The Life of Saint Anthony (Syriac version, Budge translation)

Athanasius of Alexandria (c. AD 296–373)

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The Life of Saint Anthony

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

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

3 1a most excellent entreaty, and for the sake of the courageous [thoughts] which are in you, so that we may fulfil your labour, and for the sake of the work of him who triumphed by these acts and deeds, in order that his triumphs may never die among his sons in our Lord; and finally for his name's sake, that in this history we may also magnify the glory of God [and show forth] how great is the might which He giveth unto those who fear Him.

Now we have been deputed through your affection to write down the triumphs of the blessed man Anthony, and to send by an envoy a history of them to you in writing [which will shew] how it was that he began his discipleship, and what manner of life he led before this took place, and how he was living when he brought his days to a close, and whether all the words which have been spoken concerning him and have come to our hearing are true; and straightway with joy I have devoted myself to the fulfilment of your command. Now by merely writing a commemorative history of the blessed Anthony I also shall gain great benefit, for I am convinced, O my beloved, that by narrating these histories two things will be effected: we shall increase the renown of the man of God in honour and wonder, and we shall begin to instruct your minds step by step; for the acts of the blessed Anthony form a perfect example for the solitary ascetics. Now, O my beloved, as concerning the things which ye have heard about him aforetime, from those who [lived] with him, or [from those] who heard [them] from those who were with him continually, or from those also unto whom accounts of him were handed down by tradition, ye shall have no doubt whatsoever. Ye have, however, only heard a little out of a great quantity, and only just as much as the mind (or memory) is able to narrate;

now, mine own mind convinceth me that such is the case, and in compiling the present history I have learned that indeed this is so. For when I thought that I had collected and enumerated a large number of stories, suddenly a great many others, which were far more numerous than those which had already been collected by me, sprang up, and made my mind to be confused; but as many as I was able to remember and to collect my mind hath, with joy, committed to writing. And as for you, cease ye not to ask questions and to inquire [concerning the blessed Anthony], especially of those who come by river from the Thebaid, that is to say from Inner Egypt (i.e., Upper Egypt), for it may happen that from those from whom ye expect to hear nothing ye may increase your knowledge greatly. For when a man belongeth unto those who have knowledge, he repeateth the story which he knoweth, and though we may think and be convinced that we have collected too many already, [we find, on examination, that our] narrative is immeasurably short. Now many of those who openly received [the accounts] of the wonderful things which were wrought by his hands have departed from this world; and of those who are still living, how many are there who have not revealed unto us concerning the conversations which they had with him, or the things done in his presence! And what man would wish to narrate unto his companions only a few stories out of many?

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

I have regarded carefully the word of the truth, lest a man should hear what was superfluous and should be in doubt, or should despise and belittle that which he heard.

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

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

Now when the time arrived and they brought their days to an end, and they departed from this world when he was about eighteen or twenty years old, he and one little sister were left behind, and it happened from sheer necessity that he had to rule the house and take care of his sister. And when as yet not six months had passed since the death of his parents, and when, according to his wont, he was continually in the church, it came to pass one day, when he was in the church, that a righteous idea entered his mind, and that he began to meditate within himself how the blessed Apostles forsook everything and followed after our Redeemer; and how the others who succeeded them and walked in their footsteps sold everything which they had possessed and laid [the money which they received] at the feet of the Apostles, that it might be spent upon the poor; and how great was the blessing of those who had in this wise obeyed the voice of our Redeemer. Now whilst he was meditating these and such-like things, the Lesson was being read, and when the Scriptures were ended, the Gospel was read, and he heard the words of our Lord, Who said unto the rich man, "If thou wishest to be perfect, go and sell" everything which thou hast, and give to the poor, and take "thy cross, and come after Me, and there shall be unto thee" treasure in heaven" (St. Matthew xix, 21).

And the blessed Anthony received the word of the Gospel as a sign to himself, and he reflected that this reading had not taken place as a matter of chance, but in order that the righteous idea which had taken up its abode in him might be confirmed. And straightway he went out from the church, and departed and set in order his house and the possessions which he had inherited from his parents. Now he had three hundred fields, a great estate [which produced] abundant crops, and these he handed over to the people of his village, so that they might trouble neither himself nor his sister; but the remainder of his other possessions which were in the house he sold, and gathered in money not a little, which he distributed among the poor, but he laid by a little which was sufficient for his sister's wants.

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

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

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

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

Now Saint Anthony was the storehouse of fasting, and of prayer, and of ascetic labours, and of patient endurance, and of love, and of righteousness, which is the mother of [them] all, but towards those who were young monks like himself he was not envious, except in one matter only, that is to say, he would not be second to any of them in fair works. And he contrived in every possible manner not to give offence to the wicked man; on the contrary, [he wished] that those who were yoked together with him might be drawn to his opinion (or mind) by his solicitude [for them], and by his graciousness, and that they might make progress in their career. And he toiled in his labours in such a manner that they were not only not envious of him, but they rejoiced in him and gave thanksgiving for him. Now by reason

of these triumphs every man used to call him "Theophilus," which is, being interpreted, "God-loving," and all the righteous gave him this name; and some of them loved him like a brother, and some of them like a son.

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

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

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

Now in all these things our Lord, Who put on a [human] body for our sakes, was his helper, and He strengthened him to become a shield against the Evil One, so that by means of this

act of grace which was wrought on our behalf, before any of the blessed men lived, by the merit of His agony He taught us in what it is meet that we should boast. For when one repeated too often those triumphs which were wrought for him, Saint Anthony answered and said, "It was not I who worked, but His grace which was with me" (1 Corinthians xv, 10).

And when the Enemy saw that he was vanquished in this fight, and that his craftiness was driven away and brought to naught by the thought (or mind) of the righteous man, he gnashed his teeth, and cried out that he would shew the righteous man his [evil] inner nature (or thoughts) in an external [material] form, that, peradventure, by means of fear and terror he might find an opportunity to perform his will. And he appeared unto Saint Anthony in the form of an Indian boy, and he began to say unto him, "Whom seest thou? I have come, and behold I will stand up, and I will overcome thee, and I will bring thee low, even as I do many." And whilst he was saying these words, the blessed Anthony made over himself the Sign of the Cross, and ceased to tremble, and the Enemy saw the Sign of the Cross, and straightway was terrified. And when the blessed Anthony saw that he was terrified, he began to ask him a question, saying, "Who art thou, by whose voice such words as these are heard by me?" Then the Enemy began [to say] unto him after the manner of a man who blustereth, "I, even I, am the lover of error and of fornication, and it is I who cast the goadings of these [thoughts] and flatteries [into the mind of man]. It is I who have taken upon myself to lead many astray, and I fight against every man, and I am against righteousness, and I am, even as the Prophet called me, the 'spirit of fornication' (Hosea iv, 12), for through me have gone astray all those who have stumbled. It is I who have injured thee on several occasions, and thou hast been held in contempt by me in everything."

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

But although the blessed Anthony saw the Enemy made powerless and brought low, he neither neglected his prayers nor ceased from his [wonted] course [of life], for he knew well that his contest was against a crafty being, who, although he had been vanquished for the time, would not cease [to trouble], and who, whenever he could find an opportunity through some small negligence on his part, would suddenly rise up and vanquish him that had on several occasions gained the victory over him. For Saint Anthony knew that there was no

cessation to his wrongdoing, and that he wandered about like a roaring lion seeking whom he might break (1 St. Peter v, 8). And he had learned from the Scriptures that the snares of the Adversary were many, and he was certain from his own knowledge that he strove in this manner; and he therefore contended strenuously in the fear of God, keeping his object before him.

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

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

for he remembered the word of the Apostle which he spake, "That which is behind me I forget, and I stretch forward unto the things which are before me" (Philippians iii, 13), and

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

And after these things he passed into another frame of mind, and, having decided within himself that he would go forth from the village, he departed and took up his abode in a tomb in the cemetery, which was situated in a mountain which lay close by the village; and he commanded one of his acquaintances to bring him a morsel of bread from time [to time]. And having done these things and entered into the tomb and shut the door upon himself, straightway the Adversary, together with a multitude of devils who were his associates, burst in upon him there, for he was afraid to let Saint Anthony go from the village altogether, and he began to say unto him, "How great is that which thou endurest! And to what limit wilt thou drive thyself? Thou hast come and hast entered into the place of our abode. What man is there who hath ever done the like? And when was it ever heard that men ought to live among the tombs? We have been driven out of the village, and we shall also be driven out from among the tombs. Now therefore will we take vengeance upon, &c, for it is thou who hast made fools of us. Then they's and to to smite him with blows, and they smote him so severe to that at length he fell [on the ground], and nothing but his breath was left in him;

and Saint Anthony used to relate that the blows with which the devils smote him were more severe than those of the children of men. But God brought help unto him, and would not deliver him over to death, for He put it into the mind of him that used to visit him to come quickly, and to open [the door of] the tomb according to his wont, and he saw the blessed Anthony, who was like unto a dead man by reason of the blows; and straightway he lifted him up and brought him to the church in the village. And there collected about him no small number of people, and they gathered together and sat by his side as if he had been a dead man. Now by the sweet rest of sleep the blessed Anthony was refreshed, [and he was relieved] from his affliction, and he came to himself, and he turned round and saw that all the people were asleep, and that only his friend who was sitting watching by his pillow was awake; and he made a sign to him, and he drew nigh unto him, and Saint Anthony said unto him quietly, "Come, do [an act of] righteousness (or charity), lest the heart of the people should think and mankind should imagine that there is still power left in the Evil One, and should be afraid to lift up the heel against him."

And the man hearkened unto him, and whilst the people were quiet and asleep, he lifted him up and carried him to the tomb, and shut the door as usual. Then Saint Anthony prayed as he was lying down, for he had no power in him to stand up, and when he had multiplied [his] prayers, he said with a loud voice, "Where are ye, O children of Gehenna? Here am I, even I, Anthony, and I will not depart from this place until ye are destroyed in this place:

for although ye multiply tortures, I shall not be remote from the love of Christ." And next he said with a loud voice, "Though a whole legion [of devils] encamp against me, my heart shall not fear": such were the words which this man, this athlete, proclaimed in his striving. Then the heart of the Enemy of righteousness melted within him, and he cried unto the dogs his kinsfolk, and spake, emitting smoke from himself as he did so, saying unto them, "Did ye not say unto me, What shall we do unto this man, this insolent fellow, who hath treated us wholly with contempt and disdain? His heart is not afraid of the quaking terror, his hearing is not perturbed by words (or voices), his eye is not terrified by visions, and his body hath no fear of blows. Who among you can give [me] counsel as to what shall be done [with him]?" And thereupon they contrived [with] allowing plan.

