History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria (part 2 of 2)

Severus of al-Ashmunein (10th century)

SermonIndex.net / Church Fathers

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Vol. 1, Part 3 -- Agathon to Michael I (766 AD) — MICHAEL I, THE FORTY-SIXTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 744-768

As the Scripture says in the 77th Psalm : «What we have heard we have seen, and our fathers have told us»; and as Moses the Prophet wrote |89 history, for he described what had happened on the earth from Adam the first man to his own time; and after him were the prophets who prophesied what should take place; and after them the holy apostles preached what they themselves had witnessed : so those who followed them did likewise. Then there were the teachings of the inspired fathers of the Church, and the words which confirmed the faith and the baptized brethren who put on the garment of light; and the divinely assisted fathers who gave strength to the firm foundation and to the immovable pillar . And we have the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour, who delivered us and saved us from our sins by his Incarnation of the pure Virgin, and graciously granted to us the opening of our hearts and understandings by the hearing of his holy Scriptures. Philo and Justus and Josephus, the Jews, were the first who related the destruction of Jerusalem.

Those who composed for us the history of the holy Church were Africanus and Eusebius and Sozomenus, who showed us the good and the evil, and the trials which befell the saints and shepherds of the flock of the Lord Christ, and the troubles which they underwent for the sake of the Church and the orthodox people at the hands of the secular governors at all times, not only in Egypt, but also at Antioch and Rome and Ephesus. There appeared the heresy of Nestorius, whose tongue deserved |90 to be cut out at the root, and the false teaching of the other heretics at that time; but God dispersed them all, like the dust before the wind, that is to say, by means of the young lion, Cyril, who excommunicated Nestorius with the rest of the heretics, and whose writings were placed in all the orthodox churches of the world. This is shown to us by that book which begins with the names of the patriarchs as far as the true confessor and champion, Dioscorus, who anathematized Leo, the soul-devouring lion, as his name implies, and excommunicated the six hundred and thirty, assembled at

Chalcedon, and Marcian the prince and the vile princess Pulcheria, and all the followers of Leo, and was deposed by command of the princes, and sent into exile, where he finished his fight. Dioscorus brought back many souls to the Lord Christ by his action.

And all that happened was written down for us to that point in the twelfth part of the histories of the Church. And for the first history of events subsequent to that, from the time of the Father Cyril when he was in the monastery of Ablah, down to the days of the father and confessor Alexander, we may consult the teacher and scribe in his time, who was the archdeacon and companion and secretary of the Father Patriarch Abba Simon, patriarch of Alexandria, namely |91 the monk, Abba George. For he wrote that history on the mountain of the holy Macarius in the Wadî Habîb, and informed us of what happened in the time of Marcian, the unbelieving prince, and the trouble that overtook our fathers and those that came after them, down to the time of Sulaiman, son of Abd al-Melik, prince of the Muslims, after whom reigned Omar, son of Abd al-Azîz, who drove away Usâmah, the unbelieving governor, who had been before his reign in Egypt.

Therefore I, the vile sinner, beg you to pray the Lord Christ for me, that through your prayers he may loose the bond of my feeble tongue, and open my darkened heart, and give me knowledge of words, so that perchance I may be able to show to you, my brethren and my father, what you ask of me, although it exceed my power, not as a teacher and guide greater than you, but as a scholar, since I saw that of which I have written with my own eyes, and its importance imposes a debt upon me, and my hand touched it, besides what I heard from friends older than myself, such as I could trust and believe. God forbid that I should act according to the words of the true gospel , concerning the servant who buried his Lord's silver in the ground. I declare to your Holiness, vile sinner among men as I am, that I follow the words of David, when he praises the Creator in the 112th Psalm : «Who raises the poor from the earth and the needy from the dunghill, and sets him with the rich of the people ». He it is who has seated me among the holy fathers, so that |92 I witnessed what befell them in my heart, that I might write it down, although unworthy; for they became shepherds upon the earth, and in many cases gave up their lives for the name of Christ.

Let me then record a few of their deeds, for the rest of them the Lord Christ alone knows, with all that took place in former times. But indeed the Lord Christ knows that we have added nothing to the facts, having related what took place down to the death of the blessed Father Theodore, patriarch of Alexandria, and the affairs of state in his days, to the end of the seventeenth chapter of the History, completed above. Now, by the will of God and your holy prayers, we will write the eighteenth chapter of the History of the Church.

When Ubaid Allah left Egypt, Al-Kasim, his son, became governor after him, and was much more wicked than his father, according to the words of the holy gospel; «Every evil tree brings forth evil fruit ». This man did evil before God and men in his time of government, and walked in the bad path, as I will relate further on. Solomon, the wise son of David, says : «Woe to the people of a kingdom which is ruled by a child !» Now this Al-Kasim was a child in age and conduct; and when an ignorant prince rules, all his companions will be like him.

The first beginning of his acting thus was that he loved evil and loved women, like horses which neigh one |93 after another. He obtained for himself female slaves of every race without number, and his heart was exceedingly pleased with them, as we witnessed with our own eyes many times. For he used to send for the blessed patriarch Theodore, acting like a wolf in sheep's clothing; and the Father Patriarch was accompanied by my spiritual father, the bishop Abba Moses, who went to bear him company; and the governor loved my father more than all the bishops. Then the governor brought his young female slaves to the patriarch that he might bless them; and I myself saw them; and he said to the Father Patriarch : «These are thy children; lay thy hand upon them and bless them, and give them a benediction, for I bought them recently».

This he did on several occasions with the Father Patriarch. Once when we visited him according to custom, the bishop Abba Abraham, bishop of the Faiyûm or Arsinoites, was there on account of important business. And when we also appeared, Al-Kasim called one of his female slaves, who was a native of the West, and said to our father Abraham : «This is thy daughter». And he placed the bishop's hand upon her hand, for his heart was as the heart of babes. And he said to the bishop : «Thou knowest that I have loved thee greatly since my father's |94 time, and all that thou didst ask of my father, I will do for thee». Then the holy Abraham said to him : «It is good». So Al-Kasim continued : «I desire of thee three hundred dinars». Thereupon the father gave directions to the archdeacon Simeon, who was his steward and had come with him, and who was counted worthy of the bishopric in succession to Abba Abraham. And the bishop said to the archdeacon : «Bring the three hundred dinars». And he forthwith brought the money, and the bishop handed it over to Al-Kasim. For he had much property belonging to the churches, since he possessed in his diocese thirty-five monasteries in the Faiyûm, of which he was the administrator; and he was bound to pay a tax of five hundred dinars, which were due to the Public Treasury upon this property.

He had authority over all these monasteries, and the merchants of Egypt sold to him and bought of him. Then after the bishop had paid the three hundred dinars, Al-Kasim said to him : «I do thee this great honour that I have even made my wife a daughter to thee, and yet thou wilt not give her anything to honour her therewith». Accordingly the bishop gave her a hundred dinars into her hand, and Al-Kasim reckoned them as part of the taxes due from him.

And Al-Kasim walked in the path of ignorance continually, and the oppression of the people was doubled in his days. He appointed subordinate governors throughout Egypt worse than himself, men who amassed money from strangers from Aswan to Alexandria; and he caused great trouble to |95 the people throughout the land and in all the provinces, both great and small. The great man devoured the small man, and the strong devoured the weak, like the fishes of the sea; and those who collected the strangers' money devoured the poor and seized their property, until everyone was in distress. After that, Al-Kasim made boats like the castles of kings, and when he had furnished them, he embarked in them his wives and

his slaves, and sailed through the land of Egypt, and took them with him to Alexandria and Tinnis and Damietta, in order to take the money of the merchants and of the people and of the officials in those places. And he went up the river to Upper Egypt as far as Aswan, doing the same thing. And a body of troops and armed men travelled in his company; and they entered the theatre at Ansina.

And on a certain day Al-Kasim arrived at the Monastery of Saint Sinuthius, and went up with great pomp, taking with him one female slave whom he loved more than all the rest, besides his mamelukes; and he made her ride a mare, while he rode another mare at her side. He was accompanied also by an old man, who was a chief among the Muslims, named Rayân, son of Abd al-Azîz, the former governor of Egypt. So, when they reached the door, the aged superior of the monastery came out to meet them with all his sons, that they might do honour to the governor on account of his office. After Al-Kasim had passed through the second door, which |96 is in the fortified wall which surrounds the church, while he remained on horseback, then he came to the door of the church, and began to prepare to enter it, still mounted. But the aged superior of the monastery cried aloud and said : «Dismount, O governor! Enter not into the house of God in such pride, and above all in the company of this woman who is with thee; for no woman has ever entered this church, and come out of it alive. Nay she will die on the spot». Yet Al-Kasim gave no heed to his words, but entered, accompanied by his soldiers. Now the church was very large, and capacious enough to contain thousands of people.

So when he reached the middle of the church, still riding, the mare on which the female slave was mounted plunged, and fell to the ground by the power of God; and the female slave died on the spot, both she and the horse that was under her. And as for Al-Kasim, there came upon him an unclean Satanic spirit which threw him down and choked him and buffeted him, so that he foamed at the mouth and gnashed with his teeth like a wild boar. But when he recovered a little, he saw that the old man, the superior of the monastery, was grieved for him; and he gave to the church four hundred dinars as a votive offering, as well as the horse which he was riding. And there was in the monastery a chest of teak-wood, inlaid with ivory, fitted with shelves, above which was the body of Saint Sinuthius. This chest had been |97 made for the sake of the votive offerings, for the convenience of those who should put their votive offerings in it; and the books also were placed therein; and it was of handsome workmanship, admirable and beautiful. So Rayân, who was travelling together with Al-Kasim, admired it, and wished to take it away with him. Now Saint Sinuthius had spent much money on it.

So they said to that man : «Thou canst not take it, for he who placed it here forbad its removal.» But he answered : «I must take it, either for a price or as a gift.» Then he bade ten men lift it up, but they could not. Then he called thirty men, but they could not move it. So when he saw the miracle, he gave the monks three hundred dinars. Then they all went away in fear and trembling and wonder. And the unclean spirit did not depart from Al-Kasim until the day of his death, but continued to torment him.

Then God sent down a great dearth upon the land of Egypt, on account of the sins of Al-Kasim. In the first year the land was blasted by the scirocco, and so provisions were scarce, and there was no wheat to be found; and many men and cattle died. Afterwards, in the second year, there came a pestilence upon Egypt, such as had not been before. But in spite of all this the wickedness of Al-Kasim did not diminish but increased, and he doubled the taxes laid upon the people. And when a person went to sleep at night he dreaded the light of morning, and yet he could not wish for night that |98 he might rest from his many troubles. After the second year of famine came the third year, in which there was a scirocco, and the Nile did not rise at all; and the people saw no prosperity in the days of that governor, but the years passed in turn in this manner by God's command, a year of plague followed by a year of scirocco, until the end of the year in which the government was taken from him, namely the seventh year. And the plague lasted from the beginning of Hatûr each year until the twenty-second of Baunah, and raged chiefly at Misr on account of the multitude of sins committed there. And from the eighth of Bashans to the first of Baunah the mortality among the people was so great that not even a part of those who died could be counted;

for on one day two thousand perished, and another day twelve hundred, and another day two thousand four hundred at Misr and Al-Gizah, among the people who inhabited those places and traders sojourning there; so that the burial of the dead was interrupted, and there were no tombs to hold them. And no male might be buried until the authorities knew of his death; and then his name was written down, and the name of his father, even in the case of young infants. Then our holy fathers prayed to the Lord, and the rich and the poor did likewise, and they besought him with fasting and prayer and weeping and supplication, until the Lord had pity on them, and took away the plague. |99

After this the merchants sold wheat to the people, and there was an abundant supply of it. So some of the corn-merchants went to a deacon, who practised magic, and lived at Memphis, which is the ancient Misr; and they gave him much money, and begged him to enable them by his magic arts to sell their wheat at a high price. So he began to exercise his art in such a manner that God was angered, and to practise his vile sorcery. For there was with him an orphan boy, the son of a widow who had no other children. And he said to the widow : «Thou hast nothing to eat or to feed thy son withal. Give him to me that I may make him my son, and teach him my art». So she delivered her son to the magician with joy. Now that unbeliever had visited many magicians in divers places, until they taught him to practise profound witchcraft; and thus he was able to do that by which the wheat became dear. Then indeed that miscreant took the widow's son, and led him into a chamber, and shut the door upon him, and hung him up by his hands and feet above the ground, and did to him what made God angry; for he did not cease gradually to flay the skin of the youth from his face to the back of his head daily, until he came to his shoulders.

Then wheat became rare and scarce, and whereas it had been sold at the rate of fourteen ardebbs for a dinar, and then at two mudds for a dinar, at last it was not to be procured at all. At that time the monitor of the boys in the school went to the widow woman, and said

to her : |100 «Thy son has not attended our school for many days. Where then is he?» So she went to that miscreant and enquired after her son, but could not find him. For he said to her : «I have not seen him for many days. He left my house, and returned to thine, and I know nothing about him». Therefore when she heard this from him, she departed in great grief. But the boy was not dead even then, but was still fastened up and partly flayed. And the young monitor saw the magician, his master, entering hour after hour into the closet in which the boy was fastened. So he said in his heart : «What does my master do in these days, entering this closet and coming out?» And he was a sagacious youth. So when the master entered, he followed him secretly. Then he heard that boy, the widow's son, weeping and sighing and imploring his master; but he took no pity on him.

And he uttered words in the sadness of his heart such as these : «Alas for thee, my mother, widowed and mourning as thou art, for thou knowest not what has become of me! Alas for thy womb which bore me, and thy breasts which gave me suck! Where dost thou behold the torments of thy orphan son? Would that I had died when thou didst bear me in thy womb, and would that thou hadst never brought me forth upon earth, so that I should fall into this grievous torment! Where are thine eyes beholding me, longing to see me and gaze upon me, who am in this torment?» And the boy said many things like these, in the hearing of the young monitor. So the monitor went away quickly in |101 great terror, stumbling and raising himself again in the extremity of his fear, until he reached the house of the widowed mother of the bov. So he said to her : «I have found thy son.» Then she came speedily, after he had repeated to her what he had heard from her son's mouth, and went to the governor, and repeated to him what had happened and what she had heard. So the governor despatched with her some trustworthy Muslims, and some officials with them, to the house of that miscreant, and they found him within the closet, in which the boy still was, fastened up and flayed from his neck to his shoulders.

So they carried the lad away, and led the magician bound before the governor. For at once they fastened his hands and feet, and his ears were cut off in the presence of the governor, and then he confessed all that had been done by him. And they brought in the boy, and beheld him in that state. And they wrote at once to Al-Kasim governor of Egypt; and when he had read the letter, he gave orders that the magician should be stoned and burnt in the fire.

But, in spite of all these things, Al-Kasim did not desist from his evil ways and his love for the amassing of gold. And he used constantly to change the subordinate governors, who acted as his deputies. Now there was a tribe in the mountains in the eastern part of Egypt, from Bilbais to Al-Kulzum and the sea, consisting of Muslims who were called Arabs. And there were among them more than thirty thousand horsemen, roving through those deserts and districts, and they had chiefs in command over them. |102

Al-Kasim, therefore, appointed as their governor a steward of the palace, named Abu Jarah; and his tents were near a monastery named after Our Lady Mary, near Tinnis. In this monastery there were many monks and priests, adorned with good works, and a holy hegu-

men named Epimachus, who had come from Wadî Habîb, from the Monastery of Saint Macarius, and who was afterwards counted worthy to be made a bishop. And there were with him, among the monks in this monastery, Abba Mennas, who became bishop of the city of Memphis, and Abba James the priest, and many others. And the steward of the palace had two brothers, whom he took up to the monastery; and he entered the church with them, and drove out the monks; and they plundered the church, and seized everything in the monastery, whether stuffs or provisions or furniture. And the steward's younger brother was worse than he. For there was in the cell of the hegumen a cross erected at the east end, with which he drove away the devils who frequently appeared to him. So that youth entered the cell and said to the hegumen : «What is the purpose of this cross?» Whereupon he answered : «It is the cross of Christ, my God.» He said to him : «Dost thou adore him?» The monk answered : «Yea». So the young man spat upon the cross, and treated it insultingly, and reviled the aged hegumen.

And the old man went forth from the monastery in great sorrow, saying : «If God do not requite this youth for his deed, I |103 will never return to this church all the days of my life.» Then he departed to another place, and remained there; and he said within himself : «I will wait ten days, and see what will take place; and if nothing occur, I will depart.» So, on the eighth day, that young man went and sat in the privy place, and his bowels gushed out, as it had happened to Arius the unbeliever. Therefore when his brother, the steward of the palace, beheld that punishment, he was afraid, and departed from the monastery; and fear came to all who heard or saw.

Afterwards the steward went round through that district until he found the holy Epimachus, whom he brought back to the church, after entreating him with respect and honour; and he restored to him all that had been taken away. And great fear fell upon the Muslims and long remained among them. During all this time, the church of Alexandria remained widowed, without a patriarch. Therefore the orthodox Theodosians assembled, and called the bishops together. And a number of the heretical Chalcedonians met together; and they formed a council at Misr. And three men were brought forward, that one of them might be chosen, and enthroned as patriarch. But it did not please the Lord that one of them should receive that degree, but he kept it for him whom he had selected and marked out from the womb, as shall appear further on in our discourse. |104

And God took away the government from Al-Kasim; for the caliph sent to him one who arrested him and carried him away to his master under guard and restraint. And when he reached Bilbais, together with those in charge of him, who were conducting him to the caliph, the bishops and a body of Christians came to him at Bilbais, and begged him to allow them to appoint a patriarch. Then he demanded of them that they should give him money; but they would not give it, and so he refused permission, and would not allow them to appoint a patriarch. Then Abba Theodore, bishop of Misr, who was the chief of the bishops at that time, and was the first of three bishops named Theodore who successively occupied the see of Misr, said to my spiritual father, Abba Moses, bishop of Wasîm : «Behold, Father,

the conduct of this Al-Kasim, and the evil that he has done among men, such as thou hast never seen before this day, but which I have beheld during the greater part of my time!» The bishop Abba Moses replied : «Pardon me, my Lord and Father. If this man return to Egypt, then God has not spoken by me the sinner. But thou shalt hear what God will do to this wicked wretch».

After this the commissioners conducted Al-Kasim on his journey. And he never returned to Egypt, but all his goods were seized, while he was |105 tortured and imprisoned. And the caliph sent to Egypt, and seized his male and female slaves, who were carried away to the caliph. Then the bishops returned with their attendants to Misr, where they found that the Chalcedonians had anticipated then, having chosen a follower of their sect, a man who made needles in the market-place, named Cosmas. For they had collected among themselves gold and silver and plate, and had given them to that perverse governor, Al-Kasim, before he departed; and he had given orders that they should appoint him patriarch. So the Chalcedonians took that man Cosmas, and ordained him patriarch for themselves, and triumphed over the orthodox, because they had elected a patriarch, whereas the latter had not nominated one for themselves.

The governor of Egypt who succeeded Al-Kasim was a man named Hafs, son of Al-Walîd, a native of Hadramaut, of high rank in the army of the Muslims in Egypt, and a Sunnite according to their religion. In those days a council of bishops assembled at Misr, in the year 459 of Diocletian, on the 28th day of Misri. And there were with them the clergy of Alexandria and the chief laymen, who brought men with them, so that the election might fall upon some one. And one of the bishops mentioned a certain name secretly; but God, who knows all, had reserved this degree for him who was worthy of it.

These are the names of the bishops assembled to appoint the patriarch : |106 Abraham, bishop of the Faiyûm; Moses, bishop of Wasîm; Mennas, bishop of Tmai; James, bishop of Busîr; Theodore, metropolitan bishop, bishop of Misr; Victor, bishop of Malîj; James, bishop of Sahrajt; Isaac, bishop of Samannûd; Abraham, bishop of Bilbais; Peter, bishop of Tarnût; Michael, bishop of Atrib; besides the clergy of Alexandria. Then they went to the governor, Hafs, and prayed him to allow them to appoint a patriarch. And he said to them : «When your choice is fixed upon some one, keep him until I have seen him.» So they went out from before him, and proceeded to the church of Saint Sinuthius at Misr, and prayed, and took their seats according to their rank in agreement with the canon of the church, each one sitting with his father and bishop, while the clergy of Alexandria sat in front of the bishops. And all were tranquil and dignified, and none spoke a word unless the bishops commanded; and the faces of all were bent upon the ground, both small and great. And when the sixth hour had passed, the aged bishop, Abba Mennas, bishop of Tmai, lifted up his face, and said in a low voice to Abba Abraham, bishop of the Faiyûm : «O my Father, pardon me.

What thinkest thou that we are about, and |107 for what reason are we assembled?» He answered : «My Father, the Lord Christ will settle all matters, and so will Saint Mark, and all of us also, for the chief Shepherd of our souls and bodies is with us.» Then all the people

and. the assembly cried with a loud voice together saying : «The Lord Christ will accomplish this matter according to his will.» Thereupon they stood up and prayed; and when they had finished the prayers, they agreed to meet on the morrow; and each one of them departed to his own place. Now some of the bishops, from the North, had mentioned the name of one whom they had selected; and Abba Abraham, bishop of the Faiyûm, heard of it. So Abba Peter, bishop of Tarnût, who had lived all his days in the desert of Father Macarius, and was beautiful in his conduct and excellent in his actions, said to them : «I warn thee not to lay thy hand on him whom they shall bring forward to thee, until the opinion of the assembly shall be unanimous concerning him; for he is not fit for this degree.» Now Abba Peter had grown weak through his great age, and was kept apart from the rest.

And on the second day they assembled and prayed and took their seats. The clergy of Alexandria being present, the archpriest exclaimed : «Bring this matter to a settlement, my Lords and Fathers.» So Theodore said to them : «Who is it that you have chosen, that we also may know him?» Thereupon the archpriest said : «Such and such an one, and here is his name written down.» Then Theodore said to them : «If the assembly approve of |108 him, he is fit.» The archpriest replied : «This affair regards us, not the bishops, who have nothing to do except to lay their hands upon him, and no more; for it is we who elect the patriarch.» Then Abba Abraham, bishop of the Faiyûm, said to them : «Your bishops also may propose to you him whom they choose. Yet if you have proposed one who is worthy, we will ordain him; but if he is not worthy, we shall reject him.» Thus a discussion took place between the two parties on the second day; and after prayer they dispersed. And they continued to act in this way till ten days were over. During this time there was peace between them, and there were many discussions by day and by night;

yet they would not give up their views, nor would the bishops of Upper Egypt adopt their opinion in this matter, but remained separated from them, saving : «If this man were the only man possible, we would not appoint him.» But some of the bishops of the northern dioceses were in agreement with the clergy of the Alexandrians with regard to his appointment. Then on the 4th day of the new month, namely Tût, Satan began to sow dissension among them, so that sadness and weeping came to them on account of it. For the bishops who were in agreement with the Alexandrians cried and said : «If we do not elect this man whose name we have written, we will not elect anyone.» But the Lord Christ, who cared for all these matters, was displeased at their words; while the man whom he approved for this ministry was kept |109 in reserve. Thus there was a quarrel between them that day, as there had been over the matter of the Barsanuphians. And while they were in this plight, God put it into their hearts at that hour to send for the two bishops, Abba Moses of Wasîm and Peter of Tarnût;

for they said : «If you do not bring the two aforesaid, there will never be peace between us.» Now Abba Moses was very weak, because he had been confined by sickness for six months in the Monastery of Nahyâ, and Abba Peter likewise at the church of Our Lady on the Holy Mountain of Wasîm, in the Monastery of Nahyâ, which stands on the bank of Al-Gizah to

the west of Misr. So the bishop of Misr and the bishop of the Faiyûm went to those two, and informed them of what had occurred. But Abba Moses could not mount a beast or sit upon it on account of the great pain which he was suffering; so the fathers contrived a plan, and had him carried on the bier on which the dead were borne, for they found nothing else there. And some of the faithful bore him on their shoulders, till they brought him to Al-Fustât. But they made Abba Peter ride on a horse; and there was a great company with hiM. When they arrived, the assembly met together on the 8th day, and the clergy of Misr and the officials with them, that they might settle this business by the will and help of God. And there were with them the archdeacon of the church of Saint Sergius, and the aged officials Mennas |110 and Paul, and many of the Christians of Misr. So they prayed and took their seats, and began to attack one another with words, as at the beginning.

As the strife increased, the bishops of the North said : «Wilt thou not appoint this man whose name is written down?» But Abba Abraham, bishop of the Faiyûm, said : «We have no part or lot with him.» Then Abba Abraham said : «If you would listen to me, we would all of us beseech God, as the canons command, and pray him to raise up for us whom he will, that so the Church may not be divided into two parties». Then some of the Northern bishops signified their approval of this proposal, and took their seats with the bishops of Upper Egypt. Now the blessed Abba Moses, bishop of Wasîm, was lying in the midst of the assembly, on account of the severity of the pain which he suffered, and when he heard them speak of schism, he rose up by the power of the Holy Ghost which was with him, and beckoned with his hand to the clergy of Alexandria, so that they drew near to him. Then he said to them : «What are you saying?» They answered : «What Abba Mennas, bishop of Tmai, says, that is our opinion; for it is we that appoint the patriarch, and you have nothing to do with this matter.» Now there was by his side a staff for him to lean upon on account of his infirmity, so he called to mind what the Lord did in the Temple, when he drove out the money-changers therein with the scourge of cords;

and he rose up and drove out the clergy of Alexandria, and pursued them, striking |111 them with the staff, till he had forced them out through the door, saying to them : «Depart from the midst of us! Ruin not the church of God through the desires of your hearts!» Then he turned to the bishop Abba Mennas, and the bishops with him, and said : «What have I to do with this man who is not chosen by the Lord Christ, but whom thou desirest and delightest in? If thou knowest any of his virtues, recount them in the midst of the assembly. Then, if they approve of him, it is a thing from God, and he may be appointed.» When Abba Mennas heard this, he said to Abba Moses : «The books forbid this, therefore leave him; but if you know the virtues of any man, then appoint him.» Then he made a prostration, and departed, saying : «Let there be unity and concord among you; I am innocent of this mischief.» Then they separated on that day, after the prayer of the Sixth Hour, in sorrow and great grief, because they had not found anyone to appoint. For the names of many were mentioned, but they would not agree to any one of them.

But at midnight a deacon in the company of Abba Moses awoke and said to him : «Pardon me, my Father, I know one worthy of this office.» He said to him : «Who is he my son?» The deacon answered : «He is the holy and precious one, the priest Michael at the church of Saint Macarius, a pure virgin, brought up in the desert». Then the bishop Abba Peter cried and said : «He who speaks by this deacon is Christ. O my son, verily this priest Michael is worthy of this rank». So on the morrow they assembled, and there was a discussion among them, according to their custom; and |112 then they mentioned the priest Michael, the aforesaid. So all the people cried out, old and young with one voice, saying : «In truth that man is worthy». And before this he had seen a holy man, who received revelations from the Lord, for he bore witness to him of that and said : «I heard a voice from heaven, while I was in the church of the holy Saint Macarius, saying : The priest Michael is worthy to be patriarch».

Then they all rose up and proceeded to the palace, and made known to Hafs what had taken place, and what they had agreed upon, and prayed him to write a letter to the seniors and priests of Wadî Habîb, that they might give up the said Abba Michael to the bishops and clergy. So the governor wrote letters for them, and they took them and went out of his presence. Now the Lord Jesus Christ had already moved the superiors of Wadî Habîb for a certain cause; and they had come forth from the desert with the aforesaid priest Michael in their company; and the reason was that they had met together and taken counsel, saying : «Al-Kasim, the tyrant, increased our land-tax and poll-tax beyond our power to pay. Now a new governor is come, therefore let us go and visit him and pray for him, and congratulate him on his appointment; and let us have |113 confidence in God, and beg the governor to remove these unjust exactions from us». So they arrived at the Island on the 13th of Tût. And on that day the messengers of the council had started with the letters on their way to the desert; and when they had crossed the river, they met the superiors of the monks, and with them Abba Michael, on whose account they had undertaken their journey. Therefore, when they saw him, they were greatly astonished, and wondered and rejoiced exceedingly; and each one of them marvelled at what the Lord Christ had done.

