, plotted the death of his brother. Jacob, owing to the fear thus excited, and by the advice of his mother, fled into Mesopotamia, having been urged by his father to take a wife of the house of Laban, Rebecca's brother: so great was their care, while they dwelt in a strange country, that their children should marry within their own kindred. Thus Jacob, setting out for Mesopotamia, is said in sleep to have had a vision of the Lord; and on that account regarding the place of his dream as sacred, he took a stone from it; and he vowed that, if he returned in prosperity, the name [261] of the pillar should be the "house of the Lord," and that he would devote to God the tithes of all the possessions he had gained. Then he betook himself to Laban, his mother's brother, and was kindly received by him to share in his hospitality as the acknowledged son of his sister.

Chapter IX. Laban had two daughters, Leah and Rachel; but Leah had tender eyes

Laban had two daughters, Leah and Rachel; but Leah had tender eyes, while Rachel is said to have been beautiful. Jacob, captivated by her beauty, burned with love for the virgin, and, asking her in marriage from the father, gave himself up to a servitude of seven years. But when the time was fulfilled, Leah was foisted upon him, and he was subjected to another servitude of seven years, after which Rachel was given him. But we are told that she was long barren, while Leah was fruitful. Of the sons whom Jacob had by Leah, the following are the names: Reuben, Symeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulon, and a daughter Dinah; while there were born to him by the handmaid of Leah, Gad and Asher, and by the handmaid of Rachel, Dan and Naphtali. But Rachel, after she had despaired of offspring, bare Joseph. Then Jacob, being desirous of returning to his father, when Laban his father-in-law had given him a portion of the flock as a reward for his service, and Jacob the son-in-law, thinking him not to be acting justly in that matter, while he [also] suspected deceit on his part, privately departed about the thirtieth year after his arrival. Rachel, without the knowledge of her husband, stole the idols [262] of her father, and on account of this injury Laban followed his son-in-law, but not finding his idols, returned, after being reconciled, having straitly charged his son-in-law not to take other wives in addition to his daughters. Then Jacob, going on his way, is said to have had a vision of angels and of the army [263] of the Lord. But, as he directed his journey past the region of Edom, which his brother Esau inhabited, suspecting the temper of Esau, he first sent messengers and gifts to try him. Then he went to meet his brother, but Jacob took care not to trust him beyond what he could help. On the day before the brothers were to meet, God, taking a human form, is said to have wrestled with Jacob. And when he had prevailed with God, still he was not ignorant that his adversary was no mere mortal; and therefore begged to be blessed by him. Then his name was changed by God, so that from Jacob he was called Israel. But when he, in turn, inquired of God the name of God, he was told that that should not be asked after because it was wonderful. [264] Moreover, from that wrestling, the breadth [265] of Jacob's thigh shrank.

Chapter X. Israel, therefore, avoiding the house of his brother, sent forward his company to Salem

Israel, therefore, avoiding the house of his brother, sent forward his company to Salem, a town of the Shechemites, and there he pitched his tent on a spot which he had purchased. Emor, a Chorræan prince, was the ruler of that town. His son Sychem defiled Dinah, the daughter of Jacob by Leah. Symeon and Levi, the brothers of Dinah, discovering this, cut off by a stratagem all those of the male sex in the town, and thus terribly avenged the injury done to their sister. The town was plundered by the sons of Jacob, and all the spoil carried off. Jacob is said to have been much displeased with these proceedings. Soon after being instructed by God, he went to Bethel, and there erected an altar to God. Then he fixed his tent in a part of the territory belonging to the tower [266] Gader. Rachel died in childbirth: the boy she bore was called Benjamin. Israel died at the age of one hundred and eighty years. Now, Esau was mighty in wealth, and had taken to himself wives of the nation of the Canaanites. I do not think that, in a work so concise as the present, I am called upon to mention his descendants, and, if any one is curious on the subject, he may turn to the original. After the death of his father, Jacob stayed on in the place where Isaac had lived. His other sons occasionally left him along with the flocks, for the sake of pasturage, but Joseph and the little Benjamin remained at home. Joseph was much beloved by his father, and on that account was hated by his brethren. There was this further cause for their aversion, that by frequent dreams of his it seemed to be indicated that he would be greater than all of them. Accordingly, having been sent by his father to inspect the flocks and pay a visit to his brothers, there seemed to them a fitting opportunity for doing him harm. For, on seeing their brother, they took counsel to slay him. But Reuben, whose mind shuddered at the contemplation of such a crime, opposing their plan, Joseph was let down into a well. [267] Afterwards, by the persuasions of Judah, they were brought to milder measures, and sold him to merchants, who were on their way to Egypt. And by them he was delivered to Petifra, a governor of Pharaoh.

Chapter XI. About this same time, Judah, the son of Jacob

About this same time, Judah, the son of Jacob, took in marriage Sava, [268] a woman of Canaan. By her he had three sons, -- Her, Onan, and Sela. Her was allied by concubinage [269] to Tamar. On his death, Onan took his brother's wife; and he is related to have been destroyed by God, because he spilled his seed upon the earth. Then Tamar, assuming the garb of a harlot, united with her brother-in-law, and bore him two sons. But when she brought them forth, there was this remarkable fact, that, when on one of the boys being born, the midwife had bound his hand with a scarlet thread to indicate which of them was born first, he, drawing back again into the womb of his mother, was born [270] the last boy of the two. The names of Fares and Zarah were given to the children. But Joseph, being kindly treated by the royal governor who had obtained him for a sum of money, and having been made manager of his house and family, had drawn the eyes of his master's wife upon himself through his remarkable beauty. And as she was madly laboring under that base passion, she made advances to him oftener than once, and when he would not yield to her desires, she disgraced him by the imputation of a false crime, and complained to her husband that he had made an attempt upon her virtue. Accordingly, Joseph was thrown into prison. There were in the same place of confinement two of the king's servants, who made known their dreams to Joseph, and he, interpreting these as bearing upon the future, declared that one of them would be put to death, and the other would be pardoned. And so it came to pass. Well, after the lapse of two years, the king also had a dream. And when this could not be explained by the wise men among the Egyptians, that servant of the king who was liberated from prison informs the king that Joseph was a wonderful interpreter of dreams. Accordingly, Joseph was brought out of prison, and interpreted to the king his dream, to this effect, that, for the next seven years, there would be the greatest fertility in the land; but in those that followed, famine. The king being alarmed by this terror, and seeing that there was a divine spirit in Joseph, set him over the department of food-supply, and made him equal with himself in the government. Then Joseph, while corn was abundant throughout all Egypt, gathered together an immense quantity, and, by increasing the number of granaries, took measures against the future famine. At that time, the hope and safety of Egypt were placed in him alone. About the same period, Aseneh bore him two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. He himself, when he received the chief power from the king, was thirty years old; for he was sold by his brothers when he was seventeen years of age.

Chapter XII. In the mean time, affairs having been well settled in Egypt to meet the famine

In the mean time, affairs having been well settled in Egypt to meet the famine, a grievous want of corn began to distress the world. Jacob, constrained by this necessity, sent his sons into Egypt, keeping only Benjamin with himself at home. Joseph, then, being at the head of affairs, and having complete power over the corn-supplies, his brothers come to him, and pay the same honor to him as to a king. He, when he saw them, craftily concealed his recognition of them, and accused them of having come as enemies, subtly to spy out the land. But he was annoyed that he did not see among them his brother Benjamin. Matters, then, are brought to this point, that they promised he should be present, specially that he might be asked whether they had entered Egypt for the purpose of spying out the land. In order to secure the fulfillment of this promise, Symeon was retained as hostage, while to them corn was given freely. Accordingly, they returned, bringing Benjamin with them as had been arranged. Then Joseph made himself known to his brothers to the shame of these evil-deservers. Thus, he sent them home again, laden with corn, and presented with many gifts, forewarning them that there were still five years of famine to come, and advising them to come down with their father, their children, and their whole connections to Egypt. So Jacob went down to Egypt, to the great joy of the Egyptians and of the king himself, while he was tenderly welcomed by his son. That took place in the hundred and thirtieth year of the life of Jacob, and one thousand three hundred and sixty years [271] after the deluge. But from the time when Abraham settled in the land of the Canaanites, to that when Jacob entered Egypt, there are to be reckoned two hundred and fifteen years. After this, Jacob, in the seventeenth year of his residence in Egypt, suffering severely from illness, entreated Joseph to see his remains placed in the tomb. Then Joseph presented his sons to be blessed; [272] and when this had been done, but so that he set the younger before the elder as to the value of the blessing given, Jacob then blessed all his sons in order. He died at the age of one hundred and forty-seven years. His funeral was of a most imposing character, and Joseph laid his remains in the tomb of his fathers. He continued to treat his brothers with kindness, although, after the death of their father, they felt alarmed from a consciousness of the wrong they had done. Joseph himself died in his one hundred and tenth year.

Chapter XIII. It is almost incredible to relate how the Hebrews who had come down into Egypt

It is almost incredible to relate how the Hebrews who had come down into Egypt so soon increased in numbers, and filled Egypt with their numerous descendants. But on the death of the king, who kindly cherished them on account of the services of Joseph, they were kept down by the government of the succeeding kings. For both the heavy labor of building cities was laid upon them, and because their abounding numbers were now feared, lest some day they should secure their independence by arms, they were compelled by a royal edict to drown their newly-born male children. And no permission was granted to evade this cruel order. Well, at that time, the daughter of Pharaoh found an infant in the river, and caused it to be brought up as her own son, giving the boy the name of Moses. This Moses, when he had come to manhood, saw a Hebrew being assaulted by an Egyptian; and, filled with sorrow at the sight, he delivered his brother from injury, and killed the Egyptian with a stone. Soon after, fearing punishment on account of what he had done, he fled into the land of Midian, and, taking up his abode with Jothor the priest of that district, he received his daughter Sephora in marriage, who bore him two sons, Gersam and Eliezer. At this epoch lived Job, who had acquired both the knowledge of God and all righteousness simply from the law [273] of nature. He was exceedingly rich, and on that account all the more illustrious, because he was neither corrupted by that wealth while it remained entire, nor perverted by it when it was lost. For, when, through the agency of the devil, he was stripped of his goods, deprived of his children, and finally covered in his own person with terrible boils, he could not be broken down, so as, from impatience of his sufferings, in any way, to commit sin. At length he obtained the reward of the divine approval, and being restored to health, he got back doubled all that he had lost.

Chapter XIV. But the Hebrews, oppressed by the multiplied evils of slavery

But the Hebrews, oppressed by the multiplied evils of slavery, directed their complaints to heaven, and cherished the hope of assistance from God. Then, as Moses was feeding his sheep, suddenly a bush appeared to him burning, but, what was surprising, the flames did it no harm. Astonished at such an extraordinary sight, he drew nearer to the bush, and immediately God spoke to him in words to this effect, that he was the Lord of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that he desired that their descendants, who were kept down under the tyranny of the Egyptians, should be delivered from their sufferings, and that he, therefore, should go to the king of Egypt, and present himself as a leader for restoring them to liberty. When he hesitated, God strengthened him with power, and imparted to him the gift of working miracles. Thus Moses, going into Egypt, after he had first performed miracles in the presence of his own people, and having associated his brother Aaron with him, went to the king, declaring that he had been sent by God, and that he now told him in the words of God to let the Hebrew people go. But the king, affirming that he did not know the Lord, refused to obey the command addressed to him. And when Moses, in proof that the orders he issued were from God, changed his rod into a serpent, [274] and soon after convened all the water into blood, while he filled the whole land with frogs, as the Chaldæans were doing similar things, the king declared that the wonders performed by Moses were simply due to the arts of magic, and not to the power of God, until the land was covered with stinging insects brought over it, when the Chaldæans confessed that this was done by the divine majesty. Then the king, constrained by his sufferings, called to him Moses and Aaron, and gave the people liberty to depart, provided that the calamity brought upon the kingdom were removed. But, after the suffering was put an end to, his mind, having no control over itself returned to its former state, and did not allow the Israelites to depart, as had been agreed upon. Finally, however, he was broken down and conquered by the ten plagues which were sent upon his person and his kingdom.

Chapter XV. But on the day before the people went out of Egypt

But on the day [275] before the people went out of Egypt, being as yet unacquainted with dates, they were instructed by the command of God to acknowledge that month which was then passing by as the first of all months; and were told that the sacrifice of the day was to be solemnly and regularly offered in coming ages, so that, on the fourteenth day of the month, a lamb without blemish, one year old, should be slain as a victim, and that the door-posts should be sprinkled with its blood; that its flesh was wholly to be eaten, but not a bone of it was to be broken; that they should abstain from what was leavened for seven days, using only unleavened bread; and that they should hand down the observance to their posterity. Thus the people went forth rich, both by their own wealth, and still more by the spoils of Egypt. Their number had grown from those seventy-five [276] Hebrews, who had first gone down into Egypt, to six hundred thousand men. Now, there had elapsed from the time when Abraham first reached the land of the Canaanites a period of four hundred and thirty years, but from the deluge a period of five hundred and seventy-five [277] years. Well, as they went forth in haste, a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, marched before them. But since, owing to the fact that the gulf of the Red Sea lay between, the way led by [278] the land of the Philistines, in order that an opportunity might not afterwards be offered to the Hebrews, shrinking from the desert, of returning into Egypt by a well-known road through a continuous land-journey, by the command of God they turned aside, and journeyed towards the Red Sea, where they stopped and pitched their camp. When it was announced to the king that the Hebrew people, through mistaking the road, had come to have the sea right before them, and that they had no means of escape since the deep would prevent them, vexed and furious that so many thousand men should escape from his kingdom and power, he hastily led forth his army. And already the arms, and standards, and the lines drawn up in the widespreading plains were visible, when, as the Hebrews were in a state of terror, and gazing up to heaven, Moses being so instructed by God, struck the sea with his rod, and divided it. Thus a road was opened to the people as on firm land, the waters giving way on both sides. Nor did the king of Egypt hesitate to follow the Israelites going forward, for he entered the sea where it had opened; and, as the waters speedily came together again, he, with all his host, was destroyed.

Chapter XVI. Then Moses, exulting in the safety of his own people

Then Moses, exulting in the safety of his own people, and in the destruction of the enemy, by such a miracle, [279] sang a song of praise to God, and the whole multitude, both of males and females, took part in it. But, after they had entered the desert, and advanced a journey of three days, want of water distressed them; and, when it was found, it proved of no use on account of its bitterness. And then for the first time the stubbornness of the impatient people showed itself, and burst forth against Moses; when, as instructed by God, he cast some wood into the waters, and its power was such that it rendered the taste of the fluid sweet. Thence advancing, the multitude found at Elim twelve fountains of waters, with seventy palm-trees, and there they encamped. Again the people, complaining of famine, heaped reproaches upon Moses, and longed for the slavery of Egypt, accompanied as it was with abundance to please their appetite, when a flock of quails was divinely sent, and filled the camp. Besides, on the following day, those who had gone forth from the camp perceived that the ground was covered with a sort of pods, [280] the appearance of which was like a coriander-seed of snowy whiteness, as we often see the earth in the winter months covered with the hoar-frost that has been spread over it. Then the people were informed, through Moses, that this bread had been sent them by the gift of God; that every one should gather in vessels prepared for the purpose only so much of it as would be sufficient for each, according to their number, during one day; but that on the sixth day they should gather double, because it was not lawful to collect it on the Sabbath. The people, however, as they were never prone to obedience, did not, in accordance with human nature, restrain their desires, providing in their stores not merely for one, but also for the following day. But that which was thus laid up swarmed with worms, while its fetid odor was dreadful, yet that which was laid up on the sixth day with a view to the Sabbath remained quite untainted. The Hebrews made use of this food for forty years; its taste was very like that of honey; and its name is handed down as being manna. Moreover, as an abiding witness to the divine gift, Moses is related to have laid up a full gomer of it in a golden vessel.

Chapter XVII. The people going on from thence, and being again tried with want of water

The people going on from thence, and being again tried with want of water, hardly restrained themselves from destroying their leader. Then Moses, under divine orders, striking with his rod the rock at the place which is called Horeb, brought forth an abundant supply of water. But when they came to Raphidin, the Amalekites destroyed numbers of the people by their attacks. Moses, leading out his men to battle, placed Joshua at the head of the army; and, in company with Aaron and Hur, was himself simply to be a spectator of the fight, while, at the same time, for the purpose of praying to the Lord, he went up to the top of a mountain. But when the armies had met with doubtful issue, through the prayers of Moses, Joshua slew the enemy until nightfall. At the same time, Jothor, Moses' father-in-law, with his daughter Sepphora (who, having been married to Moses, had remained at home when her husband went into Egypt), and his children, having learned the things which were being done by Moses, came to him. By his advice Moses divided the people into various ranks; and, setting tribunes, centurions, and decurions [281] over them, thus furnished a mode of discipline and order to posterity. Jothor then returned to his own country, while the Israelites came on to Mount Sinai. There Moses was admonished by the Lord that the people should be sanctified, since they were to hearken to the words of God; and that was carefully seen to. But when God rested on the mountain, the air was shaken with the loud sounds of trumpets, and thick clouds rolled around with frequent flashes of lightning. But Moses and Aaron were on the top of the mountain beside the Lord, while the people stood around the bottom of the mountain. Thus a law was given, manifold and full of the words of God, and frequently repeated; but if any one is desirous of knowing particulars regarding it, he must consult the original, as we here only briefly touch upon it. "There shall not be," said God, "any strange gods among you, but ye shall worship me alone; thou shalt not make to time any idol; thou shalt not take the name of thy God in vain; thou shalt do no work upon the Sabbath; honor thy father and thy mother; thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor; thou shalt not covet anything belonging to thy neighbor."

Chapter XVIII. These things being said by God, while the trumpets uttered their voices

These things being said by God, while the trumpets uttered their voices, the lamps blazed, and smoke covered the mountain, the people trembled from terror; and begged of Moses that God should speak to him alone, and that he would report to the people what he thus heard. Now, the commandments of God to Moses were as follows: A Hebrew servant purchased with money shall serve six years, and after that he shall be free; but his ear shall be bored, should he willingly remain in slavery. Whosoever slays a man shall be put to death; he who does so unwittingly shall in due form be banished. Whosoever shall beat his father or his mother, and utter evil sayings against them, shall suffer death. If any one sell a Hebrew who has been stolen, he shall be put to death. If any one strike his own man-servant or maidservant, and he or she die of the blow, he shall be put on his trial for doing so. If any one cause a woman [282] to miscarry, he shall be put to death. If any one knock out the eye or the tooth of his servant, that servant shall receive his liberty in due form. If a bull kill a man, it shall be stoned; and if its master, knowing the vicious temper of the animal, did not take precautions in connection with it, he also shall be stoned, or shall redeem himself by a price as large as the accuser shall demand. If a bull kill a servant, money to the amount of thirty double-drachmas shall be paid to his master. If any one does not cover up a pit which has been dug, and an animal fall into that pit, he shall pay the price of the animal to its master. If a bull kill the bull of another man, the animal shall be sold, and the two masters shall share the price; they shall also divide the animal that has been killed. But if a master, knowing the vicious temper of the bull, did not take precautions in connection with it, he shall give up the bull. If any one steals a calf, he shall restore five; if he steals a sheep, the penalty shall be fourfold; and if the animals be found alive in the hands of him who drove them off, he shall restore double. It shall be lawful to kill a thief by night, but not one by day. If the cattle of any one has eaten up the corn of another, the master of the cattle shall restore what has been destroyed. If a deposit disappears, he, in whose hands it was deposited, shall swear that he has not been guilty of any deceit. A thief who is caught shall pay double. An animal given in trust, if devoured by a wild beast, shall not be made good. If any one defile a virgin not yet betrothed, he shall bestow a dowry on the girl, and thus take her to wife; but, if the father of the girl shall refuse to give her in marriage, then the ravisher shall give her a dowry. If any one shall join himself to a beast, he shall be put to death. Let him who sacrifices to idols perish. The widow and orphan are not to be oppressed; the poor debtor is not to be hardly treated, nor is usury to be demanded: the garment of the poor is not to be taken as a pledge. A ruler of the people is not to be evil spoken of. All the first-born are to be offered to God. Flesh taken from a wild beast is not to be eaten. Agreements to bear false witness, or for any evil purpose, are not to be made. Thou shalt not pass by any animal of thine enemy which has strayed, but shalt bring it back. If you find an animal of your enemy fallen down under a burden, it will be your duty to raise it up. Thou shalt not slay the innocent and the righteous. Thou shalt not justify the wicked for rewards. Gifts are not to be accepted. A stranger is to be kindly treated. Work is to be done on six days: rest is to be taken on the Sabbath. The crops of the seventh year are not

to be reaped, but are to be left for the poor and needy.

Chapter XIX. Moses reported these words of God to the people

Moses reported these words of God to the people, and placed an altar of twelve stones at the foot of the mountain. Then he again ascended the mountain on which the Lord had taken his place, bringing with him Aaron, Nabad, and seventy of the elders. But these were not able to look upon the Lord; nevertheless, they saw the place [283] in which God stood, whose form is related to have been wonderful, and his splendor glorious. Now, Moses, having been called by God, entered the inner cloud which had gathered round about God, and is related to have remained there forty days and forty nights. During this time, he was taught in the words of God about building the tabernacle and the ark, and about the ritual of sacrifice-things which I, as they were obviously told at great length, have not thought proper to be inserted in such a concise work as the present. But as Moses stayed away a long time, since he spent forty days in the presence of the Lord, the people, despairing of his return, compelled Aaron to construct images. Then, out of metals which had been melted together, there came forth the head of a calf. The people, unmindful of God, having offered sacrifices to this, and given themselves up to eating and drinking, God, looking upon these things, would in his righteous indignation, have destroyed the wicked people, had he not been entreated by Moses' not to do so. But Moses, on his return, bringing down the two tables of stone which had been written by the hand of God, and seeing the people devoted to luxury and sacrilege, broke the tables, thinking the nation unworthy of having the law of the Lord delivered to them. He then called around himself the Levites, who had been assailed with many insults, and commanded them to smite the people with drawn swords. In this onset twenty-three thousand [284] men are said to have been slain. Then Moses set up the tabernacle outside the camp; and, as often as he entered it, the pillar of cloud was observed to stand before the door; and God spoke, face to face, with Moses. But when Moses entreated that he might see the Lord in his peculiar majesty, he was answered that the form of God could not be seen by mortal eyes; yet it was allowed to see his back parts; and the tables which Moses had formerly broken were constructed afresh. And Moses is reported, during this conference with God, to have stayed forty days with the Lord. Moreover, when he descended from the mountain, bringing with him the tables, his face shone with so great brightness, that the people were not able to look upon him. It was arranged, therefore, that when he was to make known to them the commands of God, he covered his face with a veil, and thus spoke to the people in the words of God. In this part of the history an account is given [285] of the tabernacle, and the building of its inner parts. Which having been finished, the cloud descended from above, and so overshadowed the tabernacle that it prevented Moses himself from entering. These are the principal matters contained in the two books of Genesis and Exodus.