Now it is very easy for the was we to create apparitions and appearances of such a character, that they shall be deemed real and actual objects, and [straightway] phantasms of this kind caused a phantom earthquake, and they rent asunder the four corners of the house, and entered therein in a body from all sides. One had the form of a lion, and another had the appearance of a wolf, and another was like unto a panther, and all the others were in the forms and similitudes of serpents, and of vipers, and of scorpions. The lion was roaring as a lion roareth when he is about to slay; the bull was ready to gore [him] with his horns; the panther was prepared to spring [upon him]; and the snakes and the vipers were hissing, and they appeared to be in the act of hurling themselves upon him; and the sounds which they made and the forms in which they showed themselves were terrible. Now the blessed man Anthony was not disturbed (or frightened) by their commotion, and his mind remained wholly undisturbed. And as he was lying down he laughed at these phantoms; and said, "Thus there is no power in you. Ye have taken unto yourselves the forms of wild beasts, and if there had been any power whatsoever to do harm in you, for one of you only to come [against me] would have been sufficient; but because our Lord hath cut off the things which incited you to attack me, and the goad of your wickedness hath no strength therein, ye lay plots and contrive snares, thinking that, peradventure, ye will be able to make men quake by fear only. And, moreover, whosoever hath had experience of your feebleness [knoweth] that ye have obtained as your helpers the mere forms and appearances of wild beasts."

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

Then having waited for a space, and having recovered somewhat from his tribulations, and having enjoyed rest from the graciousness of the revelation of our Lord, he lifted up his

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

And it came to pass that on the following morning he departed from the tomb and went forth to that solitary old monk who used to dwell by the side of the village, and he tried to persuade him to go with him to the desert, but the old man excused himself from this, for one thing because of his old age, and for another because he had not been in the habit of living in the desert, and indeed at that time none of the monks lived there. And straightway Anthony rose up and prayed with the old man, and he besought him to join his prayers unto his that God might make his way prosperous before him; and [afterwards] he went forth [alone] into the desert.

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

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

thought, are unable to afford any information on the matter; but [what Anthony saw] was gold, and gold in large quantities, for the blessed man marvelled at the great abundance thereof.

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

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

And when these words were heard, those who were outside [Anthony's dwelling] thought that men had entered therein through the roof of [his] house and that they were quarrelling with him; but when they had gone round about the house they found a small opening in the wall, and having looked through it they saw the blessed man alone. Then they understood that 17 those voices were those of the devils who used to wage war against him, and mighty dread came upon them, and they began to cry out to the blessed man Anthony. Now the just man was more ready to hearken unto their words than unto the tumult of the devils, and to hold converse with them, and he would draw nigh to the side of the door, and say unto them, "Come ye nigh unto me, and be not afraid"; and having conversed with them

graciously, and filled their hearts, he would dismiss them in peace, and admonish them, saying, "Be ye afraid neither of sounds (or voices) nor of phantoms of this kind, for in this wise the devils are wont to act towards those who are timid; but seal ye yourselves with the Seal of the Cross, and return ye unto your homes in confidence, and forgive those who would make of you laughing-stocks." Thus they were dismissed in peace. And as for Anthony himself he had dwelt in strife with the devils for a long time past, and was very courageous, and the strength which was in him was added to in proportion as he saw that his enemies were vanquished.

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

And it came to pass that in the process of time his fame reached all the monks who were in Egypt, and all the other folk therein who did not lead the life of the ascetic and recluse, and men of distinction, and monks in Egypt began to come unto him in large numbers. The Egyptian monks came that they might copy the manner of his life and deeds, and the laity came that he might pray over them, and might heal certain of them of their sicknesses. One day, when a multitude of people had come there in a body [to see him] and they had besought him repeatedly [to speak to them], and he had answered them never a word, they lifted the door out of its socket, and threw themselves down on their faces before him, and made supplication unto him and pacified him, and then each man among them stood up, and made known his request unto him. And having gone forth [to them] even like a man who goeth forth from the depths of the earth, they saw that his appearance was like unto that of an angel of light, and they marvelled why it was that his body had not been weakened by all his confinement, and why it was that his understanding had not become feeble, and why, on the contrary, his appearance, and his bodily stature, and his countenance were then as they had known them always to have been in the times which were past.

Now when he saw a large concourse of people he was not disturbed, and when they brought their petitions unto him, he was not moved to impatient anger, but he remained in a placid and thoughtful state, for the Living Word was unto him a guide. Among those who came unto him, there were many who were indeed very sorely afflicted, and our Lord healed them by the hand of the blessed man; and, moreover, God gave him such a measure of grace in his speech that every man was wholly gratified thereat, for those who were in affliction and distress were encouraged to endure thereby, those who were occupied with contention

were quieted thereby, those who were afflicted sorely became long-suffering, the haughty were made humble thereby, and the arrogant were brought low thereby, in order that every man might learn the doctrine of righteousness. For he used to say, "That we should possess anything besides Christ is unnecessary, and we should not esteem anything of value besides the love of Christ, neither possessions nor kinsfolk, not even our soul itself. For if God did not spare His Son, but delivered Him up on account of our sins, how much the more is it right for us, having tasted and known Divine grace, to give our souls not on His behalf, for such a thing is not required from us, but on behalf of our own lives!" By these words he used to persuade many to withdraw themselves from this world, and from the tribulation thereof, and to take refuge in a habitation of monks.

And he began to increase from that time with Christ in simple-mindedness, and in love towards strangers, and in long-suffering; now these things not only go with us, but they also go before us, and they make ready for us a place in the country of the humble and meek, and no man should lack them, especially when he knoweth the will of his Lord, and that he is bound to prepare himself according to His will. Would any servant dare to stand before his master's face and say unto him, "Yesterday I toiled, but to-day I have done nothing at all"? Or have we not heard what our Lord said in the 19 Gospel, "When a servant hath toiled nobly and hath laboured in the work which is outside, as soon as he hath gone inside he shall weave a place for his hands and shall minister unto his Lord, and then happiness shall be his"? Now, since we have heard these things from the Divine Books, what reason can we have for being without the fear of God? Was it not for this that Ezekiel the Prophet was made a watchman? (Ezekiel iii, 17.) Did not Judas, because of the one night wherein he wrought wickedness, lose the labour of all his days? (St. Matthew xxvi, 47, 49; xxvii, 5.)

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

Now therefore, O my beloved, let us be zealous in carrying out the work whereunto we have once bound ourselves, and let us travel to the end on the road whereon we have begun to journey, and let no man among us look behind him, lest we be like unto the wife of Lot (Genesis xix, 26). It is not easy for him that shall turn behind him, after he hath received the doctrine of righteousness, to enter into the kingdom of heaven; he that turneth back, whatsoever be the way in which he turn, will repent of what he hath done, and he will turn to the elements of this world, even as a dog to his vomit (Proverbs xxvi, 2; 2 St. Peter ii, 22). Be ye therefore not afraid as if ye were carrying a heavy burden, for the burden of our Lord is easy and light (St. Matthew xi, 30) unto those who desire it; if therefore we have the desire, everything is easy unto us. The children of this world travel over the seas and make journeys across difficult countries in order that they may learn profane wisdom, in the doctrine of which the means of righteousness is not employed, and in the praise of which there is no profit of life; but we are not wanted either to set out on a journey or to travel on the sea for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, for our Lord declared aforetime, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is within you" (St. Luke xvii, 21).

So therefore, O my beloved, life is in our own hands to gain, for it is within us, and it is ministered unto by us. For the soul by its nature possesseth the perception of the understanding, and therefore our soul hath knowledge of what our life is; it is prepared by the nature of its creation, and is ready for everything which it wisheth. Therefore also Joshua, the son of Nun, commanded the people, saying, "Prepare your hearts before the God of Israel" (Joshua xxiv, 23), and John also said, "Prepare your ways" (St. Luke iii, 4). Now when the Book decreeth the preparation of the soul, it wisheth that the rectitude of the nature of its first creation shall be in it, but when it goeth forth outside its limit it is condemned by the Book like the Evil One. Therefore, the matter is not a difficult one unto us. For, if we remain in that wherein we were created from the beginning, life is in us and with us; and our mind also condemneth us, when it thinketh evil and hath envy of the thoughts, and bringeth forth a deed of injury in an unseemly manner. Everything, therefore, is given into our own power to do, and there is no master set over us to command us what we shall do; moreover, there is no man who can restrain us either from thinking or doing fair things; whether we live or whether we die belongeth unto ourselves.

For if we desire to withdraw ourselves from thoughts of the wicked and from usurers and pledges, let us take heed diligently and guard for our Lord the liberty, which hath been given unto us without blemish, as something which we have received from the beginning, and let us be faithful children unto the Lord. Therefore, take ye heed, O my beloved sons, that ye keep not silence like those who have been brought low through sin, or by wrath or by lust; for it is written that the anger of a man perfecteth not the righteousness of God, and besides, lust conceiveth and bringeth forth sin, and when sin hath been performed completely, it bringeth forth death (St. James 1, 15; Psalm vii, 14; Isaiah lix, 4).

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

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

Before this, however, it is proper for us to learn that the beings which are called devils were not created that they might be devils, for there is nothing evil in the works of God, and even they were created beautiful beings; but when they turned aside from the mind of righteousness, or from the heavenly understanding, they were removed to a distance from the place wherein they lived. And seeing that they were cast away by the exalted Will, they drew nigh and mingled themselves among the created beings of this world, and they made the heathen to go astray wholly according to their desire; and against us, because they have envy of us, they multiply their contendings that, peradventure, they may be able to turn us out of the way of the truth of the kingdom of heaven, and that we may not attain unto the country wherefrom they were swept out and fell. Therefore the labour of prayer and of abundant supplication is necessary for us, that through the Divine Providence, and through the gift which we have received from the Holy Spirit, we may be able to know what distinction existeth between the evil spirits, and what each one of them hath been commanded to [seek] after, and by what manner of means the destruction of every one of them is to be brought about. For their cunning is very great, and they spread abroad the mesh of their net in everything.

Therefore the blessed Apostle and the rest of the righteous men, who like him had experience of and had tried the Tempter in everything, and it is for this very reason that they have declared it, said, "The artifices of the Evil One shall not overcome us. And I will now narrate something of what I have endured from them, and a little of the vast knowledge which I have of them, and, like the beloved Prophets, I will tell what I understand about them.

The whole race of devils is beyond measure an envious one, and it is altogether jealous of all mankind, and particularly of the monks, for they cannot bear to see heavenly deeds wrought and heavenly lives led upon the earth, and they, therefore, make hidden pits and snares for us, as it is written, "They have laid their nets over my paths" (Psalm lvii, 7): now [the words] "their nets" mean thoughts of iniquity. Let us, however, be not afraid of their stirrings, and let us not be made lax by reason of their blandishments (or flatteries); but let us be constant in fasting and in prayer, and straightway they shall be vanquished and disappear. Now when they depart, let us not be confident and say, "Behold, they are put to 'shame, and we are freed from them,' for this race of beings can never be put to shame, and

they know not how to blush; for even whilst their temptations are being brought to naught on this side, they make an attack upon us on the other; and when they have examined and tried by what means our understanding may be flattered or terrified, they plan numberless schemes [to deceive us]. Now the devils are in the habit of leading men astray by declaring something such as the following: 'Behold, we will inform you concerning the things which are about to take place,' and then they show them mighty phantoms which reach up to the ceilings, so that by means of these similitudes they may lead astray those whom they are not able to injure in their minds.