So they took him, and conducted him to the governor's palace, with all the clergy of Misr acclaiming him and chanting before him, till they reached the palace. And they said : «The Lord has sent us the trusted shepherd, the new Mark». Then when they informed Hafs of what had happened, he marvelled greatly; and he clapped his hands together and said : «Let us bless the God of the Christians, who has done deeds at which we wonder». And he said to them : «This man is he whom God has chosen for you, to be a father for you. Take him, and depart with him in peace». And Abba Theodore, the bishop of the diocese, went forward and approached the governor and prayed for him, and then departed with the patriarch. And the people cut off pieces of Michael's garments for the sake of a blessing.

And on the morrow, which was the 14th of Tût, the bishops embarked |114 in the boats, and went down the river to Alexandria, which they reached on the night of the 16th of Tût; and many people came forth to meet the patriarch. But as they entered the streets of the

city, carrying candles and crosses and books of the gospels before him, rain began to descend upon them; and it lasted three days and three nights, pouring in torrents. And all the tribes in Alexandria said : «This man is from God. Two years have passed without a fall of rain in this city. Blessed is the entrance of this man into our city!» And they consecrated him on the 17th day of Tût. Now we would fain relate a few of his deeds in the monastic life, and his miracles before he became patriarch; but we fear to be tedious, for everything has a measure, as the Scriptures say. Moreover I have related these matters in the book of his biography, apart from this history.

At that time the blessed Athanasius at Antioch departed to the Lord. And Hishâm, the prince, appointed after, him a trustworthy man, named John. Then Hishâm died, and the government of the empire was undertaken by a man named Al-Walîd, son of Yazîd, son of Abd al-Malik. Since, however, his people hated him, he began to build a city named after himself in the desert, for he gave his name to it; but the water was fifteen miles distant from it. He collected workmen from all quarters, and built that city by means of forced labour; and on account of the multitude many died every day from the scarcity of water; for though the water was carried thither by twelve |115 hundred camels daily, yet this was not enough for them; the camels being divided into two bands, six hundred carrying water one day, and six hundred the next. Then Al-Walîd was attacked by a man named Ibrahim, who killed him, and seized the government instead of him. Ibrahim released the enslaved workmen, who departed each one to his own place; and he appointed a new governor in Egypt, named Hassân, son of Atâhiya; and this Ibrahim was a cousin of his. (But according to another copy the governor's name was Isa, son of Abu Atâ. The new governor had been secretary to Usâmah, and he was acquainted with all that Usâmah had done. Now Egypt, before Hassân was governor, abounded in gold; and a dinar was as common as a dirhem among the people at that time.

But when he arrived, a great pestilence broke out in the land, until a young calf was sold for twenty dinars. When Hassan's commissioners and friends informed him of this, he observed : «I know what the people of Egypt do. If I live, I will make them buy a bull for two dinars». And at this time the Egyptians suffered great losses, and trials and troubles were brought upon them, so that the people offered their cattle and their children for sale.

And there was at Misr a young man, a Muslim, named Rajâ, who |116 assembled a body of followers, and seized the government, with the assistance of Hafs the former governor. And they went to Hassân, and wished to kill him; but he fled from them to Damascus. And Hafs commanded that everyone in the provinces of Egypt should pray according to the laws of the Sunnite ritual, and proclaimed that all those, who would give up their own religion and become Muslims, should be exempted from the poll-tax; for that was an impost due from all of them. By means of this procedure Satan did much harm to many people who gave up their religion; and some of them enrolled themselves among the soldiery. And the patriarch, Abba Michael, saw these things with sadness and tears, because he beheld men denying the

Lord Christ. And for these causes the bishops left their sees, and departed into the desert, and entered the monasteries, where they humbled themselves before the Lord in prayer.

At that time the Father Moses, bishop of Wasîm, was detained by his spiritual children in his see, and they would not let him depart from it to any other place; but. he prayed for his flock that the wolf might not carry them away from his Church. And he remained at Al-Gizah and in the neighbourhood of Misr, constantly superintending the affairs of his children. And behold, some of the orthodox officials of Misr came to his house in sadness, and said to him : «Father, pray for us earnestly. For we have counted those who have seceded to the religion of Islam from among our brethren, the baptized Christians, in Misr and its neighbourhood, through the |117 persuasions of this governor, and they amount to twenty-four thousand persons». So the father said to them : «My children, be assured that this month you will see with your own eves this unbelieving governor Hafs burnt with fire in the midst of Fustât Misr; and Rajâ will be slain with the sword». And the father's prophecy was speedily fulfilled. Morever this holy man used to heal the sick in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and gave to men the gift of repentance.

Then the prince sent a general to Egypt, accompanied by five thousand fighting men, that they might make war upon Hafs. The name of this general was Hautharah; and he gained possession of Egypt, and caused Hafs to be burnt in the fire, and killed Rajâ with the sword, and seized all their goods, as the blessed one had prophesied. So the prince took away the government from those two, because they had driven Hassân away from the country, and had taken the power into their own hands without his orders. And Hautharah sent their property to the prince. And the government was restored to Hassân for these reasons; and he was a wise judge like Solomon, and loved the churches and the bishops and monks; and he loved the patriarch Abba Michael, and used to admit him, and converse with him often, when he visited him, from the first days of his patriarchate. And as for Hautharah, after what had happened, he remained in Egypt with his troops. And he loved the orthodox; and, as he resided at Wasîm with all his army for three years, he used to consult the Father |118 Abba Moses about the salvation of his soul. But there was much disturbance in the outer provinces, and fighting among the Muslims, and they killed one man after another, so that even their governors did not remain in office for a whole year but were slain before it was over. At last there arose a man named Marwân, prince of those Turks;

and he brought his army, and seized the empire by force, and ruled it with a strong arm like Pharao; and none could withstand him, but he destroyed them with the sword; and every year he shed much blood of those who fought against him. And there was in Marwân's house a Chalcedonian deacon, named Theophylact, who was a goldsmith and wrought in gold for the prince's household; and he prayed them to gain promotion for him from the prince, by making him patriarch over his fellow-countrymen, the Greeks; for they had no patriarch at that time. So this was done for him speedily; and they appointed him patriarch over the Chalcedonians.

Now peace and prosperity continued in Egypt for five years. Then the governor was removed from Egypt, and a man named Abd al-Malik was appointed. He was a son of Musa, son of Nasir, of the family of Hassân the Jew, who had overrun part of the West. And this governor hated the Christians greatly, and was exceedingly proud, and caused much trouble |119 to the people of Egypt, and gave rise to much disturbance in the country, seizing for the benefit of Marwân the gold and silver and copper and iron, and everything that he could find. This he did by the advice of an evil man, who had learnt these deeds from Satan, and was director of all the arsenals of Egypt, and of the affairs of the government, and was named Abd ar-Rahîm. His labours at last produced results unheard of before, namely that he took linen rags and smeared the ships of the fleet with decoctions of herbs which he mixed up together; so that, when the fire was thrown by the Romans upon the ships, they did not burn. And this I saw with my own eyes; for the ships caught lire, but yet did not burn; and the fire was at once extinguished.

And merchants came from the country, bringing their wares, and collected money among themselves, and gave it to Marwân, and prayed him to allow them to rebuild the churches of Misr; and so he consented to their request. But the friends of Theophylact the Chalcedonian, who was also called Cosmas, said to him : «Verily there are many churches of ours in Egypt, of which the Theodosians, that is to say the Copts, took possession, when the government of the Romans was overthrown; and now we have no church there. We beg the prince to write for us to Egypt, and send by us letters commanding that the church of Saint Mennas at Maryût be handed over to us, so that we may communicate there. » For that church was famous for many |120 miracles, and had been endowed with property in many places. So Theophylact took to Abd al-Malik, son of Musa, son of Nasir, letters which directed him to settle the dispute between the Jacobites and the Chalcedonians, and ordered that the truth concerning the founders of that church should be ascertained, and that it should be handed over to them. And when Abd al-Malik had read the letters from Marwân, he despatched an officer to Alexandria, and commanded that the two patriarchs, the Jacobite and the Chalcedonian, should be brought before him. Now the fast was at hand, so he commanded that they should be summoned.

And when Abba Michael reached Wasîm, the bishop, Abba Moses, went out to meet him, and travelled with him until they came to Abd al-Malik. And there was with us the bishop Abba Theodore, bishop of Misr, who, before he became bishop, had been archdeacon of the church of Saint Macarius in Wadî Habîb. And we attended at the palace together with the Chalcedonians every day, and this we continued to do during the forty days of the fast, from early morning to the end of the day. And the bishop of the Romans, and their patriarch Cosmas went with us. Now the said bishop hated the people of his religion; for he said : «I have not gone so far as to add a fourth Person to the Trinity.» His name was Constantine, and with him was a deacon, named Anastasius, of the church of the Melkites at Alexandria. And Abd al-Malik assembled the Melkites, and read the decree to them, and enquired into the truth of the allegations. And the dispute carried |121 on before him had great results; for the orthodox with their arguments from the Holy Scriptures prevailed over the

Chalcedonians, so that Abd al-Malik marvelled. Then he summoned the chief of his Divân, who was a Muslim with two Divâns under his authority, and another man called Isa, son of Amir, and handed them over to him, that he might thoroughly investigate the matter, and make it known; and he ordered that each party should expound its claims in a letter.

But the Chalcedonians went secretly to the house of Isa, and offered him bribes, that he might favour them in their claims. And the patriarch, Abba Michael, assembled his bishops, and wrote a letter full of all wisdom and of the grace of God, and of the words of the holy Scriptures of God, giving an account of the foundation of the church of the martyr, Saint Mennas, and of the troubles and banishments endured by our fathers, the patriarchs, at the hands of the Chalcedonians, and of the taking of the churches from them by the hands of the princes of the Romans; and that report was written down in Coptic and in Arabic. Afterwards they assembled together, and gave that report to the aforesaid Isa, who read it and marvelled at the patriarch's eloquence. Then the Chalcedonians sent him a letter a span long, with two words in it; and, when he had read it, he laughed and shook his head; and the two letters were read in public, and all present heard their contents. Then our father the patriarch, Abba Michael, said to Isa : «My Lord Secretary, it is not right that we should allow our enemies, who have no God, to hear our words, so that they |122 may take them as a proof hereafter.» Isa replied : «I will read the letter.» But he only did this in guile, and in his care for the interests of the Chalcedonians, because of the bribe which he had received from them.

Now behold, we will cite a part of the contents of the letter written by the blessed Father Patriarch : «Michael, by the grace of God bishop of the city of Alexandria and of the Theodosian people, to the governors, with regard to the church of the glorious Saint Mennas at Maryût. At that time reigned the faithful and pious princes, Arcadius and Honorius, in the days of the holy father, the patriarch Theophilus. He began to build the church of John the Baptist, and when he had finished it, he built the church of Saint Mennas at Maryût, and another church named after Theodosius, son of Arcadius the prince, who helped him to build the churches. When Theophilus was dead, all his successors added to that church, little by little, until the days of the patriarch Timothy; so that it was he who completed it. After that time there came a diabolical prince, named Marcian; for it was he who divided the church through his corrupt creed, and banished the glorious father, the patriarch Dioscorus, who fought for the right faith of his fathers. And Marcian invented a vile new creed, being assisted therein by Leo, patriarch of Rome, who was anathematised by the patriarch Dioscorus together with his impure writings, which were full of heresy. And the aforesaid prince did wicked deeds against the children of the |123 orthodox church, and was exceedingly tyrannical; for he slew some, and drove others away into exile; and they suffered severely at his hands. Nor did they cease to be oppressed in like manner, until the government was transferred to our lords the Muslims. And to this day we continue to dispute with the followers of that new creed.»

This is a little out of much contained in the letter of the glorious father, Abba Michael the patriarch. But as for the Chalcedonians, they wrote and said : «In the beginning the power was in our hands, and the churches with all their property were ours. But the Muslims, after their conquest of Egypt, handed them over to the Copts». Isa however, for the sake of the bribe which he had received from the Chalcedonians, was desirous of proving them in the right, and of convicting the Copts of falsehood. So he said : «Neither you nor they have brought any proof of your words. Go therefore and write two other letters besides these two, and bring them to us.» So we did as he said. Then he said again ; «These are no arguments. Go therefore and write something besides these two letters.» And he did not cease to put us off for a whole month. Then one of those present said to Abba Moses, bishop of Wasîm : «My advice is that our father, the patriarch, should give something to this man, that he may deliver us from these adversaries who oppose and resist us.» But Abba Moses answered : «My son, it is not right that patriarchs and bishops should offer bribes to anyone, nor is it right that they should |124 take bribes from anyone. And we have not had to endure persecution for a year or two years or thirty years, like our fathers; but we are now living in our own homes, and our churches are in our own possession, and God does not forsake us nor cease to help us.»

And during that week God requited those heretics through the prayers of our father. For the governor deprived Isa of his office of secretary and his Divân; and there came another in his place, a man of the sons of the judges of the Muslims, named Abu 'l-Husain, who was an old man, tranquil, not given to showing favour to anyone, nor to taking bribes; and he was wise in his discourse, and just in his judgments. So they delivered us to him, that he might judge between us. And at the beginning of his judgment he said : «Which among you is the father of the Jacobites?» So those present pointed to Abba Michael, and said : «Behold him here!» Then he said : «The father of the Melkites?» And they showed him the other. Thereupon he said to Abba Michael : «Thou holdest the faith of James, bishop of Jerusalem, one of the disciples of the Lord Christ.» He said : «Yea, that is my belief.» Then he turned to the other and said : «Make known to me, Sir, who is thy father, and what is thy creed.» The patriarch of the Melkites said to him : «I hold the faith of Marcian the prince».

Upon that the judge rejoined : «Thou believest in the prince, and |125 not in God?» And he continued : «Tell me who is the father of thy sect, and whence he came, that I may know and judge between you.» The Melkite answered : «My father, who first laid the foundation, was Nestorius. A council was assembled at Ephesus, at which the leader was Cyril, the spiritual father of this man. They had with them a monk from the Mount of Adriba, in the province of Ikhmîm, and they drove Nestorius out of the Church; for they were assisted by the princess at that time. But after that, God speedily raised up Marcian and the patriarch Leo, who agreed with Nestorius and his followers, and everywhere took possession of the churches, over which bishops have ruled up to this day. But our bishop at Alexandria, Proterius, was slain by the Alexandrians; and therefore the prince commanded that an army should be collected, and sent it to Alexandria, and bade the soldiers slay with the sword; and so they killed thirty thousand in one hour.»

When the judge heard that, he clapped his hands together, and said to those around him : «How cruel and tyrannical was that deed!» Then our spiritual father answered and said to the judge : «Behold, we have been occupied with this matter for two months. The governor delivered us over to Isa, son of Amir, as thou knowest, O judge, whom God loves on account of thy just judgments; and we wrote reports and gave them to Isa, but he would not settle our case, but asked of us more than we know». So the judge commanded to bring forth the reports of the Jacobites and Melkites; and he read them and understood their contents, and was filled with |126 astonishment at the difference between them; and he took the documents, and carried them to the governor, who read them, and was also astonished, and commanded him to pronounce his sentence, and dismissed him. Accordingly the judge came forth, and said to Cosmas : «Thou art a man without religion or God. For behold, the reports bear witness against thee that the church belongs to Abba Michael. We understand all that you have written; therefore go and write other reports besides these, and bring them to me».

So we went out from his presence. But the Chalcedonians recognised that they were vanquished, and therefore they invented among themselves words of guile, and sent them to us. And Constantine, bishop of Misr, was with the messengers; and so he said to Abba Michael : «Thy Paternity knows what has happened to us at Alexandria for the sake of the faith; and to this day the dispute about our creed continues Therefore we desire that there be an agreement between thee and us concerning the church, and we wish to make a compact with thee, and to become one flock together. Send a message therefore to the father concerning this matter». Then the blessed Abba Michael said to the bishops : «What do you say on this question? Shall we send a messenger to him, to hear his proposals?» But they said : «He is acting thus with guile deceitfully». And Abba Moses said to them : |127 «O my fathers, in their hearts are seven thoughts, as it is written . They think of things that they cannot bring to pass. But let us try them». Then Abba Michael ordered a priest who was his scribe, and me the sinner, the writer of this history, and sent us to the Chalcedonian patriarch to hear his words. So when we arrived, they came out to meet us with joy;

and when we had taken our seats, and the priest Mennas had addressed Cosmas with words of Scripture, for he was learned, then Cosmas heard from him the words of the patriarch. For Mennas began with the creed of our fathers, the Three Hundred and Eighteen, and Athanasius and Cyril, and confirmed the matter with a great and terrible oath, before the Melkite patriarch and Constantine, the Melkite bishop of Misr; and they made their confession. And Constantino the Melkite bishop of Misr said : «This was my faith before to-day, and I will hold it to my last breath ; one Union, one God, one Lord, one Nature, namely the Lord Jesus Christ. He who does not believe thus is a Jew; and he who says that there are Two Natures in the One Christ, after the Union, is a stranger to the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and his lot will be with Judas the Traitor. This then is my creed». But when Anastasius heard that, he was angry and could not speak, and he waited for what was to happen after this. Then we departed to the fathers, and told them all that had taken place, and so they sent us |128 back to them, saying : «This that you have said you shall write

down in a letter in your own hand». So when we returned to them, Cosmas their patriarch said : «I have another word which I desire to speak to you».

The priest answered : «Hide none of thy thoughts from us, for God looks at the heart, not at the face». So he continued : «If unity be established, what will you do with me?» The priest Mennas replied : «Make known to us what thou desirest». Cosmas answered : «I desire, if unity be established, that my church and your church should be one at Alexandria. And when your father, the patriarch, is present on the days of liturgies, I should be with him; and when he had finished the prayers, each of us should go forth to his own place; and none should hinder me from visiting any of the churches; and so likewise with regard to him». Then the priest said to him : «These are words containing deceit». Cosmas answered : «"What thinkest thou?» So he said : «I will depart to my father, and bring the answer back to thee». Then when the bishops heard this, Abba Moses cried aloud and said : «Our Lord Christ charges us not to call any father upon earth. But now if you approve what they say, then I will speak». The patriarch said to him: «Speak now». So he said : «If he consent to be made by us bishop over the whole of Egypt, and to become our brother, not our father, since Christ will keep thy Paternity that thou mayest guard his holy Church, then we will do it». Then they went to Cosmas |129 and informed him of this their decision;

and he rejoiced, and his soul was satisfied. And Anastasius said : «You will surely make me also bishop of some see». But the priest Mennas answered : «Knowest thou not that no man who seeks another degree for himself is fit to be a bishop? But the people of Misr will assist thee in this matter». So Anastasius said to him : «If you do not consent, then be not troubled nor speak at all of this matter». Then we went out from their presence.

After this we all visited Abd al-Malik, who had written a letter at that time to all the provinces of Egypt, commanding that the scribes and officials from every town should assemble before him; and when he admitted them, the palace was crowded with people in such numbers that none could hear anything through the multitude of voices. So we too entered, surrounded by many people. Then, when we had taken our seats, the bishop Constantine separated himself from the Melkites and sat with our bishops, begging them to receive him as one of themselves, and give him a see; and the assembled multitude and the people of the country around us were observing us, wishing to know what would be settled, and looking at the bishops, both orthodox and Chalcedonian. But after a while some of the people from Upper Egypt rushed upon Constantine, when they learnt that he was a Chalcedonian, that they might drive him away, until the |130 orthodox bishops cast some of their garments over him, and surrounded him among themselves; for otherwise the people of Upper Egypt might have killed him. Then the latter cried and said : «Remove the wolves from the midst of the sheep! Flee from the ravenous lions that devour souls! Drive away the foxes that destroy the vineyard of the Lord of Sabaoth! Remove Judas from among the disciples of Christ! Let not your garments touch these unclean ones, O servants of Christ!»

Meanwhile Cosmas hid himself until their anger had abated; and then, after much questioning of our fathers, the people began to be a little pacified. Moreover when our bishops

made it known to the people that Constantine had prayed them to receive him among the Theodosians, they rejoiced and cried in the midst of the palace : «Constantine has confessed the right faith, the faith of our orthodox fathers». Then suddenly Ibrahim al-Mâhiki, the official who was governor of Alexandria, appeared, for he had been sitting in an apartment of the palace, and with him a band of heretics, including the deacon Sergius, the patriarch's son, and two of the teachers of the heretics. So the people ran back and wished to flee. But there was a man of Damietta who had been exceedingly wicked, and for that reason I, the sinner, admonished him with a word that I had heard; and he leapt into the midst of the assembly, and stood and reviled me, and blasphemed the Holy Trinity. Then I and all those present saw his garment rent from |131 the top to the bottom in three pieces, and everyone in the palace cried, both Muslims and Christians : «There is no faith except the faith of the father, Abba Michael». And there was a great shouting in the palace, and men rushed to see what had taken place, so that some of the people and the soldiers were injured or killed through the great press. Then Abd al-Malik commanded that all should be sent out of the palace.

And on the morrow he commanded the judge to decide the matter in question, saying: «Settle their affair, and let them depart.» Accordingly the judge sat down with the members of the Divâns, namely the scribes and the chief personages of the government. When they had taken their seats, they said to the patriarch, Abba Michael : «Wilt thou swear that this church rightfully belongs to thee and thy fathers?» The patriarch answered : «Our Law commands me not to swear, whether truly or falsely; but I will write a report, and declare the truth to thee therein». Then the judge said to the heretic Cosmas : «Wilt thou swear that this church is thine, that I may give it over to thee?» So he replied : «Yea, I will swear». Then the judge shook his head, as if mocking him, and said to him : «Where hast thou a witness to this statement that it belongs to thee, even if thou shalt swear to it?» Then he said to our father, Abba Michael : «Hast thou anyone to offer testimony that this church belonged to thy fathers?» He replied : «Yea, I have one who will be my witness to that fact, from the day that it was built until now». The judge asked : |132 «How many days is it since it was built?» Abba Michael answered : «Three hundred and fifty years» So the judge said to him : «And do the witnesses live to this day from that time? Thou speakest to me in parables.

Make the truth known to me». Then the patriarch answered and said : «Verily my father Theophilus and his successor Timothy were the builders of this church, and it is they also who testify to me that Theophilus founded it and set up its rows of pillars, for there is his name written upon them; and, when he died, Timothy erected the remainder, since there is his name inscribed. These are my witnesses who testify to this day». Thereupon the judge sent his confidential friends, accompanied by the secretaries and the interpreters, and they ascertained what was written upon the pillars, and found that it was as Abba Michael had declared. And the judge enquired carefully into the truth of the matter, and reiterated his questions concerning it, and discovered that the patriarch's account was correct. So,

when he had tested the truth of his words and proved it, he delivered the church to us, and dismissed us with congratulations and honour. Thus we recovered our church once more.

Now our father John, patriarch of Antioch, who had been a bishop, had a dispute during many days with his bishops, and could not make peace with them; therefore he wrote letters to the prince. And he had written a synodical epistle, but had not been able to find means of sending it to Egypt |133 till this time. So when the messengers arrived, and the Father Abba Michael had received the synodical and other letters from them, he read them, and was greatly distressed by the disagreement between the patriarch and his bishops. For they said that he was a mere bishop and no patriarch, and that they had not been able to give him the title of patriarch in the days of Hishâm. Then Abba Michael summoned all the seniors among his bishops in the land of Egypt, and the letters were read to them. Thereupon they said : «We will not write a letter nor despatch it thither, for this is a difficult matter. If they desire to expel their patriarch, the prince will say to them : Nay, for he is a bishop. But if we write and advise them not to depose him, the bishops will be divided, as they have said in their letters. Rather leave the matter, Father, remaining as it was». And accordingly he did so.

Now I desire to record a little out of much that the Lord did by the hand of the bishop Abba Moses, and concerning the gift of prophecy and of the healing of diseases which he received from the Lord. Therefore believe my words with a pure heart! We were travelling to Alexandria in order that the Father Abba Michael might take possession of the evangelical throne of Mark, and the holy synod disembarked on the way. When we walked through the Christ-loving |134 city of Wasîm, there was in the church a youth, who had been paralysed in his hands and feet from birth. He was now fifteen years old, and the martyr Saint George had appeared to him, and said : «Thou shalt not be healed except by the hand of the bishop, Abba Moses». So this youth came, and would have touched my father's garment; but the multitude around him prevented him. Therefore he cried, saying : «Make the sign of the cross, my Father, over my paralysed limbs». Then the bishop made the sign of the cross over his hands and feet, and we went on our way. But when we returned according to the will of God, that youth came out to meet us, walking and leaping with the people of the city, and recounting what had happened to him, and glorifying God, and thanking his good servant, the bishop. And this bishop also cleansed the lepers, and cast out devils, and did mighty works, like the Disciples.

Now there was in those days great trouble in the East on account of the bishops. Moreover at that time great hosts came against Marwân, and they met in battle; and much blood was shed among them. Then Abd al-Malik assembled the officers of his army at Misr, and imprisoned them for seven days, and also confined the secretaries of state, and the chiefs of the towns and superintendents of inherited property, and required them to send in their accounts, and to pay what they owed. Then he summoned the Father, Abba Michael, to Misr, in order that he might pay the taxes on his churches. But when we came before Abd al-Malik, he demanded of us |135 what we could not pay, and therefore he commanded

that we should be put in prison, and that a great block of wood should be fastened to the patriarch's foot, and a heavy iron collar to his neck. And there was nobody with him except Abba Moses, bishop of Wasîm, and Abba Theodore, bishop of Misr, and Abba Elias Paul, son of Abba Moses in the Spirit. Then they put us into a dark chamber, where we could not see the sun, and which had no window, for it was hewn in the rock. And our father, the patriarch, was greatly tormented through being thus loaded with iron, from the 11th of Tût to the 12th of Babah, seeing no sunlight all that time. While he was in the prison, there were besides him three hundred men;

and there were women also imprisoned, in greater straits than the men; and there was sadness and weeping, and much distress at the end of the day, when the governor of the prison shut the door upon us, and went away; and he did not return till the seventh hour of the day. The sick used to come to the patriarch in prison, that he might bless them, and then they rejoiced; and Christians and Muslims, and even Berbers, came to him, and confessed their sins which they had committed; and so did the prisoners, some of whom said that they had been in prison three years, and others four. And he consoled them and exhorted them to patience, saying to them : «If you vow to God that you will not return to your former deeds, God will |136 receive your repentance and save you before the end of this year». Then they swore to him that they would not return to their sins. And they were all accordingly rescued from prison before the end of the year by his prayers.

As for our fathers, the bishops, they could not change their garments nor their caps for the space of seventeen days, while they remained close by the father patriarch; for they were chained to him by their souls though not by iron. And the superintendent of the governor's table was a believer and a good man, who provided for the patriarch; and he used to visit us, and brought for us into the prison what we needed; while I, the sinner, was engaged in ministering to those three bloodless martyrs night and day.

And that year there had been a great pestilence among young infants at Misr, so that they all died. And while I was lying at the feet of the patriarch one night, and he was teaching me from the Scriptures, and answering all my questions about them, I asked him concerning the death of the infants. And I said to him : «Thinkest thou, Father, that God takes them on account of the sins of their parents or for some other cause?» Then he answered : «Do not suppose, my son, that this is the cause. But God beholds the human race, and sees that most of them do the will of |137 Satan by their vain devices, and that Hell is full and Paradise empty; and so he takes the infants who are without sin to Paradise, the place of mercy.» Then I asked him : «Why did God expel Satan from Heaven before he created the world or men?» He answered me : «O my son, who am I, the vile sinner, to deal with this problem, that thou shouldst question me about it?» But as I persisted all the more in questioning him on this subject, he said to me : «The holy Gregory Theologus says that Satan was, from the time when he was first created, in the habit of slandering his companions the angels before God; but God granted him a term of trial and was patient with him.