Chapter XX. Then follows the book of Leviticus, in which the precepts bearing upon sacrifice are set

Then follows the book of Leviticus, in which the precepts bearing upon sacrifice are set forth; commandments also are added to the law formerly given; and almost the whole is full of instructions connected with the priests. If any one wishes to become acquainted with these, he will obtain fuller information from that source. For we, keeping within the limits of the work undertaken, touch upon the history only. The tribe of Levi, then, being set apart for the priesthood, the rest of the tribes were numbered, and were found to amount to six hundred and three thousand five hundred persons. [286] When, therefore, the people made use of the manna for food, as we have related above, even amid so many and so great kindnesses of God, showing themselves, as ever, ungrateful, they longed after the worthless viands to which they had been accustomed in Egypt. Then the Lord brought an enormous supply of quails into the camp; and as they were eagerly tearing these to pieces, as soon as their lips touched the flesh, they perished. There was indeed on that day a great destruction in the camp, so that twenty and three thousand men are said to have died. Thus the people were punished by the very food which they desired. Thence the company went forward, and came to Faran; and Moses was instructed by the Lord that the land was now near, the possession of which the Lord had promised them. Spies, accordingly, having been sent into it, they report that it was a land blessed with all abundance, but that the nations were powerful, and the towns fortified with immense walls. When this was made known to the people, fear seized the minds of all; and to such a pitch of wickedness did they come, that, despising the authority of Moses, they prepared to appoint for themselves a leader, under whose guidance they might return to Egypt. Then Joshua and Caleb, who had been of the number of the spies, rent their garments with tears, and implored the people not to believe the spies relating such terrors; for that they themselves had been with them, and had found nothing dreadful in that country; and that it behooved them to trust the promises of God, that these enemies would rather become their prey than prove their destruction. But that stiff-necked race, setting themselves against every good advice, rushed upon them to destroy them. And the Lord, angry on account of these things, exposed a part of the people to be slain by the enemy, while the spies were slain for having excited fear among the people.

Chapter XXI. There followed the revolt of those, who, with Dathan and Abiron as leaders

There followed the revolt of those, who, with Dathan and Abiron as leaders, endeavored to set themselves up against Moses and Aaron; but the earth, opening, swallowed them alive. And not long after, a revolt of the whole people arose against Moses and Aaron, so that they rushed into the tabernacle, which it was not lawful for any but the priests to enter. Then truly death mowed them down in heaps; and all would have perished in a moment, had not the Lord, appeased by the prayers of Moses, turned aside the disaster. Nevertheless, the number of those slain amounted to seven hundred and fourteen thousand. [287] And not long after, as had already often happened, a revolt of the people arose on account of the want of water. Then Moses, instructed by God to strike the rock with his rod, with a kind of trial new familiar to him, since he had already done that before, struck the rock once and again, and thus water flowed out of it. In regard, however, to this point, Moses is said to have been reproved by God, that, through want of faith, he did not bring out the water except by repeated blows; in fact, on account of this transgression, he did not enter the land promised to him, as I shall show farther on. Moses, then, moving away from that place, as he was preparing to lead his company along by the borders of Edom, sent ambassadors to the king to beg liberty to pass by; for he thought it right to abstain from war on account of the connection by blood; for that nation was descended from Esau. But the king despised the suppliants, and refused them liberty to pass by, being ready to contend in arms. Then Moses directed his march towards the mountain, Or, keeping clear of the forbidden road, that he might not furnish any cause of war between those related by blood, and on that route he destroyed the king of the nation of the Canaanites. He smote also Seon the king of the Amorites, and possessed himself of all their towns: he conquered, too, Basan and Balac. He pitched his camp beyond Jordan, not far from Jericho. Then a battle took place against the Midianites, and they were conquered and subdued. Moses died, after he had ruled the people forty years in the wilderness. But the Hebrews are said to have remained in the wilderness for so long a time, with this view, until all those who had not believed the words of God perished. For, except Joshua and Caleb, not one of those who were more than twenty years old on leaving Egypt passed over Jordan. That Moses himself only saw the promised land, and did not reach it, is ascribed to his sin, because, at that time when he was ordered to strike the rock, and bring forth water, he doubted, even after so many proofs of his miraculous power. He died in the one hundred and twentieth year of his age. Nothing is known concerning the place of his burial.

Chapter XXII. After the death of Moses, the chief power passed into the hands of Joshua the

After the death of Moses, the chief power passed into the hands of Joshua the son of Nun, for Moses had appointed him his successor, being a man very like himself in the good qualities which he displayed. Now, at the commencement of his rule, he sent messengers through the camp to instruct the people to make ready supplies of corn, and announces that they should march on the third day. But the river Jordan, a very powerful stream, hindered their crossing, because they did not have a supply of vessels for the occasion, and the stream could not be crossed by fords, as it was then rushing on in full flood. He, therefore, orders the ark to be carried forward by the priests, and that they should take their stand against the current of the river. On this being done, Jordan is said to have been divided, and thus the army was led over on dry ground. There was in these places a town called Jericho, fortified with very strong walls, and not easy to be taken, either by storm or blockade. But Joshua, putting his trust in God, did not attack the city either by arms or force; he simply ordered the ark of God to be carried round the walls, while the priests walked before the ark, and sounded trumpets. But when the ark had been carried round seven times, the walls and the towers fell; and the city was plundered and burnt. Then Joshua is said to have addressed the Lord, and [288] to have called down a curse upon any one who should attempt to restore the town which had thus by divine help been demolished. Next, the army was led against Geth, and an ambuscade having been placed behind the city, Joshua, pretending fear, fled before the enemy. On seeing this, those who were in the town, opening the gates, began to press upon the enemy giving way. Thus, the men who were in ambush took the city, and all the inhabitants were slain, without one escaping: the king also was taken, and suffered capital punishment.

Chapter XXIII. When this became known to the kings of the neighboring nations

When this became known to the kings of the neighboring nations, they made a warlike alliance to put down the Hebrews by arms. But the Gibeonites, a powerful nation with a wealthy city, spontaneously yielded to the Hebrews, promising to do what they were ordered, and were received under protection, while they were told to bring in wood and water. But their surrender had roused the resentment of the kings of the nearest cities. Accordingly, moving up their troops, they surround with a blockade their town, which was called Gabaath. The townspeople, therefore, in their distress, send messengers to Joshua, that he would help them in their state of siege. Accordingly, he by a forced march came upon the enemy at unawares, and many thousands of them were completely destroyed. When day failed the victors, and it seemed that night would furnish protection to the vanquished, the Hebrew general, through the power of his faith, kept off the night, and the day continued, so that there was no means of escape for the enemy. Five kings who were taken suffered death. By the same attack, neighboring cities also were brought under the power of Joshua, and their kings were cut off. But as it was not my design, studious as I am of brevity, to follow out all these things in order, I only carefully observe this, that twenty-nine kingdoms were brought under the yoke of the Hebrews, and that their territory was distributed among eleven tribes, to man after man. For to the Levites, who had been set apart for the priesthood, no portion was given, in order that they might the more freely serve God. I desire not, in silence, to pass over the example thus set, but I would earnestly bring it forward as well worthy of being read by the ministers of the Church. For these seem to me not only unmindful of this precept, but even utterly ignorant of it -- such a lust for possessing has, in this age, seized, like an incurable disease, upon their minds. They gape upon possessions; they cultivate estates; they repose upon gold; they buy and sell; they study gain by every possible means. And even, if any of them seem to have a better aim in life, neither possessing nor trading, still (what is much more disgraceful) remaining inactive, they look for gifts, and have corrupted the whole glory of life by their mercenary dispositions, while they present an appearance of sanctity, as if even that might be made a source of gain. But I have gone farther than I intended in expressing my loathing and disgust over the character of our times; and I hasten to return to the subject in hand. The vanquished territory, then, as I have already said, having been divided among the tribes, the Hebrews enjoyed profound peace; their neighbors, being terrified by war, did not venture to attempt hostilities against those distinguished by so many victories. At the same period died Joshua in the hundred and tenth year of his age. I do not express any definite opinion as to the length of time he ruled: the prevalent view, however, is, that he was at the head of the Hebrew affairs during twenty-seven years. If this were so, then three thousand eight hundred and eighty-four years had elapsed from the beginning of the world to his death.

Chapter XXIV. After the death of Joshua, the people acted without a leader.

After the death of Joshua, the people acted without a leader. But a necessity of making war with the Canaanites having arisen, Judah was appointed as general in the war. Under his guidance, matters were successfully conducted: there was the greatest tranquillity both at home and abroad: the people ruled over the nations which had either been subdued or received under terms of surrender. Then, as almost always happens in a time of prosperity, becoming unmindful of morals and discipline, they began to contract marriages from among the conquered, and by and by to adopt foreign customs, yea, even in a sacrilegious manner to offer sacrifice to idols: so pernicious is all alliance with foreigners. God, foreseeing these things long before, had, by a wholesome precept enjoined upon the Hebrews to give over the conquered nations to utter destruction. But the people, through lust for power, preferred (to their own ruin) to rule over those who were conquered. Accordingly, when, forsaking God, they worshiped idols, they were deprived of the divine assistance, and, being vanquished and subdued by the king of Mesopotamia, they paid the penalty of eight years' captivity, until, with Gothoniel as their leader, they were restored to liberty, and enjoyed independence for fifty years. Then again, corrupted by the evil effect of a lengthened peace, they began to sacrifice to idols. And speedily did retribution fall upon them thus sinning. Conquered by Eglon, king of the Moabites, they served him eighteen years, until, by a divine impulse, Aod slew the enemies' king by a stratagem, and, gathering together a hasty army, restored them to liberty by force of arms. The same man ruled the Hebrews in peace for forty years. To him Semigar succeeded, and he, engaging in battle with the Philistines, [289] secured a decisive victory. But again, the king of the Canaanites, Jabin by name, subdued the Hebrews who were once more serving idols, and exercised over them a grievous tyranny for twenty years, until Deborah, a woman, restored them to their former condition. They had to such a degree lost confidence in their generals, that they were now protected by means of a woman. But it is worthy of notice, that this form of deliverance was arranged beforehand, as a type of the Church, by whose aid captivity to the devil is escaped. The Hebrews were forty years under this leader or judge. And being again delivered over to the Midianites for their sins, they were kept under hard rule; and, being afflicted by the evils of slavery, they implored the divine help. Thus always when in prosperity they were unmindful of the kindnesses of heaven, and prayed to idols; but in adversity they cried to God. Wherefore, as often as I reflect that those people who lay under so many obligations to the goodness of God, being chastised with so many disasters when they sinned, and experiencing both the mercy and the severity of God, yet were by no means rendered better, and that, though they always obtained pardon for their transgressions, yet they as constantly sinned again after being pardoned, it can appear nothing wonderful that Christ when he came was not received by them, since already, from the beginning, they were found so often rebelling against the Lord. It is, in fact, far more wonderful that the clemency of God never failed them when they sinned, if only they called upon his name. [290]

Chapter XXV. Accordingly, when the Midianites, as we have related above

Accordingly, when the Midianites, as we have related above, ruled over them, they turned to the Lord, imploring his wonted tender mercy, and obtained it. There was then among the Hebrews one Gideon by name, a righteous man who was dear and acceptable to God. The angel stood by him as he was returning home from the harvest-field, and said unto him, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." But he in a humble voice complained that the Lord was not [291] with him, because captivity pressed sore upon his people, and he remembered with tears the miracles wrought by the Lord, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. Then the angel said, "Go, in this spirit in which you have spoken, and deliver the people from captivity." But he declared that he could not, with his [292] feeble strength, since he was a man of very small importance, undertake such a heavy task. The angel, however, persisted in urging him not to doubt that those things could be done which the Lord said. So then, having offered sacrifice, and overthrown the altar which the Midianites had consecrated to the image of Baal, he went to his own people, and pitched his camp near the camp of the enemy. But the nation of the Amalekites had also joined themselves to the Midianites, while Gideon had not gathered more than an army of thirty-two thousand men. But before the battle began, God said to him that this was a larger number than he wished him to lead forth to the conflict; that, if he did make use of so many, the Hebrews would, in accordance with their usual wickedness ascribe the result of the fight, not to God, but to their own bravery; he should therefore furnish an opportunity of leaving to those who desired to do so. When this was made known to the people, twenty and two thousand left the camp. But of the ten thousand who had remained, Gideon, as instructed by God, did not retain more than three hundred: the rest he dismissed from the field. Thus, entering the camp of the enemy in the middle watch of the night, and having ordered all his men to sound their trumpets, he caused great terror to the enemy; and no one had courage to resist; but they made off in a disgraceful flight wherever they could. The Hebrews, however, meeting them in every direction, cut the fugitives to pieces. Gideon pursued the kings beyond Jordan, and having captured them, gave them over to death. In that battle, a hundred and twenty thousand of the enemy are said to have been slain, and fifteen thousand captured. Then, by universal consent, a proposal was made to Gideon that he should be king of the people. But he rejected this proposal, and preferred rather to live on equal terms with his fellow-citizens than to be their ruler. Having, therefore, escaped from their captivity, which had pressed upon the people for seven years, they now enjoyed peace for a period of forty years.

Chapter XXVI. But on the death of Gideon, his son Abimelech

But on the death of Gideon, his son Abimelech, whose mother was a concubine, having slain his brothers with the concurrence of a multitude of wicked men, and especially by the help of the chief men among the Shechemites, took possession of the kingdom. And he, being harassed by civil strife, while he pressed hard upon his people by war, attempted to storm a certain tower, into which they, after losing the town, had betaken themselves by flight. But, as he approached the place without sufficient caution, he was slain by a stone which a woman threw, after holding the government for three years. To him succeeded Thola, who reigned two and twenty years. After him came Jair; and after he had held the chief place for a like period of twenty-two years, the people, forsaking God, gave themselves up to idols. On this account, the Israelites were subdued by the Philistines and Ammonites, and remained under their power for eighteen years. At the end of this period, they began to call upon God; but the divine answer to them was that they should rather invoke the aid of their images, for that he would no longer extend his mercy to those who had been so ungrateful. But they with tears confessed their fault, and implored forgiveness; while, throwing away their idols, and earnestly calling upon God, they obtained the divine compassion, though it had been at first refused. Accordingly, under Jephtha as general, they assembled in great numbers for the purpose of recovering their liberty by arms, having first sent ambassadors to King Ammon, begging that, content with his own territories, he should keep from warring against them. But he, far from declining battle, at once drew up his army. Then Jephtha, before the signal for battle was given, is said to have vowed that, if he obtained the victory, the person who first met him as he returned home, should be offered to God as a sacrifice. Accordingly, on the enemy being defeated, as Jephtha was returning home, his daughter met him, having joyfully gone forth with drums and dances to receive her father as a conqueror. Then Jephtha, being overwhelmed with sorrow, rent his clothes in his affliction, and made known to his daughter the stringent obligation of his vow. But she, with a courage not to be expected from a woman, did not refuse to die; she only begged that her life might be spared for two months, that she might before dying have the opportunity of seeing the friends of her own age. This being done, she willingly returned to her father, and fulfilled the vow to God. Jephtha held the chief power for six years. To him Ezebon succeeded, and having ruled in tranquillity for seven years, then died. After him, Elon the Zebulonite ruled for ten years, and Abdon also for eight years; but, as their rule was peaceful, they performed nothing which history might record.

Chapter XXVII. The Israelites yet again turned to idols; and, being deprived of the divine protection

The Israelites yet again turned to idols; and, being deprived of the divine protection, were subdued by the Philistines, and paid the penalty of their unfaithfulness by forty years of captivity. At that time, Samson is related to have been born. His mother, after being long barren, had a vision of an angel, and was told to abstain from wine, and strong drink, and everything unclean; for that she should bear a son who would be the restorer of liberty to the Israelites, and their avenger upon their enemies. He, with unshorn locks, is said to have been possessed of marvelous strength, so much so that he tore to pieces with his hands a lion which met him in the way. He had a wife from the Philistines, and when she, in the absence of her husband, had entered into marriage with another, he, through indignation on account of his wife being thus taken from him, wrought destruction to her nation. Trusting in God and his own strength, he openly brought disaster on those hitherto victors. For, catching three hundred foxes, he tied burning torches to their tails, and sent them into the fields of the enemy. It so happened that at the time the harvest was ripe, and thus the fire easily caught, while the vines and olive-trees were burnt to ashes. He was thus seen to have avenged the injury done him in taking away his wife, by a great loss inflicted on the Philistines. And they, enraged at this disaster, destroyed by fire the woman who had been the cause of so great a calamity, along with her house and her father. But Samson, thinking himself as yet but poorly avenged, ceased not to harass the heathen race with all sorts of evil devices. Then the Jews, being compelled to it, handed him over as a prisoner to the Philistines; but, when thus handed over, he burst his bonds and seizing the jaw-bone [293] of an ass, which chance offered him as a weapon, he slew a thousand of his enemies. And, as the heat of the day grew violent, and he began to suffer from thirst, he called upon God, and water flowed forth from [294] the bone which he held in his hand.

Chapter XXVIII. At that time Samson ruled over the Hebrews, the Philistines having been subdued by the

At that time Samson ruled over the Hebrews, the Philistines having been subdued by the prowess of a single individual. They, therefore, sought his life by stratagem, not daring to assail him openly, and with this view they bribe his wife (whom he had received after what has been stated took place) to betray to them wherein the strength of her husband lay. She attacked him with female blandishments; and, after he had deceived her, and staved off her purpose for a long time, she persuaded him to tell that his strength was situated in his hair. Presently she cut off his hair stealthily while he was asleep, and thus delivered him up to the Philistines; for although he had often before been given up to them, they had not been able to hold him fast. Then they, having put out his eyes, bound him with fetters, and cast him into prison. But, in course of time, his hair which had been cut off began to grow again, and his strength to return with it. And now Samson, conscious of his recovered strength, was only waiting for an opportunity of righteous revenge. The Philistines had a custom on their festival days of producing Samson as if to make a public spectacle of him, while they mocked their illustrious captive. Accordingly, on a certain day, when they were making a feast in honor of their idol, they ordered Samson to be exhibited. Now, the temple, in which all the people and all the princes of the Philistines feasted, rested on two pillars of remarkable size; and Samson, when brought out, was placed between these pillars. Then he, having first called upon the Lord, seized his opportunity, and threw down the pillars. The whole multitude was overwhelmed in the ruins of the building, and Samson himself died along with his enemies, not without having avenged himself upon them, after he had ruled the Hebrews twenty years. To him Simmichar succeeded, of whom Scripture relates nothing more than that simple fact. For I do not find that even the time when his rule came to an end is mentioned, and I see that the people was for some time without a leader. Accordingly, when civil war arose against the tribe of Benjamin, Judah was chosen as a temporary leader in the war. But most of those who have written about these times note that his rule was only for a single year. On this account, many pass him by altogether, and place Eli, the priest, immediately after Samson. We shall leave that point doubtful, as one not positively ascertained.

Chapter XXIX. About these times, civil war, as we have said

About these times, civil war, as we have said, had broken out; and the following was the cause of the tumult. A certain Levite was on a journey along with his concubine, and, constrained by the approach of night, he took up his abode in the town of Gabaa, which was inhabited by men of Benjamin. A certain old man having kindly admitted him to hospitality, the young men of the town surrounded the guest, with the view of subjecting him to improper treatment. After being much chidden by the old man, and with difficulty dissuaded from their purpose, they at length received for their wanton sport the person of his concubine as a substitute for his own; and they thus spared the stranger, but abused her through the whole night, and only restored her on the following day. But she (whether from the injury their vile conduct had inflicted on her, or from shame, I do not venture to assert) died on again seeing [295] her husband. Then the Levite, in testimony of the horrible deed, divided her members into twelve parts, and distributed them among the twelve tribes that indignation at such conduct might the more readily be excited in them all. And when this became known to all of them, the other eleven tribes entered into a warlike confederacy against Benjamin. In this war, Judah, as we have said, was the general. But they had bad success in the first two battles. At length, however, in the third, the Benjamites were conquered, and cut off to a man; thus the crime of a few was punished by the destruction of a multitude. These things also are contained in the Book of Judges: the Books of Kings follow. But to me who am following the succession of the years, and the order of the dates, the history does not appear marked by strict chronological accuracy. For, since after Samson as judge, there came Semigar, and a little later the history certifies that the people lived without judges, Eli the priest is related in the Books of Kings to have also been a judge, [296] but the Scripture has not stated how many years there were between Eli and Samson. I see that there was some portion of time between these two, which is left in obscurity. But, from the day of the death of Joshua up to the time at which Samson died, there are reckoned four hundred and eighteen years, and from the beginning of the world, four thousand three hundred and three. Nevertheless, I am not ignorant that others differ from this reckoning of ours; but I am at the same time conscious that I have, not without some care, set forth the order of events in the successive years (a thing hitherto left in obscurity), until I have fallen upon these times, concerning which I confess that I have my doubts. Now I shall go on to what remains.

Chapter XXX. The Hebrews, then, as I have narrated above, were living according to their own will

The Hebrews, then, as I have narrated above, were living according to their own will, without any judge or general. Eli was priest; and in his days Samuel was born. His father's name was Elchana, and his mother's, Anna. She having long been barren, is said, when she asked a child from God, to have vowed that, if it were a boy, it should be dedicated to God. Accordingly, having brought forth a boy, she delivered him to Eli the priest. By and by, when he had grown up, God spoke to him. He denounced wrath against Eli the priest on account of the life of his sons, who had made the priesthood of their father a means of gain to themselves, and exacted gifts from those who came to sacrifice; and, although their father is related to have often reproved them, yet his reproofs were too gentle to serve the purpose of discipline. Well, the Philistines made an incursion into Judæa, and were met by the Israelites. But the Hebrews, being beaten, prepare to renew the contest: they carry the ark of the Lord with them into battle, and the sons of the priests go forth with it, because he himself, being burdened with years, and afflicted with blindness, could not discharge that duty. But, when the ark was brought within sight of the enemy, terrified as if by the majesty of God's presence, they were ready to take to flight. But again recovering courage, and changing their minds (not without a divine impulse), they rush into battle with their whole strength. The Hebrews were conquered; the ark was taken; the sons of the priest fell. Eli, when the news of the calamity was brought to him, being overwhelmed with grief, breathed his last, after he had held the priesthood for twenty [297] years.

Chapter XXXI. The Philistines, victorious in this prosperous battle, brought the ark of God

The Philistines, victorious in this prosperous battle, brought the ark of God, which had fallen into their hands, into the temple of Dagon in the town of Azotus. But the image, dedicated to a demon, fell down when the ark was brought in there; and, on their setting the idol up again in its place, in the following night it was torn in pieces. Then mice, springing up throughout all the country, caused by their venomous bites the death of many thousand persons. [298] The men of Azotus, constrained by this source of suffering, in order to escape the calamity, removed the ark to Gath. But the people there being afflicted with the same evils, conveyed the ark to Ascalon. The inhabitants, however, of that place, the chief men of the nation having been called together, formed the design of sending back the ark to the Hebrews. Thus, in accordance with the opinion of the chiefs, and augurs, and priests, it was placed upon a cart, and sent back with many gifts. This remarkable thing then happened, that when they had yoked heifers to the conveyance, and had retained their calves at home, these cattle took their course, without any guide, towards Judæa, and showed no desire of returning, from affection toward their young left behind. The rulers of the Philistines, who had followed the ark into the territory of the Hebrews, were so struck by the marvelousness of this occurrence that they performed a religious service. But the Jews, when they saw the ark brought back, vied with each other in joyously rushing forth from the town of Betsamis to meet it, and in hurrying, exulting, and returning thanks to God. Presently, the Levites, whose business it was, perform a sacrifice to God, and offer those heifers which had brought the ark. But the ark could not be kept in the town which I have named above, and thus severe illness fell by the appointment of God, upon the whole city. The ark was then transferred to the town of Cariathiarim, [299] and there it remained twenty years.