It is quite unnecessary that we who are believers should be terrified either by the motions of the various species of devils, or by the various forms [which they take], and we should not be afraid of their voices, which are angry and threatening at one time, and which are flattering at another. For the Evil One is a liar, and there is no truth either in his words or his deeds. But although mankind once gave him power, and sin lifted up its horn, our Lord hath now broken the goad (or, sting) thereof, and hath humbled it and brought it down beneath our feet; and it hath been made a thing for the Gentiles to trample upon, and a laughing-stock to the nations. And this is the proof that the matter is thus, and righteousness testifieth that it hath been performed in creation, for behold, he who, in his error, hath exalted himself in his heart, and who boasteth that he can dry up the sea, and can parcel out the dry land, hath not the power to destroy the heavenly mind which is in the monks, and he is unable to turn so small and unimportant a creature as myself from speaking about him. Now the devils are cunning, but they can only lead astray those upon whom they find an opportunity for exercising their wiles; they appear in all kinds of forms and similitudes, and it happeneth that the Evil One even demandeth for himself the form of righteousness, as it is written, "Satan even taketh upon himself the form of an angel of light" (2 Corinthians xi, 14).

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

be not acquainted with his craftiness, his mind will be troubled straightway, and he shall fall into despair and turn backwards.

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

They shout, and wrangle, and make tumultuous noises and commotions, that, peradventure, by means of the sheer fright which they themselves inspire, they may be able to lead away captive weak minds and to make them do their will. If they had the power to perform anything, or to do any harm whatsoever, so much tumult and outcry and trouble would be unnecessary, and if one of them only were to come, he could perform [by himself] that which he had been deputed to do. For when the angel of truth was sent by the Lord of creation against the camp of the Assyrians he had no need of many companions, and he came not with tumult and terror, but with quietness and firmness he made use of the power which had been given to him, and destroyed one hundred and fourscore and five thousand of the Assyrians (2 Kings xix, 35; 2 Chronicles xxxii, 21; Isaiah xxxvii, 26); but the assembly of the evil ones, because it possesseth not the power of performing its own will, maketh use of means which are full of terror.

Now if any man shall say, "Supposing now the devils to have no power in them, by what agency did they bring upon Job all the calamities which are written in the Book? let him understand that he must think in this wise, that is to say, he must believe that the Evil One hath no power to do harm, and that God only gave power to tempt him into his hands. For if this were not so, He would not have stripped him of everything, and He would have had compassion upon his soul, but mercy is not found with the Evil One. In this wise must a man think. Moreover, the Evil One appeareth to have been particularly feeble, inasmuch as the just man vanquished him in the contest which he waged with a man; yet this is not a matter for wonder, my beloved, for Job the just was not given over wholly into the hands of the Evil One. And know ye that unless God had so wished, he would neither have had power over Job himself, nor over his herds and his flocks, nor over the miserable wealth of

those who were spectators of him—if a man may speak thus. And that the matter is thus be ye persuaded from the blessed Gospel, for when our Lord restrained and pursued the devils in one place, they besought Him to permit them to enter into a herd of swine which was nigh unto them (St. Matthew viii, 30; St. Mark v, 2-13; St.

Luke viii, 32, 33). If now the devils had not power over the swine, how much [less] can they have power over man, who was made in the image of God? So therefore in proportion as it is necessary for us to increase our fear of God, it is meet for us to add to the contempt which we should have for the congregation of the evil ones. Now in what way can we increase our fear of God? Or in what way are we able to add to our contempt for the evil ones? The means by which both these things are to be performed are similar in each case. Whensoever we make our life and deeds better than they were before, we increase the pleasure which we give to God, and we also multiply the contempt which we have for the evil ones. For the devils are far more afraid of the fasting of the monks, and of their prayers, and of their chastity, and of their abstinence, and of their meekness, and of their gentleness, than they are of their triumphs, and they are afraid most of all of their righteousness, which is in Christ. And all these [virtues] pierce them on every side after the manner of arrows, and for this reason they do all they can, and they become mad and foam at the mouth, that, if they can help it, they may not arrive at this condition of disgrace.

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

Know ye, however, O my beloved, that they have made known to many who were afar off the fortune of this our present congregation, and all matters which were in dispute; and of what I have said the following [words] and an explanation. It hath happened by our hath set out from India, or from some remote country unto us, and when as yet we did not see him, or by a thing about him, straightway we have had sight of him and have heard where he was prepared to go, for immediately [the devils] seized upon the news quickly and brought

it unto us saying, "Behold, such and such a man from such and such a place is coming unto you." It hath happened, moreover, that the man who was coming was a king, or that some obstacle hath prevented him from coming, whosoever he was, or that having travelled a certain distance, which was not little, he returned to his own country, but nevertheless the shameful and reprehensible craftiness of the devils had found it out.

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

And the matter is like that of the watchman when he goeth up to some high place in the sight of the whole camp and is able to see him that is coming before he arriveth; but he who cometh is also able to afford exact information concerning what is coming and what are the contents of his dispatch, and what is the condition of the nation from whom he cometh. In like manner do the devils see or hear and give information concerning what they see and hear beforehand, or if God meditateth anything concerning the waters of the river, for He hath power over it, the cunning of the devils, rebuked in the opinion of the wise, but to those who lack understanding of heart their error is sweet. By such means of error as these hath paganism made its way throughout creation, but the Lord of created things came and rebuked him that did these things, and humbled his spirit; and behold, the earth is tilled by the law of righteousness, and by the sword of the Spirit; and behold, the thorns, and the briars, and all the weeds of the seed of the Evil One have been rooted out therefrom. Such are the means which are made use of by the error of the devils, The Paradise as these do they lead astray creation made in the image, "Behold, do not the devils declare many things in which they have not before seen?" Now, even this be so, O my beloved, let not your minds be disturbed thereby; but enter ye into the counsel of your mind, and go understanding concerning the things of [this] world, and from these ye will obtain the power of [preserving your minds] from storm[s].

And before all things know that the physicians, by means of the experience which they have gotten of their handicrafts are able to know of a certainty before a man falleth sick whether he will live or die, and how long the sickness will be and when it will be at an end. And it happeneth that even when a man himself hath no idea that he is about to pass under afflictions, the physicians from their constant practice and from the experience which they have acquired, are able to inform [him] concerning the sicknesses which are about to come upon him, even when the first symptoms thereof have not declared themselves. Now the power of foretelling things is even greater with those who steer ships than with the

physicians, for they have experience of the heavens (or sky) and of the wind which is therein, and they are able to declare several days beforehand on what day the heavens (or sky) will change, and at what periods the wind will become strong and these things they can do by their knowledge and by their experience. And know ye also that the ability of the devils is not superior to that of helmsmen and physicians, for they also by their experience of matters are able to declare what they have never before heard, and to describe what they have never before seen. Unto you then these devils and the supplication which is made to them are superfluities; let those who are without them seek these things, but seek ye not freedom therefrom and let it be unto you an object to finish your work.

For who [hath commanded us] that we should be strenuous in this matter, and should know it? Who among the men of olden time received praise because they had knowledge of events before they happened? And who [among them] was ever blamed because he had no knowledge of events which were afar off, or were about to take place [immediately]? Each one of us will, however, be judged if he performeth not the work of righteousness, and not because he knoweth or doth not know the things of the future. Therefore let us excuse ourselves from this supplication, and let us pray, not that we may how secret things, but that we may please the Divine Many, and that power may be given unto us to stand against darts of the Evil One. And if we also desire to know hidden ings, this too is in our own hands, and we must purify our art as a habitation for the Holy Spirit, and behold, He will de and rest in us, and by the rays of light which proceed m Him our eye will be able to see hidden things from rete distances. Did not Elisha, who was a man like unto ourves, through the purity of his heart see that which his eyes l never seen? (2 Kings ii, 9-12.)

Ye must then make a distinction between the things of the Holy Spirit, and the things of the congregation of the Evil one. And perhaps ye will say, "How are we to make the disintention? First of all, pray and make supplication unto the vealer of secret things that He will make you to possess the power] of distinguishing between these matters; and for I rest I myself am bound to impart unto you gladly, as my us, whatsoever I have learned from a long experience. The tions and revelations of the Holy Spirit are not of a terrifyor tumultuous character, for they take place under conditions of rest and tranquillity, and in like manner also with little pleasure and quiet satisfaction doth the soul feel the life of the Holy Ghost therein, for it is not wont to put terror to people or to produce trembling where it maketh itself to seem. Look ye now into the Scriptures and they will inform in what manner the revelation of the Spirit taketh place, they will shew you that it taketh place in restfulness, and ndness, and peace (Galatians v, 22, 23): these are the simililes which are in the revelation of the Spirit, and whensoever s brought about, it is done in this manner.

And if, after the nner of men, a man may be straightway terrified or greatly ved through the love of the thing itself, or through the uty of the revelation, and through the quietness and pleave which are caused thereby, in due season the fear or terror l come to an end, and comfort and gladness will come to in its place, even as Gabriel wrought for Zachariah (St. ke i, 19), and according to what the other angels did for blessed women at the grave of our

Lord (St. Matthew, viii, 5), and the angel who appeared unto the shepherds and claimed to them the good news of the birth of our Remer (St. Luke ii, 10). And ye will find many other instances ich are like unto these in the Scriptures if ye seek for them. w if the soul be terrified or be afraid by reason of those ions, it doth not follow that such fright is caused by the il One, for it may, peradventure, arise in it because the soul aketh itself unworthy of the heavenly revelation which hath been vouchsafed unto it. This then is the manner of the velation of the knowledge of the truth.

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

Understand ye also the following matter, and learn briefly concerning it, that is to say, in the revelation of the Spirit, and in the tumult caused by devils [in the soul] fear is vouchsafed. In respect of the devils, however, they can certainly stir up us a tumult, and put terror therein, but they cannot turn the away and make an end of them. Now whilst the Holy Spirit revealing itself to a man, the soul is greatly moved by the jesty thereof, but the terror which it hath of Him cometh to end speedily, and perfect happiness maketh its abode in him. Thus are the wiles and crafts of the Evil One, but, even accoding to the things which I have already said, let us not be moved by the fear which he causeth, and let us not be terrified at his visions, and let us not turn unto him and make ourselves sure to him so that he may say unto us, "Fall ye down and wo ship me" (compare St. Matthew iv, 5). By his wiles and crafts he hath led the heathen into error, and they imagine that he God, but the fearers of our Lord have prevented us, and they have gathered us into His habitation, and [thus] there is no given unto him an opportunity of leading us into captivity.