Then when God created a new heaven and a new earth, and formed man in his own image and likeness , since it lay in God's foreknowledge that Satan loved pride, he bade him behold Adam and the beauty of his countenance. So Satan took with him the host over which God had made him leader, and went to the place where Adam was; and, when he saw it he was filled with admiration of it. And he said to his lollowers : I desire to set up for myself a throne upon the clouds, and the high mountains shall be beneath me, and I will be like the Most High; and the whole world shall be under my power, and I will rule over it. Then when he ascended again to heaven, God said to him : Admirest thou what thou hast seen, and art thou pleased with the world that has been created? For he knew his secret thoughts. Then God said to Satan : I have made |138 thee lord over the world. And God said this to Satan in order that he might not fall from the glory in which he was. But Satan kept evil in his heart, and in his thoughts there was wickedness; and after that he considered and said : I desire to know the nature of the Godhead, so that when I go down to the world I may act accordingly, and may no longer have need of God. For this was the design that Satan had conceived.

And, wishing to behold the Godhead, he entered into the midst of the Angels suddenly; but God commanded ten thousand of the heavenly angelic Powers to cast him down to the lowest Hell in outer darkness, him and all his companions. This is what God revealed to Gregory Theologus, who wrote it down for us. Glory be to God for ever and ever. Amen».

Then I questioned the patriarch again, saying : «Will God have patience with these unbelieving rulers who commit these crimes against us at all times, and will not release us from these bonds?» He answered : «Be patient, my son, and be of good cheer. When we go forth from this place, we shall fall into worse misfortunes than this. Therefore be patient now, for none shall receive his reward without suffering; but he who endures to the end shall be saved. And thou wilt see what shall take place hereafter, for in these two rulers there is no good».

Then when seventeen days of the before mentioned month were over, while we were still in this distress, the governor commanded that he should be brought before him. So we came into his presence, and he demanded the money of the patriarch, saying to him : « None of thy |139 churches pays taxes, and I require of thee that which is rightfully due from them.» And he pressed him sorely. Then the patriarch answered : «If it he so, permit me to depart to Upper Egypt; and whatever the Christians may give me and supply me with I will bring to thee.» Then the governor released him, and we quitted his presence, and journeyed to Upper Egypt. At that time we suffered greatly from the cold; for there was hoar-frost at night, and heat in the day-time from the sun. And the people of Egypt had perished through oppression and poverty and taxation. And the father, Abba Michael, was fatigued during our journey, and suffered much. While we travelled, he healed many that were sick, merely by making the sign of the Gross; and he cast out unclean spirits from among the people,and converted many who had gone astray from the orthodox faith, for God helped him. Then we

returned to Misr on the night of the 21st of Tubah, the night on which our Lady, the Virgin Mary, went to her rest.

And that night there came great wrath from God, for there was a great earthquake in the land, and many houses were ruined in all the cities; and none was saved from them, not a single soul; and likewise on the sea many ships were sunk on that night. This happened all over the East, from the city of Gaza to the furthest extremity of Persia. And they counted the cities that were |140 wrecked that night, and they were six hundred cities and villages, with a vast destruction of men and beasts. But the land of Egypt was uninjured, except only Damietta. And at Misr there was only great fear, without any death or ruin of houses; for though the beams in the doorways and walls were moved out of their places, they went back again to their places after two hours. We were assured by one whose word we trust that none of the churches of the orthodox nor of their dwellings was destroyed throughout the East. But the father, Abba Michael, bade all the inhabitants of Misr and the neighbourhood prolong their fasting and prayers. So when the misbeliever, Abd al-Malik, saw what had taken place through the wrath of God, he accepted the alms given by the Christians to the patriarch, and released him.

Now I have omitted much without writing it down, that the history might not become too long and weary the reader, but I am constrained to record briefly a matter which must not be passed over. That is that there was at Dongola, a city of the Nubians, a king named Mercurius, who was called the New Constantine, for he became by his beautiful conduct like one of the Disciples; and the Lord gave him a son whom he named Zacharias. When king Mercurius died, Zacharias did not choose to become |141 king, but occupied himself with the word of God and the salvation of his soul, and gave up his rank as king, and appointed to the kingly office a kinsman of his named Simon, who was orthodox, and walked in the excellent path of Mercurius. When Simon died, Zacharias adopted a valiant youth attached to the palace, named Abraham, and made him king; but he was proud and wicked. And the bishop of the capital city used to warn him and instruct him, but he paid no heed to him, and therefore a dispute took place between the king and the bishop. So the king wrote a letter to the father patriarch, Abba Michael, in which he said with an oath : «If thou do not excommunicate Cyriacus, I will make all my country worship idols». For he had written concerning that bishop absurd calumnies and false testimonies. But when the patriarch had read this letter, he wrote letters of peace to the king.

Yet the king was not satisfied, but wrote other letters worse than the first, full of false testimonies, and despatched them to Alexandria by Cyriacus, the holy bishop. So the father assembled the bishops, and formed a synod in the city of Alexandria. And when they had met together, he produced the letters, which were read aloud; but the bishops recognised that their allegations were absurd. Then indeed they spoke a word concerning the king of that country, fearing lest Satan should bring corruption upon it: and therefore they prayed the bishop Cyriacus to reside |142 in one of the monasteries of Alexandria, until the wrath of the king should subside; but he refused to do that. So, when they saw that he would

not listen to them, they said : «Depart whithersoever thou wilt, in order to abide there.» But they would not allow him to celebrate the Liturgy in the churches of Egypt. And they ordained him whom the king had sent to them, a man named John, saying to Cyriacus : «If this matter is not from God, thou wilt see what will happen, and wilt return to thy see once more. For we have not removed thee from thy see by excommunication, but on account of the wickedness of the king, and his evil intentions».

But when they rose up to depart, each to his own place, there appeared a great wonder. For there was a great board over the throne of the patriarch, Abba Michael, on which was a painting of John Chrysostom; and, after the bishop had been removed from his see, the cords of the picture broke, and it fell into the midst of the bishops, and continued to move and leap until it had passed beyond them. Therefore they went and took it up, and restored it to its former place. Then it did the same thing a second and a third time; for as often as they hung it up it fell again, until it reached a certain place in the church and remained there. Now that bishop resembled the picture of John Chrysostom, for his cheeks were almost free from hair, so that he seemed to have no beard, and this was one of the characteristics of John Chrysostom's face. And the bishop Cyriacus was an old man, eighty |143 years of age on that day; and his appearance was like that of an angel of God. Then the bishops dispersed to their own districts; and Cyriacus departed to one of the monasteries of Nubia, while John, the new bishop, went to the capital city. Now trustworthy persons have testified to me that no rain fell upon that city during the remainder of the life of Cyriacus, the bishop, and that every year the people were visited by a pestilence, and that those who bore false witness against him were suddenly struck blind. And he lived to be one hundred and four years old. Then he prayed God to remove him from the body; and, when he was dead, the people of his country visited his tomb, and prayed him with many tears to beseech God to send down rain upon them; and this took place so that their country was fertilized, and the pestilence ceased from them.

So when king Zacharias saw these things, he banished king Abraham to an island in the midst of the river, and appointed a king named Mark instead of him; for Zacharias had been father of the kings up to this time. Then the friends of Mark went secretly with guile, to slay Abraham in his place of exile. But, when the partisans of king Abraham learnt this, they conspired against king Mark; and, while he was praying in the church before the sanctuary, they slew him, in the sixth month of his reign. Then they set up a king named Cyriacus, an honest and virtuous man, who has remained king to the day on which I write this history. |144

Now letters had been sent to this king from Egypt, and had reached him while the father, Abba Michael, was in prison with us. And Abd al-Malik heard of these communications, and therefore he seized the patriarch, and kept him in custody. Then king Cyriacus marched forth from the land of the Nubians towards Egypt with a great army, including a hundred thousand horsemen, with a hundred thousand horses and a hundred thousand camels. And we were informed by one who had witnessed it with his own eyes that the horses which the

Nubians rode used to fight with their forefeet and hindfeet in battle as their riders fought upon their backs, and that they were small horses, no higher than asses. And when they approached Misr that they might capture the city, and had encamped at the Pool known to this day as the Pool of the Ethiopians, they plundered and slew and made prisoners of the Muslims. And they had already treated the Muslims of Upper Egypt in like manner. And the king before he reached Misr had sent an envoy, called the Eparch, one of the great men of the kingdom, to Abd al-Malik, bidding him release the patriarch; but Abd al-Malik seized that envoy and imprisoned him with the patriarch. But when the governor heard of the arrival of the king before Misr, not having any means of resisting him, and being, greatly afraid of him, he released his envoy, the Eparch, from prison.

So the latter went forth to meet the king, having, previously made an engagement with Abd al-Malik, and sworn to |145 induce the king to return with his army to his own country, and not to let him approach his fortresses nor besiege him. Now the Muslims were in the habit of kidnapping the Nubians, and selling them as slaves in Egypt. So the king, after carrying off much plunder from the Muslims, led back his army, because the Eparch informed him that the patriarch had been released, and had been kindly treated by Abd al-Malik, and himself bade the Nubians return homewards with his blessing.

Now many of the tribe of Al-Kais worshipped an idol named Salkit, and therefore the king of the Nubians conquered them and plundered them, and his army carried off the booty which they had taken from them. Then Abd al-Malik sent to the patriarch, bidding him write to the king of the Nubians. So Abba Michael wrote letters of peace to Cyriacus, in which he prayed for him, and blessed him and his followers; and the king returned without fighting a battle. Now these events took place in the hundred and thirtieth year after the foundation of the empire of the Muslims. And there were under the supremacy of Cyriacus, king of the Nubians, thirteen kings, ruling the kingdom and the country. He was the orthodox Ethiopian king of Al-Mukurrah; and he was entitled the Great King, upon whom the |146 crown descended from Heaven; and he governed as far as the southern extremities of the earth, for he is the Greek king, fourth of the kings of the earth; and none of the other kingdoms stands up against him, but their kings attend him when he passes through their territory. And he is under the jurisdiction of Mark the Evangelist, for the patriarch of the Jacobites in Egypt exercises authority over him, and over all the kings of the Abyssinians and the Nubians; and he has in his country an orthodox bishop whom the patriarch ordains as metropolitan, and who ordains for the king the bishops and the priests in that land. And when the metropolitan dies, the patriarch of Alexandria appoints another for him, whom he chooses, and ordains him for that people.

Now when we came out of prison, many people came together to us, and prayed the father patriarch to celebrate the Liturgy for them, and to give them with his holy hand the communion of the Body and the Precious Blood. So they conducted him to the church of the two Martyrs, Sergius and Bacchus ; and he celebrated the Liturgy for them that day, and communicated to them the Holy Mysteries, and gave them an exhortation and instruction

|147 And there came a man seeking to communicate, as soon as the brethren began to make their communion; but the patriarch refused him, and, though he returned, would not give him the oblation. And when. Abba Michael had dismissed the congregation, and sent the people away in peace, that man appeared before the father, weeping, and said : «I desire thee, Father, to tell me for what cause thou didst refuse me communion». The spiritual father answered and said to him : «My son, I also am a sinner. None but the Lord Christ refused thee communion. He it was who forbad thee to receive it. Therefore declare now what thou hast done in the midst of this assembly of thy brethren, lest any of them do like thee». Then that man cried aloud, saying : «I pray thee, my Lord and Father, if it was a sin which I committed, forgive it me, for I will not be guilty of it again». The father said to him : «Thou must confess it».

So he said to him : «I have been accustomed to break my fast in my own house, and to come after my breakfast to the church to communicate. Thus I did to-day. And afterwards when I heard that thou wouldst give communion to thy people, I said in my heart : I will go and receive the communion from his holy hand. And I did so out of love for thee in my humility. Now I have declared this to thee who didst refuse me. But in Upper Egypt there are many who do this without knowing that it is a sin». When the Father heard that, he commanded that letters should be written to every place, ordering that none of the faithful should communicate unless fasting, and that none should make |148 his communion twice in one day ». Then he gave his blessing to that man, who departed glorifying God, who does wonders by his saints.

But Egypt found no tranquillity nor rest during the government of Abd al-Malik, for not one of the family of the princes of the Ishmaelites who ruled over them was like him. And he did to the monasteries what was not lawful, because he hated the Christians; for as he pleased to do, so he did. Yet the Lord Christ, in whose hand are the hearts of princes, turned his heart to love Abba Michael the patriarch; therefore he invited him to his palace, and we accompanied him; and he begged the patriarch to pray for him. And the governor's daughter, who was four years old, was possessed by an unclean spirit, and so her father requested the patriarch to pray over her. Then Abba Michael took oil, and blessed it, and anointed her with it; and the devil went out of her immediately. Thus the governor began to love the Christians, because he loved the father patriarch; and he also loved the bishops, and showed them honour.

Now our father, Abba Michael, was sweet in speech, beautiful in countenance, perfect in stature, decent in his attire, well-formed and dignified; and his words were like a sword against the rebellious, and his teaching was like salt to people of virtue and modesty. And the hand of God was with him in those hardships which he endured through Abd al-Malik. And |149 the church at Alexandria had suffered greatly in the time of the late patriarch Alexander, when its marble and glorious woodwork, which were priceless, were taken away from it. So the Father Michael provided money for it, and restored it, and improved it. And

he built other churches to the east and west of the town, and his buildings were completed in his lifetime.

And on a certain day the governor of Alexandria desired to launch the ships of the fleet on the sea. And there was a congregation of the orthodox in the Church of our Lady Mary, of about ten thousand persons. And a young man of the Muslims saw, painted on the wall, a picture of the Lord Christ upon the Cross, while the soldier with the spear was piercing his side. So he said to the Christians, tempting them : «What is this man upon the Cross?» They answered : «This is the sign of our God Christ, who died upon the Cross for the salvation of the world.» Thereupon that young man took a rod, and mounted to the upper gallery, and pierced the picture in the other side, namely the left, mocking and blaspheming at the Christian's words. And immediately the form of the young man became stretched, as if he were himself crucified, after the likeness of the picture which he had pierced, and a great pain seized him, as if he had been pierced in the side in like manner, and his hand clove to the rod with which he had pierced it, and no man could take it out of his hand; and he remained fixed in the midst of the congregation, between heaven and |150 earth.

So he continued all day, crying aloud : «O ye people, I am pierced in the side.» Then the Muslims cried to the Christians with a loud voice, glorifying God, the doer of wonders, and begged them to pray to God for the man's release. So the Christians prayed, saying Kyrie eleison many times. But that young man could not descend from the place where he was, until one of the Muslims said to him : «Verily unless thou shalt confess the faith of the Christians, and say that this picture is the likeness of Christ, the Son of God, and profess their creed, and believe like them, he will never let thee come down.» Then he accepted the words of that Muslim, and confessed that it was the picture of Christ, and said : «I am a Christian, and will die in the religion of Christ.» After that confession he descended into the midst of the assembly, and departed to the monasteries, and was baptized there.

Now the prince at that time was Marwân, who ruled from Persia to Spain. His hand was very heavy upon his soldiers, and for a time the Muslims fought one against the other, and shed one another's blood, so that on one day twenty thousand or thirty thousand or even seventy thousand were slain. And they did not cease from war during the seven years of Marwân's reign, because he had usurped the government over them. And in the seventh year a young man named Abd Allah had a dream, in which the |151 voice of a certain one said to him three times : «Fight against Marwân, fight. By God thou wilt overcome him.» This young man, Abd Allah, was a Bedouin, and lived in tents in the desert; and his father was an old man, named Abu Muslim, to whom the same vision came in a dream as to the young man, Abd Allah; and the old man wrote an account of the dream, and fastened it on the door of his tent. Therefore, when the Muslims saw it, they came together to him in order to know what had happened; and, when he told them, they said : «We will help thee; and, if God shall give thee the victory, we will make thee prince over us.» Accordingly, many of the tribes assembled to him, when they heard of this; and twenty thousand horsemen gathered together with him.

But they had no weapons, and so they cut branches from the palm-trees, and fastened spear-heads to them, and went forth to fight, the power of God being with them. Thereupon Marwân came out against them, accompanied by a hundred thousand fighting men, well equipped, and provided with weapons and coats of mail and helmets; and the two armies met. Then Abd Allah divided his army into two parts; and when Manvan saw them, he said, as Goliath the giant said to David : «Hast thou come out to meet me like a dog?» Then Marwân sent out against Abd Allah forty thousand horsemen in many-coloured |152 garments, wearing cuirasses and iron armour, whereas most of Abd Allah's soldiers were footmen. Yet Abd Allah's men slew Marwân's men with God's help, so that not one of them was saved; for God gave to the former the victory over the latter, as the prophet Moses says : «One man, if God helps him, shall put to flight a thousand, and two shall terrify a host.»

And Abu Muslim saw the angel of the Lord, with a golden rod in his hand, on the top of which was a Cross, putting his enemies to flight; for, wherever the Cross approached, he saw them fall dead before it. So the followers of Abd Allah and Abu Muslim took the horses and weapons of the enemy. Then Marwân again sent another forty thousand horsemen against them, at the fourth hour of the day, from behind rocks; but God delivered them into their hands, and they captured their horses and weapons. So, when Marwân saw that, he fled. And he executed the following stratagem. He brought out what he possessed of money and vessels and furniture, and put the gold in bags, and scattered it along the road, while he was fleeing, accompanied by twenty thousand horsemen, who remained with him. But Abd Allah and Abu Muslim did not understand his deceit, and so, as they pursued him, they busied themselves with seizing the money and the weapons for seven days, so that Marwân escaped and crossed the Euphrates. |153 But many of his followers were drowned, and he set fire to the boats, and none reached the shore but he and eight thousand men with him.

So the old man Abu Muslim bade his soldiers make crosses of every kind, and place them on their breasts, saying to them : «By means of this sign God has given us the victory, and it has conquered the empire for us.» And his followers multiplied, for men came to them from every place at which they arrived : from Khorassan and Sidon and the Euphrates and the land of the Romans; and all that heard of them in distant lands. And at every city which they captured, their followers established a camp. But as for Marwân, he set fire to every place that he reached in his flight, When Abu Muslim and Abd Allah came to the Euphrates, and saw the burnt boats, they put on black garments, and left their heads unshaven, and neglected their wives, and continued to fast and pray for six months, until God gave their enemy into their hands. Then they took the boats that they could get, and crossed the Euphrates, and pursued Marwân. And when they reached a place where there were Christians, they marked it out by the sign of the Cross, which they also had marked on their tents and garments. And the Muslims among them wore black garments. And him who was without these two signs they put to death, because the followers of Marwân were Persians, and therefore did not approve of these things. And so, when they found them, they killed them, |154 and ripped them open. And they used to rip open their pregnant wives,

and kill the babes, saying : «We will leave them no offspring on earth to go about the world as beggars.»

Then Marwân went into the public treasury at Damascus, for that was the capital of the Omeyyads, and brought forth much money and jewels and treasures, and burnt the rest with fire. And he went on doing thus, till he had laid waste seven provinces with fire. When Abd al-Malik, the governor of Egypt, heard the news, he feared that Marwân would summon him to fight, and therefore he wrote to him a letter with guile, inviting him to Egypt, and saying : «Thy enemies cannot enter this country.»

Accordingly, Marwân marched thither, slaying the chiefs of the towns and provinces through which he passed, and seizing their money. So also he did in the monasteries of the monks, which he wrecked and robbed of their money. And there was in Palestine a clean and decent monastery, which entertained thousands of travellers, and contained a thousand monks; and it was called Dair Mût, and in Coptic, the Monastery of Abba Harmanus. Maximus and his brother Domitius were first received here; and it was Abba Harmanus who took the Tome of Leo, and went to the tombs of his fathers, accompanied by the soldiers of the prince, and cried over their tombs with a loud voice, saying : «Think not that you are asleep, and that this does not concern you! As the Lord lives, if you answer me not, I will |155 take out your bones and burn them with fire. Tell me what you think. Shall I receive the Tome of Leo, or the Faith of Nicaea? Tell me plainly and speedily.» Then they all answered with one voice, crying and saying: «Cursed be Leo, the misbeliever, the soul-devouring lion, and his foul Tome! And cursed be Marcian, the misbeliever, and the vile Pulcheria! And cursed be the Council of Chalcedon, the six hundred and thirty heretical bishops; and cursed be all that receive them. And cursed be those that make Christ the Son of God into Two Natures after the Union.» So, when the blessed Abba Harmanus heard this, he fell upon the ground.

And when the noble who brought the Tome saw him, and heard their words addressed to him, he shaved his head, and became a monk with many others. Afterwards this saint was counted worthy of martyrdom; for when Marcian, the prince, was informed of what he had done, he sent and put him to death. And since that time there has been a body of the orthodox remaining in that glorious monastery. So when Marwân arrived at the aforesaid monastery, he demanded of them a sum of money amounting to three weights; and he severely chastised the superior of the monastery and his assistant, for he killed those two; and he plundered the monastery, and continued his march, accompanied by his army. Then, when they were at a short distance from the monastery, there was a hermit upon a pillar, a very old man, who had been there many years, an orthodox Theodosian. |156 So one of Marwân's friends said : «Verily all that this old monk says comes to pass, for he speaks the truth.» And he came up to that hermit, and asked him what would be his fate. So the old man said in a low voice, like the voice of Jeremias the prophet : «If I tell thee the truth, thou wilt slay me; yet will I declare what God has revealed to me. That which God has told me of thee is this. With the measure with which thou hast measured it shall be measured to thee.

As thou hast made mothers childless, so shall thy mother be childless. And thy path shall be very terrible to all that behold thee; for thy children and thy wives and all that are thine shall be taken captive; and he who is now pursuing thee shall take thy empire, and none of thy family shall reign after thee for ever. And thine enemies shall put thee to flight, until thou comest to Arsinoites, to Cleopatra. All this shall befall thee this year in the month of Misri.» When Marwân heard this, he commanded that the pillar should be overthrown; and he brought down the old man, and burnt him alive in the fire.

Then Marwân arrived in Egypt on the twentieth day of the month of Baunah, in the year 467 of the Martyrs. And before these things happened, some of the Bashmurites had rebelled against Abd al-Malik, under their |157 leader Mennas, son of Apacyrus, besides other insurgents, inhabitants of Shubrâ near Sanbat. And they seized that province, and refused to pay taxes to Abd al-Malik or to the chief of the Divân of Misr; and at last the Lord visited them, and gave them the victory. For Abd al-Malik brought out an army against them, but they put him to flight by the power of God, and slew his soldiers with the edge of the sword. And he despatched another army, and a fleet of ships on the river, and by the power of God they put all his men to flight or slew them. And when Marwân reached Egypt, all this was made known to him. So he wrote letters and a decree of pardon for those rebels; but as they would not accept him, he despatched against them a great army of Egyptian Muslims, and of those who came in his company from Syria. But this army could not reach them at all, because they fortified themselves in marshy places, which could only he approached by men marching in single file; and if a man's foot slipped from the path, he would sink into the mud and perish. And as the troops watched the Bashmurites from a distance, the latter marched out against them at night by ways which they knew, and took the soldiers by surprise, and killed those whom they could, and carried off their goods and their horses; and as the troops grew tired of these attacks, they marched away and left them. |158

Then Abd Allah, the prince, arrived with a great army in the province of Damascus, and divided his troops between two brave commanders, one of whom was named Sâlih, son of Ali, and the other Abu Aun, his friend, saying to them : «If you shall find Marwân and capture him, I will promote you two to be princes; and to Abu Aun I will give Egypt.» Then he sent with Sâlih sixty thousand horsemen and sixty captains; and he gave to Abu Aun forty thousand horsemen and four hundred officers. So the two arrived at Damascus, the governor of which was Marwân's son-in-law, having married his eldest daughter; but, as he submitted to them, they retained him in office. Then they marched on to Egypt. When they arrived at Gaza, the inhabitants told them : «The people of Damascus have not put on the black, nor remained obedient to you.» So they returned in wrath, and slew a great number of the chiefs of the people of Damascus, and killed the governor, Marwân's son-in-law, and took the daughter of Marwân prisoner. And when the news reached Marwân, he reviewed his troops, and found that those who had come with him were eight thousand in number. Then he gave orders to his subjects, the natives of the land, saying : «If any of the people of Egypt refuse to enter into my religion, and to pray as I do, and to adopt my creed, I will slay him and impale his body.

But whoever shall enter with me into my religion I will clothe with a robe of honour, and I will mount him upon a horse, and will place his name in my |159 Divân, and make him rich.» In consequence of these words he was soon followed by a thousand persons, who recited his prayer; and accordingly he gave to each one ten dinars. Then two thousand Muslims of Egypt joined him, besides those whom he had released from prison, and those who served him of the troops of the army of the empire. And he sent his sister's son to Alexandria, accompanied by one of the chiefs of his army, and commanded him to enlist the Ishmaelites, on condition that they recited his prayer. For there was at Alexandria a chief man and leader of the Muslims, named Al-Aswâd, to whom many men had gathered while the Muslims were fighting the Romans; and Marwân had commanded those whom he sent thither to kill him and ten of his officers, because he had not come to him at Misr; but Al-Aswâd had a friend at Misr in attendance on Marwân and an associate of his, who heard of this and wrote to Al-Aswâd to make known to him what had been done, before those men arrived at Alexandria. When the Alexandrians learnt what Marwân intended, they swore fidelity to Al-Aswâd; and he and they became of one heart, and so when Marwân's envoy and his companions arrived, the Alexandrians arrested them, and cast them into prison.

Al-Aswâd gathered a large body, from Alexandria and Maryût and Al-Buhairah, of Muslims who lived in those districts, and placed them outside the wall of Alexandria to keep the roads. Therefore when Marwân was informed, he sent a great army under an Amir and |160 chief, named Kauzârâ, who was like a wild beast in form and character, and of great courage, and with him were five hundred fighting men; and Marwân commanded them to lay Alexandria waste. So they encamped at a place named Bakûm at a distance from Alexandria. When Al-Aswâd heard this, he sent against them his brother and five hundred men with him, to reconnoitre; and when Marwân's followers saw them, they thought that they were an army from the town, and that there was none left therein who would fight them except these. So they rose up against them, and killed most of them, and the remainder fled and returned to the city, while the enemy pursued them. When they reached Al-Aswâd and his companions, they cried saving : «Our city is taken.» So they all fled, their number being thirty thousand, and Al-Aswâd escaped and hid himself. And Marwân's army entered the city with Kauzârâ, and took possession of it, and killed many of the inhabitants, and plundered its officials, and their children and wives were taken prisoners, and their goods were seized. And the Father Abba Michael was captured; and Kauzârâ said to him : «How couldst thou permit thy children, the Christians, to fight against us?» By this he meant the Bashmurites.

And he reproved the patriarch with many words, and demanded money of him. But, as Abba Michael had nothing, he put him in prison, and fastened a mass of iron to his feet. And. the patriarch's |161 disciples and some of his priests had fled on account of what had happened at Alexandria, and none remained save Abba Mennas, the priest, who was the oeconomus of the church of Saint Mark the Evangelist and Disciple, and Valentinus, the deacon and secretary of the Cell, and Bartholomew, the monk of Samannûd; for they were bound together with Abba Michael. Then Kauzârâ also seized Cosmas, patriarch of the Melkites, and put his feet in the stocks, together with the feet of our father and patriarch.

But after five days, Cosmas raised from his congregation and his church the sum of a thousand dinars, and paid them to Kauzârâ, who thereupon released him. And Kauzârâ sent to our father, and said to him : «Do likewise, and I will release thee.» But he answered : «There is nothing in my church; therefore I give myself instead of the money, and thou must do with me what thou wilt.» Then he pressed him sore, till the end of nine days. After that he sent for him, and laid his hand upon him, and dragged him on his face, and threw him on his knees. And there was a rod in his hand, so he struck him with it two hundred times on his head with all his might and main.

But the Lord Christ was Abba Michael's helper and protected him, so that he suffered no hurt. Then Kauzârâ commanded that the patriarch's head should be cut off; and they dragged him along like a dumb sheep. And when they had gone a short distance from that misbeliever, Abba Michael drew down his cap over his face, so that his head might be taken off, and then he readily with joy stretched out his neck. |162

And the swordsman put forth his hand, and drew his sword, and cried, saying : «Shall I take off his head?» For it was according to custom that he should ask permission three times. And, when he asked permission for the second time, the Amir gave it to him. Then God put a thought into Kauzârâ's heart, and he said : «How does it profit us to kill this old man? For he forbad the Bashmurites to fight with us, and wrote to them, but they would not listen to him. Rather let us carry him with us to Rosetta, and make him write to them again, and tell them that all that which has happened to him is on their account.» So Kauzârâ commanded that the patriarch should be released.