Chapter XXXII. At this time, Samuel the priest ruled over the Hebrews

At this time, Samuel the priest [300] ruled over the Hebrews; and there being a cessation of all war, the people lived in peace. But this tranquillity was disturbed by an invasion of the Philistines, and all ranks were in a state of terror from their consciousness of guilt. Samuel, having first offered sacrifice, and trusting in God, led his men out to battle, and the enemy being routed at the first onset, victory declared for the Hebrews. But when the fear of the enemy was thus removed, and affairs were now prosperous and peaceful, the people, changing their views for the worse, after the manner of the mob, who are always weary of what they have, and long for things of which they have had no experience, expressed a desire for the kingly name -- a name greatly disliked by almost all free nations. Yes, with an example of madness certainly very remarkable, they now preferred to exchange liberty for slavery. They, therefore, come in great numbers to Samuel, in order that, as he himself was now an old man, he might make for them a king. But he endeavored in a useful address, quietly to deter the people from their insane desire; he set forth the tyranny and haughty rule of kings, while he extolled liberty, and denounced slavery; finally, he threatened them with the divine wrath, if they should show themselves men so corrupt in mind as that, when having God as their king, they should demand for themselves a king from among men. Having spoken these and other words of a like nature to no purpose, finding that the people persisted in the determination, he consulted God. And God, moved by the madness of that insane nation, replied that nothing was to be refused to them asking against their own interests.

Chapter XXXIII. Accordingly, Saul, having been first anointed by Samuel with the sacerdotal oil

Accordingly, Saul, having been first anointed by Samuel with the sacerdotal oil, was appointed king. He was of the tribe of Benjamin, and his father's name was Kish. He was modest in mind, and of a singularly handsome figure, so that the dignity of his person worthily corresponded to the royal dignity. But in the beginning of his reign, some portion of the people had revolted from him, refusing to acknowledge his authority, and had joined themselves to the Ammonites. Saul, however, energetically wreaked his vengeance on these people; the enemy were conquered, and pardon was granted to the Hebrews. Then Saul is said to have been anointed by Samuel a second time. Next, a bloody war arose by an invasion of the Philistines; and Saul had appointed Gilgal as the place where his army was to assemble. As they waited there seven days for Samuel, that he might offer sacrifice to God, the people gradually dropped away owing to his delay, and the king, with unlawful presumption, presented a burnt-offering, thus taking upon him the duty of a priest. For this he was severely rebuked by Samuel, and acknowledged his sin with a penitence that was too late. For, as a result of the king's sin, fear had pervaded the whole army. The camp of the enemy lying at no great distance showed them how actual the danger was, and no one had the courage to think of going forth to battle: most had be-taken themselves to the marshes. [301] For besides the want of courage on the part of those who felt that God was alienated from them on account of the king's sin, the army was in the greatest want of iron weapons; so much so that nobody, except Saul and Jonathan his son, is said to have possessed either sword or spear. For the Philistines, as conquerors in the former wars, had deprived the Hebrews of the use of arms, [302] and no one had had the power of forging any weapon of war, or even making any implement for rural purposes. In these circumstances, Jonathan, with an audacious design, and with his armor-bearer as his only companion, entered the camp of the enemy, and having slain about twenty of them, spread a terror throughout the whole army. And then, through the appointment of God, betaking themselves to flight, they neither carried out orders nor kept their ranks, but placed all the hope of safety in flight. Saul, perceiving this, hastily drew forth his men, and pursuing the fugitives, obtained a victory. The king is said on that day to have issued a proclamation that no one should help himself to food until the enemy were destroyed. But Jonathan, knowing nothing of this prohibition, found a honey-comb, and, dipping the point of his weapon in it, ate up the honey. When that became known to the king through the anger of God which followed, he ordered his son to be put to death. But by the help of the people, he was saved from destruction. At that time, Samuel, being instructed by God, went to the king, and told him in the words of God to make war on the nation of the Amalekites, who had of old hindered the Hebrews when they were coming out of Egypt; and the prohibition was added that they should not covet any of the spoils of the conquered. Accordingly, an army was led into the territory of the enemy, the king was taken, and the nation subdued. But Saul, unable to resist the magnitude of the spoil, and unmindful of the divine injunctions, ordered the booty to be saved and gathered together.

Chapter XXXIV. God, displeased with what had been done, spoke to Samuel

God, displeased with what had been done, spoke to Samuel, saying that he repented that he had made Saul king. The priest reports what he had heard to the king. And ere long, being instructed by God, he anointed David with the royal oil, while he was as yet only a little boy [303] living under the care of his father, and acting as a shepherd, while he was accustomed often to play upon the harp. For this reason, he was taken afterwards by Saul, and reckoned among the servants of the king. And the Philistines and Hebrews being at this time hotly engaged in war, as the armies were stationed opposite to each other, a certain man of the Philistines named Goliath, a man of marvelous size and strength, passing along the ranks of his countrymen, cast insults, in the fiercest terms, upon the enemy, and challenged any one to engage in single combat with him. Then the king promised a great reward and his daughter in marriage to any one who should bring home the spoils of that boaster; but no one out of so great a multitude ventured to make the attempt. In these circumstances, though still a youth, [304] David offered himself for the contest, and rejecting the arms by which his yet tender age was weighed down, simply with a staff and five stones which he had taken, advanced to the battle. And by the first blow, having discharged one of the stones from a sling, he overthrew the Philistine; then he cut off the head of his conquered foe, carried off his spoils, and afterwards laid up his sword in the temple. In the meanwhile, all the Philistines, turning to flight, yielded the victory to the Hebrews. But the great favor shown to David as they were returning from the battle excited the envy of the king. Fearing, however, that if he put to death one so beloved by all, that might give rise to hatred against himself and prove disastrous, he resolved, under an appearance of doing him honor, to expose him to danger. First then he made him a captain, that he might be charged with the affairs of war; and next, although he had promised him his daughter, he broke his word, and gave her to another. Ere long, a younger daughter of the king, Melchol by name, fell violently in love with David. Accordingly, Saul sets before David as the condition of obtaining her in marriage the following proposal: that if he should bring in a hundred foreskins of the enemy, the royal maiden would be given him in marriage; for he hoped that the youth, venturing on so great dangers, would probably perish. But the result proved very different from what he imagined, for David, according to the proposal made to him, speedily brought in a hundred foreskins of the Philistines; and thus he obtained the daughter of the king in marriage.

Chapter XXXV. The hatred of the king towards him increased daily

The hatred of the king towards him increased daily, under the influence of jealousy, for the wicked always persecute the good. He, therefore, commanded his servants and Jonathan his son, to prepare snares against his life. But Jonathan had even from the first had a great regard and affection for David; and therefore the king, being taken to task by his son, suppressed the cruel order he had given. But the wicked are not long good. For, when Saul was afflicted by a spirit of error, and David stood by him, soothing him with the harp under his trouble, Saul tried to pierce him with a spear, and would have done so, had not he rapidly evaded the deadly blow. From this time forth, the king no longer secretly but openly sought to compass his death; and David no longer trusted himself in his power. He fled, and first betook himself to Samuel, then to Abimelech, and finally fled to the king of Moab. By-and-by, under the instructions of the prophet Gad, he returned into the land of Judah, and there ran in danger of his life. At that time, Saul slew Abimelech the priest because he had received David; and when none of the king's servants ventured to lay hands upon the priest, Doeg, the Syrian, fulfilled the cruel duty. After that, David made for the desert. Thither Saul also followed him, but his efforts at his destruction were in vain, for God protected him. There was a cave in the desert, opening with a vast recess. David had thrown himself into the inner parts of this cave. Saul, not knowing that he was there, had gone into it for the purpose of taking [305] bodily refreshment, and there, overcome by sleep, he was resting. When David perceived this, although all urged him to avail himself of the opportunity, he abstained from slaying the king, and simply took away his mantle. Presently going out, he addressed the king from a safe position behind, recounting the services he had done him, how often he had exposed his life to peril for the sake of the kingdom, and how last of all, he had not, on the present occasion, sought to kill him when he was given over to him by God. Upon hearing these things, Saul confessed his fault, entreated pardon, shed tears, extolled the piety of David, and blamed his own wickedness, while he addressed David as king and son. He was so much changed from his former ferocious character, that no one could now have thought he would make any further attempt against his son-in-law. But David, who had thoroughly [306] tested and known his evil disposition, did not think it safe to put himself in the power of the king, and kept himself within the desert. Saul, almost mad with rage, because he was unable to capture his son-in-law, gave in marriage to one Faltim his daughter Melchol, who, as we have related above, had been married to David. David fled to the Philistines.

Chapter XXXVI. At that time Samuel died.

At that time Samuel died. Saul, when the Philistines made war upon him, consulted God, and no answer was returned to him. Then, by means of a woman whose entrails a spirit of error [307] had filled, he called up and consulted Samuel. Saul was informed by him that on the following day he with his sons, being overcome by the Philistines, would fall in the battle. The Philistines, accordingly, having pitched their camp on the enemy's territory, drew up their army in battle array on the following day, David, however, being sent away from the camp, because they did not believe that he would be faithful to them against his own people. But the battle taking place, the Hebrews were routed and the sons of the king fell; Saul, having sunk down from his horse, that he might not be taken alive by the enemy, fell on his own sword. We do not find any certain statements as to the length of his reign, unless that he is said in the Acts of the Apostles to have reigned forty years. As to this, however, I am inclined to think that Paul, who made the statement in his preaching, then meant to include also the years of Samuel under the length of that king's reign. [308] Most of those, however, who have written about these times, remark that he reigned thirty years. I can, by no means, agree with this opinion, for at the time when the ark of God was transferred to the town of Cariathiarim, Saul had not yet begun to reign, and it is related that the ark was removed by David the king out of that town after it had been there twenty years. Therefore, since Saul reigned and died within that period, he must have held the government only for a very brief space of time. We find the same obscurity concerning the times of Samuel, who, having been born under the priesthood of Eli, is related, when very old, to have fulfilled the duties of a priest. By some, however, who have written about these times (for the sacred history has recorded almost nothing about his years), [309] but by most he is said to have ruled the people seventy years. I have, however, been unable to discover what authority there is for this assumption. Amid such variety of error, we have followed the account of the Chronicles, [310] because we think that it was taken (as said above) from the Acts of the Apostles, and we repeat that Samuel and Saul together held the government for forty years.

Chapter XXXVII. Saul having thus been cut off, David, when the news of his death was brought

Saul having thus been cut off, David, when the news of his death was brought to him in the land of the Philistines, is related to have wept, and to have given a marvelous proof of his affection. He then betook himself to Hebron, a town of Judæa; and, being there again anointed with the royal oil, received the title of king. But Abenner, who had been master of the host of King Saul, despised David, and made Isbaal king, the son of King Saul. Various battles then took place between the generals of the kings. Abenner was generally routed; yet in his flight he cut off the brother of Joab, who had the command of the army on the side of David. Joab, on account of the sorrow he felt for this, afterwards, when Abenner had surrendered to King David, ordered him to be murdered, not without regret on the part of the king, whose honor he had thus tarnished. At the same time, almost all the older men of the Hebrews conferred on him by public consent the sovereignty of the whole nation; for during seven years he had reigned only in Hebron. Thus, he was anointed king for the third time, being about thirty years of age. He repulsed in successful battles the Philistines making inroads upon his kingdom. And at that time, he transferred to Zion the ark of God, which, as I have said above, was in the town of Cariathiarim. And when he had formed the intention of building a temple to God, the divine answer was given him to the effect, that that was reserved for his son. He then conquered the Philistines in war, subjugated the Moabites, and subdued Syria, imposing tribute upon it. He brought back with him an enormous amount of booty in gold and brass. Next, a war arose against the Ammonites on account of the injury which had been done by their king, Annon. And when the Syrians again rebelled, having formed a confederacy for war with the Ammonites, David intrusted the chief command of the war to Joab, the master of his host, and he himself remained in Jerusalem far from the scene of strife.

Chapter XXXVIII. At this time, he knew in a guilty way Bersabe

At this time, he knew in a guilty way Bersabe, a woman of remarkable beauty. She is said to have been the wife of a certain man called Uriah, who was then in the camp. David caused him to be slain by exposing him to the enemy at a dangerous place in the battle. In this way, he added to the number of his wives the woman who was now free from the bond of marriage, but who was already pregnant through adultery. Then David, after being severely reprov'd by Nathan the prophet, although he confessed his sin, did not escape the punishment of God. For he lost in a few days the son who was born from the clandestine connection, and many terrible things happened in respect to his house and family. At last his son Absalom lifted impious arms against his father, with the desire of driving him from the throne. Joab encountered him in the field of battle, and the king entreated him to spare the young man when conquered; but he, disregarding this command, avenged with the sword his parricidal attempts. That victory is said to have been a mournful one to the king: so great was his natural affection that he wished even his parricidal son to be forgiven. This war seemed hardly finished when another arose, under a certain general called Sabæa, who had stirred up all the wicked to arms. But the whole commotion was speedily checked by the death of the leader. David then engaged in several battles against the Philistines with favorable results; and all being subdued by war, both foreign and home disturbances having been brought to accord, he possessed in peace a most flourishing kingdom. Then a sudden desire seized him of numbering the people, in order to ascertain the strength of his empire; and accordingly they were numbered by Joab, the master of the host, and were found to amount to one million three hundred thousand [311] citizens. David soon regretted and repented of this proceeding, and implored pardon of God for having lifted up his thoughts to this, that he should reckon the power of his kingdom rather by the multitude of his subjects than by the divine favor. Accordingly, an angel was sent to him to reveal to him a threefold punishment, and to give him the power of choosing either one or another. Well, when a famine for three years was set before him, and flight before his enemies for three months, and a pestilence for three days, shunning both flight and famine, he made choice of pestilence, and, almost in a moment of time, seventy thousand men perished. Then David, beholding the angel by whose right hand the people were overthrown, implored pardon, and offered himself singly to punishment instead of all, saying that he deserved destruction inasmuch as it was he who had sinned. Thus, the punishment of the people was turned aside; and David built an altar to God on the spot where he had beheld the angel. After this, having become infirm through years and illness, he appointed Solomon, who had been born to him by Bersabe, the wife of Uriah, his successor in the kingdom. He, having been anointed with the royal oil by Sadoc the priest, received the title of king, while his father was still alive. David died, after he had reigned forty years.

Chapter XXXIX. Solomon in the beginning of his reign surrounded the city with a wall.

Solomon in the beginning of his reign surrounded the city with a wall. To him while asleep God appeared standing by him, and gave him the choice of whatever things he desired. But he asked that nothing more than wisdom should be granted him, deeming all other things of little value. Accordingly, when he arose from sleep, taking his stand before the sanctuary of God, he gave a proof of the wisdom which had been bestowed upon him by God. For two women who dwelt in one house, having given birth to male children at the same time, and one of these having died in the night three days afterwards, the mother of the dead child, while the other woman slept, insidiously substituted her child, and took away the living one. Then there arose an altercation between them, and the matter was at length brought before the king. As no witness was forthcoming, it was a difficult matter to give a judgment between both denying guilt. Then Solomon, in the exercise of his gift of divine wisdom, ordered the child to be slain and its body to be divided between the two doubtful claimants. Well, when one of them acquiesced in this judgment, but the other wished rather to give up the boy than that he should be cut in pieces, Solomon, concluding from the feeling displayed by this woman that she was the true mother, adjudged the child to her. The bystanders could not repress their admiration at this decision, since he had in such a way brought out the hidden truth by his sagacity. Accordingly, the kings of the neighboring nations, out of admiration for his ability and wisdom, courted his friendship and alliance, being prepared to carry out his commands.

Chapter XL. Trusting in these resources, Solomon set about erecting a temple of immense size to God

Trusting in these resources, Solomon set about erecting a temple of immense size to God, funds for the purpose having been got together during three years, and laid the foundation of it about the fourth year of his reign. This was about the five hundred and eighty-eighth year after the departure of the Hebrews from Egypt, although in the third Book of Kings the years are reckoned at four hundred and forty. [312] This is by no means accurate; for it would have been more likely that, in the order of dates I have given above, I should perhaps reckon fewer years than more. But I do not doubt that the truth had been falsified by the carelessness of copyists, especially since so many ages intervened, rather than that the sacred [313] writer erred. In the same way, in the case of this little work of ours, we believe it will happen that, through the negligence of transcribers, those things which have been put together, not without care on our part, should be corrupted. Well, then, Solomon finished his work of building the temple in the twentieth year from its commencement. Then, having offered sacrifice in that place, as well as uttered a prayer, by which he blessed the people and the temple, God spoke to him, declaring that, if at any time they should sin and forsake God, their temple should be razed to the ground. We see that this has a long time ago been fulfilled, and in due time we shall set forth the connected order of events. In the meantime, Solomon abounded in wealth, and was, in fact, the richest of all the kings that ever lived. But, as always takes place in such circumstances, he sunk from wealth into luxury and vice, forming marriages (in spite of the prohibition of God) with foreign women, until he had seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines. As a consequence, he set up idols for them, after the manner of their nations, to which they might offer sacrifice. God, turned away from him by such doings, reprov'd him sharply, and made known to him as a punishment, that the greater part of his kingdom would be taken from his son, and given to a servant. And that happened accordingly.

Chapter XLI. For, on the death of Solomon in the fortieth year of his reign

For, on the death of Solomon in the fortieth year of his reign, Roboam his son having succeeded to the throne of his father in the sixteenth year of his age, a portion of the people, taking offense, revolted from him. For, having asked that the very heavy tribute which Solomon had imposed upon them might be lessened, he rejected the entreaties of these suppliants, and thus alienated from him the favor of the whole people. Accordingly, by universal consent, the government was bestowed on Jeroboam. He, sprung from a family of middle rank, had for some time been in the service of Solomon. But when the king found that the sovereignty of the Hebrews had been promised to him by a response of the prophet Achia, he had resolved privately to cut him off. Jeroboam, under the influence of this fear, fled into Egypt, and there married a wife of the royal family. But, when at length he heard of the death of Solomon, he returned to his native land, and, by the wish of the people, as we have said above, he assumed the government. Two tribes, however, Judah and Benjamin, had remained under the sway of Roboam; and from these he got ready an army of thirty thousand men. But when the two hosts advanced, the people were instructed by the words of God to abstain from fighting, for that Jeroboam had received the kingdom by divine appointment. Thus the army disdained the command of the king, and dispersed, while the power of Jeroboam was increased. But, since Roboam held Jerusalem, where the people had been accustomed to offer sacrifice to God in the temple built by Solomon, Jeroboam, fearing lest their religious feelings might alienate the people from him, resolved to fill their minds with superstition. Accordingly, he set up one golden calf at Bethel, and another at Dan, to which the people might offer sacrifice; and, passing by the tribe of Levi, he appointed priests from among the people. But censure followed this guilt so hateful to God. Frequent battles then took place between the kings, and so they retained their respective kingdoms on doubtful conditions. Roboam died at the close of the seventeenth year of his reign.

Chapter XLII. In his room Abiud his son held the kingdom at Jerusalem for six years

In his room Abiud his son held the kingdom at Jerusalem for six years, although he is said in the Chronicles [314] to have reigned three years. Asab his son succeeded him, being the fifth from David, as he was his great-great-grandson. He was a pious worshiper of God; for, destroying the altars and the groves of the idols, he removed the traces of his father's faithlessness. He formed an alliance with the king of Syria, and by his help inflicted much loss on the kingdom of Jeroboam, which was then held by his son, and often, after conquering the enemy, carried off spoil as the result of victory. After forty-one years he died, afflicted with disease in his feet. To him sin of a three-fold kind is ascribed; first, that he trusted too much to his alliance with the king of Syria; secondly, that he cast into prison a prophet of God who rebuked him for this; and thirdly, that, when suffering from disease in his feet, he sought a remedy, not from God, but from the physicians. In the beginning of his reign died Jeroboam, king of the ten tribes, and left his throne to his son Nabath. He, from his wicked works, and, both by his own and his [315] father's doings, hateful to God, did not possess the kingdom more than two years, and his children, as being unworthy, were deprived [316] of the government. He had for his successor Baasa, the son of Achia, and he proved himself equally estranged from God. He died in the twenty-sixth year of his reign: and his power passed to Ela his son, but was not retained more than two years. For Zambri, leader of his cavalry, killed him at a banquet, and seized the kingdom, -- a man equally odious to God and men. A portion of the people revolted from him, and the royal power was conferred on one Thamnis. But Zambri reigned before him seven years, and at the same time with him twelve years. And, on the death of Asab, Josaphat his son began to reign over part of the tribe of Judah, a man deservedly famous for his pious virtues. He lived at peace with Zambri; and he died, after a reign of twenty-five years.

Chapter XLIII. In the time of his reign, Ahab, the son of Ambri

In the time of his reign, Ahab, the son of Ambri, was king of the ten tribes, impious above all against God. For having taken in marriage Jezebel, the daughter of Basa, king of Sidon, he erected an altar and groves to the idol Bahal, and slew the prophets of God. At this time, Elijah the prophet by prayer shut up heaven, that it should not give any rain to the earth, and revealed that to the king, in order that he, in his impiety, might know himself to be the cause of the evil. The waters of heaven, therefore, being restrained, and since the whole country, burned up by the heat of the sun, did not furnish food either for man or beast, the prophet had even exposed himself to the side of perishing from hunger. At that time, when he betook himself to the desert, he depended for life on the ravens furnishing him with food, while a neighboring rivulet furnished him with water, until it was dried up. Then, being instructed by God, he went to the town of Saraptæ, and turned aside to lodge with a widow-woman. And when, in his hunger, he begged food from her, she complained that she had only a handful of meal and a little oil, on the consumption of which she expected death along with her children. [317] But when Elijah promised in the words of God that neither should the meal lessen in the barrel nor the oil in the vessel, the woman did not hesitate to believe the prophet demanding faith, and obtained [318] the fulfillment of what was promised, since by daily increase as much was added as was day by day taken away. At the same time, Elijah restored to life the dead son of the same widow. Then, by the command of God, he went to the king, and having reproved his impiety, he ordered all the people to be gathered together to himself. When these had hastily assembled, the priests of the idols and of the groves to the number of about four hundred and fifty, were also summoned. Then there arose a dispute between them, Elijah setting forth the honor of God, while they upheld their own superstitions. At length they agreed that a trial should be made to this effect, that if fire sent down from heaven should consume the slain victim of either of them, that religion should be accepted as the true one which performed the miracle. Accordingly, the priests, having slain a calf, began to call upon the idol Bahal; and, after wasting their invocations to no purpose, they tacitly acknowledged the helplessness of their God. Then Elijah mocked them and said, "Cry aloud more vehemently, lest perchance he sleeps, and that thus you may rouse him from the slumber in which he is sunk." The wretched men could do nothing but shudder and mutter to themselves, but still they waited to see what Elijah would do. Well, he slew a calf and laid it upon the altar, having first of all filled the sacred place with water; and then, calling upon the name of the Lord, fire fell from heaven in the sight of all, and consumed alike the water and the victim. Then truly the people, casting themselves upon the earth, confessed God and execrated the idols; while finally, by the command of Elijah, the impious priests were seized, and, being brought down to the brook, were there slain. The prophet followed the king as he returned from that place; but as Jezebel, the wife of the king, was devising means for taking his life, he retired to a more remote spot. There God addressed him, telling him that there were still seven thousand men who had not given themselves up to idols. That was to Elijah a marvelous statement, for he had supposed that he himself was the only one who had kept free from impiety.