For the Evil One is exceedingly bold, and he is without shame, and he even dared to approach our Lord in his madness and deprive ty, that is to say, the body which He had put on; and our Lord looked upon him and scorned him, and rebuked him, and said, "Get thee behind Me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (St. Matthew iv, 10; St. Luke iv, 8). Through the consolation of these

things especially the Evil One should be held in contempt in our sight; for the word which was spoken by our Lord to Satan was spoken on our behalf and on account of it, that in the same manner we ourselves might also rebuke the devils, and that as the Evil One was destroyed before the Lord of our Lord, so he might also perish and come to an end before our words, for in this he cannot multiply boasting.

Now when our word hath power over the devils, and the lands [run] terrified from before us, let no man marvel when I rebuketh the demons and they become subject unto him, and let him not hold in contempt another man by whose hands similar thing cannot be wrought, but let him examine first of and understand the lives and works of various men, and from us scrutiny let him know with whom abideth Divine Grace, and where the righteousness of God resteth. For they will be unto us a very much better mirror than those who cast out devils, and in them the wicked will be able to see their blemishes and become rebuked, and in them good men will be able to look carefully at their career and become strengthened. Whether a man becometh a prosperous toiler or an abject coward belongunto himself, but for a man to stretch out his hand against devils and for them to yield place belongeth not unto him unto heavenly Grace. For when the Disciples returned with unto their Lord from [preaching the] Gospel which they had been sent out to preach, they rejoiced in that even the devils are obedient unto their words. Now therefore let him that an discernment look and hearken unto this answer which given unto them: ”Rejoice ye not because the devils also have been made subject unto you, but rejoice because your names have been written down in heaven” (St. Luke x, 20).

For names to be written down in the Book of Life is a mony to conduct which is pleasing [to God], and it showeth those who are worthy of this thing have an upright mind; power over devils is, manifestly, [a mark of] the grace of Redeemer. And that ye may know that this is so, observe Christ answered those who took refuge in this thing when spirits were going forth before Him, and they said unto Him, ”Thy Name we have cast out devils, and have performed any signs and wonders. And He said unto them, ”Verily, Verily, I say unto you I know you not” (St. Matthew vii, 22, Therefore let us pray, as I have already said, that there may be given unto us the grace to seek after the power to distinguish between spirits, according to the word of the Book which saith, ”Be not ye led astray by the spirits which err (compare 1 Timothy iv).

[The following is] by the Holy Writer Mar Athanasius. Now I merit praise in that whilst repeating the triumph of the blessed Anthony I desire to keep silence concerning many things, being at the same time very careful not to speak anything on mine own authority only; it is sufficient for me to record the things which actually took place. Let not any man imagine that we declare the things as a pastime, but let him be sure that we narrate them as things which took place in very truth, and that we do so knowing from actual experience that they are true, and that we are only placing on record the wonderful acts of the blessed man that they may form a small memorial of him. Let the wise man know the purity of our intention and that we do not narrate the things which have been said by us in this history

without a good object; and we shall be made strong by the measure of your love. For I am convinced that it would be neither useful nor beneficial if matters of this kind were spoken of in a boastful manner, because our Adversary is very crafty, and it might happen that he could cause us a stumble even in a thing which concerneth the truth; therefore whilst recording the narrative of the histories of the wiles and arts of the Evil One, it is meet that we should make you to watchful against his subtlety.

The blessed and holy man Anthony [saith]: How often then did they ascribe blessings in a love voice, and whilst the voice of blessing was reading my ears, the words of cursing were sent for by them! For how many times did they inform me before hand concerning the flood of the Nile, that is to say, of river Gihôn, and how many times did I say unto them, "as for you what have ye?" And I used to say unto them, "I have no need to learn these things from you," but they would come again to me after this in the guise of thieves, and they would surround me, and would stand up and utter thieves against me, having at the same time their weapons upon them. And again, on another occasion they were suddenly founding my house with serpents of various kinds, and with repelling in large numbers, and with these there were also horses who weighed; then straightway I made myself ready and I stood I lifted up my voice in Psalms, and said, "Some [put their trust in] chariots, and some in horses, but we will be strong in the Name of the Lord our God" (Psalm xx, 7), and immediately they came to an end and disappeared from before. On another occasion they came to me by night, and they were holding torches of fire and were saying, "We have come now to burn thee [alive], O Anthony," and as they were saying these things unto me, I closed my eyes so that I might show them that I had placed their light in the portion of darkness; I straightway I put on the armour of prayer against them, and whilst I was praying the light of the sinful ones was excused, and it was no more.

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

And again, on another occasion, there appeared [unto me] the devil of an exceedingly haughty and insolent appearance, and I stood up before me with the tumultuous noise of many people, and he dared to say unto me, "I, even I, am the power of God," and "I, even I, am the Lord of the worlds." And he said unto me, "What dost thou wish me to give thee?

Ask and thou shalt receive." Then I blew a puff of wind at him, and I recked him in the Name of Christ, and I made ready to smite him, and when, as I thought, I did smite him, at that very moment all his strength, and all his host [of fiends], at the [mention of] the Name of Christ, came to an end. And on another occasion, when I was fasting, the crafty eye appeared unto me in the form of a brother monk carrying bread, and he began to speak unto me words of counsel, saying, "Rise up, and stay thy heart with bread and water, and rest a little from thine excessive labours, for thou art a man, and howsoever greatly thou mayest be exalted thou art clothed

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

And again, how very many times in the desert hath gold shown before me things like phantoms which resembled g rich in order that I might bow myself down before him and toghim even with my finger! I, however, never ceased from sin es ing the songs of the Holy Spirit. And how very many tim when I was receiving enjoyment in the Holy Spirit did he diturb me in anger, and he even dared so far as to strike me it Not that I myself am of any account whatsoever, but that it may be seen that the power of our Lord is mighty, and that i n cannot be vanquished even in the feeble ones who believe i), Him. And Satan laid upon me hard stripes (or cruel blows h and in proportion as he multiplied them I kept crying out wit ie a loud voice, saying, "There is nothing which shall separat re me from the love of God" (Romans viii, 35); and after thes all words [had been said] Satan and the members of his host fe on one upon the other, and each of them vented his wrath upc to his fellow. Now it was God, Who aforetime reduced Satan its subjection, and God alone, Who performed all these thir like which I have related; and [the Book] saith, "I saw Satan I my lightning fall from heaven" (St. Luke x, 18).

And I, O I ve sons, remember the word[s] of the Apostle, who said, "I ha or spoken these things for your behalf, both for myself and ii); Apollos, that ye may learn of us" (compare i Corinthians ii ve in this wise ye also must learn of me these things which ye ha nd heard, and ye shall not be wearied [in running] your course, a of ye shall not fear the appearances (or visions) of Satan and de all his hosts. And even though I, like a simple man, have mait use of these histories, it is for you to hold them to be true; for yer is meet that we should bring forward in this place whatsoever me we remember, lest under one pretext or another, or by sor uk means or other, [Satan] draw nigh unto you, and that ye ma he find yourselves ready [to fight] against all his schemes.

Now on one occasion Satan approached the house one nig ers and knocked at the door, and I went out to see who wi fi knocking, and I lifted up mine eyes and saw the form of a tile exceedingly tall and strong man; and having asked him h i "Who art thou?" he answered

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

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

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

35 at all times. For [otherwise] when the evil ones draw nigh unto us, having made ready to come against us in the hope that they may gain some advantage over us, or may discover some thoughts of fear in us, for they prepare phantoms [which appear] unto us in the event that they may find that we are terrified and afraid, straightway, like thieves who have discovered a place which is without guardians, they will enter into us and will lead us captives of their will, and our miserable souls will be found to be in an agitated state, not by reason of the punishment of the Adversary, but through our own sluggishness. If, however, the evil ones find us in the love of Christ, and meditating continually on the hope [of that] which is

to come, and thinking thoughts concerning the commandments of our Lord, and [believing] that the kingdom and dominion are His, and that the Evil One hath neither opportunity nor power to resist the might of the Cross, if, I say, the Evil One shall find any believing man in this state of mind when he draweth nigh unto him, at that very moment he will remove himself from him to a distance.

It was in such a frame of mind that he found Job who was prepared [to resist him], and the Evil One feared, and was ashamed, and he departed from him as from a man of war; on the other hand, he led captive to his will wholly Judah whom he found to be entirely destitute of such matters. Let us learn then fully from such examples and from such narratives, that if we wish to do so it is very easy for us to hold in contempt the Evil One. Let us meditate at all times on our Lord, and let our souls rejoice in His hope, and behold, we shall find that the Evil One will vanish from before us like the darkness, and we shall also discover that those who come to persecute us will turn [their backs] upon us like men who are chased out of the battle, for, as I have already told you, they are cowards. For the decree of doom (or judgement) is at all times before them, and they are ever expecting the punishment which is prepared for them, and the fear of the Cross is cast upon them in proportion to their impudent audacity. Let then these and all the other things [which I have said] be unto you the means of understanding the insolent cunning of the Evil One, and of recognizing the similitudes of the forms of his appearances.

If it happen therefore unto any of you that the appearance of one of these forms presenteth itself, be ye not forthwith terrified, but look upon it with great courage as it really is, and ask it, "Who art thou? And whence comest thou? And if it be a true revelation of the Holy Spirit, straightway the mind will feel that it is so, and will have confidence, and courage (or consolation) will grow in you and fear will diminish; but if it be an appearance of the error of the Evil One, the thing will be confounded, and there will be no opportunity for it to be bold, and the form of the appearance will not tarry, and the question [which ye ask] will make manifest the courage of the confidence of refuge in our Lord.

On one occasion a manifestation revealed itself unto Joshua, the son of Nun, and he asked that which had appeared unto him who he was, and took his stand upon the question; and similarly Daniel also saw one of the Watchers and rejoiced at the sight, and was afraid at the measure of the honour of him that had come, but he was wholly comforted by the grace of the confidence which he had in his truth. And in like manner a revelation (or manifestation) of the truth came to each and every one of the [saints of] olden time, and none of the stratagems of the phantoms of the Wicked One ever led them astray. And as the blessed man Anthony was saying these things, and every man was hearkening unto him with gladness, unto every man who listened unto him was given help of one kind or another according to his need; the man who was strong found his strenuousness to be increased, and the man who was weak found that he received encouragement, and the proud man found that his arrogance was overthrown and swept away, and every man was persuaded to reach forward confidently towards the hope which is to come. And all the people with one accord ascribed blessing

unto the righteous man Anthony because such a degree of strength had been given unto him, and because such great wisdom had made its abode in him, and because that in the fierce strife and warfare which he waged against devils he was able to distinguish and discern the difference between good and evil appearances, and the manifestations (or revelations) of our Lord from those which appertained unto devils.