When the Bashmurites heard of these events, they attacked those who were besieging them, and slew them or routed them, they being at a distance of a two days journey. And those who escaped death went to Marwân, and made known to him what had happened to them. And when Marwân learnt that his enemies were coming after him, and had killed his son-in-law, his daughter's husband, the governor of Damascus, he sent a letter by those who had fled to him in order to escape from the Bashmurites, saying to his followers : «Come to me speedily, for I have need of you. And pillage every town that you reach, and slay the inhabitants». Therefore those miscreants marched into Upper Egypt, and killed many of the officials, and carried off their goods, and took captive their wives and servants and children. And they burnt the monasteries of the monks, and carried off the |163 nuns, until they came to the Eastern district. And there was in those parts a convent of nuns, virgins who lived there as the brides of Christ, thirty in number. So Marwân's troops took them prisoners. And there was among them a young maiden, who had entered the convent when she was three years old;

and when they saw her they marvelled at her beauty, saying : «We have never beheld among human beings a form like hers.» So they took her, and removed her from the midst of her sisters, and consulted together as to what they should do with regard to her, some saying : «Let us cast lots for her,» and others : «Let us take her to the prince.» And, while they were saying these things, the maiden asked of them : «Where is your leader, that I may let him

know of something that is worth money, so that you may let me go? For I am a servant of God, and it is not lawful for you to profane my service. But, if I make known to you that thing by which you shall gain money, you will send me back to my convent.» So their commander answered her, saying : «I am he.» She said to him : «My fathers were fighting men, brave and strong, and gave me a medicament, with which they used to anoint themselves when they went out to fight, so that iron did them no hurt, but swords and spears became like wax candles before them. If then thou wilt let me go free, I will give this drug to thee. And if thou dost not believe my words, I will anoint my neck in thy presence;

then bring the best sword that thy men have, and let the strongest among them strike me, and I shall not be cut at |164 all, so that thou mayest know the truth of my words. » But she only said this because she desired to die by the sword, that she might not be contaminated by the defilements of those miscreants, nor her pure body be: polluted by them. Then she entered her chamber, and brought out a phial containing oil, which the holy men had blessed, and which was preserved in her possession; and she anointed her neck and face and all her body with it, and prayed kneeling upon her knees, and stretched out her neck. So those ignorant men thought that the thing was true, and knew not what was in her heart. Then she said to them : «Let him that is strong among you, and has a sharp sword, display his strength upon me; for you will see the glory of God in this medicament.» Thereupon a young man sprang forward with a sword of which he was proud. And she covered her face with her pallium, and laid down her head, saying : «Strike with all thy. might, and spare not.» So he struck at the holy martyr, and her head fell. Then they recognised what her aim had been, and that she had eluded them; and so they repented and were exceedingly sad, and great fear overwhelmed them.

And after her they touched no more of the nuns and virgins, but left them in peace and departed glorifying God.

Then Marwân wrote to Kauzârâ, whom he had despatched to |165 Alexandria, bidding him hasten to him without delay; but, when he reached Rosetta, he was informed that the Bashmurites had slain the Muslims in the town and laid it waste, and burnt it with fire, and also that the enemy was at hand. So he delivered the father patriarch to one of the officers, that he might conduct him to Marwân. Then I journeyed and informed my father, Abba Moses, of what had taken place, on account of the power of prophecy which God had given him, and the miracles which he worked. Therefore ye must believe truly in that which I am about to say, for I saw it with my own eyes. That is that before Marwân came to Egypt, and before there was any fighting there, Abba Moses had made known, by revelation from God, what would become of the princes, and what would happen to the churches and faithful people of Christ. For it was said to him in vision : «Prepare, for thou wilt be with the fathers in the battle.» And that year he multiplied his prayers and devotions and sleepings upon the ground day and night, and his continuance in prayer and sadness and weeping and copious tears. So when I, the sinner, saw him, I begged and implored him to tell me the cause of his

doing thus with himself. Now that holy father hated vain glory, and he said to me : «O my son, my sins are many;

and, when I remember them, I weep and repent, and offer prayers to God, praying to him for pardon.» But since I, the sinner, enjoyed some freedom with Abba Moses, because I attended him night and day, |166 I grasped his feet and kissed them, and my tears ran over them, and I said : «I will not rise nor lift my face until thou shalt make known to me the truth of this matter.» So he answered : «If thou must know, thou also wilt share my lot with me; ---- for none will be safe in the days of this government; ---- above all in the harm that the people will do to the Church. But I know that the Lord Christ will not abandon her finally, but that she will be delivered from her trouble. For this government will perish with all its armies, and there will be a new government after it.» Thus I heard much from him of these and other matters. And I know that every word he said was true and is fulfilled in its season; and I continued to meditate on this and what would come after it. And after that day, Marwân and his government were driven out, and he came to Egypt, as has been related. For I was pondering and wondering what would happen to the Church of God in the time of peace and prosperity, and other things;

and while he was conversing with me, behold, the father patriarch arrived, escorted by the soldiers, at the door of the holy church in the city of Wasîm, on the morning of Sunday, the 10th of Abîb. When my holy father Moses saw them, he said to me : «My son, this day which I was expecting, and of which I spoke to thee, has arrived, and seeing is better than hearing. Now therefore let him who is willing to give up his life follow me. I rejoice to day, because |167 I have long desired this, although I confess that I am not worthy to shed my impure blood in return for the pure blood shed for us. But great is the sadness in my heart, because the generation of the saints is scattered, and we are become exceedingly poor, since we cannot find a man to share with us in this ministry, as I bore witness at the time of the synod.» And my father Moses, in spite of his fasting and prayer and virtue, said : «Woe to me, the sinner! I believe that Christ will not forsake me, but will help me.» After this the soldiers began to molest us. Then we received the holy communion from the hand of the glorious father, Abba Michael, the holy patriarch and chosen martyr. Meanwhile we saw flames ascending from Al-Fustât; and we were informed that Marwân had set fire to the storehouses ot provisions and cotton and straw and to the supplies of barley.

So, when the soldiers learnt this, they troubled us much, and cried out upon us with great indignation. And my father Moses laid his arm on mine, and put on an outer garment, and I supported him, and he left all that was in his church, and went out. And there was not one of the bishops or ecclesiastics with the patriarch save me alone and one reader of the church of Saint Macarius, named James, a native of Bilbais.

Now Marwân had commanded that the trumpet should be sounded at Misr, and a proclamation made during three days, saying : «If after three |168 days I find man or beast remaining in Misr, I will put that man or that beast to death, for I will set fire to the whole city of Al-Fustât.» So all the people passed over to Al-Gizah and the Island and other parts, escaping

in the boats; even the carefully guarded girls, who had never been out of doors, went away with their families; and the people left all their goods behind. And the caliph caused Misr to be set on fire from the south to the north, until it reached the Great Mosque of the Muslims. And a countless number of men and beasts were drowned in the river, because they could find none to carry them across, when they fled from the fire. For brother fled from brother, and friend from friend; and the blind found none to lead him; and the cripple and the paralytic and the sick and the old man about to die and the aged woman unable to move, ---- all these were burnt in the fire. And people were lying in the streets and lanes and gardens in the district of Al-Gizah like corpses, in consequence of all that they had suffered in their great misery and hunger and thirst. And they found no food on account of the multitude of people; for Marwân had burnt the supplies of provisions in Misr.

So the soldiers went to Kauzârâ, whose name in another copy is |169 Hautharah, and reported our arrival to him; and he commanded a man named Azrak to take charge of us, until he should settle what was to be done. At that time Marwân was informed that his enemies, the Khorassanians, had arrived at Al-Faramâ. So he sent troops in boats to the north to every district, that they might burn all the boats that they found on the river; and this purpose they carried out. And he despatched other troops by land, with orders to burn the cities and villages and vineyards and water-wheels and every thing that they could find. So they marched on till they reached Atrib, which they were minded to burn. And there were there five streams of water running westwards, besides canals flowing from the river called Gehon , which is the River Nile. And Marwân thought that he could remain on the western side of the Nile, while the Khorassanians were on the eastern bank, and that, when they found the country laid waste, they would retire, because it was empty of men and beasts and provisions and stores, and that they would not find in the land anything to repay their trouble, nor boats by which they might cross over to him, and so that they would not remain there, but would turn upon their heels. But afterwards he learnt that his enemies were approaching near, and that there were fords in the river by which they might reach him.

And when this was made known to him, he sent a messenger to bring back those whom he had despatched to Atrib; and therefore they did not burn that town, because they returned speedily to |170 him. And on the 18th of Abîb, in the year 470 of the Martyrs, Marwân burnt a fort at Misr on that night. For he crossed in the boats, he and all his army, and encamped on the bank of the river until he had burnt the fort. But he did not burn the boats which were with him on the western bank. And when the soldiers came to him every day, he said to them : «Take care of the boats.» And wherever he marched he took us about with him, we being in great distress through the multitude of people and beasts, and the crowd and throng.

And at sunset, on the 18th of Abîb, the Khorassanians reached Misr, and he beheld them from the western bank; and he commanded his followers to assemble that night. The Khorassanians marched into Misr next day, heaping foul insults upon Marwân and his sons. These strangers formed a vast host, and they pitched their tents to the north of Al-Fustât,

at a place called the Stable; and their camp extended from that spot to the mountains. Thus their vanguard were on the bank of the Nile, while their rearguard reached from Al-Faramâ to Gaza; for these who had arrived at Misr were their scouts.

When Marwân encamped for a time during the night of the 20th of Abîb, being then on the march, he ordered that we should be brought before him; for he was filled with anger and wrath against us on account of what |171 Hautharah had told him of us. How great were the grief and the anxiety which settled upon us at that hour! When I think upon what took place, I fear and tremble for those who would not weep if they beheld what happened to us, nor grieve for what we underwent. For the words of David the Prophet, in the 37th Psalm, were fulfilled upon us, where he says : «My acquaintances stood far from me.» All the disciples that had been around us fled with the others, and none remained with us save the priest Mennas, archpriest of the church of Saint Sergius, and the hegumen Theodore, who was afterwards counted worthy to be made a bishop, and the deacon who was the patriarch's secretary, because he had been at Misr. These had left their wives and children and goods, and followed us, saying : «We will die with you.» So, when the Father Michael saw the goodness of their thoughts, he blessed them, and bade them return and not follow us, but this they would not do; and they continued to march with us. And I was wearing the habit of the monks, although unworthy. And my Father Moses, the bishop, took the father's left arm, and I took his right arm.

And when we arrived at Marwân's tent, the swordsman came out to us, and he was very terrible; and he conducted us within by order of the prince. So when Marwân beheld us, he said : «Which of you is the patriarch?» |172 When he was told which was he, he commanded that they should bring the patriarch forward before him; and they delivered my father to soldiers who were devourers of men's flesh; but they set us apart on one side. Then the father, Abba Moses, was thrown upon his knees, and they lifted up his feet, and beat him with brazen clubs upon his sides and neck, saying to him : «Give us money, and we will release thee.» But he answered not a word, for he knew not what they said to him, except what I understood of their words, and repeated to him word by word. And he was prostrate on the ground, thanking God and praying him to make him worthy to suffer for the Church of God. And the officer did not address a single syllable to me, for they considered my dress disgraceful. Now the holy father, Abba Michael, the patriarch, was standing with his face towards Marwân, whose eyes were turned towards Misr, where he saw his enemies; while the Khorassanians were looking in his direction, and all the people of Misr on the bank of the Nile were insulting Marwân, as we said before.

And behold, one of the Khorassanians shot an arrow towards the western bank, while we were looking at him. And those that were left of the Christians at Misr said to the Khorassanians : «There is our father, the patriarch, standing before Marwân, the misbeliever; and we know not what he will do with him.» The Bashmurites also had met the Khorassanians at Al-Faramâ and said to them : «Marwân has seized our patriarch, with intent to kill |173 him, because we fought against the prince, and slew his soldiers before you came.»

Meanwhile Hautharah, the misbeliever, was with Marwân, and was saying to him : «This patriarch said : Be of good courage, for God will take away the government from Marwân, and deliver it to his enemies.» And many words like this were uttered by him. So when Marwân heard these accusations, his interpreter said to the father patriarch : «Art thou the patriarch of Alexandria?» For that was Marwân's question. Abba Michael answered : «Yea, I am thy servant.» And I heard him say this, because I was near him. So Marwân said to him : «Tell me, art thou the chief of the enemies of our religion?» Then the holy patriarch answered and said : «I am not the chief of wicked men, but of good men; and my people do not work evil, but they have been ruined by troubles, so that they have even been forced to offer their children for sale.» After that, I did not hear another word from his mouth.

Then Marwân commanded the officials who were holding him to stretch forth their hands to him forthwith, and pull out the hair of his beard from his cheeks; and they cast his hair into the river, and I saw it with my own eyes floating on the water. Now his beard had been full and handsome, flowing over his breast like the beard of Jacob Israel. And the Khorassanians on the eastern bank were observing what Marwân did to the patriarch; and if they had found means of crossing over |174 to Marwân, they would have killed him because of the tyranny and hardness of heart which they saw in him; but they could not find any boats at all in which to cross. The river, however, did not rise at all before the 1st of Misri; and the western branch had sunk so low as to be without water; and in the other branch, namely the eastern, there were a few places that could be forded, but the Khorassanians did not know them; and Marwân guarded them because he knew of them; and no boat from the western bank approached Misr.

The sixth hour passed that day while the father patriarch was standing before Marwân beardless with bare cheeks. And while my father Moses was all the time undergoing the torments which we have mentioned before, the Lord opened the eyes of his heart, and he beheld the two martyrs, Sergius and Bacchus, with the grace of God surrounding them, in the likeness of two horsemen of the army of the prince; and they crossed the river, riding their horses, while no man saw them but he alone, until they stood opposite to Marwân, and said to him : «Why dost thou sit here paralysed, when thine enemies have crossed over to the west?» But no man beheld those two, except my father, the bishop Abba Moses, and Marwân, and no other. For the father patriarch was still in the hands of the officials, and they were tormenting him. Then the two holy martyrs disappeared. |175

And Marwân forthwith broke up his camp, and commanded the troops to follow him, ordering that we should be kept till the morrow. Thus we remained the rest of that day on the bank of the river, exposed to the sun, in consequence of the command which the caliph had given to the soldiers, until I thought that my father would not live till sunset, after the severe torment which they had inflicted upon him. Then, on the morrow early, we were visited by bishops, and monks from Wadî Habîb, who had come to see what had been done to us; and subsequently they remained with us. Then Marwân appeared, for he was riding; and he took his seat, and commanded that we should be brought before him early in the morning.

So when the sun rose he summoned a swordsman, and sent for our father, Abba Michael, alone, that the officer might bring him into his presence. Accordingly the swordsman took his hand and led him in, saying to us : «Stand here till he calls you». But my father, Abba Moses, cried out, saymg : «As the Lord lives, I will never be separated from my father, but will follow him whithersoever they take him!» Then I also hastened with them, in order to find out what would become of them.

But, when the swordsman saw me, he said : «The prince ordered that the patriarch alone should enter.» The bishop said to him : «I have told thee that I cannot |176 be separated at all from my father, for I only came here for his sake; therefore do whatever thou desirest, but I will never be parted from him.» Then the swordsman was angry and said to him in fury : «It is not lawful to disobey the prince; yet thou wilt not hearken». Now he had in his hand a brazen club, which weighed twenty pounds, and he raised it to strike my father upon the head; and he offered his head to him. But when he was about to strike him, a body of his companions, who were in attendance, cried out upon him, and would not let him strike. And all the soldiers said in their language and speech : «Verily what an excellent servant this bishop is to his master!» Then there came a messenger saying : «Bring them all in, for the prince summons them.» So we all entered; and found Marwân sitting on the bank of the river. Then first the blessed father went forward alone, as Marwân ordered; and the prince made him stand before him all that day for about ten hours, confronting him ; but the patriarch's heart was with Christ, while his hands were stretched out, and his very limbs seemed to pray;

and he made the sign of the cross over his face, without fear of the prince who hated the sign of the cross. And the caliph did not address a single word to him; and there were around him many drawn swords and weapons of war. |177

As for us, Marwân commanded his men to set us on his left hand in a place apart; and again he ordered that we should be brought forward and delivered to certain soldiers, other than those who had conducted us from Alexandria; so they handed us over to men who were like wild beasts. And he bade one of his companions take charge of us, namely Yazîd, a leader of certain men with him, who was braver than any other of his followers. Our number on that day was ten, besides the father patriarch, Abba Michael; and Yazîd put with each one of us three soldiers, who oppressed us sorely. Then, when the sun was burning, that officer prepared for us various instruments of torture; for they had not agreed as to what kind of death they should make us suffer; upon which I and my father Moses begged the father patriarch to say over us the Prayer of Absolution, according to the canon of the church; and so he did. Afterwards we prayed one for another, and the younger of us said to the elder : «If thou shalt find mercy with Christ, remember me.» And we turned our faces to the East and prayed, while the people were looking at us from the eastern bank, and also on the western side, and many of the Muslims wept for us; and Marwân's eldest son, named Abd Allah, was weeping for us also, together with the people.

Then Marwân lifted up his eyes towards the eastern bank, and saw |178 the Khorassanians in great numbers; and he was dismayed for this and said : «How shall I fight them?» For he knew not what to do. Now Abd ar-Rahîm, the misbeliever whom we mentioned before, had discovered a mixture with which he smeared the boats, so that fire could not injure them. Therefore Marwân caused the boats to be thus anointed, and embarked on each boat eighty men, and bade them fight the people; so they threw fire over them, and burnt all the boats that they found. But a boat which was approaching the eastern bank, where stood Sâlih and Abu Aun and their companions, was upset with its occupants, and all were drowned except one man; and the people of Misr picked up the corpses, and took what was on them and the ammunition and money that they had. And the living, who were not drowned, they took as prisoners, and bound them together two and two, with iron chains round their necks, and dragged them to land and delivered them to the Khorassanians. Now the Khorassanians had brought many boats with them to Misr.

And when the tenth hour of that day had passed, Marwân ordered Yazîd, in whose charge we were, to take us to the north of the Island of An-Nuzahât. So we prayed upon the edge of the river, in the enclosure Then, when they took us away, they hurried us along in great wrath. But |179 the Lord beheld our secret thoughts and our faith, and he put into the heart of Abd Allah, the elder son of Marwân, the wish to intercede with his father, Marwân, weeping with copious tears; for he begged his father to let us go, saying : «Behold, thou seest our enemies surrounding us; while we are preparing, if things go hard with us, to escape to the land of the Blacks, who are, as we have been told, the spiritual children of this old man; so that, if thou slayest him, they will not welcome us, but they also will rise up against us and slay us.» When Marwân had heard these words of his son, we were taken back to prison. Now there were in that place four prisons. So, when they brought us into the prison, they made us fast with wood and iron, and we were in great distress. And the first to be fettered with iron was the holy father and patriarch; and after him the bishop, Abba Moses, and I, his son John, the poor sinner and deacon, upon whom he had laid his holy hand without any merit of mine.

Then followed the bishop of Tunbuda, Abba Mennas, the patriarch's secretary, and Abba Zacharias, bishop of Atrib, and his spiritual son, the bishop of Busîr, whose name was Peter, and who had recently taken possession of his see, and the deacon George, the son of the spiritual father who received the see of Al-Basrât, and Athanasius, archpriest of the church of Saint Macarius, and Abba |180 James, who was also counted worthy of the bishopric of Sanjâr, and his spiritual brother, the son of the Father Peter of Samannûd. And they fastened to the feet of each one of us eleven a mass of iron, exceedingly heavy, weighing half a Khunjûr; and they put us behind three wooden doors without light or air or means of rest, one looking to the east and another to the west; and the narrow space in which we were oppressed us more than the iron, so that we almost died from crowding, and the gaolers were pitiless; for that misbelieving prince, Marwân, had given orders that we should be closely confined. And our father's sadness on our account was greater than his care for himself; but he encouraged us with the word of God and the holy canons of our ancient fathers. So not

one of us hid anything from the others, but we were all one soul, as Paul says , awaiting the end; and we prayed God to send it quickly, that we might lay down our lives for the people, rather than that one of them should perish.

When the father discoursed to us, he spoke a spiritual language like the music of a harp, while the breath of life came forth from his mouth with spiritual praises; and he persevered in fasting and in prayer day and night.

As for my father Moses, in the first hour after they brought us into the prison and put us in fetters he prophesied to us, saying : «They will not |181 slay us this time; yet we shall not be released from the prison as long as Marwân is alive.» And it was as he said. And when we wished to break our fast, a man named Ibn Kustus sent to us provisions for breakfast; but we had no room to eat, and could not turn to the right or left on account of the narrow space. And there was a great dearth in the district of Al-Gizah through the multitude of people; for wheat was not to be found at all, nor barley, after a waibah had been sold at a high price; but in spite of the distress salt was sold at the usual rate. Then Marwân, after these troubles which he had brought upon every place, ordered his followers to slay and take prisoners and pillage; and they obeyed him. And he sent to Upper Egypt, and slew all the Christians there; the leader of that business being a man named Marwân, son of Abd al-Azîz the founder of Hulwân. And they laid waste the country from Memphis to the city of Theodosia.

But when the Lord desired to take vengeance upon them, he endured them no longer, after the crimes which they had committed in corrupting and violating women, and polluting many of the virgins. Accordingly there came some men who knew the fords of the river, and made them known to the Khorassanians, whom they guided thither, thus conducting them across to the western bank. And the Khorassanians divided their army |182 into four parts : one part with a man named Sâlih, told off to guard Misr; and one with a man named Abu 'l-Hakam, who was in high favour with the prince; and one in the lower parts of Shatnûf and its neighbourhood, to prevent anyone from crossing the river; and one with Abu Aun, who encamped beside a ford, where the water was low. Then Marwân despatched Hautharah and his men to take up their position opposite to the Khoras-sanians, intending to prevent their crossing. But Marwân's boats were seized by the Khorassanians of the black-robed party, who had destroyed the church of the Martyr Apater. Meanwhile we, in spite of all these events, remained in the prison at Al-Gizah, in bonds and in distress with our companions ; and all men were hindered from enquiring after us by fear lest we should be put to torture; but, whenever a man desired to come to us to receive the blessing of the fathers, he bribed our gaoler heavily.

After that they oppressed us even more cruelly, as they did to Ignatius, the saint and martyr, when they delivered him to the ten lions. So they acted even when our brethren did good to them, for they tormented us yet more. At that time then we remained with the patriarch ten days and ten nights in this fashion; but when the deacon and reader of Bilbais saw our distress he hastened away to the Monastery of Saint Macarius, in Wadî Habîb, and

|183 assembled all the holy fathers and monks; and they began to fast and pray in the church night and day, crying to the Lord Christ to look upon us, and to take away our misery and all that men were suffering by captivity and slaughter and pillage, and 1o put a stop to the lamentations of young and old. So the gracious God heard them, and raised up the Khorassanians to help them : for Abu Aun crossed the river with his army to the western bank; and when Hautharah and his troops, Marwân's followers, saw him, they took to flight. And the Khorassanians pursued and fought them, and did not cease slaughtering them until they reached Wadî Habîb, in answer to the prayers of the saints; for the army of the Khorassanians crossed over the river on the day on which the monks assembled in the church, which was Saturday, the last day of Abîb.

And they slew so many of Marwân's army, that of eight thousand men whom he led out of Misr only four hundred survived and no more.

When Marwân learnt that his enemy's troops had been divided into four parts, he fled two days before they crossed the river, carrying his wives and his goods with him; and thus he escaped secretly. And of the followers of Yazîd three hundred were slain, for he fled from Shatnûf in the direction of Mount Wasîm; and then his own men killed him, and killed his horse that he rode, and went over to the other party, and swore allegiance to them. |184

But the two sons of Marwân were at Al-Gizah when their father fled, and they knew not whither he had gone. For he had sent his younger son to the north of the Island of An-Nuzahât; and he was very wicked like his father. But as for the elder, Abd Allah, our fathers had prayed for him that he might not meet with trials nor troubles because of what he had done for them; and so it was. Now the younger son was fifteen years old; and he fled to An-Nuzahât, accompanied by four hundred horsemen; and he found there a certain oil, called dogs' oil, in marble jars, and he upset it into the river; and after setting fire to An-Nuzahât, he joined his father Marwân. And although he released those that were in the prisons at that place, we were not released, but he wished to burn us in the fire. Then he went into the midst of the boats of the fleet to burn them; and a voice was heard, crying mightily : «Behold, thy enemies are come!» So he and his companions fled quickly., And those who remained at An-Nuzahât of its inhabitants extinguished the fire, and set us free at sunset from the prison, and released us from the irons on our feet. God be witness that some of the Muslims who were on horseback dismounted, and took off the iron from us; and men took women's dresses and put them on, and hid themselves in the storehouses and cellars, through fear of that terrible voice which they had heard. And they took us and led us away to Saint Peter's church at |185 Al-Gizah, while some of the faithful walked with us, it being the night of the first Sunday in Misri.

Now there was no water at all in the canal of Al-Gizah, for it was dried up by God's command; nor did the water rise or stir at all until the day when we crossed over it on our feet. And when the Khorassanians learnt that their enemy had fled, they embarked in the boats that night and crossed to Al-Gizah, taking their horses also on board. So they pursued Marwân. And every man that they met, who was not wearing the black garments, they put to

death. And that night the van of the army, which had crossed with Abu Aun from Shatnûf, came southwards with their drawn swords in their hands, and all wearing iron cuirasses, purposing to fight Marwân and to capture him. And as for us, we felt no inclination to sleep that night. For the Khorassanians stayed three days and three nights, joining their forces at the beginning of Misri, and marching onwards; while we beheld them as one host from the mountains to the river. Then Hautharah begged for a safe-conduct; but they would not accept him, saying : «If thou wilt not deliver to us the enemy of God, Marwân, thou shalt have no safe-conduct from us.» So he departed and took Marwân, and acted deceitfully with him, saying : «Behold, our enemies have drawn near to us. Arise, let us take our women and children and goods, and let us embark |186 secretly in the boats, and descend the river, and escape to the Romans;

for, if we fall into this man's hand, he will destroy us.» Marwân answered: «Ah Hautharah, thou art acting treacherously with thy master!» And thereupon Marwân took his sword, and cut off Hautharah's head and killed him. And none opposed the Khorassanians nor stood before them, after Hautharah was slain. Then they called upon every man who was a Christian to fasten a cross of gold or silver or copper upon his forehead, or upon his garment, and upon the door of his house, and whoever did not do so was slain; but this was no fault of ours. And the Khorassanians also had crosses of gold and silver on their horse's necks. Then the army of which Sâlih was leader overtook Marwân and his son, after pursuing him for a whole day, and, when they met, the fighting did not cease between them from evening till morning, so that many were slain. And they followed him as far as Mount Abbah to the west of Cleopatra, the city founded by Alexander the Macedonian, the place concerning which the prophecy was uttered by the holy old hermit, whom Marwân burnt alive in the fire, and who told him, before he burnt him, that he would be killed at that place. And with Marwân was killed also Rayân, son of Abd al-Azîz; but the two sons of Marwân |187 escaped. And the Khorassanians took possession of Hulwân and all that was therein, and slew the women, and seized all the money of Egypt that was at Hulwân.

And the Persians, Marwân's followers, were slain with the sword; and the enemy seized all that belonged to them, and carried it away in the prince's boats.

And now the Nile began to rise, although it had been sinking till the Khorassanians had crossed over to the bank of Al-Gizah, and had destroyed Marwân, After that it increased again, from the first day of Misri, and rose every day about a cubit, till finally it reached eighteen cubits that year, for which reason men said that the hand of God was with the Khorassanians. Whenever the latter found men bearing the sign of the cross, they lightened their taxes, and behaved kindly to them, and did good to them, in whatever part of the country they might be.