Chapter XLIV. At that time, Ahab, king of Samaria, coveted the vineyard of Naboth

At that time, Ahab, king of Samaria, coveted the vineyard of Naboth, which was adjacent to his own. And as Naboth was unwilling to sell it to him, he was cut off by the wiles of Jezebel. Thus Ahab got possession of the vineyard, though he is said at the same time to have regretted the death of Naboth. Acknowledging his crime, he is related to have done [319] penance clothed in sackcloth; and in this way he turned aside threatening punishment. For the king of Syria with a great army, having formed a military confederacy with thirty-two kings, entered the territories of Samaria, and began to besiege the city with its king. The affairs of the besieged being then in a state of great distress, the Syrian king offers these conditions in the war, -- if they should give up their gold and silver and women, he would spare their lives. But, with such iniquitous conditions offered, it seemed better to suffer the greatest extremities. And now when the safety of all was despaired of, a prophet sent by God went to the king, encouraged him to go forth to battle, and when he hesitated, strengthened his confidence in many ways. Accordingly making a sally, the enemy were routed, and an abundant store of booty was secured. But, after a year, the Syrian king returned with recruited strength into Samaria, burning to avenge the defeat he had received, but was again overthrown. In that battle one hundred and twenty thousand of the Syrians perished; the king was pardoned, and his kingdom and former position were granted him. Then Ahab was reproved by the prophet in the words of God, for having abused the divine kindness, and spared the enemy delivered up to him. The Syrian king, therefore, after three years, made war upon the Hebrews. Against him Ahab, under the advice of some false prophet, went forth to battle, having spurned the words of Michea the prophet and cast him into prison, because the prophet had warned him that the fight would prove disastrous to him. Thus, then, Ahab, being slain in that battle, left the kingdom to his son Ochozia.

Chapter XLV. He, being sick in body, and having sent some of his servants to consult an

He, being sick in body, and having sent some of his servants to consult an idol about his recovery, Elijah, as instructed by God, met them in the way, and, after rebuking them ordered them to inform the king that his death would follow from that disease. Then the king ordered him to be seized and brought into his presence, but those who were sent for this purpose were consumed by fire from heaven. The king died, as the prophet had predicted. To him there succeeded his brother Joram; and he held the government for the space of twelve years. But on the side of the two tribes, Josaphat the king having died, Joram his son possessed the kingdom for eighteen years. He had the daughter of Ahab to wife, and proved himself more like his father-in-law than his father. After him, Ochozias his son obtained the kingdom. During his reign, Elijah is related to have been taken up to heaven. At the same time, Elisha his disciple showed himself powerful by working many miracles, which are all too well known to need any description from my pen. By him the son of a widow was restored to life, a leper of Syria was cleansed, at a time of famine abundance of all things was brought into the city by the enemy having been put to flight, water was furnished for the use of three armies, and from a little oil the debt of a woman was paid by the oil being immensely multiplied, and sufficient means for a livelihood was provided for herself. In his times, as we have said, Ochozia was king of the two tribes, while Joram, as we have related above, ruled over the ten; and an alliance was formed between them. For war was carried on by them with combined forces both against the Syrians, and against Jau, who had been anointed by the prophet as king of the ten tribes; and having gone forth to battle in company, they both perished in the same fight.

Chapter XLVI. But Jeu possessed the kingdom of Joram.

But Jeu possessed the kingdom of Joram. After the death of Ochozia in Judæa, when he had reigned one year, his mother, Gotholiah, seized the supreme power, having deprived her grandson (whose name was Joas) of the government, he being at the time but a little child. But the power thus snatched from him by his grandmother was, after eight years, restored to him through means of the priests and people, while his grandmother was driven into exile. He, at the beginning of his reign, was most devoted to the divine worship, and embellished the temple at great expense; afterwards, however, being corrupted by the flattery of the chief men, and unduly honored by them, he incurred wrath. For Azahel, king of Syria, made war upon him; and, as things went badly with him, he purchased peace with the gold of the temple. He did not, however, obtain it; but through resentment for what he had done he was slain by his own people in the fortieth year of his reign. He was succeeded by his son Amassia. But, on the side of the ten tribes, Jeu having died, Joachas his son began to reign, displeasing to God on account of his wicked works, in punishment of which his kingdom was ravaged by the Syrians, until, through the mercy of God, the enemy was driven back, and the inhabitants of the land began to occupy their former position. Joachas, having ended his days, left the kingdom to his son Joa. He raised civil war against Amassia, king of the two tribes; and, having obtained the victory, conveyed much spoil into his own kingdom. That is related to have occurred to Amassia as a punishment of his sin, for, having entered as a conqueror the territories of the Idumæans, he had adopted the idols of that nation. He is described as having reigned nine years, so far as I find it stated in the Books of Kings. But in the Chronicles [320] of Scripture, as well as in the Chronicles [321] of Eusebius, he is affirmed to have held the government twenty-nine years; and the mode of reckoning which may easily be perceived in these Books of Kings undoubtedly leads to that conclusion. For Jeroboam is said to have begun to reign as king of the ten tribes in the eighth year of the reign of Amassia, and to have held the government forty-one years, and to have at length died in the fourth year of the reign of Ozia, son of Amassia. By this mode of reckoning, the reign of Amassia is made to extend over twenty-eight years. Accordingly, we, following out this, inasmuch as it is our purpose to adhere in this work to the dates in their proper order, have accepted the authority of the Chronicles. [322]

Chapter XLVII. Ozias, then, the son of Amassia, succeeded to him.

Ozias, then, the son of Amassia, succeeded to him. For, on the side of the ten tribes, Joas, reaching the end of his days, had given place to his son Jeroboam, and after him, again, his son Zacharias began to reign. Of these kings, and of all who ruled over Samaria on the side of the ten tribes, we have not thought it necessary to note the dates, because, aiming at brevity, we have omitted everything superfluous; and we have thought that the years should be carefully traced for a knowledge especially of the times of that portion [323] of the Jews, which being carried into captivity at a later period than the other, passed through a longer time as a kingdom. Ozias, then, having obtained the kingdom of Judah, gave his principal care to knowing the Lord, making great use of Zachariah the prophet (Isaiah, too, is said to have first prophesied under this king); and, on this account, he carried on war against his neighbors with deservedly prosperous results, while he also conquered the Arabians. And already he had shaken Egypt with the terror of his name; but, being elated by prosperity, he ventured on what was forbidden, and offered incense to God, a thing which it was the established custom for the priests alone to do. Being, then, rebuked by Azaria the priest, and compelled to leave the sacred place, he burst out into a rage, but was, when he finally withdrew, covered with leprosy. Under the influence of this disease he ended his days, after having reigned fifty-two years. Then the kingdom was given to Joathas his son; and he is related to have been very pious, and carried on the government with success: he subdued in war the nation of the Ammonites, and compelled them to pay tribute. He reigned sixteen years, and his son Achaz succeeded him.

Chapter XLVIII. The remarkable faith of the Ninevites is related to have been manifested about these times.

The remarkable faith of the Ninevites is related to have been manifested about these times. That town, founded of old by Assure, the son of Sem, was the capital of the kingdom of the Assyrians. It was then full of a multitude of inhabitants, sustaining one hundred and twenty thousand men, and abounding in wickedness, as is usually the case among a vast concourse of people. God, moved by their sinfulness, commanded the prophet Jonah to go from Judæa, and denounce destruction upon the city, as Sodom and Gomorrah had of old been consumed by fire from heaven. But the prophet declined that office of preaching, not out of contumacy, but from foresight, which enabled him to behold God reconciled through the repentance of the people; and he embarked on board a ship which was bound for Tharsus, in a very different direction. But, after they had gone forth into the deep, the sailors, constrained by the violence of the sea, inquired by means of the lot who was the cause of that suffering. And when the lot fell upon Jonah, he was cast into the sea, to be, as it were, a sacrifice for stilling the tempest, and he was seized and swallowed by a whale -- a monster of the deep. Cast out three days afterwards on the shores of the [324] Ninevites, he preached as he had been commanded, namely that the city would be destroyed in three [325] days, as a punishment for the sins of the people. The voice of the prophet was listened to, not in a hypocritical fashion, as at Sodom of old; and immediately by the order, and after the example, of the king, the whole people, and even those infants newly born, are commanded to abstain from meat and drink: the very beasts of burden in the place, and animals of different kinds, being forced by hunger and thirst, presented an appearance of those who lamented along with the human inhabitants. In this way, the threatened evil was averted. To Jonah, complaining to God, that his words had not been fulfilled, it was answered that pardon could never be denied to the penitent.

Chapter XLIX. But in Samaria, Zacharia the king, who was very wicked

But in Samaria, Zacharia the king, who was very wicked, and whom we have spoken of above as occupying the throne, was slain by a certain Sella, who seized the kingdom. He, in turn, perished by the treachery of Mane, who simply repeated the conduct of his predecessor. Mane held the government which he had taken from Sella, and left it to his son Pache. But a certain person of the same name slew Pache, and seized the kingdom. Ere long being cut off by Osee, he lost the sovereignty by the same crime by which he had received it. This man, being ungodly beyond all the kings who had preceded him, brought punishment upon himself from God, and a perpetual captivity on his nation. For Salmanasar, king of the Assyrians, made war with him, and when conquered rendered him tributary. But when, with secret plans, he was preparing for rebellion, and had asked the king of the Ethiopians, who then had possession of Egypt for his assistance, Salmanasar, on discovering that, cast him into prison with fetters never taken off, while he destroyed the city, and carried off the whole people into his own kingdom, Assyrians being placed in the enemy's country to guard it. Hence that district was called Samaria, because in the language of the Assyrians guards are called Samaritæ. [326] Very many of their settlers accepted the divine rites of the Jewish religion, while others remained in the errors of heathenism. In this war, Tobias was carried into captivity. But on the side of the two tribes, Achaz, who was displeasing to God on account of his impiety, finding he had frequently the worst of it in wars with his neighbors, resolved to worship the gods of the heathen, undoubtedly because by their help his enemies had proved victorious in frequent battles. He ended his days with this crime [327] in his wicked mind, after a reign of sixteen years.

Chapter L. To him succeeded Ezekias his son, a man very unlike his father in character.

To him succeeded Ezekias his son, a man very unlike his father in character. For, in the beginning of his reign, urging the people and the priests to the worship of God, he discoursed to them in many words, showing how often, after being chastened by the Lord, they had obtained mercy, and how the ten tribes, having been at last carried away into captivity, as had lately happened, were now paying the penalty of their impiety. He added that their duty was carefully to be on their guard lest they should deserve to suffer the same things. Thus, the minds of all being turned to religion, he appointed the Levites and all the priests to offer sacrifices according to the law, and arranged that the Passover, which had for a long time been neglected, should be celebrated. And when the holy day was at hand, he proclaimed the special day of assembly by messengers sent throughout all the land, so that, if any had remained in Samaria, after the removal of the ten tribes, they might gather together for the sacred observance. Thus, in a very full assemblage, the sacred day was spent with public rejoicing, and, after a long interval, the proper religious rites were restored by means of Ezekias. He then carried on military affairs with the same diligence with which he had attended to divine things, and defeated the Philistines in frequent battles; until Sennacherim, king of the Assyrians, made war against him, having entered his territories with a large army; and then, when the country had been laid waste without any opposition, he laid siege to the city. For Ezekias, being inferior in numbers, did not venture to come to an engagement with him, but kept himself safe within the walls. The king of Assyria, thundering at the gates, threatened destruction, and demanded surrender, exclaiming that in vain did Ezekias put his trust in God, for that he rather had taken up arms by the appointment of God; and that the conqueror of all nations, as well as the overthrower of Samaria could not be escaped, unless the king secured his own safety by a speedy surrender. In this state of affairs, Ezekias, trusting in God, consulted the prophet Isaiah, and from his answer he learned that there would be no danger from the enemy, and that the divine assistance would not fail him. And, in fact, not long after, Tarraca, king of Ethiopia, invaded the kingdom of the Assyrians.

Chapter LI. By this news Sennacherim was led to return in order to defend his own territories

By this news Sennacherim was led to return in order to defend his own territories, and he gave up the war, at the same time murmuring and crying out that victory was snatched from him the victor. He also sent letters to Ezekias, declaring, with many insulting words, that he, after settling his own affairs, would speedily return for the destruction of Judæa. But Ezekias, in no wise disturbed by these threats, is said to have prayed to God that he would not allow the so great insolence of this man to pass unavenged. Accordingly, in the same night, an angel attacking the camp of the Assyrians, caused [328] the death of many thousand men. The king in terror fled to the town of Nineveh, and being there slain by his sons, met with an end worthy of himself. At the same time, Ezekias, sick in body, lay suffering from disease. And when Isaiah had announced to him in the words of the Lord that the end of his life was at hand, the king is related to have wept; and thus he got fifteen years added to his life. These coming to an end, he died in the twenty-ninth year of his reign, and left the kingdom to his son Manasse. He, degenerating much from his father, forsook God, and took to the practice of impious worship; and being, as a punishment for this, delivered into the power of the Assyrians, he was by his sufferings constrained to acknowledge his error, and exhorted the people that, forsaking their idols, they should worship God. He accomplished nothing worthy of special mention, but reigned for fifty-five years. Then Amos his son obtained the kingdom, but possessed it only two years. He was the heir of his father's impiety, and showed himself regardless of God: being entrapped by some stratagems of his friends, he perished.

Chapter LII. The government then passed to his son Josia.

The government then passed to his son Josia. He is related to have been very pious, and to have attended to divine things with the utmost care, profiting largely by the aid of the priest Helchia. Having read a book written with the words of God, and which had been found in the temple by the priest, in which it was stated that the Hebrew nation would be destroyed on account of their frequent acts of impiety and sacrilege, by his pious supplications to God, and constant tears, he averted the impending overthrow. When he learned through Olda the prophetess that this favor was granted him, he then with still greater care set himself to practice the worship of God, inasmuch as he was now under obligation to the divine goodness. Accordingly, he burned all the vessels which had by the superstitions of former kings been consecrated to idols. For to such a height had profane observances prevailed, that they used to pay divine honors to the sun and moon, and even erected shrines made of metal to these fancied deities. Josia reduced these to powder, and also slew the priests of the profane temples. He did not even spare the tombs of the impious; and it was observed that thus was fulfilled what had of old been predicted by the prophet. In the eighteenth year of his reign, the Passover was celebrated. And about three years afterwards, having gone forth to battle against Nechao, king of Egypt, who was making war upon the Assyrians, before the armies properly engaged, he was wounded by an arrow. And being carried back to the city, he died of that wound, after he had reigned twenty and one years.

Chapter LIII. Joachas, his son, having then obtained the kingdom, held it for three months

Joachas, his son, having then obtained the kingdom, held it for three months, being doomed to captivity on account of his impiety. For Nechao, king of Egypt, bound him and led him away captive, and not long after, while still a prisoner, he ended his days. An annual tribute was demanded of the Jews, and a king was given them at the will of the victor. His name was Eliakim, but he afterwards changed it to Joachim. He was the brother of Joacha, and the son of Josia, but liker his brother than his father, displeasing God by his impiety. Accordingly, while he was in subjection to the king of Egypt, and in token thereof paid him tribute, Nabuchodonosor, the king of Babylon, seized the land of Judæa, and as victor held it by the right of war for three years. For the king of Egypt now giving way, and the boundaries of their empire being fixed between them, it had been agreed that the Jews should belong to Babylon. Thus after Joachim, having finished his reign of eleven years, had given place to his son of the same name, and he had excited against himself the wrath of the king of Babylon (God undoubtedly overruling everything, having resolved to give the nation of the Jews up to captivity and destruction), Nabuchodonosor entered Jerusalem with an army, and leveled the walls and the temple to the ground. He also carried off an immense amount of gold, with sacred ornaments either public or private, and all of mature age both of the male and female sex, those only being left behind whose weakness or age caused trouble to the conquerors. This useless crowd had the task assigned them of working and cultivating the fields in slavery, in order that the soil might not be neglected. Over them a king called Sedechias was appointed; but while the empty shadow of the name of king was allowed him, all real power was taken away. Joachim, for his part, possessed the sovereignty only for three months. He was carried away, along with the people, to Babylon, and was there thrown into prison; but being, after a period of thirty years released, while he was admitted by the king to his friendship, and made a partaker with him at his table and in his counsels, he died at last, not without some consolation in that his misfortunes had been removed.

Chapter LIV. Meanwhile Sedechias, the king of the useless multitude, although without power

Meanwhile Sedechias, the king of the useless multitude, although without power, being of an unfaithful disposition and neglectful of God, and not understanding that captivity had been brought upon them on account of the sins of the nation, becoming at length ripe for suffering the last evils he could endure, offended the mind of the king. Accordingly, after a period of nine years, Nabuchodonosor made war against him, and having forced him to flee within the walls, besieged him for three years. At this time, he consulted Jeremia the prophet, who had already often proclaimed that captivity impended over the city, to discover if perhaps there might still be some hope. But he, not ignorant of the anger of heaven, having frequently had the same question put to him, at length gave an answer, denouncing special punishment upon the king. Then Sedechias, roused to resentment, ordered the prophet to be thrust into prison. Ere long, however, he regretted this cruel act, but, as the chief men of the Jews (whose practice it had been even from the beginning to afflict the righteous) opposed him, he did not venture to release the innocent man. Under coercion from the same persons, the prophet was let down into a pit [329] of great depth, and which was disgusting from its filth and squalor, while a deadly stench issued from it. This was done that he might not simply die by a common death. But the king, impious though he was, yet showed himself somewhat more merciful than the priests, and ordered the prophet to be taken out of the pit, and restored to the safekeeping of the prison. In the meantime the force of the enemy and want began to press the besieged hard, and everything being consumed that could be eaten, famine took a firm hold of them. Thus, its defenders being worn out with want of food, the town was taken and burnt. The king, as the prophet had declared, had his eyes put out, and was carried away to Babylon, while Jeremia, through the mercy of the enemy, was taken out of his prison. When Nabuzardan, one of the royal princes, was leading him away captive with the rest, the choice was granted by him to the prophet, either to remain in his deserted and desolated native country, or to go along with him in the possession of the highest honors; and Jeremia preferred to abide in his native land. Nabuchodonosor, having carried away the people, appointed as governor over those left behind by the conquerors (either from the circumstances attending the war, or from an absolute weariness of accumulating spoil) Godolia, who belonged to the same nation. He gave him, however, no royal ensign, or even the name of governor, because there was really no honor in ruling over these few wretched persons.

Chapter I. The times of the captivity have been rendered illustrious by the predictions and deeds of

The times of the captivity have been rendered illustrious by the predictions and deeds of the prophets, and especially by the remarkable persistency of Daniel in upholding the law, and by the deliverance of Susanna through the divine wisdom, as well as by the other things which it accomplished, and which we shall now relate in their order, Daniel was made a prisoner under King Joachim, and was brought to Babylon, while still a very little child. Afterwards, on account of the beauty of his countenance, he had a place given him among the king's servants, and along with him, Annanias, Misael, and Azarias. But, when the king had ordered them to be supplied with the finer kinds of food, and had imposed it as a duty on Asphane the eunuch to attend to that matter, Daniel, mindful of the traditions of his fathers which forbade him to partake of food from the table of a king of the Gentiles, begged of the eunuch to be allowed to use a diet of pulse only. Asphane objected that the leanness which would follow might reveal the fact that the king's commandment had been disobeyed; but Daniel, putting his trust in God, promised that he would have greater beauty of countenance from living on pulse than from the use of the king's dainties. And his words were made good, so that the faces of those who were cared for at the public expense were regarded as by no means comparable to those of Daniel and his friends. Accordingly, being promoted by the king to honor and favor, they were, in a short time, by their prudence and wise conduct, preferred to all those that stood nearest to the king. About the same time, Susanna, the wife of a certain man called Joachis, a woman of remarkable beauty, was desired by two elders, and, when she would not listen to their unchaste proposals, was assailed by a false accusation. These elders reported that a young man was found with her in a retired place, but escaped their hands by his youthful nimbleness, while they were enfeebled with age. Credit, accordingly, was given to these elders, and Susanna was condemned by the sentence of the people. And, as she was being led away to punishment according to the law, Daniel, who was then twelve years old, after having rebuked the Jews for delivering the innocent to death, demanded that she should be brought back to trial, and that her cause should be heard afresh. For the multitude of the Jews who were then present, thought that a boy of an age so little commanding respect, had not ventured to take such a bold step without a divine impulse, and, granting him the favor which was asked, returned anew to council. The trial, then, is entered upon once more; and Daniel was allowed to take his place among the elders. Upon this, he orders the two accusers to be separated from each other, and inquires of each of them in turn, under what kind of a tree he had discovered the adulteress. From the difference of answers which they gave, their falsehood was detected: Susanna was acquitted; and the elders, who had brought the innocent into danger, were condemned to death.

Chapter II. At that time, Nabuchodonosor had a dream marvelous for that insight into the future which

At that time, Nabuchodonosor had a dream marvelous for that insight [330] into the future which it implied. As he could not of himself bring out its interpretation, he sent for the Chaldæans who were supposed by magic arts and by the entrails of victims to know secret things, and to predict the future, in order to its interpretation. Presently becoming apprehensive lest, in the usual manner of men, they should extract from the dream not what was true, but what would be acceptable to the king, he suppresses the things he had seen, and demands of them that, if a real power of divination was in them, they should relate to him the dream itself; saying that he would then believe their interpretation, if they should first make proof of their skill by relating the dream. But they declined attempting so great a difficulty, and confessed that such a thing was not within the reach of human power. The king, enraged because, under a false profession of divination, they were mocking men with their errors, while they were compelled by the present case to acknowledge that they had no such knowledge as was pretended, made an exposure of them by means of a royal edict; and all the men professing that art were publicly put to death. When Daniel heard of that, he spoke to one of those nearest to the king, and promised to give an account of the dream, as well as supply its interpretation. The thing is reported to the king, and Daniel is sent for. The mystery had already been revealed to him by God; and so he relates the vision of the king, as well as interprets it. But this matter demands that we set forth the dream of the king and its interpretation, along with the fulfillment of his words by what followed. The king, then, had seen in his sleep an image with a head of gold, with a breast and arms of silver, with a belly and thighs of brass, with legs of iron, and which in its feet ended partly with iron, and partly with clay. But the iron and the clay when blended together could not adhere to each other. At last, a stone cut out without hands broke the image to pieces, and the whole, being reduced to dust, was carried away by the wind.

Chapter III. Accordingly, as the prophet interpreted the matter, the image which was seen furnished a representation

Accordingly, as the prophet interpreted the matter, the image which was seen furnished a representation of the world. The golden head is the empire of the Chaldæans; for we have understood that it was the first and wealthiest. The breast and the arms of silver represent the second kingdom; for Cyrus, after the Chaldæans and the Medes were conquered, conferred the empire on the Persians. In the brazen belly it is said that the third sovereignty was indicated; and we see that this was fulfilled, for Alexander took the empire from the Persians, and won the sovereignty for the Macedonians. The iron legs point to a fourth power, and that is understood of the Roman empire, which is more powerful [331] than all the kingdoms which were before it. But the fact that the feet were partly of iron and partly clay, indicates that the Roman empire is to be divided, so as never to be united. This, too, has been fulfilled, for the Roman state is ruled not by one emperor but by several, and these are always quarreling among themselves, either in actual warfare or by factions. Finally, by the clay and the iron being mixed together, yet never in their substance thoroughly uniting, are shadowed forth those future mixtures of the human race which disagree among themselves, though apparently combined. For it is obvious that the Roman territory is occupied by foreign nations, or rebels, or that it has been given over to those who have surrendered themselves under an appearance [332] of peace. And it is also evident that barbarous nations, and especially Jews, have been commingled with our armies, cities, and provinces; and we thus behold them living among us, yet by no means agreeing to adopt our customs. And the prophets declare that these are the last times. But in the stone cut out without hands, which broke to pieces the gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay, there is a figure of Christ. For he, not born under human conditions (since he was born not of the will of man, but of the will of God), will reduce to nothing that world in which exist earthly kingdoms, and will establish another kingdom, incorruptible and everlasting, that is, the future world, which is prepared for the saints. The faith of some still hesitates about this point only, while they do not believe about things yet to come, though they are convinced of the things that are past. Daniel, then, was presented with many gifts by the king, was set over Babylon and the whole empire, and was held in the highest honor. By his influence, Annanias, Azarias, and Misael were also advanced to the highest dignity and power. About the same time, the remarkable prophecies of Ezekiel came out, the mystery of future things and of the resurrection [333] having been revealed to him. His book is one of great weight, and deserves to be read with care.