And in the days of the blessed man the habitations of the monks were accepted as tabernacles of praises, and Psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs were heard therein; and love and righteousness rejoiced therein, and therein was found the rest of prayer coupled with fasting. And the monks toiled in the labour of their hands that they might not be a burden upon any man, and of [the proceeds of] the sweat of their faces the poor and the needy were relieved. And the monastery [of Anthony] became at that time a wonder unto the inhabitants of the country, for behold, the silver, and the gold, and the riches of this world which were so highly esteemed in their sight were despised and accounted as dross by such men as the monks thereof; and those at whose wastefulness, and drunkenness, and lasciviousness the monks marvelled, returned [to their homes] in wonder as [if they had seen] an angel and not a human being. No sounds of dissension or contention were heard there, and no voice of the violent man (?) or of his gaoler sounded therein; well might a man describe that monastery in the words of the parable which was uttered in olden time, and say, "How fair are thy habitations, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!" (Numbers xxiv, 5), for the country was as if the desert had been roofed over, and it was like a paradise which was by the rivers, and tabernacles which the Lord had stablished, and like cedars by the side of the stream.

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

And this he used to say and teach unto them: It is right that we should at all times follow after the food of the soul, for the soul worketh together with our spirit in the striving which is against the adversary; but it is meet for the body to be in subjection and tribulation, for

it very speedily becometh unduly exalted by the persuasion and flattery of the Evil One. And it is therefore right that the soul should be more prepared and more exalted than the body, that the body may not prevail (or be strong) over it, and bring it low by the lusts [thereof]. And our Lord also gave this indication to the blessed Apostles, and commanded them, saying, "Be not careful as to what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, for such things do the peoples of the earth seek after, and your Father knoweth whatsoever things ye have need of; but seek ye the kingdom of God and His glory, and the things which are superior unto these shall be added unto you" (St. Matthew vi, 31 sq.)

Now some short time after these things a storm and a persecution arose in the Church, during the years [of the reign] of Maximinus, the wicked Emperor, and [the soldiers] began to seize and to take into Alexandria a great company of the blessed confessors; and the report of these things reached the blessed Anthony. And straightway he left his habitation and place of abode, and he made haste at the sound of the strife, and he said to himself, "I will go and draw nigh [thereto], so that if Divine Grace call me, it shall find me prepared, and if it thinketh otherwise concerning my unworthy self, I shall at all events be a spectator of the strife. Now he desired exceedingly to enter [the race], and to be accounted worthy of the athlete's crown. So he travelled on his way and drew nigh and arrived at the city, and he went in through the gate, and inquired where the athletes had been made to assemble, and where they had been gathered together, and asked concerning the report of the strife. And when he had heard and had learned where the place was, and in what manner of restraint they were fettered, he made his way thither; and as soon as he saw those who had been called by Divine Grace [unto death] at this time, he planned with all diligence and by every means in his power to be a companion unto every one of them in the contest wherein they were to stand.

And he prepared and made himself ready to be with every man, and he became a prisoner in the prison with those who were shut up therein, and he ministered unto them and relieved their wants; and he passed his time continually in close companionship with the rest of the prisoners who were to be exiled, and those who were to be sent out from the country to the mines, and to the islands, and he ministered unto them with great pains and care. And he was found to be ready to accompany all such as were brought and were going in to their doom, both in their going in and coming out; as they went in he gave them encouragement and admonition, and as they came out he ascribed blessings unto them and sang hymns of praise. And it was his custom [to do this] day by day, and his acts were so well known and so famous in all the city that at length [the report thereof] came to the ears of the governor. Now when the wicked governor learned concerning him, and the people had informed him concerning Anthony's disposition and work, he marvelled at [the bravery of] his mind, and because he was neither moved by the tortures and tribulations which were falling upon his companions, nor was afraid; and he commanded that he should no longer be found in the city, and that the other monks who were with him should not come therein, because they also were doing the same work.

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

Now he wore his apparel with the hair inside, and the skin outside, and to the day of his death he never touched his body with water, for he wished to keep it meagre, and he never dipped his feet in water without the sternest necessity; and no man ever saw him naked or exposed, except when he died, and his body was carried in honour by his disciples. He once decided that for a short time he would remain in silent contemplation, and that he would neither go outside his dwelling nor be seen by any man, and it came to pass that during the days wherein [he was thus occupied] a certain Roman nobleman whose name was Martinianus came to visit him, and he drew nigh and besought him to come forth and to pray with him, and to lay his hand upon his daughter, who was torn by a devil. And when the nobleman had waited a very long time, and had besought the blessed man incessantly to open his door, though he would not be persuaded to do so, Anthony looked [out of the window] and saw him, and said unto him: "O man, why dost thou weary me? I am a man like unto thy-self, but if thou dost believe in the Christ Whom I serve, depart in peace, and according as thou believest pray, and it shall be [unto thee] even as thou wishest.

Then straightway that man had full and complete confidence in the word which he had heard, and went by the way he had come, taking his daughter with him, and she was delivered from the power of the subjugation of the Evil One. And God, Who did say, "Ask ye and receive" (St. Matthew vii, 7; St. Luke xi, 9), performed very many things like unto this by the hands of Anthony; now many people who were smitten with diseases of several kinds thronged to him, and came and sat down by the side of his cell, and each of them obtained relief from his afflictions.

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

Then again the voice came to him, saying, "If thou goest up it will not be to the Thebaid only, and even if thou goest into the Thebaid as thou art thinking [of doing], thou wilt have to endure toil greater than that which thou [performest] here; if, however, thou wishest to enjoy silent contemplation and to be at rest, get thee gone into the innermost desert. And Anthony the blessed answered and said, "O my Lord, who will shew me [the way to] that difficult place? For neither do I myself know it, nor am I acquainted with or have knowledge of men whodo. Now whilst he was standing up, there passed by certain Arabs who had made ready and set out on their way to go to that region, and the blessed man drew nigh unto them, and entreated them to let him go with them, and they received him gladly because it was manifest that it was the commandment of God which was to be performed in this matter. And having travelled with them for three days and three nights, he arrived at a certain high mountain, and he found in the lower parts thereof water which was clear, and cool, and sweet, and a few palm-trees, for the land which was by the side of the mountain was a flat plain; and the place was pleasing to the blessed Anthony, and he loved it well, and he loved it especially because God had been his Governor and had led him to that spot.

Therefore Anthony encamped there and dwelt in that place, and he was exalted there like a king in the courts [of his palace]. Now when those Arabs who had brought him to that place saw [this], they wondered and marvelled, and they left with him a little bread which was found with them; and from that time forward whenever they were journeying into Egypt and returning therefrom, those Arabs, by reason of the wonderful things which they saw in the man, always passed by the place where he was, and also brought him bread. Now there were found in that region a few small birds [which came] from the palm-trees.

And it came to pass that after a time it was heard by the brethren where he was, and like beloved sons they remembered their righteous father, and they made inquiries and found out where the place was, and they laboured strenuously and sent to him everything that could be of use to him. Now when the blessed Anthony saw that the brethren had begun

to take trouble for him, he besought those who had begun to go to him to bring him a little wheat and a hoe; and when they had brought them to him, he went about the land at the foot of the mountain, and found a little place which was suitable for cultivating and watering; thus he was able to provide himself with as much bread as he needed, and he rejoiced greatly because he had found the means which would prevent him from troubling any man, and because he would be a burden to himself only. And having seen that the brethren were thronging to him, and that they would not be prevented from coming to him, he tilled a portion of that ground and made it into a vegetable garden for the benefit of those who came to him. Now when he first began to sow wheat in that place, the wild animals used to come there in large numbers for the sake of the water, and they damaged the crop, but one day when they were among the corn according to their custom, he went quietly and seized one of them, and he said unto them all with a laugh, "Why do ye do harm to me, seeing that I do no harm to you? Get ye gone therefore in the Name of the Lord, and come ye never again nigh unto this place"; and from that hour this was a command from heaven to them, and they never again did harm to that place.

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

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

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

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

And it came to pass after a time that the brethren [who were] monks appeared before him and besought him to come down and visit them in their monastery for a long period, and having multiplied their entreaties he granted their request; and he rose up and travelled with them in the desert to the borders of Egypt. Now there was with them a camel which was laden with bread and water [and] provisions for the way, for no water whatsoever was to be found in the whole of that desert. And having travelled for one or two days, the water was finished and came to an end, for the men with him were not a few, and in those days the heat was very fierce, and the people were overcome by thirst; and they were troubled the more because they had wandered about the whole of that district that they might find water, and they threw themselves down on the ground, being in trouble and in great danger, and because they were in despair about themselves they turned the camel adrift to wander about in the desert. Now when the blessed old man saw the people in such great distress, he sighed heavily, and having departed from them a short distance, he bowed his knees upon the ground and spreading out his hands towards heaven, he cried out to God, and said, "Consider, O Lord, at this time also the prayer of Thy servant";

and before the words of his prayer were ended, water sprang up from that place whereon he had prayed, and he brought all the people and made them to come [there], and they prayed and gave thanks unto God, and they drank and were relieved from their tribulations, and they also filled the water-skins with the water. Then they went forth in quest of the camel, and they brought him back [to their camp]; now they found him quite near, because it happened that, through the Providence (or Dispensation) of God, whilst the animal was wandering about his cord was caught by a root and he was unable to move, and he stood still until they went and brought him [back]. And they gave the camel water to drink, and they loaded up his load upon him, and they set out on their road.

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

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

And, moreover, he spake the following words: "Since we, who are monks, are not held fast by anger in anything whatsoever, Satan filcheth us away through this very thing that we may rage one against the other; and it is therefore meet that we should at all times remember the word of our Lord which saith, 'If thou bringest to the altar thine offer- 'ing, and there rememberest that thou art held by anger against 'thy brother, go thou and be reconciled with thy brother, and 'then offer up thine offering' (St. Matthew v, 23, 24). We should remember also the word of the Apostle, 'Let not the 'sun go down upon your wrath' (Ephesians iv, 26). Now this command, 'Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,' was not written merely [to tell us] that we were never to be angry, but [to warn us] against offences of every kind, and

against keeping wrath one against the other; for it is very right and seemly that the sun should not go down by day and leave us in sin, and that the moon should not overtake us in the same by night, and should not find us in the service of the Wicked One, or thinking of him. Since therefore it is well for us [to be] thus, it is right that we should consider and examine into the word of the Apostle which admonished us, saying, 'Try ye one another, examine ye one another' (2 Corinthians xiii, 5).

Let us then each and every day meditate in such a way that every man among us may receive from his soul the computation of all his works and thoughts, both by day and by night; and let every man be an honest investigator of his own thoughts for himself, before shall come the righteous Avenger Who shall reward righteously (compare St. Matthew xvi, 27), and shall punish even according as the Holy Gospel hath admonished us; for the wages of the mind are always the same. Those who have fought against sins He will encourage, and him that standeth in the truth He will admonish and urge to new exertions, lest he be filched away by boasting, and be despoiled by means of over-confidence, and lest he despise one man and love another, and justify his own soul. [Let us then do these things], even as the Apostle Paul said, 'until our Lord cometh' (1 Timothy vi, 14), Who shall judge the things which are hidden.