But they impaled Marwân head downwards, after they had killed him. For they took him prisoner at a place called Dâwatun, and we were witnesses of this event; and they cut off the head of his vizier. And when those princes, the leaders of the Khorassanians, inquired after us, we went to them; and they set the holy father and martyr, Abba Michael, free,

and honoured him greatly. And his beard had grown again and was more |188 comely than before, by the power of the Lord Christ; and we and all who had witnessed these occurrences glorified God. And the father, Abba Michael said : «Verily I saw a personage while I was in prison, who touched my face with his hand, and my beard grew again handsomer than it had been before.» When the father, Abba Michael, requested of the governor to protect the property of the churches in all the provinces, he complied with his request. And as for the Bashmurites, he made them free of taxation, and gave them other revenues as a gift. Now Marwân had burnt all the books and accounts of the Divâns, so that they did not know the amount of the revenues, whether paid in cash or in kind. In those days great events took place in Egypt; but Sâlih departed with his army to Palestine.

When we were set free, each one of us departed to his own place. And Abu Aun was made governor of Egypt. And a short time afterwards there came to Egypt two men, officials of the divans, sent by the prince. They were Muslims, and one of them was named Atâ, son of Shurahbil, and the other Safi; and they were far from the knowledge of God. And Abu Aun laid before them all the accounts of Egypt, and brought the country back into the state in which it had been under Marwân. Although they were driven away from the palace, the prince sent them back; and they imposed two fresh |189 duties upon Lower Egypt, and one upon Upper Egypt. This was in the second year of security and prosperous government. And they instructed the governor, and taught him how to cause great trouble, through their hatred of us, the Christians, and their love of money; for authority was given to them to do what they would. Now of the revenue of Egypt, after deducting the soldiers' pay, and the expenses of the government offices, and what was needed to carry on the administration, what remained over and was carried to the Public Treasury altogether every year amounted to two hundred thousand dinars , apart from the necessary outlay and expenses and what we have already mentioned. And in the third year of the rule of the Khorassanians they doubled the taxes, and exacted them from the Christians, and would not fulfil their promises to them.

For the two secretaries aforesaid find the Khorassanians forgot that it was God who had given them the government, and neglected the holy Cross which had gained them the victory. And Abd Allah, the prince, sent letters over the whole of his empire, declaring that every one who would adopt his religion, and pray according to his prayer, should be exempted from the poll-tax. So in consequence of the cruel extortions and burdens imposed upon them, many of the rich and poor denied the faith of Christ, and followed Abd Allah. Then the father patriarch, |190 Abba Michael, went to Abu Aun, the governor, and addressed him with reference to the troubles which had been caused in Egypt, instead of the good administration which he had purposed; and he answered : «The prince gave those orders because wicked men bore witness to him, saying : If the people of Egypt find rest for one year, they will conspire against thee, and make war upon thee, as the Bashmurites made war upon Marwân.» Then Abba Michael prayed the governor to relieve the churches of Alexandria by lightening the taxes on the land which is cultivated for them only; so Abu Aun gave orders to those two secretaries, telling them to do what the patriarch desired; yet

they would not obey him, but began to incline his heart to evil. So the father patriarch, and my father, Abba Moses, with him, and I, the mean one, remained for more than a month attending at the palace and interviewing those miscreants.

And there was there an old Ishmaelite, who beheld us daily at this business; and he feared God. And he related a story to our father, Abba Michael, saying : «As we, the Muslims who serve God, have grown poor, so I know that you also will be like us.» The father said to him : «Thou speakest truly; but I desire a fuller explanation of the meaning of thy speech.» So the old man replied :

«In my youth, my parents entrusted me to two friends, Ishmaelite merchants, that I might carry goods with them to Africa, to sell them there. |191 When we had journeyed as far as the Five Cities, with our camels laden with the rarities of Egypt and the East, we halted by a lake that was very deep. And each one of us had tied to his belt a purse, containing four hundred dinars. And in consequence of the fatigue of the journey and the heat, one of us stripped off his clothes, that he might go down into the water and bathe. So he threw his belt to his comrade, that he might keep it until he came up from the water; but it slipped from his friend's hand into the water unnoticed by anyone else. The man who had dropped it stripped himself, and went down to seek it, but could not find it. So when he came up again, he gave his comrade his own girdle, instead of that which was lost, without telling him that it was lost. And we journeyed onward into Africa, where we sold our merchandise, and bought other wares suitable for Egypt. Then the elder of my companions said to the younger : Give me the four hundred dinars which thou hast, that I may buy merchandise with them. But he answered : What we have bought is enough for us this time. And though the other insisted, he did not tell him what had happened.

So the other bought certain goods with the four hundred dinars which he had. When we returned to the lake, the same thing happened as before; for the elder, to whom the lost money belonged, stripped himself and went down to bathe. And he found his belt, which had been lost; and when he looked at it, he recognised it as his own. So he said to his friend : |192 Tell me what thou hast done. Then his friend made known to him what had happened, and how he had dropped the girdle. But the other did not tell him that he had found it, until they arrived at Misr, and sold their wares. Then the elder gave to the younger the interest of the four hundred dinars as well as the principal, saying to him : God gives thee this money of thine, and thou must also have the interest of it. When he had done this, his comrade discussed with him what had taken place between them; and the thing became known to the governor, and all men marvelled thereat. And both of them took some of their money, and gave it as alms to the poor; and after that they devoted themselves entirely to religion, and I imitated them; and not one of us either sells or buys any more. But at the present day, O holy man, behold, thou seest how all men love injustice, and have set evil as a crown upon their heads;

and thou art a witness to this, and knowest that it is true.»

When he had related this tale to us, we departed to our own places. And God did not endure the Khorassanians, but raised up wars against them from every side. First there was Abd ar-Rahman, son of Habîb, brother of Al-Aswâd before mentioned, who seized Africa. For Abd Allah, the prince, sent troops to Africa in order to take it, in the fourth year of his |193 reign; and in the year 470 of the Martyrs he marched from Egypt at the beginning of the month of Abîb. Yet his army did not dare to enter Africa, but remained in the desert, where most of them perished with thirst. And in that year God destroyed Abd Allah, and his son sat upon the throne instead of him. And great fighting took place in Egypt between Sâlih and his brother, who now began to govern. Then the prince sent Sâlih into Egypt to seek his troops, and rescue them from the hand of his brother. Then he brought back the army which he had sent into Africa, and entered Misr on the 19th of Babah. And he marched to Palestine, that they might fight Sâlih's brother. And Abu Aun was there also; and many of his soldiers were killed. And the war continued between them without interruption, for God requited them for the evil which they had done in the land Egypt;

and they destroyed one another without the interference of a stranger, and did not cease fighting until Sâlih went away to the sovereign prince in Al-Irak, and Abu Aun returned to Egypt, and Sâlih's brother fled, and did not appear again, after they had destroyed the troops between them. At that time Abba John, patriarch of Antioch, went to his rest, after he had continued in reconciliation with the bishops for three years. And God hindered the water from rising while Abu Aun was in Egypt; for its |194 highest level was below fourteen cubits, where it stopped, whereas the height required by the government for its revenue was sixteen cubits. But God only held back the water on account of those two secretaries, who were like Antichrist in their deeds. And this check to the water took place by God's will, that he might show his wonders which he manifests at all times, and prove the truth of the Christian religion. The bishops had come from their sees to the patriarch, that they might meet together in his presence at the Feast of the Cross, according to their custom of assembling before him and forming a synod twice in the year. So the bishop of Misr and the others went to him. Now God had revealed this matter to my father the bishop, Abba Moses. And orders were given that none should go that year to Alexandria for the synod according to custom. So the bishops assembled at Misr before the patriarch.

And on the 17th of Tût, the day of the Feast of the glorious Cross, the clergy of Al-Gizah and An-Nuzahât assembled with most of the people of Al-Fustât, and the old and the young of the laity : and they bore the gospels, and censers with incense. And we entered into the great church, the Catholicon, named after Saint Peter, the foundations of which were laid in the river. But the church could not contain the people through their multitude, so that they stood in the fields and places |195 around. And the patriarch lifted up the cross; while beside him stood Abba Mennas, bishop of Memphis, bearing the holy gospel. And he led us all forth, carrying crosses and books of the gospels; and we stopped upon the bank of the river, it being before sunrise. And the father patriarch prayed, and Abba Mennas, the bishop, prayed; and the people did not cease to cry Kyrie eleison until the third hour of the day, so that multitudes of the Jews and Muslims and others marvelled at our cries to God,

the Glorious and Exalted. And he heard us, praised is his glorious name! For the river rose and increased by one cubit; and all glorified and gave thanks to God. And when the news reached Abu Aun, he marvelled and feared, he and all his troops. And by God's inspiration he said to his soldiers and to the people of Misr : «We desire to know which of the religions is the true one».

So he gave orders that the Muslims dwelling at Misr should assemble, and go forth to the mountain to the east of Misr. Therefore they gathered together, small and great, old and young, slaves and freemen; and not one of the people of his faith and religion was left; and the multitude were assembling from midnight till the. fourth hour of the day. And they prayed and offered supplications to God, saying thus : «O God, the Only One, who hast no fellow, O Creator of heaven and earth, thou knowest that we associate no other with thee, and worship none besides thee, and that we say not, as the Christians do, that thou hast a Son, or that thou wast |196 born, but we confess thee to be One, and worship thee in Unity. We desire this day to see thy wonders, which thou dost work, that we may know and prove that there is no religion like ours, which we inherit from our fathers; and we pray thee to work a miracle for us, as thou didst yesterday for the Christians, who are our enemies and the enemies of our creed, for they set beside thee another God, begotten by thee from the beginning, whom they call Christ born of Mary, saying that he is thy Son, with the Holy Ghost, and that thou art the Third of them, with many such doctrines.

We pray thee to give us a sign and miracle in this water.» And while they were thus employed, behold, one of the men who measure the water ran up and said to them : «The water has sunk just as much as it rose yesterday.» Then great sadness came upon them, and the governor knew not what to say; and the people went away to their own places in great grief. Then Abu Aun ordered that the people of Misr should be tried, and bad the crier proclaim that the Muslims were to go out to the mountain to pray. And on the morrow they all issued forth. And the Jews and the Samaritans went out the second day; but the water neither rose nor sank, but remained as it was. So Abu Aun, the governor, remained in sadness and without faith. But he said : «So that I may see the end of the matter»; and he remained in perplexity, saying : «By the prayers of the Christians the water rose, and at our prayers it sank.» Then he ordered on the third |197 day that no one at all should go out, and that none should ascend to the mountain nor pray. And the water did not rise during the three days at all. After that he gave orders to bring the Christians who were at Al-Fustât, and certain tribes whose names we do not remember; and he commanded Abba Moses to pray, him and his people.

So they recited the prayers, and gave thanks to God till the sixth hour of the day, and went down and walked round Misr, and came to the bank of the river, and prayed for the rest of the day. And that night the river rose three cubits, so that altogether it completed seventeen cubits. Then all the people rejoiced greatly, and thanked God and glorified his name.

And as for Abu Aun, for this reason he increased his benefits towards the Christians and their churches, and lightened their taxes. And from that day the Father Patriarch and the

bishops, with those who were baptized and the whole Church, lived in security and peace, in great joy and gladness, in the land of Egypt and the Five Cities and all the places under the see of the evangelist, Saint Mark, because of the miracles of the Church which the governor beheld, and her mighty works. And the governor said that the Christians were of one heart, living in agreement together. For the conduct of the fathers in that generation resembled the works of the spiritual |198 angels; for one cured diseases, and another showed forth wonders, and another expounded the scriptures and taught and exhorted, and another exercised his body in works and labours; and all the laity were filled with admiration of them, and sought their blessing. And the father, Abba Michael, for this cause was happy in his bishops and all his flock, and used to go round among them, and enquire into all their circumstances with care, and exhort them with his life-giving words, like the apostles and fathers at the beginning, and like the dwellers in the deserts and caves, encouraging them and teaching them how to fight the Satanic spirits. And to the monks of the monasteries he taught humility and mutual love; and the faithful laity he led to that which God approves, and to those of little faith he taught the doctrines of the gospel, and those who were engaged in disputes he conciliated together, and calmed their malice, and appeased their enmity by his instructions in the Holy Scriptures.

But if we did not aim at abridgment, books would be insufficient to contain the deeds of this holy father, Abba Michael. Now there were two parties of heretics, the followers of Meletius, who lived in ancient times, and of Julian. So the father sent messengers to them, and wrote to them; but they would not answer him. Then he went himself to visit them, but could not bring them back to a right heart. For they denied that they were heretics, and they remained dissidents, some of them in the monasteries and some in |199 the deserts. So he raised his hands to heaven, and said : «If these are they who have denied thee and done evil deeds, show forth a sign speedily without delay, so that all may see them, and glorify thy name.» Accordingly, after a short time, the Lord destroyed them, and caused them to disappear, as he destroyed Sodom. And at the monastery wherein there were three thousand persons, there no longer remained any save ten souls, who were believers and did not walk in their path. And 1, the mean one, addressed them, and visited them, when the wild beasts had dwelt in their habitations through the prayers of the holy father, Abba Michael, during the governorship of Abd Allah. And if anyone, ignorant of the history, asks : «What was the sin of those men, for which they perished?» I will answer you with God's help.

In the days when Dionysius the Wise was patriarch of Alexandria, there appeared the misbeliever, Paul of Samosata, who was patriarch of Antioch, and who angered God by his foul deeds. So, when Dionysius heard of him, he wrote to the pious and faithful princes, to inform them of the news that had reached him concerning Paul the heretic. Therefore they drove him away, and none knew how he escaped. And anyone who desires to know |200 of his foul deeds will find an account of them in the epistle of Athanasius the Apostolic, which he wrote concerning them, and then he will understand and know that matter. And when Abba Moses was first ordained there were many monasteries in his diocese of Wasîm, belong-

ing to those followers of Meletius, in which they dwelt. So he banished them all. But some of them had received the habit from his hand, when they put it on, and became united to us; and for this reason there was friendship between me and them, during the time when I was a layman. So when they stripped off them the spiritual habit, received from my father's hand, there was no longer any affection between me and any of them. And I questioned him about their former deeds, when he was calling them sorcerers and the children of Satan;

and he answered me : «I will tell thee of another thing done by those men, who were not worthy to enter among the people of God nor into his kingdom, namely, that they bewitched children, and led them out into the desert, and bound them where none could see them, and sat down near them to guard them; and if they complained of thirst, they gave them nothing to drink; and when their thirst became severe, they poured water over their heads and bodies; and when one of them was near death, and his eyes started out of his head, and his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, they cut off his head with a knife before he died, so that Satan might speak through those heads without falsehood, and they might |201 lead men astray with their devilish and shameful deeds». Now there was a holy priest in our company, living in the Cell at Wasîm; and on Friday, during the Fast, while I was with him in the Cell, but Abba Moses was seeing no man, since he was employing himself in prayer and self-discipline, except on Saturdays and Sundays, then that priest saw a great dragon in his cell. Therefore he made a cross of silver, and placed it on the spot where he had seen it; and on the morrow he found the dragon dead beneath the cross.

Is there then any power greater than the power of those who worship God with a pure and honest intention and a firm faith? And there was in those days a great dearth, and so a man came to An-Nuzahât to ask alms, and stole something thence. And another man saw mm, who was a believer; and he wished to reprimand him, so that he might repent of the theft, but was prevented from doing so by his kindness and charitable thoughts. Afterwards that man went again, and stole some corn from his neighbours, and buried it, that he might take and eat it. Then the owner of the corn visited my father Moses, who read to him from the Scriptures, and charged him not to reward evil with evil, but to recompense evil with good. Accordingly he did so, and followed his advice, and therefore God increased his wealth until all who knew him marvelled at him. |202

I have mentioned to you, my brethren, the fate of the accursed people of Palestine, that you might hold yourselves aloof from them. Now I desire to relate another miracle, shown forth by the Father Epimachus, the bishop. One day he was teaching his people in the city of Al-Faramâ, and exhorting them to avoid heretics, and never to associate with them in anything. And behold, a priest of the Chalcedonians appeared before him to tempt him with guile; and the bishop delivered a long discourse, at the end of which the priest said to him : «I believe in thy creed and confess it.» But the bishop Epimachus took holy oil from the body of the holy Severus, the patriarch, and anointed the face of the heretical priest, saying to him : «If thou mockest the Lord, let his power appear in thee!» And immediately a spirit of an unclean devil leapt upon him, and threw him down, and choked and tormented him,

so that he foamed at the mouth; and it did not cease to possess and torment him till the day of his death.

Then the bishop gave orders that his flock should never have a stranger as sponsor, but only members of their own family or their parents. And there were there some heretics, who would not obey him; but God requited them speedily, so that every one marvelled at the doctrines of the Lord. And there was a wealthy woman, who took a man who had committed sin with her, |203 and made him godfather to her child. When they returned to their town, while they were on the way, they came to a desert place, and sinful desires were stirred in them according to their custom; so they laid down the child with the garments of baptism upon him, and entered an inn by the way side, and committed their sin; and so the house fell down upon them, and they were killed. And the bishop testified to us that he had beheld those two still together, when the stones were removed from them, and their heads were as they had been, the face of the man and the face of the woman. And many people saw them, and feared. And the news was spread abroad among all men, and the people published it. So the bishop's theology was confirmed among our fathers, and from that day they forbad all men to take a stranger as sponsor, but only their own kinsfolk. And none alter that took a stranger as sponsor. But I in my youth saw many commit sin with their sponsors, during my own lifetime, in consequence of which their lives were cut off and their habitations laid waste.

Now the bishop, Abba John, bishop of Sarsana, used to cast out unclean spirits through the grace given to him for his virginity and asceticism. For he remained monk and bishop all his life, and died in a good old age. So also Abba Cyrus, bishop of Tânah, to whom during his monastic life a wonder was manifested, namely that a heretic deceived him on account of the faith, and took his hand to lead him into the furnace at the baths, but could not |204 induce him, and he escaped from his hand. Then the bishop took his mantle, he being a monk, and threw it into the fire, and it was not burnt.

Now I know that I have made my discourse long, but my only object has been to teach you what took place, that you may understand it. And as for what is said about the deeds of Abba Zacharias, bishop of Atrib, he dwelt from his youth up in the desert, continuing in prayer; and his tears flowed like streams of water, and weeping was sweet to him; and he was assiduons in alms-giving to the anchorites, and everyone loved him; and his spiritual sons walked in his path. So likewise the blessed Stephen, bishop of Shutb, and his fathers who were before him over that see, who were excellent in their lives above the rest of the bishops of Egypt, among whom was the bishop Abba Hesychius, the great Theomantis and confessor, who spoke of divine matters. And to Stephen, who walked in his path, God granted the gift of healing the sick, and knowing what was to happen before it took place; and he showed forth many wonders. Now there was in his diocese a priest, whose wife was pregnant when he died; and she was a pure woman. Yet after his death, her elder sons cast her out, saying that she had conceived by another.

But the bishop said to them : «Leave her alone until she brings forth.» So when she was delivered, he took the babe and baptized it, and carried it on his shoulder in the presence of all the people of his diocese, and bade the babe speak before the people, and say who was its father. And immediately it spoke with its tongue, as if it |205 were a lion's cub, saying : «I am the son of such an one, the priest, by whom my mother conceived me nine days before his death, although none knew of that but God who created me. And my brothers wished to cast my mother out wrongfully.» Then the bishop made the sign of the cross over its lips, and bade it speak no more, until the proper age of speech. And so it was. Like these was the aged Abba Paul, bishop of Akhmim, who had been the second superior of the Monastery of Sinuthius, the saint, the star of the desert. There was a magician, who took a maiden, and turned her into an ass by his wicked arts, in the presence of all who saw her. And she remained with him three years, as she related. And when he took her out into the desert, he made her a woman, that she might serve him, and he might commit sin with her. But when he entered the city, he rode upon her, as if she were an ass.

Then on the 7th of Abîb, the feast of the holy Sinuthius, the excellent prophet, the aged Abba Paul met that man, when she was with him, and took her from him, though none knew of her except the accursed misbelieving magician. And Abba Paul took the magician, and gave him up to the governor, who caused him |206 to be burnt in the fire, after he had been put to death. Then the bishop loosed the woman from the bonds of Satan, and delivered her to the superior of the convent of nuns. For there were among them many women of the laity, living with them.

These then are the fathers whom we saw, and whose words we listened to, and whose glorious deeds cannot be counted. And one of them, Abba Cyrus, who was of Jaujar which is the chief of four sees, had been married in his youth, and lived long with his wife in great devotion and reached the age of a hundred and five years. And those two were two pure virgins, sleeping on one bed for a long time; and their food was barley bread and salt; and all that they had or found they gave in alms to the poor. Then, when they advanced in years, Abba Cyrus gave up his pure wife to the convent of nuns. Another of them was the Father Abba Isaac, bishop over the see of Samannûd, and we know what he endured of torments and fighting with the Barsanuphians, until he brought them back to the faith in the see of Saint Mark the Evangelist.

Now the church of Antioch was widowed and without a patriarch. And a man named Abd Allah Abu Ja'far, who belonged to the family of the first princes, was now reigning, and Abu Muslim was called his uncle. And Abu Aun was in Egypt, and Sâlih with Abd Allah. And the Church was prosperous and at peace in the days of the holy patriarch, Abba Michael, in consequence of the troubles and struggles which he had endured, and some of which we |207 have related, until his ministry was ended and he went to his rest, and departed in peace to the merciful Lord Christ, as we have described at the end of this history. And the church of Antioch remained without a patriarch after the decease of Abba John, on account of the wars and the armies, until the Khorassanians took possession of the land. At the beginning

of their rule, Isaac, bishop of Harran, went to Abd Allah, and petitioned him concerning the patriarchate of Antioch; for Abba John had died, as his two sons informed us, when they came to visit us. They said that Abd Allah was a native of Harran, and bis wife was barren; and she saw in a dream one who prophesied to her : «Seek Isaac, the bishop, that he may pray for thee, and the Lord will give thee a son.» And this woman served and feared God;

and when Abd Allah solicited her to marry him, she made a condition with him that he should marry no other wife besides her, and should take no concubine. For she said to him : «We know that God created us in the beginning male and female, and, if thou wilt not make this compact with me, I will not marry thee.» So he made the agreement with her, and kept it till the day of her death. Therefore they summoned the bishop Abba Isaac to her, on the morning of the next day, and she made known to him what she had seen in her dream. So he appointed a week between her and him, and prayed God to fulfil her request. Then he departed to the monastery in which he had been a monk, and informed the brethren of the matter; so they |208 assembled in the church before the body of the founder of the monastery, and prayed him to intercede with God on her account. And three days afterwards, while they were fasting, the woman saw two men standing near her bed, who resembled Abba Isaac the bishop and the Father of the monastery, saying to her : «Verily God has heard the prayers, and this night thou shalt conceive a male child.» Then they disappeared. So she told this dream to her husband, and they were exceedingly glad. Then she conceived and brought forth a son.

And for this reason they loved the bishop Abba Isaac, until God gave the government of the empire to Abd Allah, and then the prince gave Isaac authority to be patriarch of Antioch and the East, and commanded that whoever should oppose him should be slain with the sword. Afterwards indeed the prince slew two great metropolitans of this country, because they said to Abba Isaac : «Thou art bishop of Harran. How canst thou break the canons, and accept the support of the government, in taking the patriarchal throne by violence. Thou forcest us to excommunicate thee, for the canons decree that all who take advantage of the government shall be excommunicated.» Abba Isaac therefore laid a complaint before the prince, who gave orders that those two metropolitans should be slain; and there was great trouble in that country. Then Abba Isaac received a |209 decree from the prince for Abu Aun, governor of Egypt, in which he said; «Obey all that the patriarch, Abba Isaac, writes to thee, and do it for him». Isaac also wrote a synodical letter in his own name to the blessed Abba Michael, patriarch of the city of Alexandria, and sent it, accompanied by gifts, by two sons of his, a priest and a deacon, who were his scribes, and two of the chiefs of the metropolitans, one of them being metropolitan of Damascus, and the other metropolitan of Emesa, that they might receive an answer for him.

Therein he wrote salutations to the patriarch of Egypt and his bishops, requesting him to exalt his name among them according to custom and for the sake of unity. He also wrote a letter from himself to Abu Aun, the governor, asking that, if the patriarch refused to comply, he might be sent to Abd Allah, the prince. When the letters reached Abu Aun, he sent to

Alexandria and summoned Abba Michael, the patriarch, to Misr by himself; and when the letters and the decree were read to him, he answered, saying : «Do not force me to this, until I have assembled the bishops, and they have taken counsel upon this matter, according to our canons and laws». Then the governor conceded this to him, and allowed him a delay; and the patriarch took up his residence at Misr, and wrote to the bishops of the north and south and of the farther and nearer parts of Upper Egypt, bidding them all assemble to him, and look into this affair, and write him an answer, When they arrived, |210 they answered, saying to the patriarch : «He is thy equal, Father, and thy partner in the ministry; therefore do what seems good to thee with him; for, as for us, we have nothing to do with this matter.» And there was great trouble among them. And there was with him Abba Theodore, the second bishop of Misr of that name, who had been hegumen of Al-Fustât, and priest of the church of Saint Sergius :

he and my father Abba Moses, bishop of Wasîm, alone. So they sent to me, the sinner, because they knew that I was one of their members, as it is written , not by my knowledge, but by spiritual love. So I went to them as a son, after a month, while they were holding converse with the envoys, in order to seek for answers, and for the sake of the decree of confirmation, that is say, the systatic letter. Now these envoys from the east were men in whom were found religion and charity. So when they saw me, I was wearing the habit of monks, though my conduct was far from that which a monk's ought to be, and they pointed to my fathers, saying : «Art thou here present alone with us, because thou art acting as deputy for thy brethren?» Then when they beheld me sitting with the bishops, and arguing with them in the discussion, they marvelled and said : «We never saw a monk argue with the patriarch, like this man». And the metropolitans said : «His tongue is like a sword, and cannot be opposed.» Then my fathers said to them : «He is in the position of a bishop.» So |211 they marvelled.

Then one of the metropolitans said to me : «How many children hast thou in thy diocese and province?» I answered : «I have ten villages in each of which are ten adults, so that they produce every year about fifty human beings.» Then they said : «In truth we see thee worn and weak in body.» And one of them said : «I have under my see nine hundred hamlets, besides cities and villages and small dioceses; and our provinces are few.» And much discourse passed between us; for they were men imbued with religion and charity.

And in the second month they assembled in the church of our Lady, and the affair was settled with the patriarch, Abba Michael, who said : «Sword or fire or casting to lions or exile or captivity, ---- these are things that trouble me not; but I will not enter into what is not lawful, nor incur my own excommunication, which I subscribed with my own hand and initiated, to the effect that no bishop shall become patriarch. For the excellent fathers excommunicated him who shall take a degree in the hierarchy by the help or lavour of the government, and the bishops wrote to me from Antioch, in the time of Abba John, the patriarch, that any bishop who should be established on the throne after him should be excommunicated, and I subscribed my name to that declaration in my own handwriting.

How then is it lawful for me to excommunicate myself, and to declare lawful to day what I anathematized yesterday, and to approve to-day what I condemned yesterday, and the holy fathers condemned before me?» Then he broke off the |212 discussion. So they proceeded to Abu Aun, the governor, and said to him : «Wilt thou send the patriarch with us to our own country, as the prince commanded?» But Abu Aun did not wish to send the father, because he loved him and the Christians; and he had found favour before God through them, and through God's acceptance of their prayers for him. So he said to the patriarch : «Thou art advanced in years, and the way is very long. Therefore depart and take counsel with thyself for a few days; and if the matter appears easier to thee, well and good; but if not, thou mayest go or not as thou wilt.»

So we went out from his presence. Then the metropolitans and envoys troubled us, and discoursed with the patriarch concerning the accomplishment of the command to journey with them, and would not leave us. So the father patriarch took thought for the journey, being sad at heart, and saying to my father Moses : «Wilt thou accompany me on this difficult road?» So my father Moses prepared to travel with him, besides Abba Theodore, bishop of Misr; and so also did I, John, the sinner. But when we were ready to start, the news that night arrived at Misr that Isaac, the bishop, who had usurped the throne of Antioch by the help of the government, had died at Antioch, and the see had been occupied by a man named Athanasius, who took his seat that very day before sunset, but died himself also the third day, and both were buried. When the metropolitans |213 and their clerical companions heard this news, they fled, and we knew not how they departed, only that we never beheld them again after that day.