Chapter IV. But in Judæa, over which, as we have related above

But in Judæa, over which, as we have related above, Godolia was set after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews taking it very ill that a ruler not of the royal race had been assigned them by the mere will of the conqueror, with a certain Ismael as their leader and instigator of the execrable conspiracy, cut off Godolia by means of treachery while he was at a banquet. Those, however, who had no part in the plot, wishing to take steps for avenging the deed, hastily take up arms against Ismael. But when he learned that destruction threatened him, leaving the army which he had collected, and with not more than eight companions he fled to the Ammonites. Fear, therefore, fell upon the whole people, lest the king of Babylon should avenge the guilt of a few by the destruction of all; for, in addition to Godolia, they had slain many of the Chaldæans along with him. They, therefore, form a plan of fleeing into Egypt, but they first go in a body to Jeremia, requesting of him divine counsel. He then exhorted them all in the words of God to remain in their native country, telling them that if they did so, they would be protected by the power of God, and that no danger would accrue from the Babylonians, but that, if they went into Egypt, they would all perish there by sword, and famine, and different kinds of death. The rabble, however, with the usual evil tendency they show, being unaccustomed to yield to useful advice and the divine power, did go into Egypt. The sacred Scriptures are silent as to their future fate; and I have not been able to discover anything regarding it.

Chapter V. At this period of time, Nabuchodonosor elated with prosperity

At this period of time, Nabuchodonosor elated with prosperity, erected a golden statue to himself of enormous size, and ordered it to be worshiped as a sacred image. And when this was zealously gone about by all, inasmuch as their minds had been corrupted by the universal flattery which prevailed, Annanias, Azarias, and Misael kept aloof from the profane observance, being well aware that that honor was due to God alone. They were therefore, according to an edict of the king, regarded as criminals, and there was set before them, as the means of punishment, a fiery furnace, in order that, by present terror, they might be compelled to worship the statue. But they preferred to be swallowed up by the flames rather than to commit such a sin. Accordingly, they were bound, and cast into the midst of the fire. But the flames laid hold of the agents in this execrable work, as they were forcing, with all eagerness, the victims into the fire; while -- wonderful to say, and indeed incredible to all but eye-witnesses -- the fire did not touch the Hebrews at all. They were seen by the spectators walking in the midst of the furnace, and singing a song of praise to God, while there was also beheld along with them a fourth person having the appearance of an angel, and whom Nabuchodonosor, on obtaining a nearer view of him, acknowledged to be the [334] Son of God. Then the king having no doubt that the divine power was present in the event which had taken place, sent proclamations throughout his whole kingdom making known the miracle which had taken place, and confessing that honor was to be paid to God alone. Not long after, being instructed by a vision which presented itself to him, and presently also by a voice which reached him from heaven, he is said to have done penance by laying aside his kingly power, retiring from all intercourse with mankind, and to have sustained life by herbs alone. However, his empire was kept for him by the will of God, until the time was fulfilled, and at length duly acknowledging God, he was, after seven years, restored to his kingdom and former position. He is related, after having conquered Sedechia (whom he carried away captive to Babylon), as we have said above, to have reigned twenty-six years, although I do not find that recorded in the sacred history. But it has perhaps happened that, while I was engaged in searching out many points, I found this remark in the work of some anonymous author which had become interpolated in course of time, and in which the dates of the Babylonish kings were contained. I did not think it right to pass the remark unnoticed, since it does in fact harmonize with the Chronicles, and thus its account agrees with us, to the effect that, through the succession of the kings, whose dates the record contained, it completed seventy years up to the first year of king Cyrus, and such in fact is the number of years which is stated in the sacred history to have elapsed from the captivity up to the time of Cyrus.

Chapter VI. After Nabuchodonosor, the kingdom fell to his son, whom I find called Euilmarodac in the

After Nabuchodonosor, the kingdom fell to his son, whom I find called Euilmarodac in the Chronicles. He died in the twelfth year of his reign, and made room for his younger brother, who was called Balthasar. He, when in the fourteenth year he gave a public feast to his chief men and rulers, ordered the sacred vessels (which had been taken away by Nabuchodonosor from the temple at Jerusalem, yet had not been employed for any uses of the king, but were kept laid up in the treasury) to be brought forth. And when all persons, both of the male and female sex, with his wives and concubines, were using these amid the luxury and licentiousness of a royal banquet, suddenly the king observed fingers writing upon the wall, and the letters were perceived to be formed into words. [335] But no one could be found who was able to read the writing. The king, therefore, in perturbation called for the magi and the Chaldæans. When these simply muttered among themselves and answered nothing, the queen reminded the king that there was a certain Hebrew, Daniel by name, who had formerly revealed to Nabuchodonosor a dream containing a secret mystery, and had then, on account of his remarkable wisdom, been promoted to the highest honors. Accordingly, he, being sent for, read and interpreted the writing, to the effect that, on account of the sin of the king, who had profaned vessels sacred to God, destruction impended over him, and that his kingdom was given to the Medes and Persians. And this presently took place. For, on the same night, Balthasar perished, and Darius, a Mede by nation, took possession of his kingdom. He again, finding that Daniel was held in the highest reputation, placed him at the head of the whole empire, in this following the judgment of the kings who had preceded him. For Nabuchodonosor had also set him over the kingdom, and Balthasar had presented him with a purple robe and a golden chain, while he also constituted him the third ruler in the kingdom.

Chapter VII. Those, therefore, who were possessed of power along with him

Those, therefore, who were possessed of power along with him, stimulated by envy, because a foreigner belonging to a captive nation had been placed on a footing of equality with them, constrain the king, who had been corrupted by flattery, to enact that divine honors should be paid to him for the next thirty days, and that it should not be lawful for any one to pray to a god except the king. Darius was easily persuaded to that, through the folly of all kings who claim for themselves divine honors. In these circumstances, Daniel being not unacquainted with what had happened, and not being ignorant that prayer ought to be addressed to God, and not to man, is accused of not having obeyed the king's commandment. And much against the will of Darius, to whom he had always been dear and acceptable, the rulers prevailed that he should be let down into a den. [336] But no harm came to him when thus exposed to the wild beasts. And on the king discovering this, he ordered his accusers to be given over to the lions. They, however, did not pass through a similar experience, for they were instantly devoured to satisfy the hunger of the savage beasts. Daniel, who had been famous before, was now esteemed still more famous; and the king, repealing his former edict, issued a new one to the effect that, all errors and superstitions being abandoned, the God of Daniel was to be worshiped. There exists also a record of visions of Daniel, in which he revealed the order of events in coming ages, embracing in them also the number of the years, within which he announced that Christ would descend to earth (as has taken place), and clearly set forth the future coming of Antichrist. If any one is eager to inquire into these points, he will find them more fully treated of in the book of Daniel: our design is simply to present a connected statement of events. Darius is related to have reigned eighteen years; after which date Astyages began to rule over the Medes.

Chapter VIII. Him Cyrus, his grandson by his daughter, expelled from the kingdom

Him Cyrus, his grandson by his daughter, expelled from the kingdom, having used the arms of the Persians for the purpose; and hence the chief power was transferred to the Persians. The Babylonians also fell under his power and government. It happened at the beginning of his reign that, by the issue of public edicts, he gave permission to the Jews to return into their own country; and he also restored the sacred vessels which Nabuchodonosor had carried away from the temple at Jerusalem. Accordingly, a few then returned into Judæa; as to the others, we have not been able to discover whether the desire of returning, or the power of doing so, was wanting. There was at that time among the Babylonians a brazen image of Belus, a very ancient king, whom Virgil also has mentioned. [337] This having been deemed sacred by the superstition of the people, Cyrus also had been accustomed to worship, being deceived by the trickery of its priests. They affirmed that the image ate and drank, while they themselves secretly carried off the daily portion which was offered to the idol. Cyrus, then, being on intimate terms with Daniel, asked him why he did not worship the image, since it was a manifest symbol of the living God, as consuming those things which were offered to it. Daniel, laughing at the mistake of the man, replied that it could not possibly be the case, that that work of brass -- mere insensate matter -- could use either meat or drink. The king, therefore, ordered the priests to be called (they were about seventy in number); and, bringing terror to bear upon them, he reprovngly asked them who was in the way of consuming what was offered, since Daniel, a man distinguished for his wisdom, maintained that that could not be done by an insensate image. Then they, trusting in their ready-made trick, ordered the usual offering to be made, and the temple to be sealed up by the king, on the understanding that, unless on the following day the whole offering were found to have been consumed, they should suffer death, while, on the opposite being discovered, the same fate awaited Daniel. Accordingly, the temple was sealed up by the signet of the king; but Daniel had previously, without the knowledge of the priests, covered the floor of it with ashes, so that their footprints might betray the clandestine approaches of those who entered. The king, then, having entered the temple on the following day, perceived that those things had been taken away, which he had ordered to be served up to the idol. Then Daniel lays open the secret fraud by the betraying footprints, showing that the priests, with their wives and children, had entered the temple by a hole opened from below, and had devoured those things which were served up to the idol. Accordingly, all of them were put to death by the order of the king, while the temple and image were submitted to the power of Daniel, and were destroyed at his command.

Chapter IX. In the meantime, those Jews, who, as we have said above

In the meantime, those Jews, who, as we have said above, returned into their native land by the permission of Cyrus, attempted to restore their city and temple. But, being few and poor, they made but little progress, until, at last, after the lapse of about a hundred years, while Artaxerxes the king ruled over the Persians, they were absolutely deterred from building by those who had local authority. For, at that time, Syria and all Judæa was ruled under the empire of the Persians by magistrates and governors. Accordingly, these took counsel to write to king Artaxerxes, that it was not fitting that opportunity should be granted to the Jews of rebuilding their city, lest, in accordance with their stubborn character, and being accustomed to rule over other nations, they should, on recovering their strength, not submit to live under the sway of a foreign power. Thus, the plan of the rulers being approved of by the king, the building of the city was put a stop to, and delayed until the second year of Darius the king. But, who were kings of Persia throughout this period of time, we shall here insert, in order that the succession of the dates may be set forth in a regular and fixed order. Well, then, after Darius the Mede, who, as we have said above, reigned eighteen years, Cyrus held the supreme power for thirty-one years. While making war upon the Scythians, he fell in battle, in the second year after Tarquinius Superbus began to reign at Rome. To Cyrus succeeded his son Cambyses, and reigned eight years. He, after harassing with war Egypt and Ethiopia, and subduing these countries, returned as victor to Persia, but accidentally hurt himself, and died from that wound. After his death, two brothers, who were magi, and Medes by nation, held rule over the Persians for seven months. To slay these, seven of the most noble of the Persians formed a conspiracy, of whom the leader was Darius, the son of Hystaspes, who was a cousin of Cyrus, and by unanimous consent the kingdom was bestowed on him: he reigned thirty and six years. He, four years before his death, fought at Marathon, in a battle greatly celebrated both in Greek and Roman history. That took place about the two hundred and sixtieth year after the founding of Rome, while Macerinus and Augurinus were consuls, that is, eight hundred and eighty-eight years ago, provided the research I have made into the succession of Roman consuls does not deceive me; for I have made the entire reckoning down to the time of Stilico. [338] After Darius came Xerxes, and he is said to have reigned twenty-one years, although I have found that the length of his rule is, in most copies, [339] set down at twenty and five years. To him succeeded Artaxerxes, of whom we have made mention above. Since he ordered the building of the Jewish city and temple to be stopped, the work was suspended to the second year of king Darius. But that the succession of dates may be completed up to him, I have to state that Artaxerxes reigned forty-one years, Xerxes two months, and that, after him, Sucdianus ruled for seven months.

Chapter X. Next, Darius, under whom the temple was restored, obtained the kingdom

Next, Darius, under whom the temple was restored, obtained the kingdom, his name being at that time Ochus. He had three Hebrew of tried fidelity as his bodyguard, and of these had, from the proof of his prudence which he had given, attracted towards himself the admiration of the king. The choice, then, being given him of asking for anything which he had formed a desire for in his heart, groaning over the ruins of his country, he begged permission to restore the city, and obtained an order from the king to urge the lieutenants and rulers to hurry forward the building of the holy temple, and furnish the expense needful to that end. Accordingly, the temple was completed in four years; that is, in the sixth year after Darius began to reign, and that seemed, for the time, enough to the people of the Jews. For, as it was a work of great labor to restore the city, distrusting their own resources, they did not venture at the time to begin an undertaking of so great difficulty, but were content with having rebuilt the temple. At the same time, Esdras the scribe, who was skilled in the law, about twenty years after the temple had been completed (Darius being now dead who had possessed the sovereignty for nineteen years), by the permission of Artaxerxes the second (not he who had a place between the two Xerxes, but he who had succeeded to Darius Ochus), set out from Babylon with many following him, and they carried to Jerusalem the vessels of various workmanship, as well as the gifts which the king had sent for the temple of God. Along with them were but twelve Levites; for with difficulty that number of the tribe is related then to have been found. He, having found that the Jews united in marriage with the Gentiles, rebuked them severely on that account, and ordered them to renounce all connections of that kind, as well as to put away the children which had been the issue of such marriages; and all yielded obedience to his word. The people, then, being sanctified, performed the rites sanctioned by the ancient law. But I do not find that Esdras did anything with the view of restoring the city; because he thought, as I imagine, that a more urgent duty was to reform the people from the corrupt habits which they had contracted.

Chapter XI. There was at that time at Babylon one Nehemiah

There was at that time at Babylon one Nehemiah, a servant of the king, a Jew by birth, and very much beloved by Artaxerxes on account of the services he had rendered. He, having inquired of his fellow-countrymen the Jews, what was the condition of their ancestral city; and having learned that his native land remained in the same fallen condition as before, is said to have been disturbed with all his heart, and to have prayed to God with groans and many tears. He also called to mind the sins of his nation, and urgently entreated the divine compassion. Accordingly, the king noticing that he, while waiting at table, seemed more sorrowful than usual, asked him to explain the reasons of his grief. Then he began to bewail the misfortunes of his nation, and the ruin of his ancestral city, which now, for almost two hundred and fifty years, being leveled with the ground, furnished a proof of the evils which had been endured, and a gazing-stock to their enemies. He therefore begged the king to grant him the liberty of going and restoring it. The king yielded to these dutiful entreaties, and immediately sent him away with a guard of cavalry, that he might the more safely accomplish his journey, giving him, at the same time, letters to the rulers requesting them to furnish him with all that was necessary. When he arrived at Jerusalem, he distributed the work connected with the city to the people, man by man; and all vied with each other in carrying out the orders which they received. And already the work of rebuilding [340] had been half accomplished, when the jealousy of the surrounding heathen burst out, and the neighboring cities conspired to interrupt the works, and to deter the Jews from building. But Nehemiah, having stationed guards against those making assaults upon the people, was in no degree alarmed, and carried out what he had begun. And thus, after the wall was completed, and the entrances of the gates finished, he measured out the city for the construction by families of houses within it. He reckoned, also, that the people were not adequate in numbers to the size of the city; for there were not more of them than fifty thousand of both sexes and of all ranks -- to such an extent had their formerly enormous numbers been reduced by frequent wars, and by the multitude kept in captivity. For, of old, those two tribes, of whom the remaining people were all that survived, had, when the ten tribes were separated from them, been able to furnish three hundred and twenty thousand armed men. But being given up by God, on account of their sin, to death and captivity, they had sunk down to the miserably small number which they now presented. This company, however, as I have said, consisted only of the two tribes: the ten [341] which had previously been carried away being scattered among the Parthians, Medes, Indians, and Ethiopians never returned to their native country, and are to this day held under the sway of barbarous nations. But the completion of the restored city is related to have been effected in the thirty-second year of the reign of Artaxerxes. From that time to the crucifixion of Christ; that is, to the time when Fufius Geminus and Rubellius were consuls, there elapsed three hundred and ninety and eight years. But from the restoration of the temple to its destruction, which was completed by Titus under Vespasian, when Augustus was consul, there was a period of four hundred and eighty-three years. That was formerly predicted by Daniel, who announced that from the restoration of the temple to its overthrow there would elapse seventy and nine weeks. Now, from the date of the captivity of the Jews until the time of the restoration of the city, there were two hundred and sixty years.

Chapter XII. At this period of time we think Esther and Judith lived

At this period of time we think Esther and Judith lived, but I confess that I cannot easily perceive with what kings especially I should connect the actions of their lives. For, while Esther is said to have lived under King Artaxerxes, I find that there were two Persian kings of that name, and there is much hesitation in concluding to which of these her date is to be assigned. However, it has seemed preferable to me to connect the history of Esther with that Artaxerxes under whom Jerusalem was restored, because it is not likely that, if she had lived under the former Artaxerxes, whose times Esdras has given an account of, he would have made no mention of such an illustrious woman. This is all the more convincing since we know that the building of the temple was (as we have related above) prohibited by that Artaxerxes and Esther would not have allowed that had she then been united with him in marriage. But I will now repeat what things she accomplished. There was at that time a certain Vastis connected with the king in marriage, a woman of marvelous beauty. Being accustomed to extol her loveliness to all, he one day, when he was giving a public entertainment, ordered the queen to attend for the purpose of exhibiting her beauty. But she, more prudent than the foolish king, and being too modest to make a show of her person before the eyes of men, refused compliance with his orders. His savage mind was enraged by this insult, and he drove her forth, both from her condition of marriage with him and from the palace. Consequently, when a young woman was sought after to take her place as the wife of the king, Esther was found to excel all others in beauty. She being a Jewess of the tribe of Benjamin, and an orphan, without father or mother, had been brought up by her cousin-german, [342] Mardocheus. On being espoused to the king, she, by the instructions of him who had brought her up, concealed her nation and fatherland, and was also admonished by him not to become forgetful of her ancestral traditions, nor, though as a captive she had entered into marriage with a foreigner, to take part in the food of the heathen. Thus, then, being united to the king, she, in a short time, as was to be expected, easily captivated his whole mind by the power of her beauty, so that, equalizing her with himself in the emblem of sovereign power, he presented her with a purple robe.

Chapter XIII. At this time, Mardocheus was among those nearest to the king

At this time, Mardocheus was among those nearest to the king, having entirely under his charge the affairs of the household. He had made known to the king a plot which had been formed by two eunuchs, and, on that account, had become a greater favorite, while he was presented with the highest honors. There was at that period one Haman, a very confidential friend of the king, whom he had made equal to himself and, after the manner of sovereign rulers, had ordered to be worshiped. Mardocheus being the one man among all who refused to do that, had greatly kindled the wrath of the Persian against himself. Accordingly, Haman setting his mind to work the ruin of the Hebrew, went to the king, and affirmed that there was in his kingdom a race of men of wicked superstitions, and hateful alike to God and men. He said that, as they lived according to foreign laws, they deserved to be destroyed; and that it was a righteous thing to hand over the whole of this nation to death. At the same time, he promised the king immense wealth out of their possessions. The barbarous prince was easily persuaded, and an edict was issued for the slaughter of the Jews, while men were at once sent out to publish it through the whole kingdom from India even to Ethiopia. When Mardocheus heard of this, he rent his clothes, clothed himself in sackcloth, scattered ashes upon his head, and, going to the palace, he there made the whole place resound with his wailing and complaints, crying out that it was an unworthy thing that an innocent nation should perish, while there existed no ground for its destruction. Esther's attention was attracted by the voice of lamentation, and she learned how the case really stood. But she was then at a loss what step she should take (for, according to the custom of the Persians, the queen is not permitted access to the king, unless she has been sent for, and indeed is not admitted at any time the king may please, but only at a fixed period); and it happened at the time, that by this rule, Esther was held as separated from the presence of the king for the next thirty days. However, thinking that she ought to run some risk in behalf of her fellow-countrymen, even should sure destruction await her, she was prepared to encounter death in such a noble cause, and, after having called upon God, she entered the court of the king. But the barbarian, though at first amazed at this unusual occurrence, was gradually won over by female blandishments, and at length went so far as to accompany the queen to a banquet which she had prepared. Along with him also went Haman, the favorite of the king, but a deadly enemy of the nation of the Jews. Well, when after the feasting the banquet began to become jovial through the many cups which were drunk, Esther cast herself down at the knees of the king, and implored him to stay the destruction which threatened her nation. Then the king promised to refuse nothing to her entreaties, if she had any further request to make. Esther at once seized the opportunity, and demanded the death of Haman as a satisfaction to her nation, which he had desired to see destroyed. But the king could not forget his friend, and hesitating a little, he withdrew for a short time for the purpose of considering the matter. He then returned, and when he saw Haman grasping the knees of the queen, excited with rage, and, crying out that violence was being applied to the queen, he ordered him to be put to death. It then came to the knowledge of the king that a cross [343] had been got

ready by Haman on which Mardocheus was to suffer. Thus, Haman was fixed to that very cross, and all his goods were handed over to Mardocheus, while the Jews at large were set free. Artaxerxes reigned sixty and two years, and was succeeded by Ochus.

Chapter XIV. To this series of events it will be right that I should append an account

To this series of events it will be right that I should append an account of the doings of Judith; for she is related to have lived after the captivity, but the sacred history has not revealed who was king of the Persians in her day. It, however, calls the king under whom her exploits were performed by the name of Nabuchodonosor, and that was certainly not the one who took Jerusalem. But I do not find that any one of that name reigned over the Persians after the captivity, unless it be that, on account of the [344] wrath and like endeavors which he manifested, any king acting so was styled Nabuchodonosor by the Jews. Most persons, however, think that it was Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, on this ground that he, as a conqueror, penetrated into Egypt and Ethiopia. But the sacred history is opposed to this opinion; for Judith is described as having lived in the twelfth year of the king in question. Now, Cambyses did not possess the supreme power for more than eight years. Wherefore, if it is allowable to make a conjecture on a point of history, I should be inclined to believe that her exploits were performed under king Ochus, who came after the second Artaxerxes. I found this conjecture on the fact that (as I have read in profane histories) he is related to have been by nature cruel and fond of war. For he both engaged in hostilities with his neighbors, and recovered by wars Egypt, which had revolted many years before. At that time, also, he is related to have ridiculed the sacred rites of the Egyptians and Apis, who was regarded by them as a god; a thing which Baguas, one of his eunuchs, an Egyptian by nation, and indignant at the king's conduct, afterwards avenged by the death of the king, considering that the king had insulted the race to which he belonged. Now, the inspired [345] history makes mention of this Baguas; for, when Holofernes by the order of the king led an army against the Jews, it has related that Baguas was among the host. Wherefore, not without reason may I bring it forward in proof of the opinion I have expressed that that king who was named Nabuchodonosor was really Ochus, since profane historians have related that Baguas lived in his reign. But this ought not to be felt at all remarkable by any one, that mere worldly writers have not touched on any of those points which are recorded in the sacred writings. The spirit of God thus took care that the history should be strictly confined within its own mysteries, unpolluted by any corrupt mouth, or that which mingled truth with fiction. That history being, in fact, separated from the affairs of the world, and of a kind to be expressed only in sacred words, clearly ought not to have been mixed up with other histories, as being on a footing of equality with them. For it would have been most unbecoming that this history should be commingled with others treating of other things, or pursuing different inquiries. But I will now proceed to what remains, and will narrate in as few words as I can the acts performed by Judith.