"For it may happen that we ourselves do not know our own manner of life and works, but though we have lost this knowledge it is manifest before God, Who knoweth the things which are hidden. Let us therefore appoint Him to be the Judge. Let us, at all times, take each the burden of the other, and let us suffer for each other even as our Lord suffered for us; but let us examine our souls unceasingly, and let us provide and fill our houses in this world with whatsoever things we lack with the greatest care. And let this thing also be an admonition to us against sin, and let each man of us write down both his actions and his thoughts upon the tablets of his heart, as if he were obliged to read and lay them out in due order under the eye of every man. For when he pondereth and considereth [he will find] that it would be a shame and a disgrace that these things should come to light, and when he meditateth further [he will see] that, inasmuch as the mere hearing of the same would cause him great ignominy, it is manifest that the doing of the same [would work] great destruction. And since it is difficult for sin to come to the light, it is certain that falsehood clingeth and cleaveth thereto;

for as when the natural eye seeth [what is happening] no act of shame is to be expected, so also if we were men who were obliged to tell each other our manner of life (or conversation) and thoughts, no sin would ever be committed by us because of the shame which would result therefrom. Let then the writings wherein are inscribed our shortcomings be things of which to be ashamed, for they take the place of the eyes of the spectators, and since we are as much ashamed of the writings as if they had been spectators, let us, like men of understanding, cease from the doing of and from meditating upon the works which bring in their train reproach. Now therefore by such means as these, if our souls are a care unto us,

let us bring our bodies into subjection, so that by our works we shall please God, and treat with contempt the Enemy by means of our strenuousness."

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

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

And there was a certain virgin of Busiris who suffered from a severe and terrible disease, for the water (or tears) which flowed from the pupil of her eyes, and the matter which fell from her nostrils, before it fell upon the ground became worms, and her whole body was in a state of putrefaction; and because of the progress of the disease her eyes had lost the power of natural sight and were useless. Now when the kinsfolk of this young woman heard that certain brethren [who were] monks were preparing to go to the blessed Anthony, because they believed wholly in the man who had healed a woman of a flow of blood [which had lasted] twelve years, they entreated them to allow them to go with them also and to follow in their company; and as the brethren received their petition and permitted them to go in their company, they arrived [in due course] at the place [where the blessed man was]. And the kinsfolk of the maiden remained with their daughter a short distance on this side of the mountain, at the place where dwelt the man of God, Paphnutius the confessor and anchorite.

And when the brethren had gone in and had greeted the blessed Anthony, and whilst they were meditating about relating to him concerning the maiden and her kinsfolk, he began to speak before they did about her sickness and afflictions, and said how it happened that she came to be in their company.

Then making the conversation of the blessed man the pretext for their words they besought and entreated him to allow the maiden to come into his presence, but he would not be persuaded to do so, and he said unto them, "Get ye back to the place where the maiden is, and if she be not already dead, ye will find that she hath been wholly healed; now this hath not happened either through me or through the gift which my poor and contemptible person possesseth, but it is a gift from our Redeemer, Who performeth grace and mercy in every place for those who cry unto Him in affliction. Get ye out then quickly, for the merciful God hath hearkened unto the prayer of the maiden, and hath regarded the toil and labour of her kinsfolk; and behold, His lovingkindness hath made known and revealed unto me in this hour that relief from her affliction hath come unto the maiden. Thus this wonderful thing hath taken place. And the brethren went forth and found the kinsfolk of the maiden rejoicing, and their daughter was freed from and was completely healed from her affliction.

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

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

And the blessed Anthony possessed this wonderful attribute. When he was dwelling in the mountain, his mind was alert and watchful to observe and to see, by the operation of the Holy Spirit which dwelt in him, that which was afar off as if it were near. For, on another occasion when he was in the mountain, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and suddenly

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

And there was also another famous man with whom many were acquainted, for he used to come very frequently to the blessed Anthony, and many glorious deeds and signs and wonders were wrought by his hands unto our Lord. Now on a certain occasion one reason or another made it necessary for the blessed Ammon to cross the river, the name of which was Dābhā (i.e., the Wolf River), and he had with him the righteous man, [who was called] Theodore; and this blessed man also was mighty in the ascetic life. And when they had come nigh unto the river, and were standing on the bank, they agreed that each should go away a short distance from the other so that they might not see each other's nakedness as they were crossing the river. Now when the righteous man Theodore had removed himself from him, the blessed man Ammon began to have shame even of himself, and whilst he was in this state of mind suddenly Divine Grace seized him, and set him up upon the [other] side of the river. And when the righteous man Theodore had crossed the river, he drew nigh unto the blessed Ammon, and examined him attentively, [and found] that his feet had not been dipped in the water, and that not a drop of water had touched either his body or his garments.

Then Theodore began to entreat Ammon to inform him how his passage over the river had been effected, and when he saw that he was making many excuses about it and was debating the matter, he became certain in his mind that it was Divine Grace which had taken him across the river. And he persisted strongly in questioning Ammon, and took hold of his feet, and said unto him, "Yes, or no? I will not leave thee until thou hast shown me" [this thing]. Now when the old man Ammon saw the persistence of the righteous man Theodore, and [remembered] especially the word which had gone forth to him, he entreated him to make the matter known to no man until his departure from this world had been effected, and then he revealed to him that he had indeed been carried across the river [by the Spirit], and that he had never walked upon the water thereof at all. And this thing our Lord Himself did by His own power, and He made the great Apostle Peter to do so (St. Matthew xiv, 29), and it was done [by Ammon] also by the command of our Lord; and [it was only] after the old man Ammon was dead that this matter was spoken of by the righteous man Theodore, according to the agreement which he had made with Ammon.

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

51 4a And moreover there came unto him a certain Count called Archelaus, and he found him in the outer mountain praying by himself, and he made entreaty unto him on behalf of the nun Polycratia, who was from the city of Laodicea, and was faithful and devoted to the ascetic life. Now she was much afflicted by pains in her stomach and in her right side, and, in short, her whole body was in a state of suffering. And when the blessed man had prayed for her, Archelaus wrote down the day and the hour in which the prayer had been made, and after this the blessed man dismissed him, and he returned to his own country; and when he had gone to the province of Laodicea he found Polycratia the nun in perfect health. Then he asked at what time she had found deliverance from her sufferings, and by what means it had been brought about, and they related to him that the mercy of God had been poured out upon her at a certain time suddenly, and that she had felt relief and found herself made whole and free from the violent pains of her disease. And immediately that the words of their narrative concerning her illness had come to an end, Archelaus brought forth the paper whereon were written the day and hour wherein the prayer had been made on behalf of the believing woman (Polycratia), and the words of their narrative agreed with those which were written on his paper as if they had been written down [at the same time] with a pen. Then wonder laid hold upon every man, and they all admitted openly that the time at which the prayer was made by the blessed man was precisely that at which relief had come to her.

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

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

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

And when the blessed Anthony had said these things, straightway the young man was made whole, and he came to himself, and remembered where he was, and through whom deliverance had come unto him, and then he began to salute the blessed man, and to confess God with many loud protestations. Now believing men have related very many [wonderful] things like unto this, but in comparison to the other deeds which were wrought by the blessed man these are not very important.

On one occasion he stood up to pray at the ninth hour, and he perceived that his mind was exalted, and, what was still more wonderful, that whilst he was on the earth his mind was transformed, and he did not feel that he was upon the earth. For he saw that his soul was not being lifted up by the power of his mind, but was being governed by the angels; and when he himself was raised up, he saw other beings who came and stood opposite to him, and they prevented him from passing on. And they said, "Let us see of what kind are his deeds, and if we cannot by any means make him to be taken (or held) by us." Then those

who were guiding him turned round and rebuked them, and said unto them, "Our Lord by His grace blotted out his shortcomings and his sins before he became a disciple, but ye are embodied in his triumphs and in his works and deeds [which took place] after he had become a disciple"; and thereupon his soul was immediately exalted to the place unto which it attained. And after this his mind took up its abode in him, and he felt and perceived that which had happened to him; and he magnified and gave thanks to (or confessed) God by reason of everything which had taken place, and [he remained] in prayer the whole night which followed that day, and he tasted no food of any kind whatsoever therein.

And a man must also marvel at the severity of our contest, and at the great labour by which he passeth to this air; and he must remember and say, "This is the word of the Apostle, who spake, saying, 'Your contending is against the ruler who 'holdeth the power of this world'" (Ephesians vi, 12). For this reason the Apostle himself commanded, saying, "Put on the armour of God in order that ye may be able to stand against him in the evil day" (Ephesians vi, 13), so that the Enemy may have no occasion in any way to say about us that we have been sorely put to shame. And, my beloved, in connexion with the history of the blessed man, let us remember the matter of the Apostle who said, "Whether in the body or out of the body, I know not; God knoweth" (2 Corinthians, xii, 2). Now, the blessed Paul was snatched up into the third heaven, and heard words which may not be uttered, and came down [again]; but the blessed Anthony was lifted up into the place to which he was lifted up, and he received a pledge of the confidence of his labour, and he returned and took up his abode with himself. And the [sign of] grace was also found with him. Whensoever he had in his mind any matter the truth of which he could not comprehend with his thoughts, he would make supplication in his prayer, and it would be revealed unto him, and in all these things he was taught by God even as it is written (St. John vi, 45; Isaiah liv, 13).

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

Such was the vision which came unto him, and it roused him up and incited him exceedingly to triumph in his old age.

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

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

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

those who saw him; when he was troubled [they saw that] his visage was disturbed, and when he was angry that his thoughts were ruffled.

And, moreover, he was immeasurably firm in the faith, and he held fast thereunto with honour and discretion (or discernment); he did not conduct himself in the matter of faith like a man who made himself a stranger unto the children of men, or like one who dwelt in the desert, either in common with other monks, or by himself; and he would not receive the people who used to go to him without question and also enquiry. For he never joined himself to the Meletian heretics* who were in Egypt, for from the very beginning he was well acquainted with their dissensions (or schisms), and their restlessness, and he never took count at all of the other heresies, and he even exhorted every man to withdraw himself from them, for he used to say, "Neither in the discussion of them nor in their result is there any advantage. Similarly the Arian heretics were so detestable and contemptible in his sight that he withdrew himself altogether from having any dealings with them, and he also exhorted other people to keep themselves far from their words and their doctrines. And it happened on one occasion that some of these Arians went to him, but when he had enquired at their hands, and had asked them questions and learned that they belonged to the dough of the leaven of Arius, the unbeliever, he drove them forth from his presence like the other wild beasts and vipers.

And he said unto them, "Ye are more bitter and more evil than the beasts of prey and deadly serpents. Now on one occasion the Arians spread a report and made a scandal which they cast upon the world, and they went about, saying, "Anthony hath agreed to our faith and hath accepted it," and when this report came to his ears, astonishment laid hold upon him, and he marvelled greatly at the falsehood of the Arians, and how easily error came to them through the impudence of their minds.