Now I will tell you what was told us concerning this Athanasius. He was one of the chief bishops and a metropolitan, and exercised jurisdiction from the boundary of Harran inwards; and his province was very extensive, so that he used to travel over mountains and rocks and sharp stones on foot, wearing iron sandals, that he might go round every district. And they told us that he was very strong, tall in stature, stout in body; and the privilege had been granted him in synod to ordain the bishops, on account of the distance of the province from Antioch. But as soon as he usurped the patriarchal throne, he died. And there came to us a Chalcedonian, named George, who was a good man; and he entered with us into the orthodox faith. So the choice of the synod fell upon him, and they made him patriarch of Antioch. But, a little time after he had established himself there, he was attacked by a bishop, named Abba David, whose mother had been nurse to Abu Ja'far al-Mansur, prince of the Muslims. This bishop accused him of that which may not be mentioned in the history of the Church ; for our misdeeds and sins require no addition to them. After this the prince arrested this George, and fettered him with iron and wood, and put him in prison in the eighth |214 year of his reign. And from that time to now no synodical letter has reached us, and no such letter has gone from us.

Now I will tell you the strange story of the patriarch of Constantinople, and the prince, and a Chalcedonian, in the year 480 of the Martyrs. There was a man of high rank at

Constantinople, named Philip, whom the patriarch persuaded to attack the prince, saying : «If thou fightest against him, thou wilt conquer him, and take possession of the government.» But when the news reached the prince, he banished that patriarch to a distant town, where he was cast into a narrow dungeon; and another was made patriarch. Now this prince committed deeds not fit to be named, and removed the pictures from the churches. And I have related this to you, only that you may know that these things were general, and did not take place at Antioch alone, but throughout the empire. Thus the two patriarchs of Constantinople and Antioch were imprisoned at the same time.

Now we have related a little of the good fight fought by the Father Patriarch, Abba Michael. And there was none who remained with him in. his distress and weakness to assist him, except the father and bishop, Abba Theodore, bishop of Misr, and Abba Moses, bishop of Wasîm. And when he was advanced in age, he prayed God mercifully to remove him |215 from this world, that he might rest with the saints; and God answered his prayer, and he gave up his soul after all his struggles and the good works that he had done, on the 16th of Barmahât. And he remained upon the evangelical throne, according to the statement which we found in the library in the Monastery of Saint Macarius, twenty-three years and a half; and his holy body was deposited with the bodies of our holy fathers, in glory and honour. May their prayers be with us! Amen.

[Footnotes moved to the end and renumbered] 1. 1. S. John. x. 11. 2. 2. Ps. cxvi, 15 (Sept. cxv. 6). 3. 1. Some mss. have «Theodosius». 4. 1. S. Matth., v. 44; S. Luke. vi. 27, 28, 5. 1. Ps. iv. 3. 6. 1. S. Matth.. x, 28: S. Luke, xii. 4, 5. 7. 1. Cf. Amélineau, Histoire du patriarche copte Isaac, étude critique, texte copte et traduction, in Bulletin de correspondance africaine, Paris, 1890. and Bulletin de l'Institut Egyptien, 2 serie. n° 6 annee 1885. Le Caire. 1886. 8. 1. Gen., L, 24: Exod., xiii. 19. 9. 2. Hebr., v. 4. 10. 3. Ps. lxv. 5 (Sept. lxiv). 11. 1. Ps. xxxiii. 10 (Sept. xxxii). 12. 1. This note was apparently added in the time of Mauhub, son of Mansur, one of the compilers of the history. 13. 2. Michael III. A. D. 881-913. 14. 1. S. Matth., xxv, 21. 23; cf. S. Luke, xix. 17.

15. 1. This note is evidently added by the translator. 16. 1. Exod., xxiii, 5. 17. 1. Apoc, xiii. 17. 18. 1. S. Matth., xx, 26-27; S. Mark, x, 43, 44. 19. 1. Ps. lxxviii, 3 (Sept. lxxvii). 20. 1. I Tim., iii. 15. 21. 1. S. Matth., xxv, 25: cf. S. Luke, xix, 20. 22. 2. Ps. cxiii, 7 (Sept. cxii). 23. 1. S. Matth., vii. 17. 24. 2. Eccl., x, 16. 25. 1. Prov., xxvi, 25. 26. 1. Gen., i, 26. 27. 1. Daniel, vii, 17 ff; viii. 21 ff; x, 20; xi, 2, 5 ff. 28. 1. I Kings, xvii, 43. 29. 1. Deut., xxxii, 30: cf. Lev., xxvi, 8; Jos., xxiii, 10. 30. 1. Jer., i, 6. 31. 1. Gen., ii, 13; Eccli., xxiv, 27 (Vulg. 37; also Jer., ii, 18, Sept.). 32. 1. Ps. xxxviii; 12 (Sept, xxxvii). 33. 1. Rom,, xii. 16; xv, 5; I Cor., i, 10; II Cor., xiii, 11; Phil., ii, 2: iv. 2. etc.

34. 1. The copyists have added another word, making it 200,000,000. 35. 1. Rom., xii, 5; Ephes., iv, 25.

Vol. 1, Part 4 -- Mennas I to Joseph (849 AD) — Introduction

HISTORY OF THE PATRIARCHS OF THE COPTIC CHURCH OF ALEXANDRIA — IV — MENNAS I TO JOSEPH (849)

ARABIC TEXT EDITED, TRANSLATED, AND ANNOTATED BY B. EVETTS A = Paris, arabe 301. B = Brit. Mus., add. 26 100. C = ---- or. 1338. D = Vatican, arabe 620. E = ---- 686. F = Paris, arabe 4773. G = ---- 4772.

Vol. 1, Part 4 -- Mennas I to Joseph (849 AD) — MENNAS I, THE FORTY-SEVENTH PATRIARCH. A.D. 767-774

It is our duty to make enquiries and researches into the whole history of the Church, as our forefathers used to do. For Philo and Justus and Josephus, the Jews, narrated the events that took place at Jerusalem on account of Christ. And those who wrote the history of the orthodox Church were Africanus and Eusebius and Sozomenus; and after them again Mennas the scribe. These men related that which happened to the Church until the time of Dioscorus, the great father, who confessed Christ, and declared the truth, which saved us from the second deluge, and from drowning in the bottomless abyss, and from the six hundred and thirty assembled at Chalcedon, and the miscreant Leo, lord of Rome. An account of such matters has been written for us, in the twelfth part of the History of the Church, by those whose names we have mentioned because |360 they concerned themselves with these things. And so in every generation God has not left us without a record. Thus there was the archdeacon, the spiritual parent of our father, the holy father Abba Cosmas, patriarch of Alexandria, who was his kinsman. And Abba Macarius also, and Macarius the monk. And after them John, the spiritual son of Abba Moses, bishop of Wasîm.

And I, poor sinner, was ordered by my father the monk through a dream which he saw, for he was a holy old man; and he bade me and commanded me to write the history of my blessed fathers, both what I had witnessed and what was reported to me by trustworthy persons. For I was ministering to my father Abba Joseph, and slept at his feet; and he was my spiritual father and was advanced in age. And likewise the father patriarch, Abba Sinuthius, bade me write. So I prayed to the gracious God, and said like David : «O Lord open thou my lips, that I may relate that which happened to the blessed fathers with profit to those that shall read it, and with benefit to those that shall hear it. »

When our blessed father, Abba Michael, fell sick through old age, and went to his rest in glory and honour, his body was carried up |361 to be with the bodies of his fathers at Alexandria,

in the church of Saint Mark the Evangelist, amid proofs of respect and veneration, while all the people wept for him. And they prayed and besought God to raise up, as successor to Abba Michael, a patriarch who should rule as he did. So the assembly met together, with the bishops, to appoint him whom God, who knows the secrets of all hearts and gives grace to those that are worthy of it, should choose. Then mention was made of the priest Mennas, the monk, of the church of Saint Macarius. Mennas was a man who excited general admiration by his sense and conduct. He had been a monk from his youth, and was the spiritual son of the father Abba Michael, and superintendent of his habitation in the monastery of Saint Macarius. So he was promoted to the patriarchal dignity by God's dispensation, amid the joy of all. And God vouchsafed to his Church this faithful shepherd, who had lived with Abba Michael, witnessing his works, because he was with him from his youth.

When Abba Mennas had taken his seat upon the apostolic throne, he imparted the spiritual doctrine, so that everyone marvelled at the mighty grace which was descending upon him, and at his admirable teaching. And the Lord, who had selected him, gave to the Church increase and protection in all her provinces, until men forgot all that had happened to them in the days of Abba Michael, now at rest; and peace continued in the Church. |362

But after a time Satan, the hater of good, raised up a trial for the blessed father. For he spoke by the tongue of a deacon and monk named Peter, in whom he took up his abode, that he might suggest to him great crimes of which Abba Mennas and the bishops under his see might be accused. This deacon and monk was a native of a village called Dasimah, and had been spiritual son to Abba Michael, now at rest, and was brought up in his cell, And the hater of good put into his heart the thought of soliciting a bishopric, though he was not worthy of it, from our father, Abba Mennas. But the father answered him as Peter the Apostle replied to Simon the magician, saying : «He has no lot nor share with us.» Then the deacon would not endure this treatment, but embarked in a ship, and departed to Syria. And when he arrived there, he composed letters, falsely purporting to be addressed by Abba Mennas to the patriarch of the Syrians, Abba George, patriarch of Antioch, and to his bishops and metropolitans, saying in those letters that great trouble and persecution and distress had been caused to the Church in Egypt by the governors. For Peter was skilled in the art of writing letters to patriarchs and metropolitans and bishops. So when the patriarch of Antioch had read the letters, he received Peter with great joy, because he said that he was the envoy of the patriarch's brother, the patriarch of Alexandria.

And the patriarch |363 collected money for Peter, and gave him letters addressed to all the metropolitans and bishops subject to Antioch, bidding them also make collections for him and honour him with much attention; for the patriarch was infatuated with him. As soon as a sufficient sum had been raised to give him the assistance that he needed for his evil deed, and the means of reaching the princes, the hater of good still walked with him. And after some days Peter arrived at the capital city, and began with his heart full of wrath and cunning to write letters, containing false reports of the patriarch Abba Mennas. For Peter said in his report that the prince's treasury was empty of money, in spite of all that he needed

for the expenses of the army and the administration of the government; while in Egypt there was a person, a great patriarch among the Christians, who knew how to practise alchemy for the permutation of substances into gold; and that by such means he had filled his churches with vessels of gold and silver, in which the holy offerings were presented. «But thou, my prince and my lord», he added, «hast the right to possess in thy storehouse these splendid golden vessels, which are in the churches of Egypt, and with which things displeasing to God are done». When this foul sinner had written this report, he waited for a day on which he might find means of laying it before the prince;

and he gave bribes to all the attendants of the prince, in order that they |364 might introduce him. And Satan worked a great wonder for him, as he does for his favourites and followers, like the conjuring of the witch when she raised up the prophet Samuel from the tomb for Saul. Far be Samuel from this imagined likeness! We are only pointing out to you how Satan causes semblances and illusions in all ages.

These events were in the reign of Abû Ja'far Abd Allah, nephew of Abû Muslim, whom we have already mentioned in the eighteenth chapter of the History of the Church. He was the first who took possession of Khorassan. He had married a chaste wife while he was at Harran before he began to reign; and afterwards, when he became caliph, he lived at Damascus. This woman feared God; and she was of high rank in her tribe and nation; and she had made her husband swear, when she was married to him, that he would marry no other wife while she lived, so that she might keep the Law of God. But when he married her, God gave him no child for many years. Afterwards, however, she saw in a dream one who said to her : «Send for Isaac, bishop of Harran, that he may pray for thee; for God will accept his prayers on thy account and give thee a son.» Therefore she obeyed the vision with faith, and caused Abd Allah, her husband, to send and fetch the bishop. And before he arrived, she saw in a second dream a personage, who announced to her that God had heard |365 her petition and would fulfil her desire through the prayers of the bishop Isaac. Then, when he came, he prayed over her, and blessed her. So she conceived and bore two children. And for this cause the bishop stood high in favour with Abd Allah and his wife.

So when Abd Allah began to reign, the father and bishop Isaac begged of him authority over the patriarchate of Antioch and the East; and the prince granted his request. And this was the cause of Isaac's fall, because he broke the canons. But since God would not endure to leave him upon the throne, as the holy gospel says : «Behold the axe is laid at the roots of the trees, therefore every tree that bears not good fruit shall be cut down and cast into the fire», thus it happened with this Isaac; when he acted foolishly and broke the law of God, and took his seat as patriarch by the power of the government, and transgressed the injunctions of his fathers, God cut off his life from the earth, and he died suddenly before the end of the year. And another man, named Athanasius, sat upon the throne by force on the day of Isaac's death; but he also died that very night, as it has been related in the eighteenth chapter of the History.

When the two sons of Abd Allah and of his chaste virtuous wife, before |366 mentioned, had grown up, one of them died. And the prince was exceedingly sad for him, and his mother mourned with all the household; for they were greatly grieved on his account. And the courtiers knew how much his mother loved her son, so that she never ceased to weep for him one single hour by night or by day, while the prince was very sorrowful. Now the death of this young son of the prince had taken place before the arrival of the deacon Peter, unworthy of that name. And the prince went out of the palace one day with his guards, and rode round the city, seeking distraction from his grief for his son according to the custom of men and princes. And he chanced to look aside and see that unworthy Peter, whom Satan transformed in the prince's eyes into the likeness of his son who was dead, so that he seemed to be the very same, in no wise differing from the young man's appearance even in the hair of his head. Therefore the prince, as soon as he perceived Peter, with joy caused him to be summoned, and embraced him, and kissed his mouth and eyes as if he were his son indeed.

And in the excess of his gladness he returned to the palace, and with haste went in to his wife and said to her : «If thou couldst see the living image of thy son, wouldst thou cease from this weeping and sadness?» She answered : «Whence can he come to me?» Then the prince commanded that the deacon in whom Satan dwelt should be brought in to her; and Satan made him in her eyes like the form of her son. So when she saw him, she rose up |367 quickly and went to meet him rejoicing, imagining that he was her son; and more wonderful than this is the fact that Satan removed from her heart the grief that she had felt for her son. Therefore Peter remained with the prince and his wife in the palace some months, while they looked upon his face and were consoled by his presence. And God granted him favour with them, so that the prince said : «If thou hast any need, make it known to me, that I may satisfy it for thee». Then Peter told him what we related above, and after a stay of three months in the palace prayed the prince to send him to Egypt, and to write a decree for him appointing him patriarch over Egypt, and to give him authority over the patriarch Abba Mennas and his bishops, that he might do with them what was wanted.

In compliance with this request, the prince drew up for Peter a document, addressed to the governor of Egypt at that time, whose name was Ibn Abd ar-Rahmân, directing him to do for Peter whatever he might bid him do. Then Peter gave orders that a cap should be made for him of splendid and priceless material; and his name was written upon it in Arabic letters thus : «Peter, patriarch of Egypt». And besides his own name the name of the prince also was written upon it; for Peter added in his folly, after putting his own name first : «And servant of the prince».

As soon as Peter arrived at Misr, he gave the document to the governor, who, after he had read it, sent and summoned the holy patriarch Abba |368 Mennas and his synod. When the governor's messengers arrived at the frontier-city of Alexandria and informed the patriarch of what had happened, he was sad and cried to the Lord from the depths of his heart, saying : «O Lord, save me from this snare which is secretly laid for me, for thou art my God; and give me not up to those that oppress me, for false witnesses have risen up against me. And

behold, thine eyes, O Lord, are upon those that fear thee and trust in thy mercy, that thou mayest deliver their souls from death». And he did not cease to pray and weep the whole night long until the morning. Then the messengers appeared before him, and urged him to start upon his journey. Therefore he arose, and said with cheerfulness : «O Lord, make me worthy to suffer for thy name's sake; for thou alone art my hope, O Lord my God, and therefore I fear not what man can do to me». And he continued to repeat these words during his journey from Alexandria, until he arrived at Fustât Misr.

Then the governor was informed of the patriarch's arrival, and gave orders that he should be brought before him, and rejoiced when he saw him. For the governor loved the Christians, and had been friendly with the holy father, Abba Michael the patriarch, now at rest. So he said to the father, Abba Mennas : «Thou shalt receive all fair treatment from me, according to that which I used to do for the deceased patriarch who was thy predecessor. But the prince's mandate has arrived, bidding thee obey the bearer of it, who is a follower of thy faith and creed, and forbidding |369 thee to dispute with him concerning that which he shall command thee to do.» Thereupon the valiant one, who had no fear of the awfulness of earthly princes, the truth-speaking Abba Mennas, looked up into the face of the new Judas, I mean Peter the deacon, who relied upon worldly power, and believed himself to be invested with the authority of the patriarchate, and said to him : «Good is that which the true gospel says concerning thee : None shall receive honour from himself unless it be given him from heaven by God. But hear what God says concerning thee and those that act like thee, declaring what thou deservest, where our Lord Christ says with his pure mouth : Every tree which my heavenly Father plants not shall be cut down and rooted up. So this name shall be taken away from thee, and thou shalt die in poverty an evil death».

Then that fool answered him, and said to the holy father : «Do now what I command thee, that thou mayest escape the punishment, which I shall otherwise inflict upon thee, until I learn that thou dost resist the prince's mandate». And the vile wretch turned and said to the governor : «Instead of answering that as he hears so he will obey the prince's command, behold, he utters words which mean that he prays God to strip me of the authority which the prince has conferred upon me.» Then the governor answered and said to the patriarch : «Do not oppose the command of the prince, but perform what he ordains.» Mennas replied : «I will do so with joy, that |370 I may carry out the Law which bids me obey the king as I would obey God; for it says : He who resists and disputes authority, resists God, his Lord.» When the governor heard these words, he was pleased with the patriarch's answer, and said to the wretch : «Bid him do whatever thou desirest.» So he said : «Let him send and summon all the bishops under his jurisdiction, that I may give them in his presence the orders that are necessary.» Then the father begged of the governor that he might be allowed a delay of some days, till he could assemble the bishops.

But that heretic said : «Let us send him away to prison, so that I may enter the churches in Misr and go up to their altars, as the patriarchs do. »

So the patriarch was imprisoned with Theodore, bishop of Misr, and ordered the secretaries to write letters to all the bishops, that they might come to him. For that heretic Peter believed that they would obey him and do for him what he had planned, though it was contrary to the canons of the Church. The letter which the father patriarch wrote was full of sadness and grief, but he did not explain any matter to the bishops lest he should discourage them, so that they would shrink from the struggle. The contents of the letter were as follows : «Satan does not at any time leave the Bride of Christ, the Universal Church, without opposition, but raises |371 up persecution and disorder with the object of vanquishing her in the war that he wages against her. But her Bridegroom, Christ the Truth, crushes Satan's power by the words which he said to Peter, chief of the apostles , that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against her. You know now that it is the Lord Christ who is the conqueror. Therefore advance to the combat and dispute not, but trust in the Lord; for he will abase our adversary and bring his counsels to nought, and glorify his Church which is his Bride. Let us also rejoice because we have armed ourselves like warriors for battle in this campaign, that we may obtain the heavenly crown, according to the summons which he gives us at all times, as Paul, the sweet-tongued, says : A man will not obtain the crown unless he fight. Hasten therefore now, that you may gain that reward, O my friends whom I love in the Lord.»

When the bishops had read the patriarch's letter, so full of consolation for them, they journeyed with all speed, and assembled at Fustât Misr. As soon as that erring son of Satan learnt that they were gathered together in the church on Sunday, he arose in his obstinacy, escorted by a troop of soldiers from the governor's palace, and proceeded without fear, and ascended into the sanctuary, intending to say the prayer of thanksgiving and the prayer of peace like the patriarch, wearing on his head the cap on which the name of the prince was written. But when the fathers and bishops saw him do this, they joined together in the Holy Ghost; and Abba |372 Mennas, bishop of Sanabû, rushed upon him, with Abba Moses, bishop of Wasîm; and they seized the cap and threw it down, and cast him out of the sanctuary, crying : «Ah thou second Julian, the churches of Egypt do not deserve to be defiled by thy presence !» At first that foul wretch was filled with confusion, but afterwards gave way to anger and commanded his escort to lead all the bishops away to prison, and to put irons upon their necks and feet. And when the holy father patriarch beheld them, he welcomed them and comforted them, saying : «O my friends, he who fights for us is greater than he who fights against us; and the Lord will rescue us from our enemies, and save us from those that rise up against us, and deliver us from the workers of iniquity.» The bishops, hearing these words, exclaimed : «Our father, we are ready to die with thee, and we believe and trust that we shall obtain salvation by thy prayers !»

Thus the bishops passed a few days in prison while that foul wretch was considering what evil he should do to them and to the patriarch; and then he ordered the governor to bring them out of confinement and make them stand before him; and the governor did so. Thereupon that miscreant said to the father patriarch : «I will do nothing with thee that thou fearest, such as others in my place have done to others in thy place before thee, from the

time of the patriarch Abba Agathon; for he was compelled to build ships for the fleet. So Theodore the Chalcedonian, the governor of |373 Alexandria, treated Agathon in the reign of the caliph Yezîd, son of Mu'âwiyah. Come, bring forth from the church the vessels of gold and silver, that they may be carried to the prince's treasury. For this is the purpose for which I am come». On hearing this the patriarch said within himself : «The pains of death have surrounded me, and the terrors of Hell have fallen upon me». This he said because he knew that there was nothing in the churches such as Peter demanded of him. For notorious misfortunes had happened to the fathers before Abba Mennas, and none of the vessels of the churches had been left among their possessions; for the Copts had been robbed of every thing time after time by the adversaries who hated them.

And when this glorious father was consecrated and enthroned, nothing had been restored, so that in the city of Alexandria no vessel was found, from which the people could receive the Communion, except a chalice of glass and another of wood. Therefore the holy father answered that miscreant, saying : «Thou knowest not the condition of the church from that time till now». But the wretched infidel replied : «Lo, I know that thou hast a book by means of which thou canst speedily become rich; for it teaches the art of making gold». The spiritual father said in answer to him : «I know nothing of that of which thou speakest. But I will do whatever thou mayest choose to command, and my trust is in |374 God; for I know that there is nothing in the church such as that which thou namest. And thou hast told lies to the prince». Then Peter said to the patriarch : «I will act generously towards thee, nor will I compel thee to spend any sum of money upon the fleet. But, by the prince's truth, none shall work at the task of pitching the ships but thou and thy bishops, with your own hands». Abba Mennas replied : «I will do that gladly, for so I shall act according to the words of Paul the Apostle, who says : I work with my own hands. Paul says also : They revile us and we bless them; they drive us away and we bear it patiently;

they defame us and we entreat them».

So the father Abba Mennas and the bishops who were with him went out to perform the task allotted to them every day in the arsenal at Misr, working with their own hands at all that was needed for the ships for a whole year, while their faces were exposed to the sun all day during the summer. Thus the patriarch and bishops were labouring among the workmen and the ash-heaps in Fustât Misr, with tears and sighs. At the end of the day the father and all the bishops were taken back to the prison. And all the time Peter continued to demand of them the vessels of the churches, saying to them : «I came hither from the prince's court for this purpose only». But when some days had passed, while they were still in |375 prison, and he repeated his claims, at last the Lord looked upon the sighs of his pure ones, and worked a miracle; and he who has the power to repay took vengeance. We have already remarked that the governor favoured the Christians. Yet although he saw that contemptible person persecuting the patriarch and bishops, he could not hinder him, because he feared the prince, but could only urge upon him that it was not lawful for him

to act so with the chief of the Christians. At last Peter answered : «Dost thou also call that man the head of the Christian community, and ignore the prince's decree?

Then I will go to the prince, and let him know that thou hast deprived me of the dignity which he conferred upon me». Then, when Peter said this, the words of Solomon the Wise were fulfilled in him : «A fool's tongue is a snare to him». For the governor exclaimed : «Thou desirest to depart to the prince, in order to tell lies to him against me, and present a calumnious report against me in accordance with what thou hast said and done with regard to this old man who fears God. Now after this day I will no longer suffer thee to behold the light of the sun, but all men shall know that God has exacted justice from thee for this old man». Accordingly the governor gave orders that very hour that Peter should be taken away to prison, and thrown into the dungeon, and that his hands and feet should be fettered with iron, and he be kept there |376 in a narrow place. So Peter remained in this condition three years. At the same time the governor gave orders to release the militant patriarch and bishops from punishment. And they began to praise God and to say : «As the prophet Isaias says : God destroys the counsel of the adversaries and hypocrites; and the Lord will not forsake those that trust in him, those who fear God. Now is fulfilled the word of the prophet Malachias in us : Ye who fear my name, upon you the Sun of Righteousness shall shine.

Go forth, rejoicing like calves released to their mothers. And ye shall tread down the hypocrites».

Then the father departed to Alexandria; and there he entered the church with joy. And the Alexandrians glorified God with public thanksgivings. And Abba Mennas occupied himself with the care of Christ's flock and the administration of the Evangelical See, through the grace which was with him. Yet in spite of all this he was sad on account of that poor miserable sinner, who had given up his soul to death by sin. And Abba Mennas prayed to God, saying : «Thou art the merciful God who saidst : I desire not the death of a sinner, so much as that he should return and be converted. Therefore thou, O Lord, wilt save the soul of this other man, that he may not die in sin. Rather save him, that he may repent and weep for his error, |377 so that his soul may live. For Satan at all times drags down to Hell those who obey him».

Now Satan, the hater of good, filled him who was in prison with evil designs and bad notions, and suggested foul thoughts in his heart concerning the patriarch and concerning the bishops and the Church for his sake. And at the end of three years, while Peter was still in prison, Ibn Abd ar-Rahmân, the governor, was removed from Egypt, and another was sent thither. When the new governor arrived at Al-Fustât, he examined the prisons that he might learn what was the offence of every prisoner; and so, as soon as the case of Peter was reported to him, he commanded that Peter should be brought before him. And the governor recognised Peter on seeing him, and said to him : «Art thou not he whom the prince despatched to Egypt at such a time?» He replied : «Yes, I am he». Then the governor asked him : «What befell thee, and cut off the memory of thee from before the prince, so

that thou becamest as one dead?» Thereupon Peter answered by accusing the patriarch and Ibn Abd ar-Rahmân, the governor lately dismissed, of committing great crimes, and added : «For he left the prince's edict without effect, and kept me in prison three years». And Peter brought many charges against the Christians and the Church. The governor said to him : «Thou shalt depart to the prince's court. I will send thee to him». Peter replied : «That is well; for such is my |378 desire, in order to accomplish that which is in my heart».

So the governor despatched him in haste, bidding him take with him a letter, in which an explanation of what had happened to him was given. Thus Satan, the hater of good, drove Peter back to his former circumstances, and raised in the prince's heart a greater love for him than before. This was especially because Peter said to him : «I wish to enter into thy religion, and to return to Egypt and claim my rights from my enemies». At this the prince rejoiced. Then the foul wretch denied the name of Christ the Saviour, and confessed the religion of Islam; and for that the prince gave him many gifts on that day, garments and money and horses and female slaves, and named him Abu'l-Khair .

But the Lord, whose name is blessed, purposed to give rest to the holy father Abba Mennas, that he might not undergo any punishment from this renegade. For God showed forth a miracle, when he looked upon him who was called Abu'l-Khair, but was in reality father of all mischief and guile. The prince gave him the letters to the governor that he asked for, and he journeyed to Egypt, believing that he was about to do all the harm to the patriarch that lay in his power. Before he arrived in Egypt, however, Abd Allah, the prince, died. So when the wretch learnt that his hopes were thus frustrated, the words of the prophet were fulfilled in him : |379 «Contemptible is the man who trusts in a man.» For in shame he departed to his native town; but as soon as his family and kinsmen and acquaintances saw him, he was hated and detested among them like the Jews who slew their Lord. And they began to reproach him, saying : «Ah thou that art become a son of Satan, and hast strayed from the way of life, where hast thou left the fear of God and of Hell, and the voice of our Creator pronouncing the terrible sentence : Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I deny before the Father who is in Heaven ? Thou hast rejected this true voice, and therefore thou shalt hear instead of it :

Take him away to the fire which is not quenched and the worm which sleeps not. This shall be the reward of thy apostasy. To thee will be spoken also his words addressed to those like thee : Depart from me, ye cursed, into the fire kindled and prepared for the Devil and his hosts. Then it will be said to thee that, instead of the bishopric which thou didst demand, there is the gain of rebellion, and instead of the Spiritual Paradise thou hast earned the foulness of apostasy.» And Peter had to listen to many such reproaches every day, filled with sorrow and shame. At last he went away to the bishops of Egypt, whom he had afflicted with such torments; and he begged them to pray to God for him |380 that he might save him from this error, professing that his heart was right. Then he heard from the mouth of the bishops, as the Lord said to his disciples at that time concerning Judas Iscariot, that none should perish except the son of perdition.