Chapter XV. The Jews, then, having returned, as we have narrated above

The Jews, then, having returned, as we have narrated above, to their native land, and the condition of their affairs and of their city being not yet properly settled, the king of the Persians made war on the Medes, and engaged in a successful battle against their king, who was named Arphaxad. That monarch being slain, he added the nation to his empire. He did the same to other nations, having sent before him Holofernes whom he had appointed master of his host, with a hundred and twenty thousand foot-soldiers, and twelve thousand cavalry. He, after having ravaged in war, Cilicia and Arabia, took many cities by force, or compelled them through fear to surrender. And now the army, having moved on to Damascus, had struck the Jews with great terror. But as they were unable to resist, and as, at the same time, they could not bring their minds to acquiesce in the thought of surrender, since they had previously known from experience the miseries of slavery, they betook themselves in crowds to the temple. There, with a general groaning and commingled wailing, they implored the divine assistance; saying that they had been sufficiently punished by God for their sins and offenses; and begging him to spare the remnant of them who had recently been delivered from slavery. In the meantime, Holofernes had admitted the Moabites to surrender, and joined them to himself as allies in the war against the Jews. He inquired of their chief men what was the power on which the Hebrews relied in not bringing their minds to submit to the thought of submission. In reply, a certain man called Achior stated to him the facts, viz.: that the Jews being worshipers of God, and trained by their fathers to pious observances, had formerly passed through a period of slavery in Egypt, and that, brought out from that country by the divine aid, and having passed over on foot the sea which was dried up before them, they had at last conquered all the opposing nations, and recovered the territory inhabited by their ancestors. That subsequently, with various fluctuations in their affairs, they had either prospered or the reverse, that, when they did sink into adversity, they had again escaped from their sufferings, finding that God was, in turn, either angry against them, or reconciled towards them, according to their deserts, so that, when they sinned, they were chastised by the attacks of enemies or by being sent into captivity, but were always unconquerable when they enjoyed the divine favor. So then, if at the present time they are free from guilt, they cannot possibly be subdued; but if they are otherwise situated, they will easily be conquered. Upon this, Holofernes, flushed with many victories, and thinking that everything must give way before him, was roused to wrath, because victory on his part was regarded as principally depending on the sin of the Jews, and ordered Achior to be pushed forward into the camp of the Hebrews, that he might perish in company with those who he had affirmed could not be conquered. Now, the Jews had then made for the mountains; and those to whom the business had been assigned, proceeded to the foot of the mountains, and there left Achior in chains. When the Jews perceived that, they freed him from his bonds and conducted him up the hill. On their inquiring the reason of what had happened, he explained it to them, and, being received in peace, awaited the result. I may add that, after the victory, he was circumcised and became a Jew. Well, Holofernes, perceiving the difficulty of the localities, because he could not

reach the heights, surrounded the mountains with soldiers, and took the greatest pains to cut off the Hebrews from all water supplies. On that account, they felt all the sooner the misery of a siege. Being therefore overcome through want of water, they went in a company to Ozias, their leader, all inclined to make a surrender. But he replied that they should wait a little, and look for the divine assistance, so that the time of surrender was fixed for the fifth day afterwards.

Chapter XVI. When this became known to Judith a widow woman of great wealth

When this became known to Judith (a widow woman of great wealth, and remarkable for beauty, but still more distinguished for her virtue than her beauty), who was then in the camp, she thought that, in the distressed circumstances of her people, some bold effort ought to be made by her, even though it should lead to her own destruction. She therefore decks her head and beautifies her countenance, and then, attended by a single maidservant, she enters the camp of the enemy. She was immediately conducted to Holofernes, and tells him that the affairs of her countrymen were desperate, so that she had taken precautions for her life by flight. Then she begs of the general the right of a free egress from the camp during night, for the purpose of saying her prayers. That order was accordingly given to the sentinels and keepers of the gates. But when by the practice of three days she had established for herself the habit of going out and returning, and had also in this way inspired belief in her into the barbarians, the desire took possession of Holofernes of abusing the person of his captive; for, being of surpassing beauty, she had easily impressed the Persian. Accordingly, she was conducted to the tent of the general by Baguas, the eunuch; and, commencing a banquet, the barbarian stupefied himself with a great deal of wine. Then, when the servants withdrew, before he offered violence to the woman, he fell asleep. Judith, seizing the opportunity, cut off the head of the enemy and carried it away with her. Being regarded as simply going out of the camp according to her usual custom, she returned to her own people in safety. On the following day the Hebrews held forth for show the head of Holofernes from the heights; and, making a sally, marched upon the camp of the enemy. And then the barbarians assemble in crowds at the tent of their general, waiting for the signal of battle. When his mutilated body was discovered, they turned to flight under the influence of a disgraceful panic, and fled before the enemy. The Jews, for their part, pursued the fugitives, and after slaying many thousands, took possession of the camp and the booty within it. Judith was extolled with the loftiest praises, and is said to have lived one hundred and five years. If these things took place, as we believe, under king Ochus, in the twelfth year of his reign, then from the date of the restoration of Jerusalem up to that war there elapsed two and twenty years. Now Ochus reigned in all twenty-three years. And he was beyond all others cruel, and more than of a barbarous disposition. Baguas, the eunuch, took him off by poison on an occasion of his suffering from illness. After him, Arses his son held the government for three years, and Darius for four.

Chapter XVII. Against him Alexander of Macedon engaged in war.

Against him Alexander of Macedon engaged in war. And on his being conquered, the sovereign power was taken from the Persians, after having lasted, from the time of its establishment by Cyrus, two hundred and fifty years. Alexander, the conqueror of almost all nations, is said to have visited the temple at Jerusalem, and to have conveyed gifts into it; and he proclaimed throughout the whole territory which he had reduced under his sway that it should be free to the Jews living in it to return to their own country. At the end of the twelfth year of his reign, and seven years after he had conquered Darius, he died at Babylon. His friends who, along with him, had carried on those very important wars, divided his empire among themselves. For some time they administered the charges they had undertaken without making use of the name of king, while a certain Arridæus Philippus, the brother of Alexander, reigned, to whom, being of a very weak character, the sovereignty was nominally and in appearance given, but the real power was in the hands of those who had divided among themselves the army and the provinces. And indeed this state of things did not long continue, but all preferred that they should be called by the name of kings. In Syria Seleucus was the first king after Alexander, Persia and Babylon being also subject to his sway. At that time the Jews paid an annual tribute of three hundred talents of silver to the king; but they were governed not by foreign magistrates but by their own priests. And they lived according to the fashions of their ancestors until very many of them again corrupted by a long peace, began to mingle all things with seditions, and to create disturbances, while they aimed at the high-priesthood under the influence of lust, avarice, and the desire of power.

Chapter XVIII. For, first of all, under king Seleucus, the son of Antiochus the great

For, first of all, under king Seleucus, the son of Antiochus the great, a certain man called Simon accused to the king on false charges Onias the priest, a holy and uncorrupted man, and thus tried, but in vain, to overthrow him. Then, after an interval of time, Jason, the brother of Onias, went to Antiochus the king, who had succeeded his brother Seleucus, and promised him an increase of tribute, if the high-priesthood were transferred to him. And although it was an unusual, and indeed, until now, an unpermitted thing for a man to enjoy the high-priesthood year after year, still the eager mind of the king, diseased with avarice, was easily persuaded. Accordingly, Onias was driven from office, and the priesthood bestowed on Jason. He harassed his countrymen and his country in the most shameful manner. Then, as he had sent through a certain Menelaus (the brother of that Simon who has been mentioned) the money he had promised to the king, a way being once laid open to his ambition, Menelaus obtained the priesthood by the same arts which Jason had employed before. But not long after, as he had not furnished the promised amount of money, he was driven from his position, and Lysimachus substituted in his stead. Then there arose disgraceful conflicts between Jason and Menelaus, until Jason, as an exile, left the country. By examples like these, the morals of the people became corrupted to such an extent, that numbers of the natives begged permission from Antiochus to live after the fashion of the Gentiles. And when the king granted their request, all the most worthless vied with each other in their endeavors to construct temples, to sacrifice to idols, and to profane the law. In the meantime, Antiochus returned from Alexandria (for he had then made war upon the king of Egypt, which, however, he gave up by the orders of the senate and Roman people, when Paulus and Crassus were consuls), and went to Jerusalem. Finding the people at variance from the diverse superstitions they had adopted, he destroyed the law of God, and showed favor to those who followed impious courses, while he carried off all the ornaments of the temple, and wasted it with much destruction. That came to pass in the hundred and fiftieth year after the death of Alexander, Paulus and Crassus being, as we have said, consuls, about five years after Antiochus began to reign.

Chapter XIX. But that the order of the dates may be correctly preserved

But that the order of the dates may be correctly preserved, and that it may appear more clearly who this Antiochus was, we shall enumerate both the names and times of the kings who came after Alexander in Syria. Well, then, king Alexander having died, as we have related above, his whole empire was portioned out by his friends, and was governed for some time by them under the name of the king. [346] Seleucus, after the lapse of nine years, was himself styled king in Syria, and reigned thirty-two years. After him came Antiochus, his son, with a reign of twenty-one years. Then came Antiochus, the son of Antiochus, who was surnamed Theus, and he reigned fifteen years. After him, his son Seleucus, surnamed Callinicus, reigned twenty-one years. Another Seleucus, the son of Callinicus, reigned three years. After his death Antiochus, the brother of Callinicus, held Asia and Syria for thirty-seven years. This is the Antiochus against whom Lucius Scipio Asiaticus made war; and he, being worsted in the war was stripped of a part of his empire. He had two sons, Seleucus and Antiochus, the latter of whom he had given as a hostage to the Romans. Thus, then, Antiochus the great having died, his younger son Seleucus obtained the kingdom, under whom, as we have said, Onias the priest had an accusation brought against him by Simon. Then Antiochus was set free by the Romans, and there was given in his place as hostage Demetrius, the son of Seleucus, who was at that time reigning. Seleucus dying in the twelfth year of his reign, his brother Antiochus, who had been a hostage at Rome, seized the kingdom. He, five years after the beginning of his reign, did, as we have shown above, lay waste Jerusalem. For, as he had to pay a heavy tribute to the Romans, he was almost of necessity compelled, in order to meet that enormous expense, to provide himself with money by rapine, and to neglect no opportunity of plundering. Then, after two years, the Jews being again visited by a similar disaster to that which they had suffered before, lest it should happen that, driven on by their numerous miseries, they should commence war, he placed a garrison in the citadel. Next, with the view of overturning the holy law, he published an edict, that all, forsaking the traditions of their ancestors, should live after the manner of the Gentiles. And there were not wanting those who readily obeyed this profane enactment. Then truly there was a horrible spectacle presented; through all the cities sacrifices were publicly offered in the streets, while the sacred volumes of the law and the prophets were consumed with fire.

Chapter XX. At that time, Matthathias, the son of John, was high-priest.

At that time, Matthathias, the son of John, was high-priest. When he was being forced by the servants of the king to obey the edict, with marvelous courage he set at naught the profane enactments, and slew, in the presence of all, a Hebrew who was publicly performing profane acts. A leader having thus been found, rebellion at once took place. Matthathias left the town; and as many flocked to him, he got up the appearance of a regular army. The object of every man in that host was to defend himself by arms against a profane government, and rather even to fall in war than to take part in impious ceremonies. In the meantime, Antiochus was compelling those Jews who were found in the Greek cities in his dominions to offer sacrifice, and was visiting with unheard-of torments those who refused. At this time, there occurred that well-known and remarkable suffering of the seven brothers and their mother. All of the brothers, when they were being forced to violate the law of God, and the customs of their ancestors, preferred rather to die. At last, their mother, too, accompanied them both in their sufferings and death.

Chapter XXI. In the meantime, Matthathias dies, having appointed in his own place his son Judah

In the meantime, Matthathias dies, having appointed in his own place his son Judah, as general of the army which he had brought together. Under his leadership, several successful battles took place against the royal forces. For first of all, he destroyed, along with his whole army, Apollonius, the enemy's general, who had entered on the conflict with a large number of troops. When a certain man, named Seron, who was then the ruler of Syria, heard of this, he increased his forces, and attacked Judah with much spirit as being superior in numbers, but when a battle took place, he was routed and put to flight; and with the loss of nearly eight hundred men, he returned to Syria. On this becoming known to Antiochus, he was filled with rage and regret, inasmuch as it vexed him that his generals had been conquered, notwithstanding their large armies. He therefore gathers aid from his whole empire, and bestows a donative on the soldiers, almost to the exhaustion of his treasury. For he was then suffering in a very special manner from the want of money. The reason of this was, on the one side, that the Jews, who had been accustomed to pay him an annual tribute of more than three hundred talents of silver, were now in a state of rebellion against him; and on the other side, that many of the Greek cities and countries were unsettled by the evil of persecution. For Antiochus had not spared even the Gentiles, whom he had sought to persuade to abandon their long-established superstitions, and to draw over to one kind of religious observance. And no doubt, those of them who regarded nothing as sacred, easily were induced to give up their ancient forms of worship, but at the same time all were in a state of alarm and disaster. For these reasons, then, the taxes had ceased to be paid. Boiling with wrath on these grounds (for he who had of old been the richest of kings now deeply felt the poverty due to his own wickedness), he divided his forces with Lysias, and committed to him Syria and the war against the Jews, while he himself set out against the Persians, to collect the taxes among them. Lysias, then, selected Ptolemy, Gorgias, Doro, and Nicanor, as generals in the war; and to these he gave forty thousand infantry, and seven thousand cavalry. At the first onset these caused great alarm among the Jews. Then Judah, when all were in despair, exhorted his men to go with courageous hearts to battle -- that, if they put their trust in God, everything would give way before them; for that often before then the victory had been won by a few fighting against many. A fast was proclaimed, and sacrifice was offered, after which they went down to battle. The result was that the forces of the enemy were scattered, and Judah, taking possession of their camp, found in it both much gold and Tyrian treasures. For merchants from Syria, having no doubt as to victory, had followed the king's army with the hope of purchasing prisoners, and now were themselves spoiled. When these things were reported to Lysias by messengers, he got together troops with still greater efforts, and in a year after again attacked the Jews with an enormous army; but being defeated, he retreated to Antioch.

Chapter XXII. Judah, on the defeat of the enemy, returned to Jerusalem

Judah, on the defeat of the enemy, returned to Jerusalem, and bent his mind on the purification and restoration of the temple, which having been overthrown by Antiochus, and profaned by the Gentiles, presented a melancholy spectacle. But as the Syrians held the citadel, which being connected with the temple, but standing above it in position, was really impregnable, the lower parts proved inaccessible, as frequent sallies from above prevented persons from approaching them. But Judah placed against these assailants a very powerful body of his men. Thus the work of the sacred building was protected, and the temple was surrounded with a wall, while armed men were appointed to maintain a perpetual defence. And Lysias, having again returned into Judæa with increased forces, was once more defeated with a great loss both of his own army and of the auxiliaries, which being sent to him by various states had combined with him in the war. In the meantime, Antiochus, who, as we have said above, had marched into Persia, endeavored to plunder the town of Elymus, the wealthiest in the country, and a temple situated there which was filled with gold; but, as a multitude flocked together from all sides for the defense of the place, he was put to flight. Moreover, he received news of the want of success which had attended the efforts of Lysias. [347] Thus, from distress of mind, he fell into bodily disease. But as he was then tormented with internal sufferings, he remembered the miseries which he had inflicted on the people of God, and acknowledged that these evils had deservedly been sent upon him. Then, after a few days, he died, having reigned eleven years. He left the kingdom to his son Antiochus, to whom the name of Eupator was given.

Chapter XXIII. At that time Judah besieged the Syrians who were posted in the citadel.

At that time Judah besieged the Syrians who were posted in the citadel. They, being sore pressed with famine and want of all things, sent messengers to the king to implore assistance. Accordingly, Eupator came to their aid with a hundred thousand infantry and twenty thousand cavalry, while elephants marched in front of his line, causing immense terror to the onlookers. Then Judah, abandoning the siege, went to meet the king, and routed the Syrians in the first battle. The king begged for peace, which, because [348] he, with his treacherous disposition, made a bad use of, vengeance followed his treachery. For Demetrius, the son of Seleucus, who, we have said above, was handed over as a hostage to the Romans, when he heard that Antiochus had departed, begged that they would send him to take possession of the kingdom. And when this was refused to him, he secretly fled from Rome, came into Syria, and seized the supreme power, having slain the son of Antiochus, who had reigned one year and six months. It was during his reign that the Jews first begged the friendship of the Roman people, and alliance with them; and the embassy to this effect having been kindly received, they were, by a decree of the senate, styled allies and friends. In the meantime Demetrius was, by means of his generals, carrying on war against Judah. And first the army was led by a certain man named Bacchides, and by Alcimus, a Jew; Nicanor, being afterwards placed at the head of the war, fell in battle. Then Bacchides and Alcimus, recovering power, and having increased their forces, fought against Judah. The Syrians, turning out victorious in that battle, cruelly abused their victory. The Hebrews elect Jonathan, the brother of Judah, in his place. In the meantime, Alcimus, after he had fearfully desolated Jerusalem, dies; Bacchides, being thus deprived of his ally, returns to the king. Then, after an interval of two years, Bacchides again made war upon the Jews, and being beaten, he begged for peace. This was granted him certain conditions, to the effect that he should give up the deserters and prisoners, along with all that he had taken in war.

Chapter XXIV. While these things are going on in Judæa, a certain young man educated at Rhodes

While these things are going on in Judæa, a certain young man educated at Rhodes, by name Alexander, gave himself out as being the son of Antiochus (which was false), and assisted by the power of Ptolemy, king of Alexandria, came into Syria with an army. He conquered Demetrius in war, and slew him after he had reigned twelve years. This Alexander before he made war against Demetrius, had formed an alliance with Jonathan, and had presented him with a purple robe and royal ensigns. For this reason Jonathan had assisted him with auxiliary forces; and on the defeat of Demetrius, had been the very first to meet him with congratulations. Nor did Alexander afterwards violate the faith which he had pledged. Accordingly, in the five years during which he held the chief power, the affairs of the Jews were peaceful. In these circumstances, Demetrius, the son of Demetrius, who, after the death of his father, had betaken himself to Crete, at the instigation of Lasthenes, general of the Cretans, tried by war to recover the kingdom of his, father, but finding his power unequal to the task, he implored Ptolemy Philometor, king of Egypt, the father-in-law of Alexander, but who was then on bad terms with his son-in-law, to give him assistance. But he, induced not so much by the entreaties of the suppliant as by the hope of seizing Syria, joined his forces with those of Demetrius, and gives him his daughter, who had been married to Alexander. Against these two Alexander fought a pitched battle. Ptolemy fell in the fight, but Alexander was defeated; and he was soon afterwards slain, after he had reigned five, or as I find it stated in many authors, nine years.

Chapter XXV. Demetrius, having thus obtained the kingdom, treated Jonathan with kindness

Demetrius, having thus obtained the kingdom, treated Jonathan with kindness, made a treaty with him, and restored the Jews to their own laws. In the meantime, Tryphon, who had belonged to the party of Alexander, was appointed [349] governor of Syria, to keep him in check by war. Jonathan, [350] on the other hand, descended to battle, formidable with an army of forty thousand men. Tryphon, when he saw himself unequal to the contest, pretended a desire for peace, and slew Ptolemais who had been received and invited into friendship with him. After Jonathan, the chief power was conferred on his brother Simon. He celebrated the funeral of his brother with great pomp, and built those well-known seven pyramids of most noble workmanship, in which he buried the remains both of his brothers and of his father. Then Demetrius renewed his treaty with the Jews; and in consideration of the loss caused to them by Tryphon (for after the death of Jonathan he had wasted by war their cities and territories), he remitted to them their annual tribute forever; for up to that time, they had paid tribute to the kings of Syria, except when they resisted by force of arms. That took place in the second year of king Demetrius; and we have noted that, because up to this year we have run through the times of the Asiatic kings, that the series of dates being given in order might be perfectly clear. But now we shall arrange the order of events through the times of those, who were either high-priests or kings among the Jews, up to the period of the birth of Christ.

Chapter XXVI. Well, then, after Jonathan, his brother Simon, as has been said above

Well, then, after Jonathan, his brother Simon, as has been said above, ruled over the Hebrews with the power of high-priest. For that honor was then bestowed upon him both by his own countrymen and by the Roman people. He began to rule over his countrymen in the second year of king Demetrius, but eight years afterwards, being deceived by a plot of Ptolemy, he met his death. He was succeeded by his son John. And he, on the ground that he had fought with distinction against the Hyrcani, a very powerful nation, received the surname of Hyrcanus. He died, after having held the supreme power for twenty-six years. After him, Aristobulus being appointed high-priest, was the first of all living after the captivity to assume the name of king, and to have a crown placed upon his head. At the close of a year, he died. Then Alexander, his son, who was both king and high-priest, reigned twenty-seven years; but I have found nothing in his doings worthy of mention, except his cruelty. He having left two young sons named Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, Salina or Alexandra, his wife, held the sovereignty for three years. After his decease, frightful conflicts about the supreme power arose between the two brothers. And first of all, Hyrcanus held the government; but being by and by defeated by his brother Aristobulus, he fled to Pompey. That Roman general, having finished the war with Mithridates, and settled Armenia and Pontus, being, in fact, the conqueror of all the nations which he had visited, desired to march inwards, [351] and to add all the neighboring regions to the Roman empire. He therefore inquired into the causes of the war, and the means of obtaining [352] the mastery. Accordingly he readily received Hyrcanus, and, under his guidance, attacked the Jews; but when the city was taken and destroyed, he spared the temple. He sent Aristobulus in chains to Rome, and restored the right of the high-priesthood to Hyrcanus. Settling the tribute to be paid by the Jews, he placed over them as governor a certain Antipater of Askelon. Hyrcanus held the chief power for thirty-four years; but while he carried on war against the Parthians, he was taken prisoner.

Chapter XXVII. Then Herod, a foreigner, the son of Antipater of Askelon

Then Herod, a foreigner, the son of Antipater of Askelon, asked and received the sovereignty of Judæa from the senate and people of Rome. Under him, the Jews began for the first time to have a foreigner as king. For as now the advent of Christ was at hand, it was necessary, according to the predictions of the prophets, that they should be deprived of their own rulers, that they might not look for anything beyond Christ. Under this Herod, in the thirty-third year of his reign, Christ was born on the twenty-fifth of December in the consulship of Sabinus and Rufinus. But we do not venture to touch on these things which are contained in the Gospels, and subsequently in the Acts of the Apostles, lest the character of our condensed work should, in any measure, detract from the dignity of the events; and I shall proceed to what remains. Herod reigned four years after the birth of the Lord; for the whole period of his reign comprised thirty-seven years. After him, came Archelaus the tetrarch, for eight years, and Herod for twenty-four years. Under him, in the eighteenth year of his reign, the Lord was crucified, Fufius Geminus and Rubellius Geminus being consuls; from which date up to the consulship of Stilico, there have elapsed three hundred and seventy-two years.