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

* i.e., the followers of Meletius, Bishop of Lycopolis; he was deposed for his irregular behaviour A.D. 306. "ye away then from them afar off that ye become not corrupted by them. God forbid that the Son of God should be proclaimed to be a thing which hath been made, or that He should be named as something which came from nothing. For He is of the substance of the Father, and He is His Child, and it is therefore great wickedness for a man to say that there was ever a time when He was not; for the Word existed at all times with God. There-

fore flee ye from association with them, lest ye have a portion in their blasphemy, for light hath no connexion with darkness, and ye must have no connexion whatsoever with them, and ye must have no likeness to or association with them, for ye are in the righteousness of your faith believing Christians, and those who say that the Son of the Living God is a created thing are in no wise different from the heathen. Believe me, O my beloved, the very creatures are far more to be desired than those who worship the creatures in preference to their Creator, and who confound and compare the creatures with the Lord and Creator of the universe."

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

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

such knowledge and understanding could dwell in a man who had not learned to read or to write.

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

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

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

Now on another occasion it happened that certain men, who were wise according to the world and who were received gladly among the Greeks, went to him, and began to ask him questions concerning the faith which is in our Lord Jesus Christ, wishing to confound him in a discussion concerning the matter of the Cross and of the preaching of our Lord, and

having seen that they were ready to scoff and to mock, he bore with them a little, and then, having observed them, he roared greatly in his heart concerning the error which dwelt in them. Then he spake unto them by means of an interpreter, who was exceedingly skilled in translating words from the Egyptian into the Greek language, and he said unto them first of all, "Which is the easier? For a man to confess the Cross, or to believe that adultery, and fornication, and impure acts with men are committed by those who are called 'gods.' For the [doctrine] which is spoken and believed by us is a mark and a likeness of the men by whom death is held in contempt, and the world is considered to be of no account, but the religion which ye preach is a service of impurity, and the desire of foul lusts. Which thing then is more beneficial for us to believe?

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

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

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

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

"Narrate ye now unto us your scriptures, and explain ye unto us what is therein. What are the animals which are worshipped, and what are the reptiles unto which are given the names of gods, except subjects for mockery and contempt? But if a man void of understanding cometh to you, ye liken each one of them [unto gods] in the speech of rational beings, and ye expound the unlikely things [which are declared concerning them], so that the foolish may think that they are true. Ye give names to the earth, and to the heavens, and the sun, and the moon, and the air, and the sea, and the fire, and the waters, and to other created things, and call them gods, that ye may lead man astray thereby from the One God Who is the Creator of the universe. The quest of the God of truth is not among you, and ye are found worshipping the things which have been created rather than Him Who created them. For, if ye gave the names of gods to such similitudes because created things were so exceedingly beautiful, it would have been sufficient for you to be able to admire them, without holding them in such absolute and singular honour in your minds.

And because of this opinion of error which dwelleth in your mind, it is not difficult for you either to divert to the house which He hath fashioned and adorned the honour which is due to the Master-handicraftsman, or to hold lightly the King, and to ascribe the glory which is His due to His household which ministereth unto Him. What then have ye to urge against these [words], O wise men? [Speak,] so that we may know if there be in the Cross anything which meriteth mockery. And when the blessed man had spoken unto them in this fashion the things which they could not endure to hear from him, they began to look to the right hand and to the left.

Now when the blessed man knew that they were silently seeking to make objections to his words, he spake unto them again through an interpreter, saying, "The work (i.e., proof) of these my words is also their testimony; but because ye yourselves take refuge in words of guile and falsehood, and because ye employ them with the greatest skill, ye desire that we, like yourselves, shall also journey on without the truth of investigation. Show ye me now briefly the work [or proof] of [your] words. First of all, How can the knowledge of God be truly comprehended? Which is the older: the faith which is in works, or the quest of words?" They answered and said unto him, "The faith which is indeed faith; and this is the true

knowledge." The old man saith unto them, "Ye have well said, for faith is the sign of the love which is made perfect in the soul. For discussion cometh from words which are strung together, and therefore the faith which is in works, and which is closely united to them, is not sought after, because the quest of words is superfluous; for the matters which we comprehend by faith ye try by every means to represent by comparisons and similitudes, and howsoever much ye weary yourselves ye will never be able to narrate the things the truth of which we have comprehended. It is, therefore, well known and evident that our faith which is in works is far more excellent than your wisdom [which consisteth of] a discussion of words, and that your wisdom cannot by any means be [rightly] compared therewith."

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

" of Christ. And, moreover, we by means of the Cross which " ye hold in contempt chase away and put to flight those devils " which ye worship as gods, and wheresoever the name of the " Cross is mentioned all the crafts and wiles of error come to " an end. If it be divination it is destroyed, and if it be sor- " cery it is made an end of; and that such hath been done in " very truth ye must admit when ye are asked by us, 'Where " 'is divination? Where are the magicians who were in Egypt? " 'Where are the phantoms of the errors of the sorcerers? " 'When were these things which appertain unto you de- " 'stroyed except when the Cross of Christ was mentioned?' " Is then this Cross worthy to be despised? Judge ye this " matter in your souls, and consider it also and marvel there-

" at. It is a matter of wonder that your doctrine hath never " before been a subject for persecution, and that it hath only " become so at this time when Christian kings [live] in honour " and majesty in every place. " In proportion as persecution cometh your doctrine hideth " itself, but ours, against which storms innumerable have " arrayed themselves, becometh stronger and stronger. Your " doctrine, notwithstanding that it is praised and magnified, " becometh despised and rejected, whilst ours, although held " in contempt, is great in its acts and glorious in its operation, " and being harassed [spreadeth] from one end of the earth " even unto the other without men taking care about it. For " when did the knowledge of God come down into the world, " and chastity flourish, and virginity shed its light abroad, " and death become held in contempt, if it be not after the

" Cross of victory came and triumphed throughout all the " earth? And of this fact no man can have any doubt, when he " considereth the blessed martyrs by whom death was de- " spised because of the victory of the Cross. And behold, do " we not see that the Church rejoiceth in innumerable congre- " gations of virgins, both men and women, who preserve their " bodies in all holiness? These are the true likenesses which " make known and shew forth the faith of Christ, which is a " living confidence and a knowledge in faith unto those who " put their trust therein. Now if ye have been in doubt [con- " cerning these things] up to this present, it is because your " mind (or opinion) hath been fettered with words of binding " and loosing, the end of which ye will never be able to find;

" for we do not, like you, go astray through the blandish- " ment of the words of alien wisdom, but, according to what " our Teacher spake, we give a proof of our faith, and we " readily make manifest in the clearest possible manner the truth of our opinion unto every one who wisheth [to see it]."

And behold, there were in that place certain men who were suffering from injuries to their bodies, and the blessed man commanded them, and they came forth and stood in the midst; then he answered and said unto those wise men, "Draw nigh now and, by whatsoever means ye wish and will, whether by the wisdom of your renowned idols, or by your sorceries and enchantments, give the word, and let these afflicted souls have relief from their sufferings. But if ye are not able to do so, stand aside and cease your hostile attacks upon us, and ye shall straightway see the power of the Cross of Christ. Then he made the sign of the Cross over them three times, and the people were healed immediately and stood up; and when those philosophers saw [this], they praised him greatly, and they marvelled in very deed at the understanding of the man, and at the visible sign which had been wrought by his hand. And the blessed man said unto them, "Why marvel ye at this thing? It is not we who have done this, but Christ Who is wont to do suchlike things by the hands of those who fear Him. Therefore do you also believe even as do we, and become like us, and see that we possess none of the handicraft of devils, but only the faith which is made perfect by means of the love of Christ, our Lord Jesus.

If ye possess this also, ye have no need of the quest of much discussion, for the deed itself will convince you that it is not by words, but by manifest works, that our doctrine increaseth and giveth the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Such were the words which the blessed man spake unto those philosophers, who tarried to hear [them], and who put to the test and then received the proof of all the [mental] adornment of the old man; and thus having received his grace, they applauded his words and his acts, and having saluted him with great honour they returned to their own country.

Now the fame of the blessed man reached even unto the king and the princes, and the Emperor Constantine and his sons Constantius and Constans heard concerning his works and triumphs, and they began to write epistles unto him as unto a father and to entreat him to pray for them, and they longed greatly to become the recipients of letters from him. Now he did not write letters quickly, and he did not consider too highly or boast about those

which he received, but he continued to preserve the humility and sweetness of disposition which he possessed before he received the imperial epistles, and after he had received them he remained unchanged. Whensoever he received the imperial letters, he would call and gather 65 together the monks who happened to be with him, and say unto them, "Ye marvel, perhaps, that the kings and the princes should write epistles unto us, but what [need] is there for wonder, seeing that it is only one man writing letters to another? but what ye should wonder at is how God wrote the Law for the children of men, and how He hath spoken unto us through His only Son." He preferred, however, not to receive epistles which were sent unto him by the king and the princes, for he said, "It is not in my power to write epistles like theirs"; but inasmuch as the king and the princes were Christians, he did not consider it seemly that their epistles should be held lightly, lest they might become offended and be displeased, and he permitted them to be read before every one who happened to be with him.

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

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

* Bishop of Thmuis, the site of which city is marked by the Arab village Tamai-al-Amdid; he was surnamed "Scholasticus," and died about A.D. 360. time which he remained with him he had seen the blessed man for several days at a time labouring seriously with visions in this manner.

One day whilst he was sitting down at work on the palm leaves he fell into a state of profound stupefaction, and remained for an exceedingly long time therein seeing a vision of revelation, and he groaned frequently, and after a season he turned round to those who happened to

be with him, and groaned again; and he trembled greatly, and began to pray, and he bent his knees and [then] stood up with his eyes full of tears. Now those who saw the old man thus troubled were beginners in the monastic life, and they were greatly moved and were afraid with a great fear; and after a season they began to entreat them to tell him what was the vision which he had seen, and which had troubled him in this fashion. Then when they had pressed him, he sighed the more, and said unto them, "It would be much better for me to die than for that which hath appeared unto me to happen. And being urged by their entreaty, he spake sadly and excitedly, saying, "Great wrath is coming upon the Church, which is about to be delivered over to men who are in no wise different from the wild beasts. I have seen an altar surrounded by mules which without mercy kicked all the people, both great and small, for they were as excited as a drove of horses which had been turned loose without bridles.

When I sighed concerning these things, even ye heard the sound of my sighs, and I heard a voice which said, 'My altar shall be defiled." Such were the things which the old man saw. Two years later (about A.D. 343) the trouble with the Arians took place, and the spoliation of the churches by the hands of the pagans in the sight of all the people of the city who were gathered together, and they caused the performance of the holy service to be set aside and abrogated. Now these pagans went forth into the streets of the city, and they thronged them and brought forth people from their shops, and compelled them to assemble with them, and before their eyes they performed the service of the Church and [administered] the Holy Mysteries. It was then that we understood [what] the kickings of the mules [meant], that is to say [the vision] which had appeared unto the blessed man, and the whole work which was wrought with such iniquity and wickedness by the hands of the Arians in the Church.