After these events it was God's will to give rest to the father Abba Mennas, and translate him to Jerusalem on high from this world full of misery and trouble. So he went to his rest, after occupying the see seven years, on the last day of Tubah, and brought his teaching to a close, preserving the faith of his lathers; and he departed in peace to the Lord Christ, whom he loved, and received the crown of victory together with the assembly of his militant brethren, and entered into joy with them in the land of the living. And after his decease, that rebel returned to the town where he was born, and died there a bitter death in sin and poverty, as our father Abba Mennas had prophesied concerning him. Thus all who witnessed his fate marvelled and glorified God, saying : «That which the father Abba Mennas foretold by the Holy Ghost against this man has come to pass.» And they said, as David, the servant of the Lord, says in the Psalm , that he humbles the proud as one that is wounded. David says also in the 118th. Psalm : «Cursed are all those that swerve from thy commandments.» |381

So the Church remained a widow without a pastor. But the Lord visited his sheep, whom he had bought with his blood; and the bishops assembled in the city of Alexandria, and consulted together, and prayed the Lord to shew them a faithful shepherd. Many names were mentioned, and they continued to discuss this matter during several days, while the Lord was reserving his chosen one, whom he was about to elect and anoint with the oil of his mercy, that he might be called to the patriarchal office, because it belonged to him. Now our fathers, when they met together in order to come to an agreement upon the appointment of a patriarch, were accustomed to write many names on small sheets which, they laid in the sanctuary. Then the bishops and priests and orthodox laity used to pray to the Lord with a sincere intention, and cry Kyrie eleison. Afterwards they brought a young child, ignorant of sin, which put forth its hand and took one sheet from among the number. And him whose name was drawn they promoted to the patriarchal dignity.

Now they had begun to carry out this procedure. And there was in charge of the church of Saint Mennas a priest named John, the son of the father Abba Michael; and his birthplace was at Bana Busir, and he had become a monk in Wadî Habîb, and had then been, entrusted with the office of oeconomus under the father Abba Mennas, lately gone to his rest. This man was named by an aged deacon of pious character, one of the |382 clergy of Alexandria, who said to the assembly : «Have you remembered the priest John, in charge of the church of Saint Mennas, so as to write his name down?» Now they had not remembered him, but the Lord recalled him to memory by the mouth of the old ecclesiastic. So they wrote down his name, and prayed, and did three times what we have described above. And the name of John was drawn each of these three times. Then all those that were present marvelled; and they cried aloud saying : «Truly he is worthy!» So they appointed John, and he sat upon the throne.

Vol. 1, Part 4 -- Mennas I to Joseph (849 AD) — JOHN IV, THE FORTY-EIGHTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 775-799

After the father Abba John had been enthroned, he wrote a synodical letter full of wisdom to the blessed father, George, patriarch of Antioch, to make known to him his unity with him in the faith and the circumstances of his taking his seat upon the throne. Now a report had been presented to the prince, against this George of whom we speak, by one of his bishops; and in consequence of this report the prince arrested George, and put him in fetters and imprisoned him. And the bishop who accused him sat upon the throne, but had written no epistle nor announced a decree of |383 appointment to the patriarch of Alexandria. Then that bishop died, and George returned, having been released from prison, and sat upon the throne of Antioch with glory and honour, after an absence of ten years. George, therefore, having read the letters of the blessed patriarch, Abba John, upon the arrival of his envoys at Antioch, welcomed those envoys and rejoiced over them; and so likewise the synod of metropolitans and bishops, assembled with their chief, glorified the Lord Christ, with great joy and spiritual gladness, on account of the agreement of the doctrine of the two patriarchs concerning the orthodox Faith, and their common accord after the days that had passed. And George with his metropolitans and bishops composed an epistle in answer to the synodical, and sent it to the father, Abba John, according to the ecclesiastical canons, which are exempt from error.

Now Abba John was beautiful in form, perfect in stature, inspired by God in all his affairs. And everyone desired to behold his welcome form; and it was granted to him to be acceptable to all princes and governors, like Joseph the Truthful, with whom God's hand was, and whom God saved from all his sorrows, and to whom he gave grace and wisdom before Pharao. And the father John was assiduous in doing good, and provided means for the building of a church and a patriarchal residence, which he adorned with all beautiful ornaments. He also embellished the churches |384 at Alexandria with all decoration and adornment. The

times were propitious towards him, and the authorities respected him, and enabled him to carry out his desires, and accepted his opinion, and did not hinder him from anything that he wished; and the orthodox people obeyed him, and the Church enjoyed tranquillity and peace in his days. He did not cease from doing good, and his chief care was for the building of the churches of Alexandria, so that he raised a great monument to himself in this city. His conduct was admirable, so that the heretics at Alexandria were jealous of him, according to the custom of those accursed ones in dealing with the orthodox, even in matters relating to the Faith, especially in the days of this holy John, because they beheld his good works in the Church and in all the churches at Alexandria with glory and honour.

The liar, who was at that time the father of the heretics, was a person named Politian. He was a skilful physician, and the prince's of Islam used to treat him with favour on account of his art. And he did not cease to speak of our father John with words of jealousy. But God, who knows that which is secret, was raising up this man day after day, and the sweet odour of his teaching reached all the people. Therefore those who loved God took thought and said : «We will hand over to him our money, that he may build with it the churches of Alexandria, as a memorial for us and for |385 those that shall come after us». Accordingly they used to bring to him, that saint adorned with virtues, large sums of money and gifts, and to pray him to provide for the building of the churches, until that which is saidof the prophet David was fulfilled in Abba John : «The zeal of thine house has eaten me up.» And he accepted those gifts from the people, because he knew how great were their charity and their sacrifice of their wealth and their goodness and right faith in God.

And there was with Abba John a deacon, who loved God, and was very vigilant and full of faith and spiritual wisdom. This deacon was named Mark, and was an Alexandrian; and he had grasped with zeal the helm of the Ark, which is the Church, the Ark of salvation from the deluge of the devils. Our father Abba John had known him from his youth. Mark was in charge of the church of Saint Mennas, and the patriarch, because of his acquaintance with him and his family, made him deacon; and wherever the patriarch celebrated the Liturgy or was present, Mark used to chant the gospel, with a voice of tenderness and moving tones, so that the hearts of listeners were touched by their music. For this reason the people used to come early to the church in order to hear his chanting and his beautiful voice, and because he understood the art of chanting, and for |386 the sake of his beautiful countenance; and when he chanted he put every word in its right place. He was also learned in the Scriptures and in the study of all the Mystagogia. So men used to say : «Blessed is the Lord God, who has given a wise son to David , as it is said.» The faithful laity used to say, glorifying God : «Blessed is God, who has raised up for us this deacon Mark who loves God.

Blessed is the Lord who has made this branch to flourish for us from this blessed tree, ---- our holy father John and his son Mark. Happy is our city which has merited this grace!» And when our father the patriarch beheld this deacon and his actions, he rejoiced over him and thanked God, who had given him this gift for the Church, and had left Mark to him as an adviser in all his circumstances. And Mark, in each step to which the patriarch promoted

him, grew more and more humble towards all, both small and great; and more excellent than this was his obedience to the father in all that he commanded him. to do. Then Mark, when he was filled with grace, begged our father to hold him worthy of the Angelic Habit, that is the monastic estate. So Abba John, when he saw Mark's desire, took him with him, on the 27th. of Barmahât, which is the day when Saint Macarius went to his rest, to the monastery of the illuminating father, Saint Macarius, the meeting-place of monks, and the home of high wisdom and of prayer, continuing night and day with |387 glorification of the Holy Trinity.

And when Mark had put on the habit, an aged monk, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, looked at him and said : «This deacon, whose name is Mark, is worthy to sit upon the throne of his father, Mark the evangelist.» And Mark began to increase in humility and purity and holiness, till there was accomplished in him that which God says : «To whom shall I look, except to the humble of heart who fears me?»

Now when you hear these words from me, brethren, be not angry with me because I have left the discourse of the blessed fathers, and the building of the church in the city of Alexandria, and the narration of their history in spite of its importance to us; for likewise is it incumbent upon us to mention the humble sons, who were saved by their works, and pleased the fathers by their conduct, in order that future generations and peoples may hear of them, and that they too may grow in the grace of the Holy Ghost, according to that which Paul the sweet-tongued wrote , where he says in the Spirit : «I am jealous» ; and therefore I do not leave this unsaid. The interpretation of the words : «I am jealous», is that they mean jealous in spiritual works.

Hear how our father, the patriarch Abba John, began to take thought for the building of the church, in accordance with the request of those two |388 blessed ones who loved God, Cyrus and Barnabas, when they saw that Christ's people desired this. And the churches possessed endowments. So Abba John called the deacon Mark, and said to him : «My son, it shall be to thee a reward from God that thou shalt superintend the building of the churches; for thou art acquainted with the city and the workmen and their trades. And I know that God is with thee, and I believe and trust that the good care which thou shalt bestow upon this matter in thy faith will be returned to thee in perfection». Mark replied : «Thy Holiness knows that the accursed heretics have many arguments with which they will oppose us. But it would be a sin upon my conscience if I resisted the Holy Ghost who dwells in thee; and now, my father, thou desirest to do a good deed». Then he made a prostration before the patriarch, and said to him : «Pray for me, my father!» And the patriarch answered : «The Lord bless thee and be with thee, until thou shalt complete the building of his holy house, so that thou mayest rejoice in it after we are gone». Thereupon Mark said to the patriarch : «Thy Paternity commands me to lay the foundation as God shall give me light».

Therefore the patriarch supplied all that was needed for the fabric, and assembled the workmen and overseers. And he said prayers, and laid the foundations of the church and of the surrounding habitations. And he delivered all that church needed into the hand of the pious

deacon Mark, that he might provide for the construction. Thus Mark was entrusted with the building of the holy church; and God was helping him with grace, and |389 the building grew and advanced daily. Then Satan whispered to the [heart of the lying heretic, the chief of the believers in the Two Natures, that he should accuse the father, Abba John, before the governor of occupying buildings belonging to the government and turning them into churches. This charge was brought by that heretic in envy, that he might stop the building, like the Chaldeans who desired to put an end to the building of the holy house of God. But the father, Abba John, endured patiently and suffered greatly through that which was done to him by that liar, and was forced on account of it to pay a heavy fine to the government. And the wretch rejoiced thereat, and accused Abba John of all sorts of evil deeds and of lies. And as often as his enemies beheld him growing and increasing day by day, while his people were orthodox, and his teaching was uninterrupted, and his churches were flourishing, and he also continued to build and restore in the churches, then they grew yet more wrathful.

But they could not resist the power of God, and were as the Chaldeans with regard to the temple of Jerusalem, when God brought their efforts to nought; for so he did likewise in this case, scattering the counsel of the heretics, those new Jews. For by the mercy of the Lord Christ, he put it into the heart of the governor to command the father, Abba John, to finish the church and furnish it as he desired. So he completed the church in the space of five years, and consecrated it in the name of the Archangel Michael. This |390 church is called at the present day, in the city of Alexandria, the church of Repentance. And there was with our father the patriarch a scribe and deacon, named John, who was counted worthy of the bishopric of the see of Sakhâ after the decease of the father, Abba John.

After the completion of the church of the Angel Michael, by the Lord's inscrutable decrees a great dearth came upon the city of Alexandria and Upper Egypt, so that the price of wheat rose to a dinar for three waibahs, and many persons perished. And our father was sad on account of the dead and the mortality that he saw, and prayed with tears, saying, like the prophet Isaias : «Thou hast turned away thy face from us, and given us up because of our sins. And now, O Lord, thou art yet our Father, and we are all dust and the work of thy hands. Deal not with us according to our sins, and be not angry with us for ever; and remember not our offences, but turn to as, O Lord, for we are thy people». And he continued in prayer night and day, saying : «O Lord, have mercy on thy creatures and the work of thy hands; deal not with us after our sins. We deserve indeed all chastisement, for we have not walked in the way of thy commandments. But now, O Lord, chastise us not with the rod of thy wrath, and remember not our transgressions before thee».

And the patriarch beheld the distress of the people from the severity of |391 the dearth, and his pity excited him to pray. Then Abba John called his son and partner in his works, the deacon Mark, and gave him authority to distribute alms among all the inhabitants of the city; and the storehouses and the accounts of the church were under his superintendence, for the father, Abba John, had entrusted him with the charge of them, making trial of his conduct. So Mark began to assist all those that were starving, giving them their food

morning and evening every day. And he used to see at the patriarch's door many people of every race, whom he would supply with provisions out of the stores of the church; for she had at that time an abundance of good things. Thus the sweet perfume of his good deeds spread, and filled all places. Basil and Eusebius, the two bishops, were those who made almsgiving their uninterrupted occupation, making more of it than of the fulfilment of any other commandment. In the same way this holy man acted as they did, emulating their excellence until he resembled them in that point; but though he did thus, yet he did not neglect any of the precepts of religion: And he visited the officials and the rich men, and said to them : «Be merciful to the needy». And he urged them to alms-giving with arguments from the holy scriptures, saying to them : «Profit by this time and this grace which is glorious before God». |392

And he began to exhort them in the words of the prophet David to his son : «Turn not thy face from the poor, and then the Lord will not turn his face from thee». He quoted also the saying of another prophet :«Alms saves from death, and raises from Hell, and does not suffer a man to enter into darkness». He reminded them also of that which Paul wrote to Timothy his son, saying to him : «Charge the rich in this world that they be not proud, but that they place their trust in God, who gives riches to each one, that they may have enough of all things, and may lay for themselves a foundation, in order that they may take hold of the true life». And he admonished them with these and other words, until the rich men and the officials emulated his works, and began to do as he advised them with their money; and none of them was backward in giving alms, nor in visiting the widows and orphans and prisons and taking to them food and clothing; and so also they did for the clergy and the poor. And many of the officials had fallen into poverty at this time, and they also were assisted. And Mark used to entertain strangers. But at last the Lord took pity on his people and relieved them of the dearth, through the prayers of the holy father, Abba John.

At that time the patriarch of Antioch, Abba George, went to his rest. And a holy man, named Cyriacus, was appointed in his place by a |393 dispensation from God, and through the united votes of the metropolitans and bishops and of all the laity of Syria and the East. He was full of the Holy Ghost, and when he heard of the works of the holy father, Abba John, he summoned his metropolitans and bishops, and said to them : «We must not delay writing to the father, Abba John, who occupies the evangelical throne in the great city of Alexandria, which is an inheritance of ours from our fathers, since the time of the father Severus and of Theodosius, who both fought for the orthodox faith.» Now I have already mentioned the deceased father, Abba George, and observed that in the past years, during which he was in prison, no synodical letter came from him to Egypt to the father Mennas, on account of Abba George's troubles and confinement, and because Abba Mennas also did not write, being otherwise occupied through the persecution which he suffered at the hands of the excommunicated deacon Peter, the apostate unworthy of his name; until the patriarch and bishops escaped from durance, and then the correspondence took place as we have related above. Therefore the father Cyriacus said : «If we should not write, we should be guilty of an offence and a sin, on account of the agreement and unity which exist between us.

In the time of our forefathers, they agreed with us in the true faith and in charity; and they commemorate our fathers' names in all the sanctuaries of Egypt. For this reason |394 let us not interrupt the Christian charity and spiritual concord which we share with them. » Accordingly, our father, Abba Cyriacus, patriarch of Antioch, addressed to Abba John, patriarch of Alexandria, a synodical letter, full of the grace of the Holy Ghost, and despatched it by the hand of Anastasius, metropolitan of Damascus, who was accompanied by two bishops of his province. In this epistle Cyriacus spoke of the orthodox union existing between the two sees of Antioch and Alexandria, and announced how he had taken his seat upon the throne of Ignatius, the Wearer of Divinity. And when the letter reached Abba John, and he had read it, he rejoiced greatly, and glorified the Lord Jesus Christ, who always cares for his Church and for his people, whom he bought with his precious Blood.

Afterwards our father, Abba John, commanded that the letter should be read before the people, who marvelled when they heard its eloquence, and because it was a long time since a synodical had arrived; and they gave thanks to God for it. And when the envoys, Anastasius and the two bishops, visited the church at Alexandria, they were filled with admiration of its paintings and decoration, and the marshalling of the patriarch and bishops and clergy, and the seven ecclesiastical orders, and the dignity of all of them and their serenity and piety. And the Syrians wondered and glorified God for the magnitude of the grace which rested upon the clergy of |395 Alexandria, through the holy favour of Saint Mark the evangelist. Therefore, beholding these things, they said what David says in the psalm : «As we have heard, so have we seen.» And they rejoiced with a great spiritual joy, according to that which is written in the Acts : «A report came to the ears of the Church in Jerusalem concerning them, so they sent Barnabas to Antioch, and when he arrived and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced.»

The envoys remained with the holy father John a few days, and then he bade them farewell with respect and honour, after he had written for them an answer to their letter. So they departed to their own country glorifying God for what they had witnessed.

I desire, my holy fathers, to bring to an end my discourse concerning the deeds of our blessed father Abba John. This I do, not because my faltering tongue could not relate a few more of his actions; but, while I record the names of the holy men who lived in his time, I must describe for your Paternities their good works and their prophecies, that your hearts may be gladdened, as it is written : «When the righteous are commemorated, the people rejoice.» There was in those days at Al-Burlus a holy old man, named George, who was beautiful in his conduct. And |396 through the Holy Ghost, he used to see that which was about to happen far away by a great mystery, before the event took place so that he might know it, on account of his excellent virtues. Now Abba George, bishop of Misr had gone to his rest at that time; and he was a holy man, merciful and generous in alms-giving; and he had lived long among the people of Misr, ruling them in purity and justice. Therefore the faithful people mourned for him, and met together and took counsel, and wrote to the father, Abba John, praying him to appoint his son Mark, the deacon, bishop over them at Misr, in the

place of George now at rest. When the patriarch read the letter, he was willing that they should obtain their desire because of his pastoral care for their souls;

and he commanded that Mark, the deacon, should be promoted to their see. Mark, however, refused the dignity which was offered to him. Thereupon the patriarch caused iron fetters to be placed upon Mark's feet, and ordained him priest, intending to complete his consecration as bishop. But this proceeding was against Mark's will, and he was weeping and sad, saying : «O Lord, thou knowest that I am not fit for this post; therefore I pray thee, O my Lord, to save me from this burden which I cannot bear.» And the Lord, who loves mankind, and chooses those whom he elects for his grace before they are born, heard him; for he said to that faithful one : «Rise, leave this place in which thou art.» So he arose at that moment; and the irons fell from his feet, and |397 the door opened for him, and he escaped; and none of those who were guarding him awoke as he went out. When morning came, the patriarch sent for Mark, but found that he was gone. And Abba John, though he gave orders to enquire after the fugitive, could not discover him, and therefore was indignant. Then the patriarch appointed a son of his, named Cosmas, and ordained him for the people of Misr; but after a short time he died. And there was a person called Michael, of virtuous life; therefore Abba John consecrated him bishop for them.

And the patriarch was angry with Mark the deacon, because he had escaped and disobeyed his father's command. So he wrote a letter to the holy father George at Al-Burlus, whom we mentioned at the beginning of this narrative. The letter was written in order to let him know that the patriarch was displeased with his son Mark, on account of his disobedience to his father, and flight from him, and because Mark had lowered the patriarchal dignity in the eyes of the people of Misr. To this the holy George, the prophet, answered, saying : «Let not thy Paternity be angry with thy son because he resisted thee. For thou didst desire to oppose God's decree, since that which thou didst purpose for Mark was not from God. But God has reserved him, that he may receive thy see and thy primacy after thee.» When the father patriarch heard this prophecy, he marvelled; for he believed all that the holy old hermit said to him. And when Mark learnt this, he returned to the patriarch, and prostrated himself before him and |398 asked his pardon. And he was no longer displeased with Mark, who from that day enjoyed high estimation with the patriarch, and was never separated from him again, but accompanied him wherever he went.

Then the patriarch betook himself to Fustât Misr, on account of the taxes which were imposed upon the Church property; and this was the last time that he went thither. And Satan, the hater of good, contrived that certain persons should attack Abba John. For Satan said : «This old man resists me, and builds churches and memorials; I also will cause his remuneration to be scanty.» There was at that time a governor who hated Christ; and Satan suggested to him that he should demolish some of the churches of Misr. But the Lord who loves mankind speedily took vengeance on that man, and he suddenly died an evil death. And after him there was appointed in his room a person who favoured the Christians. So he directed them to clean out the churches, which his predecessor had begun to pull down; but

he did not bid them rebuild. Now the patriarch was at Misr, where he had accomplished all his duties, and was intending to return to Alexandria. But it was the feast of the Lord, the 28th. day of Kîhâk. So the bishops and laity begged him to celebrate the Liturgy for them, and to communicate them, before he separated from them. And this prophecy was current among them, that they should receive the Holy Mysteries from his hand before his departure from this world. |399

And when he entered the church, he saw that it had no roof. Therefore he sighed, saying : «O my Lord and God, Jesus Christ, thou saidst to Peter, the chief of the disciples : I will build my church upon the rock, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against her. And though some of the hypocritical princes have oppressed her somewhat, yet according to thy word she shall never be destroyed. Proud princes like Diocletian and Julian and such as resembled them have been repulsed, but the Church is exalted in every age, and faith is perfected. O Lord, I pray and implore that thou wilt renew the Church by grace, and overthrow all the hypocritical princes that oppose her, and show them their weakness speedily, and bring their counsels to nought. And grant me a governor, seeking the truth, who will command that the churches be rebuilt, and restored to their former condition of decency and beauty, by making thy light to rise among them.»

And while he was praying with these and similar words, he heard, like the blessed David, a voice saying : «As for thee, I will take thee to myself, and give thee rest from the troubles of this world. But he who shall come after thee is he that shall build and restore the churches.» When the patriarch heard these words, he began the liturgy; and as soon as he had finished the service, he communicated the laity of the Holy Mysteries, and gave them the salutation of peace. Afterwards the bishops returned to their dioceses. At that time our father, Abba John, was attacked by fever, and |400 he began to suffer from pains in his head. Now the fathers and bishops hoped that he might attain his desires, and that his heart might be satisfied; and they said to him : «Our father, let not thy heart be troubled because the church is wrecked! The Lord will raise up for it one who will rebuild it, so that it shall be better than it was before, in return for thy prayers and thy holy life.» But the patriarch did not heed their words, for his heart was occupied with the voice that he had heard, telling him that he was about to depart from this world. So he prayed the bishops, saying to them : «Take me to my city, the place which the Lord chose for me, that I may worship the Lord upon the throne of my father, Mark the evangelist, before my soul leaves my body.»

And they obeyed him, and carried him to a boat. And there were with him of the bishops Michael, bishop of Misr, and George, bishop of Memphis. And on the day of their departure from Misr, a new governor, named El-Laith, son of El-Fadl, was appointed over Egypt; and he was a good man and favoured the Christians. And while we went down the river, the patriarch began to address us, as he sat in the boat, saying : «A thought has come into my mind, which I will tell you for the sake of your holy lives; and I will reveal to you what lies hid from you. You know what trouble I have encountered, and how I have endured even to the shedding of blood. But now I am about to be removed to the place where my fathers

dwell. For I prayed God not to take me away suddenly without fruit, but to leave me for one year, and to grant to me that I might turn |401 to him with my whole heart, and repent and weep over my sins. And I prayed him to let me see a just governor in the land of Egypt, who would favour the Christians. And God did not refuse me this request, but granted me life for one year, the end of which will be in these few days. And the tidings has reached me that a governor has been appointed, and that he does all that is good to the churches and the brethren. But I am about to depart to God, and you will see me no more in the body; for my time, of which I have been warned by God, is at hand. Therefore listen now. When I am dead, hasten and place him whom God shall choose upon the throne.»

The fathers and bishops, on hearing these words, were assured of the patriarch's approaching death. Therefore they gave vent to sighs, and could not endure their grief through the abundance of their tears, on account of his saying : «You will see me no more in the body.» And they said to him : «Our father, when God revealed thy departure from this world, of whom did he make known to thee that he would sit upon the throne after thee?» Abba John replied : «It is he whom God has preserved till now, and whom he has chosen to rule his people. I indeed desired to make him a bishop; but it was God's dispensation to keep him for this ministry. It is, namely, my son, the priest Mark.» This the patriarch said, while they were descending the river on the boat. And when he arrived at the city of Alexandria, his sickness and fever grew heavy upon him. And here is another wonder which God manifested to our holy father, |402 Abba John, and which must not be left unnoticed. For on the 16th. day of the month of Tubah, the feast of the holy martyr Philotheus, which was the birthday of this father, as it is generally related, and also the day on which he was ordained patriarch, ---- on that very day he gave up his soul to the Lord.

Abba John remained upon the throne twenty-four years, and his death took place in the year 515 of the Martyrs. So the grief of the orthodox laity was great that day on his account. And when the prayers and the liturgy had been said for him, his holy body was laid with his holy fathers, the Theodosian patriarchs. And the Lord received his pure soul; and he was numbered with the saints in the land of the living. Glory is due to the Lord Jesus Christ and to his merciful Father and to the Holy Ghost, the Giver of life, now and at all times and for ever and ever! Amen.

Vol. 1, Part 4 -- Mennas I to Joseph (849 AD) — MARK III, THE FORTY-NINTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 799-819

Then the two bishops returned in haste to Misr, namely Abba Michael, the bishop of that city, and George, bishop of Memphis, that they might |403 forward the appointment of a successor to Abba John. So when the bishops and orthodox laity assembled at Alexandria, and took counsel together as to whom they should nominate, the bishops said : «We have heard that our father, Abba John, mentioned the name of the priest Mark, and said that it was he that should sit after him.» Then all the clergy cried with one voice : «He is worthy indeed of this rank. He is the saint who has been approved by the Holy Ghost, and was approved by our blessed father John all the days that he remained with him.» Then all the bishops and clergy wrote a letter, addressed to Michael, bishop of Misr, saying thus : «Thy Paternity knows the state of orphanhood into which we are fallen, through the departure of our blessed father, Abba John, to the Lord at this mournful time, and also how the princes are changed. And thy Paternity knows that a flock of sheep without a shepherd is entered and scattered by the wolf, and that every city without a wall is destroyed by the enemy. For this cause we have assembled in the Great Church of Alexandria with the fathers and bishops, and have written with one consent that our hearts approve the priest Mark, that he may be a father to us. For we know that the Lord has chosen him, and that our departed father informed you of this before his death. Therefore we say, as the blessed David said : Instead of the fathers there came sons, whom thou shalt make rulers over all the land.» |404

This letter was conveyed to its destination by some of the bishops and the archdeacon of the city. But when the priest Mark received the news of the letter, which had been written concerning him, he was much grieved, and immediately rose up and fled to the monastery of Saint Macarius in Wadî Habîb. Now the desert was at that time like the Paradise of God, inhabited by holy and spiritual men, one of whom prophesied of this saint that he was

worthy of this ministry, as we related above. Then when the father, Abba Michael, bishop of Misr, read the letter, he recalled the words of his teacher, Abba John, the deceased patriarch. Therefore Michael summoned all the chief men at Misr, and they went to the governor. And the bishops, that is Abba Michael and the envoys, entered into the governor's presence, for he admitted no other. And he said to them : «What is your business?» Abba Michael replied : «We make it known to thy lordship that our father, the chief and father of our religion, whom we had, is dead.» Then the governor asked : «What then do you desire?» They answered : «May God lengthen thy days! There are heavy taxes upon the property of the Church, and therefore we desire to appoint a successor to him, who may administer the affairs of the Church and the people.» Then the governor enquired : «And what is his name ?» They said that it was Mark. So he ordered that Mark's name should be written in the Divan, and then gave them permission to appoint him in the place of Abba John. And they went out from his presence. |405

After this the bishop, Abba Michael, learnt that the priest Mark had fled. Now the bishop, Abba Michael, was superintendent of all matters concerning the monasteries. So he at once despatched the bishops and clergy, and bade them fetter Mark, and conduct him to Alexandria. And this they did to him on the 2nd. day of Amshir, the feast of the Father Longinus; and Mark arrived at Alexandria on a Sunday. And among the bishops was George, bishop of Memphis.