Chapter XXVIII. Luke made known the doings of the apostles up to the time when Paul was

Luke made known the doings of the apostles up to the time when Paul was brought to Rome under the emperor Nero. As to Nero, I shall not say that he was the worst of kings, but that he was worthily held the basest of all men, and even of wild beasts. It was he who first began a persecution; and I am not sure but he will be the last also to carry it on, if, indeed, we admit, as many are inclined to believe, that he will yet appear immediately before the coming of Antichrist. Our subject would induce me to set forth his vices at some length, if it were not inconsistent with the purpose of this work to enter upon so vast a topic. I content myself with the remark, that he showed himself in every way most abominable and cruel, and at length even went so far as to be the murderer of his own mother. After this, he also married a certain Pythagoras in the style of solemn alliances, the bridal veil being put upon the emperor, while the usual dowry, and the marriage couch, and wedding torches, and, in short, all the other observances were forthcoming -- things which even in the case of women, are not looked upon without some feeling of modesty. But as to his other actions, I doubt whether the description of them would excite greater shame or sorrow. He first attempted to abolish the name of Christian, in accordance with the fact that vices are always inimical to virtues, and that all good men are ever regarded by the wicked as casting reproach upon them. For, at that time, our divine religion had obtained a wide prevalence in the city. Peter was there executing the office of bishop, and Paul, too, after he had been brought to Rome, on appealing to Cæsar from the unjust judgment of the governor. Multitudes then came together to hear Paul, and these, influenced by the truth which they were given to know, and by the miracles [353] of the apostles, which they then so frequently performed, turned to the worship of God. For then took place the well-known and celebrated encounter of Peter and Paul with Simon. [354] He, after he had flown up into the air by his magical arts, and supported by two demons (with the view of proving that he was a god), the demons being put to flight by the prayers of the apostles, fell to the earth in the sight of all the people, and was dashed to pieces.

Chapter XXIX. In the meantime, the number of the Christians being now very large

In the meantime, the number of the Christians being now very large, it happened that Rome was destroyed by fire, while Nero was stationed at Antium. But the opinion of all cast the odium of causing the fire upon the emperor, and he was believed in this way to have sought for the glory of building a new city. And in fact, Nero could not by any means he tried escape from the charge that the fire had been caused by his orders. He therefore turned the accusation against the Christians, and the most cruel tortures were accordingly inflicted upon the innocent. Nay, even new kinds of death were invented, so that, being covered in the skins of wild beasts, they perished by being devoured by dogs, while many were crucified or slain by fire, and not a few were set apart for this purpose, that, when the day came to a close, they should be consumed to serve for light during the night. In this way, cruelty first began to be manifested against the Christians. Afterwards, too, their religion was prohibited by laws which were enacted; and by edicts openly set forth it was proclaimed unlawful to be a Christian. At that time Paul and Peter were condemned to death, the former being beheaded with a sword, while Peter suffered crucifixion. And while these things went on at Rome, the Jews, not able to endure the injuries they suffered under the rule of Festus Florus, began to rebel. Vespasian, being sent by Nero against them, with proconsular power, defeated them in numerous important battles, and compelled them to flee within the walls of Jerusalem. In the meanwhile Nero, now hateful even to himself from a consciousness of his crimes, disappears from among [355] men, leaving it uncertain whether or not he had laid violent hands upon himself: certainly his body was never found. It was accordingly believed that, even if he did put an end to himself with a sword, his wound was cured, and his life preserved, according to that which was written regarding him, -- "And his mortal [356] wound was healed," -- to be sent forth again near the end of the world, in order that he may practice the mystery of iniquity.

Chapter XXX. So then, after the departure of Nero, Galba seized the government

So then, after the departure of Nero, Galba seized the government; and ere long, on Galba being slain, Otho secured it. Then Vitellius from Gaul, trusting to the armies which he commanded, entered the city, and having killed Otho, assumed the sovereignty. This afterwards passed to Vespasian, and although that was accomplished by evil means, yet it had the good effect of rescuing the state from the hands of the wicked. While Vespasian was besieging Jerusalem, he took possession of the imperial power; and as the fashion is, he was saluted as emperor by the army, with a diadem placed upon his head. He made his son Titus, Cæsar; and assigned him a portion of the forces, along with the task of continuing the siege of Jerusalem. Vespasian set out for Rome, and was received with the greatest favor by the senate and people; and Vitellius having killed himself, his hold of the sovereign power was fully confirmed. The Jews, meanwhile, being closely besieged, as no chance either of peace or surrender was allowed them, were at length perishing from famine, and the streets began everywhere to be filled with dead bodies, for the duty of burying them could no longer be performed. Moreover, they ventured on eating all things of the most abominable nature, and did not even abstain from human bodies, except those which putrefaction had already laid hold of and thus excluded from use as food. The Romans, accordingly, rushed in upon the exhausted defenders of the city. And it so happened that the whole multitude from the country, and from other towns of Judæa, had then assembled for the day of the Passover: doubtless, because it pleased God that the impious race should be given over to destruction at the very time of the year at which they had crucified the Lord. The Pharisees for a time maintained their ground most boldly in defense of the temple, and at length, with minds obstinately bent on death, they, of their own accord, committed themselves to the flames. The number of those who suffered death is related to have been eleven hundred thousand, and one hundred thousand were taken captive and sold. Titus is said, after calling a council, to have first deliberated whether he should destroy the temple, a structure of such extraordinary work. For it seemed good to some that a sacred edifice, distinguished above all human achievements, ought not to be destroyed, inasmuch as, if preserved, it would furnish an evidence of Roman moderation, but, if destroyed, would serve for a perpetual proof of Roman cruelty. But on the opposite side, others and Titus himself thought that the temple ought specially to be overthrown, in order that the religion of the Jews and of the Christians might more thoroughly be subverted; for that these religions, although contrary to each other, had nevertheless proceeded from the same authors; that the Christians had sprung up from among the Jews; and that, if the root were extirpated, the offshoot would speedily perish. Thus, according to the divine will, the minds of all being inflamed, the temple was destroyed, three hundred and thirty-one years ago. And this last overthrow of the temple, and final captivity of the Jews, by which, being exiles from their native land, they are beheld scattered through the whole world, furnish a daily demonstration to the world, that they have been punished on no other account than for the impious hands which they laid upon Christ. For though on other occasions they were often given over to captivity on account of their sins, yet

they never paid the penalty of slavery beyond a period of seventy years.

Chapter XXXI. Then, after an interval, Domitian, the son of Vespasian

Then, after an interval, Domitian, the son of Vespasian, persecuted the Christians. At this date, he banished John the Apostle and Evangelist to the island of Patmos. There he, secret mysteries having been revealed to him, wrote and published his book of the holy Revelation, which indeed is either foolishly or impiously not accepted by many. And with no great interval there then occurred the third persecution under Trajan. But he, when after torture and racking he found nothing in the Christians worthy of death or punishment, forbade any further cruelty to be put forth against them. Then under Adrian the Jews attempted to rebel, and endeavored to plunder both Syria and Palestine; but on an army being sent against them, they were subdued. At this time Adrian, thinking that he would destroy the Christian faith by inflicting an injury upon the place, set up the images of demons both in the temple and in the place where the Lord suffered. And because the Christians were thought principally to consist of Jews (for the church at Jerusalem did not then have a priest except of the circumcision), he ordered a cohort of soldiers to keep constant guard in order to prevent all Jews from approaching to Jerusalem. This, however, rather benefited [357] the Christian faith, because almost all then believed in Christ as God while continuing [358] in the observance of the law. Undoubtedly that was arranged by the over-ruling care of the Lord, in order that the slavery of the law might be taken away from the liberty of the faith and of the church. In this way, Mark from among the Gentiles was then, first of all, bishop at Jerusalem. A fourth persecution is reckoned as having taken place under Adrian, which, however, he afterwards forbade to be carried on, declaring it to be unjust that any one should be put on his trial without a charge being specified against him.

Chapter XXXII. After Adrian, the churches had peace under the rule of Antoninus Pius.

After Adrian, the churches had peace under the rule of Antoninus Pius. Then the fifth persecution began under Aurelius, the son of Antoninus. And then, for the first time, martyrdoms were seen taking place in Gaul, for the religion of God had been accepted somewhat late beyond the Alps. Then the sixth persecution of the Christians took place under the emperor Severus. At this time Leonida, the father of Origen, poured forth his sacred blood in martyrdom. Then, during an interval of thirty-eight years, the Christians enjoyed peace, except that at the middle of that time Maximinus persecuted the clerics of some churches. Ere long, under Decius as emperor, the seventh bloody persecution broke out against the Christians. Next, Valerian proved himself the eighth enemy of the saints. After him, with an interval of about fifty years, there arose, under the emperors Diocletian and Maximian, a most bitter persecution which, for ten continuous years, wasted the people of God. At this period, almost the whole world was stained with the sacred blood of the martyrs. In fact, they vied with each other in rushing upon these glorious struggles, and martyrdom by glorious deaths was then much more keenly sought after than bishoprics are now attempted to be got by wicked ambition. Never more than at that time was the world exhausted by wars, nor did we ever achieve victory with a greater triumph than when we showed that we could not be conquered by the slaughters of ten long years. There survive also accounts of the sufferings of the martyrs at that time which were committed to writing; but I do not think it suitable to subjoin these lest I should exceed the limits prescribed to this work.

Chapter XXXIII. Well, the end of the persecutions was reached eighty-eight years ago

Well, the end of the persecutions was reached eighty-eight years ago, at which date the emperors began to be Christians. For Constantine then obtained the sovereignty, and he was the first Christian of all the Roman rulers. At that time, it is true, Licinius, who was a rival of Constantine for the empire, had commanded his soldiers to sacrifice, and was expelling from the service those who refused to do so. But that is not reckoned among the persecutions; it was an affair of too little moment to be able to inflict any wound upon the churches. From that time, we have continued to enjoy tranquillity; nor do I believe that there will be any further persecutions, except that which Antichrist will carry on just before the end of the world. For it has been proclaimed in divine words, that the world was to be visited by ten afflictions; [359] and since nine of these have already been endured, the one which remains must be the last. During this period of time, it is marvelous how the Christian religion has prevailed. For Jerusalem which had presented a horrible mass of ruins was then adorned with most numerous and magnificent churches. And Helena, the mother of the emperor Constantine (who reigned along with her son as Augusta), having a strong desire to behold Jerusalem, cast down the idols and the temples which were found there; and in course of time, through the exercise of her royal powers, she erected churches [360] on the site of the Lord's passion, resurrection, and ascension. It is a remarkable fact that the spot on which the divine footprints had last been left when the Lord was carried up in a cloud to heaven, could not be joined by a pavement with the remaining part of the street. For the earth, unaccustomed to mere human contact, rejected all the appliances laid upon it, and often threw back the blocks of marble in the faces of those who were seeking to place them. Moreover, it is an enduring proof of the soil of that place having been trodden by God, that the footprints are still to be seen; and although the faith of those who daily flock to that place, leads them to vie with each other in seeking to carry away what had been trodden by the feet of the Lord, yet the sand of the place suffers no injury; and the earth still preserves the same appearance which it presented of old, as if it had been sealed by the footprints impressed upon it.

Chapter XXXIV. Through the kind efforts of the same queen, the cross of the Lord was then

Through the kind efforts of the same queen, the cross of the Lord was then found. It could not, of course, be consecrated at the beginning, owing to the opposition of the Jews, and afterwards it had been covered over by the rubbish of the ruined city. And now, it would never have been revealed except to one seeking for it in such a believing spirit. Accordingly, Helena having first got information about the place of our Lord's passion, caused a band of soldiers to be brought [361] to it, while the whole multitude of the inhabitants of the locality vied with each other in seeking to gratify the desires of the queen, and ordered the earth to be dug up, and all the adjacent most extensive ruins to be cleared out. Ere long, as the reward of her faith and labor, three crosses (as of old they had been fixed for the Lord and the two robbers) were discovered. But upon this, the greater difficulty of distinguishing the gibbet on which the Lord had hung, disturbed the minds and thoughts of all, lest by a mistake, likely enough to be committed by mere mortals, they might perhaps consecrate as the cross of the Lord, that which belonged to one of the robbers. They form then the plan of placing one who had recently died in contact with the crosses. Nor is there any delay in carrying out this purpose; for just as if by the appointment of God, the funeral of a dead man was then being conducted with the usual ceremonies, and all rushing up took the body from the bier. It was applied in vain to the first two crosses, but when it touched that of Christ, wonderful to tell, while all stood trembling, the dead body was [362] shaken off, and stood up in the midst of those looking at it. The cross was thus discovered, and was consecrated with all due ceremony. [363]

Chapter XXXV. Such were the things accomplished by Helena, while, under a Christian prince

Such were the things accomplished by Helena, while, under a Christian prince, the world had both attained to liberty, and possessed in him an exemplar of faith. But a far more dreadful danger than all that had preceded fell upon all the churches from that state of tranquillity. For then the Arian heresy burst forth, and disturbed the whole world by the error which it instilled. For by means of the two [364] Ariuses, who were the most active originators of this unfaithfulness, the emperor himself was led astray; and while he seemed to himself to fulfill a religious duty, he proceeded to a violent exercise of persecution. The bishops were driven into exile: cruelty was exerted against the clerics; and even the laity were punished, who had separated from the communion of the Arians. Now, the doctrines which the Arians proclaimed were of the following nature, -- that God the Father had begotten his Son for the purpose of creating the world; and that, by his power, he had made [365] out of nothing into a new and second substance, a new and second God; and that there was a time when the Son had no existence. To meet this evil, a synod was convened from the whole world to meet at Nicæa. Three hundred and eighteen bishops were there assembled: the faith was fully set forth in writing; the Arian heresy was condemned; and the emperor confirmed the whole by an imperial decree. The Arians, then, not daring to make any further attempt against the orthodox faith, mixed themselves among the churches, as if they acquiesced in the conclusions which had been reached, and did not hold any different opinions. There remained, however, in their hearts, a deep-seated hatred against the Catholics, and they assailed, with suborned accusers and trumped-up charges, those with whom they could not contend in argument on matters of faith.

Chapter XXXVI. Accordingly, they first attack and condemn in his absence Athanasius

Accordingly, they first attack and condemn in his absence Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, a holy man, who had been present as deacon at the Synod of Nicæa. For they added to the charges which false witnesses had heaped up against him, this one, that, with wicked intentions, he had received [366] Marcellus and Photinus, heretical priests who had been condemned by a sentence of the Synod. Now, it was not doubtful as to Photinus that he had been justly condemned. But in the case of Marcellus, it seemed that nothing had then been found worthy of condemnation, and [367] a belief in his innocence was above all strengthened by the animus of that party, inasmuch as no one doubted that those same judges were heretical by whom he had been condemned. But the Arians did not so much desire to get these persons out of the way as Athanasius himself. Accordingly, they constrain the emperor to go so far as this, that Athanasius should be sent as an exile into Gaul. But ere long, eighty bishops, assembling together in Egypt, declare that Athanasius had been unjustly condemned. The matter is referred to Constantine: he orders [368] bishops from the whole world to assemble at Sardes, and that the entire process by which Athanasius had been condemned, should be reconsidered by the council. In the meantime, Constantine dies, but the Synod, called together while he was yet emperor, acquits Athanasius. Marcellus, too, is restored to his bishopric, but the sentence on Photinus, bishop of Sirmion, was not rescinded; for even [369] in the judgment of our friends, he is regarded as a heretic. However, even this result chagrined Marcellus, because Photinus was known to have been his disciple in his youth. But this, too, tended to secure an acquittal for Athanasius, that Ursatius and Valens, leading men among the Arians, when they were openly separated from the communion of the Church after the Synod at Sardes, entering into the presence of Julius, bishop of Rome, asked pardon of him for having condemned the innocent, and publicly declared that he had been justly acquitted by the decree of the Council of Sardes.

Chapter XXXVII. When, after an interval of some time had elapsed

When, after an interval of some time had elapsed, Athanasius, finding that Marcellus was by no means sound in the faith, suspended him from communion. And he had this degree of modesty, that, being censured by the judgment of so great a man, he voluntarily gave way. But though at a former period innocent, yet confessedly afterwards becoming heretical, it may be allowed to conclude that he was really then guilty when judgment was pronounced regarding him. The Arians, then, finding an opportunity of that kind, conspire to subvert altogether the decrees of the Synod of Sardes. For a certain coloring of right seemed to be furnished them in this fact, that a favorable judgment had as unjustly been formed on the side of Athanasius, as Marcellus had been improperly acquitted, since now, even in the opinion of Athanasius himself, he was deemed a heretic. For Marcellus had stood forward as an upholder of the Sabellian heresy. [370] But Photinus had already brought forward a new heresy, differing indeed from Sabellius with respect to the union of the divine persons, but proclaiming that Christ had his beginning in Mary. The Arians, therefore, with cunning design, mix up what was harmless with what was blameworthy, and embrace, under the same judgment, the condemnation of Photinus, and Marcellus, and Athanasius. They undoubtedly did this with the view of leading the minds of the ignorant to conclude, that those had not judged incorrectly regarding Athanasius, who, it was admitted, had expressed a well-based opinion respecting Marcellus and Photinus. At that time, however, the Arians concealed their treachery; and not daring openly to proclaim their erroneous doctrines, they professed themselves Catholics. They thought that their first great object should be to get Athanasius turned out of the church, who had always presented a wall of opposition to their endeavors, and they hoped that, if he were removed, the rest would pass over to their evil [371] opinion. Now, that part of the bishops which followed the Arians accepted the condemnation of Athanasius with delight. Another part, constrained by fear and faction, yielded to the wish of the Arian party; and only a few, to whom the true faith was dearer than any other consideration, refused to accept their unjust judgment. Among these was Paulinus, the bishop of Treves. It is related that he, when a letter on the subject was placed before him, thus wrote, that he gave his consent to the condemnation of Photinus and Marcellus, but did not approve that of Athanasius.

Chapter XXXVIII. But then the Arians, seeing that stratagem did not succeed

But then the Arians, seeing that stratagem did not succeed, determined to proceed by force. For it was easy for those to attempt and carry out anything who were supported by the favor of the monarch, whom they had thoroughly won over to themselves by wicked flatteries. Moreover, they were by the consent of all unconquerable; for almost all the bishops of the two Pannonias, and many of the Eastern bishops, and those throughout all Asia, had joined in their unfaithfulness. But the chief men in that evil company were Ursatius of Singidunum, Valens of Mursa, Theodorus of Heraclia, Stephanus of Antioch, Acatius of Cæsarea, Menofantus of Ephesus, Georgius of Laodicia, and Narcissus of Neronopolis. These had got possession of the palace to such an extent that the emperor did nothing without their concurrence. He was indeed at the beck of all of them, but was especially under the influence of Valens. For at that time, when a battle was fought at Mursa against Magnentius, Constantius had not the courage to go down to witness for himself the conflict, but took up his abode in a church of the martyrs which stood outside the town, Valens who was then the bishop of the place being with him to keep up his courage. But Valens had cunningly arranged, through means of his agents, that he should be the first to be made acquainted with the result of the battle. He did this either to gain the favor of the king, if he should be the first to convey to him good news, or with a view to saving his own life, since he would obtain time for flight, should the issue prove unfortunate. Accordingly, the few persons who were with the king being in a state of alarm, and the emperor himself being a prey to anxiety, Valens was the first to announce to them the flight of the enemy. When Constantius requested that the person who had brought the news should be introduced to his presence, Valens, to increase the reverence felt for himself, said that an angel was the messenger who had come to him. The emperor, who was easy of belief, was accustomed afterwards openly to declare that he had won the victory through the merits of Valens, and not by the valor of his army.

Chapter XXXIX. From this first proof that the prince had been won over to their side

From this first proof that the prince had been won over to their side, the Arians plucked up their courage, knowing that they could make use of the power of the king, when they could make little impression by their own authority. Accordingly, when our friends did not accept of the judgment which they had pronounced in regard to Athanasius, an edict was issued by the emperor to the effect that those who did not subscribe to the condemnation of Athanasius should be sent into banishment. But, at that time, councils of bishops were held by our friends at Arles and Bitteræ, towns situated in Gaul. They requested that before any were compelled to subscribe against Athanasius, they should rather enter on a discussion as to the true faith; and maintained that only then was a decision to be come to respecting the point in question, when they had agreed as to the person of the judges. [372] But Valens and his confederates not venturing on a discussion respecting the faith, first desired to secure by force the condemnation of Athanasius. Owing to this conflict of parties, Paulinus was driven into banishment. In the meantime, an assembly was held at Milan, where the emperor then was; but the same controversy was there continued without any relaxation of its bitterness. Then Eusebius, bishop of the Vercellenses, and Lucifer, bishop of Caralis [373] in Sardinia, were exiled. Dionysius, however, priest of Milan, subscribed to the condemnation of Athanasius, on the condition that there should be an investigation among the bishops as to the true faith. But Valens and Ursatius, with the rest of that party, through fear of the people, who maintained the Catholic faith with extraordinary enthusiasm, did not venture to set forth in public their monstrous [374] doctrines, but assembled within the palace. From that place, and under the name of the emperor, they issued a letter full [375] of all sorts of wickedness, with this purpose, no doubt, that, if the people gave it a favorable hearing, they should then bring forward, under public authority, the things which they desired; but if it should be received otherwise, that all the ill feeling might be directed against the king, while his mistake might be regarded as excusable, because being then only a catechumen, he might readily be supposed to have erred concerning the mysteries of the faith. Well, when the letter was read in the church, the people expressed their aversion to it. And Dionysius, because he did not concur with them, was banished from the city, while Auxentius was immediately chosen as bishop in his place. Liberius, too, bishop of the city of Rome, and Hilarius, bishop of Poitiers, were driven into exile. Rhodanius, also, bishop of Toulouse (who, being by nature of a softer disposition, had resisted the Arians, not so much from his own powers as from his fellowship with Hilarius) was involved in the same punishment. All these persons, however, were prepared to suspend Athanasius from communion, only in order that an inquiry might be instituted among the bishops as to the true faith. But it seemed best to the Arians to withdraw the most celebrated men from the controversy. Accordingly, those whom we have mentioned above were driven into exile, forty-five years ago, when Arbitio and Lollianus were consuls. Liberius, however, was, a little afterwards, restored to the city, in consequence of the disturbances at Rome. But it is well known that the persons exiled were celebrated by the admiration of the whole world, and that abundant supplies of money were

collected to meet their wants, while they were visited by deputies of the Catholic people from almost all the provinces.

Chapter XL. In the meantime, the Arians, not secretly, as before

In the meantime, the Arians, not secretly, as before, but openly and publicly proclaimed their monstrous heretical doctrines. Moreover, they interpreted after their own views the Synod of Nicæa, and by the addition of one letter to its finding, threw a sort of obscurity over the truth. For where the expression Homoousion had been written, which denotes "of one substance," they maintained that it was written Homoiouision, which simply means "of like substance." They thus granted a likeness, but took away unity; for likeness is very different from unity; just as, for illustration's sake, a picture of a human body might be like a man, and yet possess nothing of the reality of a man. But some of them went even farther, and maintained Anomoiousia, that is, an unlike substance. And to such a pitch did these controversies extend, that the wide world was involved in these monstrous errors. For Valens and Ursatius, with their supporters, whose names we have stated, infected Italy, Illyria, and the East with these opinions. Saturninus, bishop of Arles, a violent and factious man, harassed our country of Gaul in like manner. There was also a prevalent belief that Osius from Spain had gone over to the same unfaithful party, which appears all the more wonderful and incredible on this account, that he had been, almost during his whole life, the most determined upholder of our views, and the Synod of Nice was regarded as having been held at his instigation. If he did go over, the reason may have been that in his extreme old age (for he was then more than a centenarian, as St. Hilarius relates in his epistles) he had fallen into dotage. While the world was disturbed by these things, and the churches were languishing as if from a sort of disease, an anxiety, less exciting indeed, but no less serious, pressed upon the emperor, that although the Arians, whom he favored, appeared the stronger, yet there was still no agreement among the bishops concerning the faith.