Now when the blessed man saw this vision, and perceived that it was very grievous to the brethren, he consoled them, and said, "My beloved sons, be not afflicted, for as God is angry now even so will He become pacified again, and after 67 5a no [great] interval between these trials and injuries rest and peace shall come upon the Church of God. And ye shall see those who have been persecuted for righteousness' sake return to their places, and the Evil One, together with those who work his will, shall turn on his heels, and the horn of the righteous men who hold the true faith shall be exalted, and they shall openly proclaim the truth in the ears of a persecuted but believing nation. Hearken ye then unto these things from me, and take heed that ye keep yourselves from fornication in respect of the faith, and from intercourse with people who are polluted therewith; for the time of these things shall be short, and there shall be redemption for the people of God, and the righteous man shall live by faith.

Such were the things which were spoken by the blessed man, and it is not a great matter that such things were uttered and seen by the man who was crucified unto the world, and to whom the world was crucified. For our Lord made the promise unto believers, saying, "If ye have in you faith like a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, 'Depart'; and it shall depart, and there is nothing which shall be too hard for you" (St. Matthew xvii,

20); and again He said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask of My Father in My Name shall be given unto you." And He commanded His disciples, saying, "Go ye forth, and preach, and heal the sick, and cast out devils; freely ye have received (St. Matthew x, 8), freely give." Now the blessed man did not perform healings by his own power after the manner of a master, but only with prayer and the mention of the Name of Christ, so that it might be manifest unto every man that it was not he who was the doer of these things, but that God wrought them by his hands. Thus the old man was triumphant in all such matters, for his strength was renewed from day to day even as is the youth of the eagle, by the fervour of his mind, and he had pleasure in the constant works which our Lord Jesus wrought for him.

Now he was afflicted and suffered much by reason of the people who were continually coming to him, and he enjoyed no respite from them, and he was therefore compelled to withdraw to the outer mountain; and moreover the judges and the governors of the country entreated him to come back to a place of habitation, because it was difficult for them to come near him on account of the numerous people who clung to him, and because of the fatigue of the journey which [they had to endure] in going to him. And this matter was exceedingly hard to the blessed man, and he excused himself from suchlike things. Now when the judges and the governors saw that he refused to do what they wanted, they dealt craftily with him in this matter, for they sent to him the Greeks and the other people who had been arrested for evil dealing and wickednesses of various kinds, and they entreated and besought him with much supplication to come back to the habitations of men so that he might work deliverance from prison for them; and by such means and excuses the judges were able to see him continually, and the toil which he suffered on such journeys was not in vain, for his coming was beneficial to every one.

Now the judges heard from him that which helped them to rule[righteously], and they learned to know that they themselves were men, and were even as those who were subject unto them, and that they must not behave towards them angrily, but judge them righteously, for, "With what judgement ye judge [ye shall be judged]" (St. Matthew vii, 2). But although the blessed man rejoiced in the works of the fear of God which he wrought, he was more pleased with his habitation in the desert than with any other thing. And after he had been led by force by those men who had made supplication unto him, and had entreated him to come to the outer mountain, so soon as he had performed for them his kind offices and had spoken unto the governor words which were suitable to his majesty and dominion, he would hasten back to his place. And when the governor did homage to him, and begged him to remain with him for a day or two, the old man entreated him courteously [to be allowed to depart], saying, "This thing is impossible, for as fish die if a man lift them out of the water, so, if we monks prolong our stay with men, do our minds become perverted and troubled; therefore it is meet that as fish [pass] their lives beneath the waters we also should let our lives and works be buried in the wilderness.

Now when the governor heard these and other things like unto them, he marvelled and said, "Verily [this is] a true servant of God. He speaketh not that which cometh from himself, but

that which is given unto him from heaven. How could this simple man possess such rich knowledge unless he was beloved by God?"

Now a certain duke whose name was Bālak (Balacius) persecuted the Church sorely at the instigation of the Arians, and his wickedness increased to such an extent that he would beat the nuns, and strip the monks naked and flog them. And when the blessed old man heard of the wickedness of this man, he wrote a letter and sent it to him, and in it was thus written, "Behold, I see that wrath is coming upon thee; desist therefore, and accept rebuke, and persecute not the believers, that peradventure the angel of wrath may be restrained, for behold, he hath set out to come. When Balacius received the letter, he looked thereat and laughed, and he spat thereon, and took it up and threw it away; and in his hatred he cursed the bringer of the letter, and said unto him, "Get thee back and 'tell these things to him that sent thee. And he said unto him, "Inasmuch as thou hast exceedingly great regard for 'the churches and for those who are persecuted, behold I will speedily execute judgement upon thee also'; but after these words he went no further than five days before wrath overtook him.

For he set out to journey to the first stopping-place [on the road from] Alexandria which is called Chaereus, and as the duke Balacius and Nestor, the prefect of Alexandria, were riding together—now they were riding two of Balacius's horses which were the gentlest of all his horses—before they arrived at the place [of destination], the horses began to play together according to their wont, and suddenly the gentler of the two horses, that is to say the animal whereon Nestor the prefect rode, seized the thigh of Balacius with his mouth and dragged him from his horse and fell upon him and rent him like a dog. And they took Balacius and brought him into Alexandria, and after three days he died; and thus the word of the blessed man actually came to pass, and wonder laid hold upon every man.

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

And what poor man ever came unto him broken by poverty who did not [afterwards] by reason of his words and the sight of him despise all riches? And what monk ever came to him sorrowful in mind who did not depart full of strength like a mighty man of war? And what young man ever came unto him with lusts burning in him, and saw that the old man had conquered in the strife, who did not go away with his lusts quenched and dead within him? And what youth who was afraid of the war which had come upon him ever came unto him, and seeing his triumphant old age did not [henceforward] contend in the forefront of the battle? And what man ever came unto him troubled in mind who did not go away with it composed and in a state of reason?

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

Concerning his Death

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

And when the brethren heard [these things], they wept bitter tears, and each of them began to embrace and to kiss him, and the old man, like unto a man from a strange country who is about to depart thereto, with great gladness besought them to be quiet, and exhorted them, saying, "Be not ye in despair by reason of your tribulations, and be not lax in your lives and works, but even as men who are dying daily prepare ye for life, and, as I have already said, be watchful ever. Keep ye your souls from thoughts of iniquity, and strive ye for good gifts, and guard ye yourselves against associating yourselves with the Meletians (see page 57), who are heretics, for ye know the cause of their schisms, and how cunning

and bitter they are. And flee ye with all your might also from the doctrine of the Arians, for their wickedness is clearly manifest, and take good heed to avoid them, and be not like unto them for ever, neither if they be mighty in their help, nor if they be many in bearing burdens, for however often error raiseth up her nest (?) it shall never be able to contend against the truth. Be ye, therefore, free from all intercourse with them, and thus shall ye be able to take good heed to the true doctrine of our fathers, and to the preaching of the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, which ye have received from the Scriptures."

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

And after a few months he became sick, and he cried out to the brethren who were with him (now these were only two in number, and they had been with him from the time when his old age [began], which was nearly fifteen years before, and they ministered unto him with the greatest care), and said unto them, even as it is written, "Behold, I go the way of my fathers, for I have felt within myself for some days [past] that I have been called by my Lord. Observe ye now how carefully ye can maintain this contest, and take good heed that ye lose not the long-suffering which ye have acquired, and that, like men who are just beginning [the strife], ye increase it more and more and add to it day by day. Ye are well acquainted with the baneful devils and their craftiness, and ye know well this fact, that if ye please they shall be accounted as nothing by you. Be ye therefore not terrified by them, but always take refuge in Christ. And remember ye everything which ye have heard from me during all this time [which ye have been with me], that ye have no intercourse whatsoever with the Arians, the heretics, for ye know how filthy they are in my sight because of their blasphemy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Take ye also heed then diligently at all times that ye cleave to the Spirit of Christ and agree therewith, and be ye, moreover, friends and associates of just men that they may receive you into their everlasting habitations as friends and men of whom they have good knowledge. Therefore meditate ye upon these things and keep them in your minds. And if your minds are [set] upon me, and ye remember me as a father, permit no man to take my body and carry it into Egypt, lest, according to the custom which they have, they embalm me and lay me up in their houses, for it was [to avoid] this that I came into this desert. And ye know that I have continually made exhortation concerning this thing and begged that it should not be done, and ye well know how much I have blamed those who observed this custom. Dig a grave then, and bury me therein, and hide my body under the earth, and let these my words be observed carefully by you, and tell ye no man where ye lay me; [and there I shall be] until the Resurrection of the dead, when I shall receive [again] this body without corruption.

"And divide ye my garments [into lots], and give one leather tunic to Bishop Athanasius, and the covering of this my bed which he gave unto me when it was new; but now it hath become old. And to Bishop Serapion do ye give the other leather coat; and this covering of my bed which is made of hair ye yourselves shall keep; now therefore, my children, abide in peace, for, behold, Anthony bringeth his journey to an end, and he goeth whither Divine Grace shall bring him." And when he had spoken these words, he straightway stretched out his legs, whereupon the brethren began to cry out [to him], and to kiss him; now his face was full of joy unspeakable at the meeting of those who had come for him, and it resembled that of a man when he seeth a friend whom it rejoiceth him to meet. So the blessed man held his peace and died, and was gathered to his fathers.

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

Here end the history of the life of the blessed old man in the body, and the previous narrative thereto which [dealt with] the beginning of his deeds and labours; and if these appear to be too small in comparison with [the number of] the triumphs of the blessed man, still from these ye will be able to imagine how great was this man of God, who, from his earliest youth to his old age, never desisted from his career in the fear of God. Old age did not reduce his vigour and compel him to gratify the body, and he was not urged by the sickness of his body even to touch water with his feet; and whilst he was thus keeping his body in restraint God preserved him unharmed. For, in spite of his great old age, his eye waxed not dim, and not one of his teeth dropped out, and both his feet and his hands were in a sound and healthy

state; and notwithstanding that he kept his body low [in respect of food], his appearance was more glorious than that of all those who fed themselves luxuriously on dainty meats, and who wore fine clothes, and who made use of baths. And moreover he possessed strength which was out of all proportion to his aged body.

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

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

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

Here endeth, by the help of our Lord, the History of the Triumphs of the blessed Anthony, the athlete and perfect man, who triumphed in the contest and received the crown of victory. By his prosperous trafficking he made double his merchandise through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who helped him and made him to triumph, the Lord [of righteous men] and the Conqueror.

Source. English translation by E. A. Wallis Budge, from ***The Paradise, or Garden of the Holy Fathers***, translated from the Syriac by E. A. Wallis Budge, volume 1 (London: Chatto & Windus, 1907); public domain. The text was read by machine (Mistral OCR) from a scan of the 1907 edition from the University of Toronto library at the Internet Archive and has not been proofread against the printed book. SermonIndex has removed running heads and page numbers, joined words split across lines, and divided the text into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Footnotes and the editor's introduction are left out. No original-language text is shown beside it, and no modern English version has been made.

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