Chapter XLI. Accordingly, the emperor orders a Synod to assemble at Ariminum

Accordingly, the emperor orders a Synod to assemble at Ariminum, a city of Italy, and instructs Taurus the prefect, not to let them separate, after they were once assembled, until they should agree as to one faith, at the same time promising him the consulship, if he carried the affair to a successful termination. Imperial [376] officers, therefore, being sent through Illyria, Italy, Africa, and the two Gauls, four hundred and rather more Western bishops were summoned or compelled to assemble at Ariminum; and for all of these the emperor had ordered provisions [377] and lodgings to be provided. But that appeared unseemly to the men of our part of the world, that is, to the Aquitanians, the Gauls, and Britons, so that refusing the public supplies, they preferred to live at their own expense. Three only of those from Britain, through want of means of their own, made use of the public bounty, after having refused contributions offered by the rest; for they thought it more dutiful to burden the public treasury than individuals. I have heard that Gavidius, our bishop, was accustomed to refer to this conduct in a censuring sort of way, but I would be inclined to judge far otherwise; and I hold it matter of admiration that the bishops had nothing of their own, while they did not accept assistance from others rather than from the public treasury, so that they burdened nobody. In both points, they thus furnished us with noble example. Nothing worthy of mention is recorded of the others; but I return to the subject in hand. After all the bishops had been collected together, as we have said, a separation of parties took place. Our friends [378] take possession of the church, while the Arians select, as a place for prayer, a temple which was then intentionally standing empty. But these did not amount to more than eighty persons: the rest belonged to our party. Well, after frequent meetings had been held, nothing was really accomplished, our friends continuing in the faith, and the others not abandoning their unfaithfulness. At length it was resolved to send ten deputies to the emperor, that he might learn what was the faith or opinion of the parties, and might know that there could be no peace with heretics. The Arians do the same thing, and send a like number of deputies, who should contend with our friends in the presence of the emperor. But on the part of our people, young men of but little learning and little prudence had been selected; while, on the side of the Arians, old men were sent, skillful and abounding in talent, thoroughly imbued, too, with their old unfaithful doctrines; and these easily got the upper hand with the prince. But our friends had been specially charged not to enter into any kind of communion with the Arians, and to reserve every point, in its entirety, for discussion in a Synod.

Chapter XLII. In the meantime in the East, after the example of the West

In the meantime in the East, after the example of the West, the emperor ordered almost all the bishops to assemble at Seleucia, a town of Isauria. At that time, Hilarius, who was now spending the fourth year of his exile in Phrygia, is compelled to be present among the other bishops, the means of a public conveyance being furnished to him by the lieutenant [379] and governor. As, however, the emperor had given no special orders regarding him, the judges, simply following the general order by which they were commanded to gather all bishops to the council, sent him also among the rest who were willing to go. This was done, as I imagine, by the special ordination of God, in order that a man who was most deeply instructed in divine things, might be present when a discussion was to be carried on respecting the faith. He, on arriving at Seleucia, was received with great favor, and drew the minds and affections of all towards himself. His first inquiry was as to the real faith of the Gauls, because at that time the Arians had spread evil reports regarding us, and we were held suspected by the Easterns as having embraced the belief of Sabellius, to the effect that the unity of the one God was simply distinguished [380] by a threefold name. But after he had set forth his faith in harmony with those conclusions which had been reached by the fathers at Nicæa, he bore his testimony in favor of the Westerns. Thus the minds of all having been satisfied, he was admitted to communion, and being also received into alliance, was added to the council. They then proceeded to actual work, and the originators of the wicked heresy being discovered, were separated from the body of the Church. In that number were Georgius of Alexandria, Acacius, Eudoxius, Vranius, Leontius, Theodosius, Evagrius, Theodulus. But when the Synod was over, an embassy was appointed to go to the emperor and make him acquainted with what had been done. Those who had been condemned also went to the prince, relying upon the power of their confederates, and a common cause with the monarch.

Chapter XLIII. In the meantime, the emperor compels those deputies of our party who had been sent

In the meantime, the emperor compels those deputies of our party who had been sent from the council at Ariminum to join in communion with the heretics. At the same time, he hands them a confession of faith which had been drawn up by these wicked men, and which, being expressed in deceptive terms, seemed to exhibit the Catholic faith, while unfaithfulness secretly lay hid in it. For under an appearance of false reasoning, it abolished the use of the word Ousia as being ambiguous, and as having been too hastily adopted by the fathers, while it rested upon no Scriptural authority. The object of this was that the Son might not be believed to be of one substance with the Father. The same confession of faith acknowledged that the Son was like the Father. But deception was carefully prepared within the words, in order that he might be like, but not equal. Thus, the deputies being sent away, orders were given to the prefect that he should not dissolve the Synod, until all professed by their subscriptions their agreement to the declaration of faith which had been drawn up; and if any should hold back with excessive obstinacy, they should be driven into banishment, provided their number did not amount to fifteen. But when the deputies returned, they were refused communion, although they pleaded the force which had been brought to bear upon them by the king. For when it was discovered what had been decreed, greater disturbance arose in their affairs and purposes. Then by degrees numbers of our people, partly overcome through the weakness of their character, and partly influenced by the thought of a weary journeying into foreign lands, surrendered to the opposite party. These were now, on the return of the deputies, the stronger of the two bodies, and had taken possession of the church, our friends being driven out of it. And when the minds of our people once began to incline in that direction, they rushed in flocks over to the other side, until the number of our friends was diminished down to twenty.

Chapter XLIV. But these, the fewer they became, showed themselves all the more powerful

But these, the fewer they became, showed themselves all the more powerful; as the most steadfast among them was to be reckoned our friend Foegadius, and Servatio, bishop of the Tungri. As these had not yielded to threats and terrors, Taurus assails them with entreaties, and beseeches them with tears to adopt milder counsels. He argued that the bishops were now in the seventh month since they had been shut up within one city -- that no hope of returning home presented itself to them, worn out by the inclemency of winter and positive want; and what then would be the end? He urged them to follow the example of the majority, and to derive authority for so doing at least from the numbers who had preceded them. For Foegadius openly declared that he was prepared for banishment, and for every kind of punishment that might be assigned him, but would not accept that confession of faith which had been drawn up by the Arians. Thus several days passed in this sort of discussion. And when they made little progress towards a pacification, by degrees Foegadius began to yield, and at the last was overcome by a proposal which was made to him. For Valens and Ursatius affirmed that the present confession of faith was drawn up on the lines of Catholic doctrine, and having been brought forward by the Easterns at the instigation of the emperor, could not be rejected without impiety; and what possible end of strife could there be if a confession which satisfied the Easterns was rejected by those of the West? Finally, if there appeared anything less fully stated in the present confession than was desirable, they themselves should add what they thought ought to be added, and that they, for their part, would acquiesce in those things which might be added. This friendly profession was received with favorable minds by all. Nor did our people venture any longer to make opposition, desiring as they did in some way or other now to put an end to the business. Then confessions drawn up by Foegadius and Servatio began to be published; and in these first Arius and his whole unfaithful scheme was condemned, while the Son of God also was [381] pronounced equal to the Father, and without beginning, [that is] without any commencement [382] in time. Then Valens, as if assisting our friends, subjoined the statement (in which there lurked a secret guile) that the Son of God was not a creature like the other creatures; and the deceit involved in this declaration escaped the notice of the hearers. For in these words, in which the Son was denied to be like the other creatures, he was nevertheless pronounced a creature, only superior to the rest. Thus neither party could hold that it had wholly conquered or had wholly been conquered, since the confession itself was in favor of the Arians, but the declarations afterwards added were in favor of our friends. That one, however, must be excepted which Valens had subjoined, and which, not being at the time understood, was at length comprehended when it was too late. In this way, at any rate, the council was brought to an end, a council which had a good beginning but a disgraceful conclusion.

Chapter XLV. Thus, then, the Arians, with their affairs in a very flourishing condition

Thus, then, the Arians, with their affairs in a very flourishing condition, and everything turning out according to their wishes, go in a body to Constantinople where the emperor was. There they found the deputies from the Synod of Seleucia, and compel them by an exercise of the royal power to follow the example of the Westerns, and accept that heretical confession of faith. Numbers who refused were tortured with painful imprisonment and hunger, so that at length they yielded their conscience captive. But many who resisted more courageously, being deprived of their bishoprics, were driven into exile, and others substituted in their place. Thus, the best priests being either terrified by threats, or driven into exile, all gave way before the unfaithfulness of a few. Hilarius was there at the time, having followed the deputies from Seleucia; and as no certain orders had been given regarding him, he was waiting on the will of the emperor to see whether perchance he should be ordered to return into banishment. When he perceived the extreme danger into which the faith had been brought, inasmuch as the Westerns had been beguiled, and the Easterns were being overcome by means of wickedness, he, in three papers publicly presented, begged an audience of the king, in order that he might debate on points of faith in the presence of his adversaries. But the Arians opposed that to the utmost extent of their ability. Finally, Hilarius was ordered to return to Gaul, as being a sower [383] of discord, and a troubler of the East, while the sentence of exile against him remained uncanceled. But when he had wandered over almost the whole earth which was infected with the evil of unfaithfulness, his mind was full of doubt and deeply agitated with the mighty burden of cares which pressed upon it. Perceiving that it seemed good to many not to enter into communion with those who had acknowledged the Synod of Ariminum, he thought the best thing he could do was to bring back all to repentance and reformation. In frequent councils within Gaul, and while almost all the bishops publicly owned the error that had been committed, he condemns the proceedings at Ariminum, and frames anew the faith of the churches after its pristine form. Saturninus, however, bishop of Arles, who was, in truth, a very bad man, of an evil and corrupt character, resisted these sound measures. He was, in fact, a man who, besides the infamy of being a heretic, was convicted of many unspeakable crimes, and cast out of the Church. Thus, having lost its leader, the strength of the party opposed to Hilarius was broken. Paternus also of Petrocorii, [384] equally infatuated, and not shrinking from openly professing unfaithfulness, was expelled from the priesthood: pardon was extended to the others. This fact is admitted by all, that our regions of Gaul were set free from the guilt of heresy through the kind efforts of Hilarius alone. But Lucifer, who was then at Antioch held a very different opinion. For he condemned those who assembled at Ariminum to such an extent, that he even separated himself from the communion of those who had received them as friends, after they had made satisfaction or exhibited penitence. Whether this resolution of his was right or wrong, I will not take upon me to say. Paulinus and Rhodanius died in Phrygia; Hilarius died in his native country in the sixth year after his return.

Chapter XLVI. There follow the times of our own day, both difficult and dangerous.

There follow the times of our own day, both difficult and dangerous. In these the churches have been defiled with no ordinary evil, and all things thrown into confusion. For then, for the first time, the infamous heresy of the Gnostics was detected in Spain -- a deadly [385] superstition which concealed itself under mystic [386] rites. The birthplace of that mischief was the East, and specially Egypt, but from what beginnings it there sprang up and increased is not easy to explain. Marcus was the first to introduce it into Spain, having set out from Egypt, his birthplace being Memphis. His pupils were a certain Agape, a woman of no mean origin, and a rhetorician named Helpidius. By these again Priscillian was instructed, a man of noble birth, of great riches, bold, restless, eloquent, learned through much reading, very ready at debate and discussion -- in fact, altogether a happy man, if he had not ruined an excellent intellect by wicked studies. Undoubtedly, there were to be seen in him many admirable qualities both of mind and body. He was able to spend much time in watchfulness, and to endure both hunger and thirst; he had little desire for amassing wealth, and he was most economical in the use of it. But at the same time he was a very vain man, and was much more puffed up than he ought to have been with the knowledge of mere earthly [387] things: moreover, it was believed that he had practised magical arts from his boyhood. He, after having himself adopted the pernicious system referred to, drew into its acceptance many persons of noble rank and multitudes of the common people by the arts of persuasion and flattery which he possessed. Besides this, women who were fond of novelties and of unstable faith, as well as of a prurient curiosity in all things, flocked to him in crowds. It increased this tendency that he exhibited, a kind of humility in his countenance and manner, and thus excited in all a greater honor and respect for himself. And now by degrees the wasting disorder of that heresy [388] had pervaded the most of Spain, and even some of the bishops came under its depraving influence. Among these, Instantius and Salvianus had taken up the cause of Priscillian, not only by expressing their concurrence in his views, but even by binding themselves to him with a kind of oath. This went on until Hyginus, bishop of Cordova, who dwelt in the vicinity, found out how matters stood, and reported the whole to Ydacijs, priest of Emerita. But he, by harassing Instantius and his confederates without measure, and beyond what the occasion called for, applied, as it were, a torch to the growing conflagration, so that he rather exasperated than suppressed these evil men.

Chapter XLVII. So, then, after many controversies among them, which are not worthy of mention

So, then, after many controversies among them, which are not worthy of mention, a Synod was assembled at Saragossa, at which even the Aquitanian bishops were present. But the heretics did not venture to submit themselves to the judgment of the council; sentence, however, was passed against them in their absence, and Instantius and Salvianus, bishops, with Helpidius and Priscillian, laymen, were condemned. It was also added that if any one should admit the condemned persons to communion, he should understand that the same sentence would be pronounced against himself. And the duty was entrusted to Ithacius, bishop of Sossuba, of seeing that the decree of the bishops was brought to the knowledge of all, and that Hyginus especially should be excluded from communion, who, though he had been the first to commence open proceedings against the heretics, had afterwards fallen away shamefully and admitted them to communion. In the meantime, Instantius and Salvianus, having been condemned by the judgment of the priests, appoint as bishop in the town of Arles, Priscillian, a layman indeed, but the leader in all these troubles, and who had been condemned along with themselves in the Synod at Saragossa. This they did with the view of adding to their strength, doubtless imagining that, if they armed with sacerdotal authority a man of bold and subtle character, they would find themselves in a safer position. But then Ydacius and Ithacius pressed forward their measures more ardently, in the belief that the mischief might be suppressed at its beginning. With unwise counsels, however, they applied to secular judges, that by their decrees and prosecutions the heretics might be expelled from the cities. Accordingly, after many disgraceful squabbles, a rescript was, on the entreaty of Ydacius, obtained from Gratianus, who was then emperor, in virtue of which all heretics were enjoined not only to leave churches or cities, but to be driven forth beyond all the territory under [389] his jurisdiction. When this edict became known, the Gnostics, distrusting their own affairs, did not venture to oppose the judgment, but those of them who bore the name of bishops gave way of their own accord, while fear scattered the rest.

Chapter XLVIII. And then Instantius, Salvianus, and Priscillian set out for Rome

And then Instantius, Salvianus, and Priscillian set out for Rome, in order that before Damasus who was at that time the bishop of the city, they might clear themselves of the charges brought against them. Well, their journey led them through the heart of Aquitania, and being there received with great pomp by such as knew no better, they spread the seeds of their heresy. Above all, they perverted by their evil teachings the people of Elusa, who were then of a good and religious disposition. They were driven forth from Bordeaux by Delfinus, yet lingering for a little while in the territory of Euchrotia, [390] they infected some with their errors. They then pursued the journey on which they had entered, attended by a base and shameful company, among whom were their wives and even strange women. In the number of these was Euchrotia and her daughter Procula, of the latter of whom there was a common report that, when pregnant through adultery with Priscillian, she procured abortion by the use of certain plants. When they reached Rome with the wish of clearing themselves before Damasus, they were not even admitted to his presence. Returning to Milan, they found that Ambrose was equally opposed to them. Then they changed their plans, with the view that, as they had not got the better of the two bishops, who were at that time possessed of the highest authority, they might, by bribery and flattery, obtain what they desired from the emperor. Accordingly, having won over Macedonius, who was the master [391] of public services, they procured a rescript, by which, those decrees which had formerly been made being trampled under foot, they were ordered to be restored to their churches. Relying upon this, Instantius and Priscillian made their wayback to Spain (for Salvianus had died in the city); and they then, without any struggle, recovered the churches over which they had ruled.

Chapter XLIX. But the power, not the will, to resist, failed Ithacius

But the power, not the will, to resist, failed Ithacius; for the heretics had won over by bribes Voluentius, the proconsul, and thus consolidated their own power. Moreover, Ithacius was put on his trial, by these men as being a disturber of the churches, and he having been ordered as the result of a fierce prosecution, to be carried off [392] as a prisoner, fled in terror into Gaul, where he betook himself to Gregory the prefect. He, after he learned what had taken place, orders the authors of these tumults to be brought before himself, and makes a report on all that had occurred to the emperor, in order that he might close against the heretics every means of flattery or bribery. But that was done in vain; because, through the licentiousness and power of a few, all things were there to be purchased. Accordingly, the heretics by their artifices, having presented Macedonius with a large sum of money, secure that, by the imperial authority, the hearing of the trial was taken from the prefect, and transferred to the lieutenant in Spain. By that time, the Spaniards had ceased to have a proconsul as ruler, and officials were sent by the Master to bring back to Spain Ithacius who was then living at Treves. He, however, craftily escaped them, and being subsequently defended by the bishop Pritannius, he set them at defiance. Then, too, a faint [393] rumor had spread that Maximus had assumed imperial power in Britain, and would, in a short time, make an incursion into Gaul. Accordingly, Ithacius then resolved, although his affairs were in a ticklish state, to wait the arrival of the new emperor; and that, in the meantime, no step should on his part be taken. When therefore Maximus, as victor, entered the town of the Treveri, he poured forth entreaties full of ill-will and accusations against Priscillian and his confederates. The emperor influenced by these statements sent letters to the prefect of Gaul and to the lieutenant in Spain, ordering that all whom that disgraceful [394] heresy had affected should be brought to a Synod at Bordeaux. Accordingly, Instantius and Priscillian were escorted thither and, of these, Instantius was enjoined to plead his cause; and after he was found unable to clear himself, he was pronounced unworthy of the office of a bishop. But Priscillian, in order that he might avoid being heard by the bishops, appealed to the emperor. And that was permitted to be done through the want of resolution on the part of our friends, who ought either to have passed a sentence even against one who resisted it, or, if they were regarded as themselves suspicious persons, should have reserved the hearing for other bishops, and should not have transferred to the emperor a cause involving such manifest offences.

Chapter L. Thus, then, all whom the process embraced were brought before the king.

Thus, then, all whom the process embraced were brought before the king. The bishops Ydacijs and Ithacius followed as accusers; and I would by no means blame their zeal in overthrowing heretics, if they had not contended for victory with greater keenness than was fitting. And my feeling indeed is, that the accusers were as distasteful to me as the accused. I certainly hold that Ithacius had no worth or holiness about him. For he was a bold, loquacious, impudent, and extravagant man; excessively devoted to the pleasures of sensuality. He proceeded even to such a pitch of folly as to charge all those men, however holy, who either took delight in reading, or made it their object to vie with each other in the practice of fasting, with being friends or disciples of Priscillian. The miserable wretch even ventured publicly to bring forward a disgraceful charge of heresy against Martin, who was at that time a bishop, and a man clearly worthy of being compared to the Apostles. For Martin, being then settled at Treves, did not cease to importune Ithacius, that he should give up his accusations, or to implore Maximus that he should not shed the blood of the unhappy persons in question. He maintained that it was quite sufficient punishment that, having been declared heretics by a sentence of the bishops, they should have been expelled from the churches; and that it was, besides, a foul and unheard-of indignity, that a secular ruler should be judge in an ecclesiastical cause. And, in fact, as long as Martin survived, the trial was put off; while, when he was about to leave this world, he, by his remarkable influence, obtained a promise from Maximus, that no cruel measure would be resolved on with respect to the guilty persons. But subsequently, the emperor being led astray by Magnus and Rufus, and turned from the milder course which Martin had counseled, entrusted the case to the prefect Evodius, a man of stern and severe character. He tried Priscillian in two assemblies, and convicted him of evil conduct. In fact, Priscillian did not deny that he had given himself up to lewd doctrines; had been accustomed to hold, by night, gatherings of vile women, and to pray in a state of nudity. Accordingly, Evodius pronounced him guilty, and sent him back to prison, until he had time to consult the emperor. The matter, then, in all its details, was reported to the palace, and the emperor decreed that Priscillian and his friends should be put to death.

Chapter LI. But Ithacius, seeing how much ill-will it would excite against him among the bishops

But Ithacius, seeing how much ill-will it would excite against him among the bishops, if he should stand forth as accuser also at the last trial on a capital charge (for it was requisite that the trial should be repeated), withdrew from the prosecution. His cunning, however, in thus acting was in vain, as the mischief was already accomplished. Well, a certain Patricius, an advocate connected with the treasury, was then appointed accuser by Maximus. Accordingly, under him as prosecutor, Priscillian was condemned to death, and along with him, Felicissimus and Armenius, who, when they were clerics, had lately adopted the cause of Priscillian, and revolted from the Catholics. Latronianus, too, and Euchrotia were beheaded. Instantius, who, as we have said above, had been condemned by the bishops, was transported to the island of Sylina [395] which lies beyond Britain. A process was then instituted against the others in trials which followed, and Asarivus, and Aurelius the deacon, were condemned to be beheaded, while Tiberianus was deprived of his goods, and banished to the island of Sylina. Tertullus, Potamius, and Joannes, as being persons of less consideration, and worthy of some merciful treatment, inasmuch as before the trial they had made a confession, both as to themselves and their confederates, were sentenced to a temporary banishment into Gaul. In this sort of way, men who were most unworthy of the light of day, were, in order that they might serve as a terrible example to others, either put to death or punished with exile. That conduct [396] which he had at first defended by his right of appeal to the tribunals, and by regard to the public good, Ithacius, harassed [397] with invectives, and at last overcome, threw the blame of upon those, by whose direction and counsels he had effected his object. Yet he was the only one of all of them who was thrust out of the episcopate. For Ydacius, although less guilty, had voluntarily resigned his bishopric: that was wisely and respectfully done, had he not afterward spoiled the credit of such a step by endeavoring to recover the position which had been lost. Well, after the death of Priscillian, not only was the heresy not suppressed, which, under him, as its author, had burst forth, but acquiring strength, it became more widely spread. For his followers who had previously honored him as a saint, subsequently began to reverence him as a martyr. The bodies of those who had been put to death were conveyed to Spain, and their funerals were celebrated with great pomp. Nay, it came to be thought the highest exercise of religion to swear by Priscillian. But between them and our friends, a perpetual war of quarreling has been kept up. And that conflict, after being sustained for fifteen years with horrible dissension, could not by any means be set at rest. And now all things were seen to be disturbed and confused by the discord, especially of the bishops, while everything was corrupted by them through their hatred, partiality, fear, faithlessness, envy, factiousness, lust, avarice, pride, sleepiness, and inactivity. In a word, a large number were striving with insane plans and obstinate inclinations against a few giving wise counsel: while, in the meantime, the people of God, and all the excellent of the earth were exposed to mockery and insult.

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