And Mark was ordained on the aforesaid day in the city of Alexandria. When he had taken his seat upon the evangelical throne, while all the people bore witness of him that he was worthy, then he read before them the Exegesis, which is called among the orthodox the Logos, in which he declared that he was acquainted with their works. And this Logos was full by the grace of the Holy Ghost of the doctrines of the orthodox; and he demonstrated therein how the Council of Chalcedon had fallen and was rejected; and he explained their error as consisting in the worship of a man. He also refuted those who deny the sufferings of Christ our God, who endured them for our sake by his own will in the body, which according to their teaching was a phantom. And when Abba Mark had performed the service of the Liturgy according to custom, he communicated all the congregation of the Holy Mysteries of the Body and the pure Blood. And |406 when all was accomplished, a week after his consecration came the week of carnival; and therefore he departed to the holy monastery, the Monastery of Az-Zajâj, in order that he might live in retirement there for prayer during the days of the Fast. After he arrived there, he received letters from Abba Michael, bishop of Misr, advising him to repair to Misr after the holy feast of Easter, in order to pay his respects to the governor. This was a dispensation from God, because some of the churches were in a state of ruin up to that time, and therefore the people mourned.

Accordingly, when the feast of Easter was over, the father patriarch, Abba Mark, made his entry into Fustât Misr, that he might salute the governor. And when he reached the city, its bishop, the father Michael, and the people were informed of their patriarch's arrival, and went out to him, carrying books of the gospel and crosses and censers, and met him with

great rejoicing and shouting and chanting; and they said : «Happy and blessed is thy arrival amongst us, O Mark, son of Mark.» Then he proceeded to his lodging to rest, for it was the end of the day. And on the morrow the patriarch and the bishop Michael, and the rest of the bishops assembled with them, arose, that they might pay a visit to the governor. And when they reached the governor's house, and asked permission to see him, the governor commanded that the patriarch should enter. Then he went in and saluted the governor, who welcomed him; and afterwards |407 the patriarch prayed for him; so that the governor admired the sweetness of Abba Mark's voice and his gracious words and the grace with which he. was surrounded. So God put good will towards the patriarch into the governor's heart, and he bade Abba Mark sit beside him, and conversed with him on equal terms, and said to him : «Take courage and be of good comfort, for I will perform all thy needs, and enable thee to obtain all that thou desirest of me.» The patriarch answered : «God will exalt thy authority and make thy days prosperous, and bring thy subjects into accord with thy rule.» And he went out from his presence in peace.

When they afterwards considered the governor's discourse with Abba Mark, and the interest which the former manifested with regard to the churches, Abba Michael, bishop of Misr, said : «We must take measures for the rebuilding of the churches now, because the governor evidently favours the Christians.» Accordingly, on the morrow the patriarch again visited the governor, and saluted him. And the governor showed respect and honour to Abba Mark, and raised him from the ground and gave him a seat, and addressed him as follows : «I told thee yesterday that I would perform all thy needs, but thou hast asked nothing of me. Now therefore, mention to me whatever thou requirest, and it shall be carried out by me, because I have an affection for thee ». Then the patriarch said to him with soft |408 words : «May the Lord preserve thy days, and exalt thee yet more, and increase thy power! Thou knowest that thy servant has not been made ruler over money and revenue, but over souls and churches. I request then of thy highness, ---- for we have here churches, some of which were demolished by the tyrant before thy arrival in Egypt; and so the Lord demolished his houses, and cut off his life from the earth. If then thy wisdom sees good to order that we rebuild our churches, so that we may pray in them and intercede for thy highness, the matter lies in thy hands». Then God quickly put it into the governor's heart that he should give orders for the restoration of the churches;and accordingly all the churches of Fustât Misr were rebuilt. And all the orthodox rejoiced greatly, and praised God for the great mercy which he had granted to them, and their sadness was turned into joy. And our father Mark uttered praises in the spirit, and sang with David : «Blessed is the Lord who has not rejected my prayer, nor removed his mercy from me».

Then Abba Mark returned to Alexandria, and occupied himself with maintaining the unity of the two sees of Alexandria and Antioch. For he wrote according to custom a synodical letter, which was full of all wisdom, and sent it to Cyriacus, patriarch of Antioch, informing him therein of the decease of the father, Abba John, and relating how he himself had taken his seat upon the evangelical throne. And Abba Mark in his epistle reminded Abba |409 Cyriacus of all the heretics, and of the war waged by our fathers for the true Faith, and

renounced all schism and all heretics and the impure council of Chalcedon, as being the cause of doubt throughout the world, and abjured the sect of Nestorius, composed of the new Jews. And Abba Mark declared the concord of the two sees, and called Cyriacus Father and Partner in the ministry. This letter he sent by two bishops who understood how to pronounce an oration in Greek, one of them being Mark, the wise bishop of Tinnîs, and the other also Mark, bishop of Al-Faramâ, besides the deacon George, superintendent of the church of Alexandria.

When they had delivered the synodical to the patriarch Cyriacus, and he had read it, he mourned over the departure of the Father John, and rejoiced at the appointment of the father, Abba Mark, and over the holy bishops. And when the letter was read in the church of Antioch, the souls of the people were filled with joy, as they heard Abba Mark's words and the wisdom, full of spiritual perfume, which flowed from his heart, full as he was of the Holy Ghost; and they blessed the Lord, and praised the fathers who were counted worthy to sit upon the throne of Mark the evangelist. Then they admired the bishops, who had brought the synodical from Egypt, for their comely faces and garments, and their humility, and the eloquence of their speech and the sweetness of their words. And the bishops stayed a few days with the patriarch, until he dismissed them with gifts worthy of the patriarchal dignity; and he sent by them a letter of salutation, |410 glorifying our holy father, the patriarch Mark. When they reached Egypt, and the letter of the patriarch Cyriacus was read in the churches of Egypt, the people glorified God and rejoiced over the union of the two patriarchs, the one with the other.

We will now record another work done by the Lord in the days of our father Mark, that your hearts may rejoice, and that you may know that he resembled the father Severus and Cyril and Dioscorus, those men who repulsed the heretics in their time. There was a community in Egypt named after Barsanuphi, and also called Those that have no head; and this sect continued a long time, from the days of the patriarch Peter, who held the see after Timothy the confessor, in the time of Zeno, the pious prince; and afterwards they remained in their opposition to the truth. Therefore the father Mark, who concerned himself with the salvation of men's souls, was sad, and prayed to the Lord for them, saying : «O eternal Lord of hosts, unattainable and inscrutable Light, whom none beholds nor approaches, who seest thy creatures drowned in the depths of sin through their disobedience, thou hast offered us salvation by an incomprehensible mystery, and made earth like heaven by thy death and holy resurrection. As the wise |411 Paul says : That he may gather the nations to himself in peace by the power of his Cross, which destroyed the enemy, and announced peace to us, both those that are near and those that are afar off. Who also didst go to the mountain, until thou hadst brought back the sheep that was lost , and saved him from the mouth of the cruel wolf, rescuing him not by sword nor scourge, but by thy great mercy.

And thou wast not content with his return, but didst summon the heavenly hosts and the sublime orders of the angels to rejoice with thee, saying to them in thy gospel : Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost. Now, O Lord, hear the prayer of thy servant,

and let my prayer enter before thee on behalf of these lost sheep; and let the members of thy Church be gathered together, that they may be one fold and one Shepherd according to the true words of the gospel ». So the Lord heard his prayer speedily, and moved the hearts of the chiefs of that sect. Now their leader was a man named Abraham, whose father in the flesh was a bishop of theirs. And the patriarch taught those two to recognise the error in which the Barsanuphians were living, having left the fount of the water of life flowing from the evangelical see, and dug for themselves a well of error, as the prophet Jeremias says . So they rose up quickly, and visited the patriarch, Abba Mark the Younger, and cast |412 themselves down prostrate before him, saying : «Blessed is God, who has enlightened us by the teachings of thy Holiness, which have come to our ears, and converted us from the error which has kept us in darkness during this long period of time. Now we shall be reckoned among thy sheep, as children of thy evangelical see, which is the see of Saint Mark».

Then when our father, the patriarch, saw that they had abandoned their former tenets, and had returned to the spiritual flock, he rejoiced greatly and glorified God for that conversion, and uttered the praises that were fitting in the words of David, where he praises God in the Psalm : «When the Lord turned again the captivity of his people, we became as those that are consoled. Let Jacob rejoice, and Israel sing praises!»

And through the grace of God, shining forth in our holy father, the patriarch, he desired to prove and examine the faith of the two men, whether they were humble as befits those that wish to return to Christ, or were clothed with pride on account of the high offices which they had occupied. Then he said to them with humility and kindness : «Hear what was said by him in whom was the fount of mercy, Paul, the sweet-tongued, in one of his epistles : What portion has the believer with the unbeliever, and what pleasure has Christ in Satan? Therefore now think not that you two will remain in this office which you hold, and which you received from |413 your heretical sect, without ordination according to the canons. For the Holy Ghost did not come down upon you, as he descends upon bishops at the reading of the canonical prayers, established for them by the apostles.» When the two men heard these words of the patriarch, they replied with humility, through the grace which had come to them by the prayers of the holy father, and said to him : «Our holy father, henceforth we are not worthy to be in office nor to remain in it. But we came to thee that we might be under the shadow of thy prayers.

Only there is one thing that we beg of thee, that thou wilt pray the Lord to forgive us the offence of our former error and negligence.» This they said in the power of faith and confession. And they requested him to give them ink and paper, as they sat before him; and they wrote in their own handwriting a declaration that they would never, under pain of anathema, solicit of him a bishopric or any clerical office in any place whatsoever. So when he saw how strong their faith was, and that they had returned to the orthodox belief of our holy fathers, who were clothed with light, he blessed them from the depths of his heart, saying like the apostle Paul : «May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace, that you may abound in the right faith by the |414 power of the Holy Ghost!» And according to the

custom of charity, and the manifestation of good at all times, and the rewarding of it, God soon declared himself to those two men.

Then Abba Mark commanded that those two men, George and his son Abraham, should be received. And after the patriarch had ascertained their intentions, he ordained them bishops, and read the canonical prayers over them, and clothed them with the episcopal vestments in the church of the martyr, Saint Mennas, at Maryût, on the day of his glorious feast, which is the 15th of Hatûr, when all the orthodox people were assembled to keep the martyr's festival. And the congregation stood upon tiptoe, that they might see what was taking place. And they glorified God, who performed wonders by the hand of this holy man, saying : «Glory be to thee, O Lover of mankind, who hast saved the souls of these two men from the service of Satan, the seducer.» Then when the patriarch had finished the celebration of the holy feast, he returned to the city of Alexandria, accompanied by all the people with great rejoicing; for they praised him because he had presented this offering to the Lord. And he took those two bishops to himself, and attached them to his person. But after a little while two bishops died among those in the land of Egypt, one of them being Apacyrus, bishop of Tunbudha, and the other, Mennas, bishop of Atrîb. Then the patriarch |415 appointed Abraham to Atrîb and George, his father, to Tunbudha; and these two bishops became his elect ones to the day of their death. Glory be to the Lord Jesus Christ, who rejoices over those that return to life!

The Barsanuphians of Egypt, mentioned above, when they saw that their chiefs had returned to orthodoxy, and that no foundation remained for their community, wrote to Abba Mark, praying him to visit them and consecrate their churches. And when he read the letters, he rejoiced exceedingly, and left all his work, and went in haste to Misr, and consecrated their churches and monasteries for them, and established liturgies for them according to the ecclesiastical rule, and gave them the Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, our God. So there was at Fustât Misr great joy and spiritual gladness. And the Lord Jesus Christ did for our holy father Mark all that he asked of him. And all the congregations assembled to hear his discourse and his salutary doctrines. Thus after a few days he found that the church which he had consecrated for the Barsanuphians, the followers of that doctrine, would not contain the congregation, when he went thither to celebrate the liturgy. Therefore he called the workmen, and spent money upon it from his own resources, so that it was rebuilt and became a handsome edifice. For this reason it is called the patriarch's church to the present day. |416

And this wonderful grace increased in his days. But the Enemy would not be patient, when he saw this prosperity and these sublime events, and how the patriarch established the divine precepts in the hearts of the faithful, and the liberation of the captives who returned through his prayers. Therefore Satan discharged his arrows against the Church of the east. For he influenced one of the metropolitans of Cyriacus, patriarch of Antioch, named Abraham, so that he spoke perverse words of the mysteries of Christ, such as we should have no desire to record, were it not necessary, lest the hearing them should defile the ears of

the faithful and pure. For I know that you are surrounded by grace at all times through that Light of men, Saint Mark; since by the prayers of our father the evangelist there will never be a lack of grace. The error into which that metropolitan strayed was by blaspheming against the mysteries. Then when our father Mark heard of it, he was greatly grieved and said : «What should we gain if we were at all times of one accord in the faith, when this strange doctrine appears in the Church of Antioch? This grief of mine is on account of the union of the orthodox fathers, to which we and they cleave; and above all on account of Paul's words : «If one member of the body suffers, all the |417 members suffer;

and if one member of the body is glorified, the whole body rejoices with it.» This the holy Mark, the patriarch, said, while he was praying to the Lord. And because he cared greatly for the Faith and for union with the Antiochenes, he wrote to the Father Patriarch Cyriacus a letter of which here is a copy : «A report has reached us of the seed that Satan has sown in your holy Church in the error of Abraham. Therefore our Church mourned; and we assembled together on that account, because we never heard before these days of anything out of harmony with our union in the orthodox Faith, and with that which the Lord joined together, when he brought us all into the true light. And now we have become like those who have taken a prisoner, and offered him as a gift to the king; but while he is making provision for him, he is attacked by a strange nation, which takes possession of the captive. But I trust in that king, with whose weapons we are armed to fight his enemies, that he will speedily put his enemies to shame, and deliver the captive from their hands. Therefore, O blessed father, neglect not to seek out the erring one, and feed him with the food with which the sick ought to be fed, namely the word of God. As the teacher Paul wrote to us, saying :

Receive the weak in the faith, and help them, not with disputations on opinions, but by the exercise of the art |418 of healing. Human bodies are cured by those who understand their sickness. Through proper treatment of the sick, they are restored to health and grow strong. Thou art now a physician of souls, and, by the power of the doctrine of our Lord Christ, thou wilt remove the disease implanted by the enemy. Salutation to our holy and blessed Father! Amen. »

When this letter reached Cyriacus, patriarch of Antioch, he admired the solicitude shown by this holy man, and strove with all his might to bring back that sinner, but had no power over him. For Satan continued to incline Abraham's heart; and finally a number of his brother bishops in the regions of Antioch joined him, and went astray with him in this error. Then the people of the east called them Abrahamites; and they separated themselves from the Church and the orthodox Synod.

When our father Mark returned to Alexandria, after the building of the church known by his name, the orthodox rejoiced and were all filled with divine emulation. And Solomon, the pious magistrate, and a band of Christians with him, visited our father, and prayed him earnestly, saying to him : «The whole land of Egypt is filled with joy through the building of the churches, especially that church which thou hast built at Misr. And thou, our father, knowest that during the lifetime of our father, Abba John, we begged him to rebuild the

church of the Lord and Saviour, and to enlarge it and increase it, because it stands in the midst of the city. But |419 the work was not done, and the church has remained as it was till now. Therefore we ask thee to let us see this joy in thy days.» But the good shepherd answered and said to them : «You know the jealousy of these neighbours of yours. When we begin to do the work that you have mentioned, they will present petitions to the governor against us, and complain of us; and so we shall fall into trials such as we endured many times from them, I and my father John, during the building of the church of Michael the Angel, also called the church of Repentance.» Nevertheless as often as he spoke to them thus, they begged him again and urged him still more, saying : «Thy holy prayers will be a strong wall for us, so that this monument may be completed». And when he saw the strength and ardour of their faith, he consented to their request.

Then Abba Mark gathered together a body of workmen and architects. And he laid the foundation in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this church stood in the midst of the city. So the patriarch used to rise at the time of prayer and at cockcrow, that he might witness and superintend the progress of the building, as if he were one of the architects; for the Lord had granted him all wisdom. And Abba Mark counted his labour rest, because he loved good works and the building of churches. And while he went on building the aforesaid church, through the grace of the Lord which |420 descended upon him, he adorned it with all kinds of decoration, until it became a sadness to the Chalcedonian heretics, and a joy and delight to the faithful orthodox. And on the 17th. day of Tût, the feast of the Cross, the bishops who were in the district of Alexandria, with other neighbouring bishops of Egypt, assembled together; and the church was consecrated in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. How great was the joy on that day, with the singing of hymns and pronouncing of blessings and glorifying of God, as the heavenly orders do in the highest! And the patriarch gave large alms on that day to the poor and needy. How many were the works of the glorious father, Mark the patriarch! For they cannot be counted, nor can my feeble tongue describe them.

In those days the father appointed a superintendent over the patriarchal service. But that superintendent was full of jealousy and malice against all men, and especially against a secretary of our father Abba Mark, whom he accused of all wickedness, in order that our father, the patriarch, might cast out that secretary, and commit the care of the church to the superintendent by himself alone. And although our father restrained him, and forbad him to say such words, yet he would not receive the medicine from the physician. So on a certain day, namely the 16th. day of Tubah, when the holy father was about to commemorate the death of the father John, who went to his rest on that day, that wicked man appeared, and began to calumniate the brother and secretary, as Joseph's brethren did to him. Then the |421 patriarch said to him : «Now is thy malady dangerous. Now we have tried upon thee every means of saving thy soul; but instead of checking thyself thou growest worse. Therefore now let thine injustice rest upon thine own head, as the prophet says in the psalm ». And there was near them a picture, in which the glorious Lady Mary was painted with the Lord Christ in her lap; and it was set up in the chamber where the patriarch sat.

So that superintendent looked upon it, and, stretching out a finger of his right hand, he said : «By her power, if I have told a lie in that which I have related, may this picture take vengeance upon me!» Now hear the bitter fate that befell this wretch according to the denunciation of that holy prophet, who spoke with authority. For he uttered against him words full of terror, like the words of Daniel the prophet to the two old men who contradicted the testimony of the chaste Susanna, saying : «O thou that art grown old in wickedness, the angel of the Lord shall strike thee and cut thee in two, as he did to those who bore false witness against Susanna». And at that moment, when the words which came from his mouth were ended, that wretched man fell at the patriarch's feet upon his right side, that being the side of his right hand, which he had stretched out towards the picture with evil intent; and he was struck with paralysis of one side, which lasted to the day of |422 his death. Therefore, when men saw this miracle and this terrible occurrence, they all feared the patriarch's words, which were like the words of the prophets.

Now my lords and fathers, and ye children of the orthodox, I told you at the beginning that I could never give a perfect account of the deeds of my fathers, as the greatness of those deeds deserves; for I am like the gleaner after the reapers. And I have no illuminating wit, because I am plunged in the darkness of my sins. Yet from reliable and truthful persons, who were constantly ministering to our holy fathers, we have heard the narratives which we are relating in part. I will therefore give a further description of that which was manifested by this father, the patriarch Abba Mark, that you may marvel and glorify God for the mercy and compassion which he shows to his elect. As Paul says : «For those that love God he does every excellent work».

There was in the time of this saint a great plague of locusts, which appeared in the province of Al-Buhairah and near Alexandria, and devoured all the fruits of the earth and of the vineyards. As it is written in the Psalm : «He spoke, and locusts and grasshoppers came, and ate up all the green things on the earth». So the father was sad when he was informed of this calamity. And he bade the orthodox people proceed forth with incense |423 and crosses and books of the gospel, and pray the merciful God to remove from them the wrath which had descended upon them. And the father went out with them and besought God in his heart with abundant tears. Thus they marched outside the city to the place where the locusts were, as Abba Mark directed them. There they saw the locusts, which had flown up high into the air; and there were so many of them that the air was darkened. And the tears of the people were mixed with their prayers. Then the patriarch said : «O Lord of mercy and pity, destroy us not for our sins and offences, but turn away from our transgressions for thy mercy's sake. As thou didst hear the people of Nineve, hear, O Lord, our supplication, and accept our petition.

And as thou didst hear the prayer of Moses in ancient times, and drive away the locusts from the land of Egypt, so hear our request to-day, and look upon the tears of thy people and their sighs which come from the depth of their hearts, and remove this wrath from us». If we did not abhor prolixity, we would fully report all the prayers and humble supplications

that they offered, and their ardour and their weeping. And God is the Mighty one, who hears the prayers of his servants, and delivers those that cry to him. How great was that miracle, in no respect less than that which took place in the days of Moses! How great was the power of Christ in our father the patriarch! For at that very hour the locusts flew away over the heads of the people, and afterwards |424 came down again upon the waves of the sea, where they all perished, through his prayers.

Hear now, my fathers and brothers, a thing at which your hearts will rejoice on account of the gift of divine mercy, which God gave to this father. After this event, while he was returning from Misr, and was making a visitation of the people, he passed through a town now called Agharwah, but in former times Aghra. And the clergy came out to meet him according to the custom, that they might chant before him, with a body of the laity, chief men and leaders of the people; and he blessed them and prayed for all of them. And there came out among the others a person possessed by a devil, which threw him down in the midst of the people, and choked him until foam flowed from his mouth. So our father, when he saw that man, pitied him and was sorry, and being filled with the Holy Ghost, said to the people : «Bring him to me.» Then Abba Mark signed that man's face with the sign of the Gross, and said : «O Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Word of the Father, who didst confound the devils and free thy creatures from them, thou art he whom the devils recognised, and thou art he who didst cast them down to Hell, wherefore they cried : What have |425 we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God, art thou come to destroy us before the time when we shall be chastised?

Now, my Lord Jesus Christ, drive away this unclean devil, and cast him out of this man!» And when he had said this, the man fell upon the ground, and became unconscious and tranquil as if he were asleep; and when he arose, a moment afterwards, the devil had left him through the patriarch's prayers. So that man threw himself at Abba Mark's holy feet, and thanked God for the deliverance thus granted. Then the father repeated to him the words, addressed by Jesus in the gospel to the man with the withered hand, after he healed him : «Thou art made whole, therefore sin no more, lest worse things than this befall thee . And beware how thou goest up to receive the Holy Mysteries, and learn that the punishment which overtook thee was because thou didst communicate of the Holy Mysteries unprepared. Therefore guard thyself from vain words, which come forth from thy mouth.»

You have seen then, my friends, this excellent grace of which our father, the patriarch Abba Mark, was counted worthy, and that by the word of his mouth he cast out devils by command and with authority, like the pure apostles and disciples of Christ. He also anointed many of the sick with oil in the name of the Lord Christ, and prayed over them, and they quickly recovered their health. And if any objector say : «Why did he |426 not cure himself of the painful sickness from which he suffered?», let him read in the scriptures, and he will find that God declares that he tries his elect by sicknesses and trials. So, for example, he tried Job the truthful by leprosy; and Joseph by his being cast into the pit by his brothers; and Daniel with the fierce lions; and the three youths in the furnace of fire; and Isaias with

the wooden saw. But the prophets and good men of this class are many, and if we were to relate all that each of them suffered, the volumes would not contain it. For if the shadow of the apostle Peter passed over a sick man in the way, he was healed of his sickness; and therefore the sick used to sit in the road which Peter would traverse, and then his shadow passed over them, and they were healed. And Paul had a pustule in his leg, from which he suffered, and which he could not cure;

but God only tried him thereby in mercy to him, lest he should magnify himself when he was working miracles in the name of Christ. Simeon, the hermit, also suffered from inveterate ulcers, which he could not cure; although by his prayers he healed the blind, and cleansed lepers, and did many works; and he continued in his sickness three years. And our holy |427 father, Abba Mark the patriarch, continued in his pains twelve years. Yet he used to give thanks to God, saying : «I thank thee my Lord and God, because thou hast counted me worthy of these sufferings like Lazarus the beggar.» And the people and all the land of Egypt remained in peace and prosperity all his days.

But Satan, the hater of good, would not endure patiently, because he saw Abba Mark's works and wonders, which increased every day. Therefore he began to raise up seditions against the land of Egypt, and there was mourning in every place, including Alexandria. And great trouble came upon the patriarch, such that no man who hears of it can refrain from weeping. Now therefore I will relate to you that which happened.

In those days Hârûn ar-Rashîd had died at Bagdad; and his son Muhammad, called Al-Amîn, sat in his father's place. The cause of offence was that Hârûn ar-Rashîd before his death had assembled the chief personages of the empire, and said to them : «After me, the caliphate belongs to my son, the lord Al-Ma'mûn.» But when Muhammad al-Amîn heard of this, he was filled with anger, and gathered a host together, and made war upon his brother. But Al-Ma'mûn killed Al-Amîn, and sat upon the throne of the empire. When the strife broke out between the two brothers, a certain rebel arose, and assembled an innumerable army, and kept the road between |428 Egypt and the East. And he robbed those that were journeying to Misr or Upper Egypt or Abyssinia or Nubia of all their goods; so that travelling was interrupted on the roads and all the tracks through fear of him. This attack upon Egypt lasted long on account of the disturbed state of the government of Bagdad. And the insurgents rose against the government in Egypt, and gathered the taxes for themselves. There was among them a man, called Abd al-Azîz al-Jarawi, who seized the land from Shatnûf to Al-Faramâ, with the eastern province of Egypt, Bilbais and its territory. And there was one named As-Sarî, son of Al-Hakam, who took the country between Misr and Aswan. These two men took possession of the revenues. Moreover those that are called Lakhm and Judhâm, the two tribes, seized the western part of Egypt and the districts of Alexandria and Maryût, and ruled over the whole of Al-Buhairah. These two tribes were generally at war one with the other, and plundered one another; and the country suffered greatly from them. So when they reduced the city of Alexandria to extremities, the inhabitants prayed, and implored the Lord's help, and begged him to deliver them from this tyrannical people.

Now there was in those days to the west of Alexandria a monastery, known as the Monastery of Az-Zajâj, at which there was an aged hermit, endowed with grace to see through the Holy Ghost signs and visions; and his name was John. And he said to the Alexandrians prophetically : «I see that you are distressed by this people. In the same way, believe |429 me, a nation will come from the west, and will destroy without mercy this people and this city, and plunder all that it contains.» And after he had said this, Alexandria was invaded by a host of those who are called Spaniards, laden with much booty from the islands of the Romans. And they continued to make raids from Egypt, as they had done elsewhere, upon the islands of the Romans, plundering them, and bringing the captives to Alexandria, and selling them as slaves. Therefore when our father Mark saw these captives, he was grieved because human beings were sold, as if they were cattle; moreover many of them became Muslims. And because his heart was compassionate he redeemed many of them, such as monks and priests and deacons and virgins and mothers of children, until he had bought as many as six thousand souls. When he purchased one of these prisoners, he wrote a deed of emancipation for him on the spot, and gave into his hand a letter which set him free.

And Abba Mark said to those whom he liberated : «If any of you wish to settle with me, he shall be as my son. But to him that desires to return to his native country I will give the means of bringing him to his own people.» And many of them, when they saw his deeds, settled with him. And he placed them with teachers, who taught them the Psalms and the doctrine of the Church. But to those that preferred to go back to their people he gave provisions for the journey and all that they required. Then the report of him and what he did was spread abroad in the kingdoms and among the officials |430 of the various states, and he gained a fair fame among them. Therefore Satan was filled with envy against him on account of his deeds, and brought trials upon him and showed the sting of his wickedness.

There was in the city of Alexandria in those days a governor of high lineage among the Muslims, named Omar son of Mâlik. But the tribes of Lakhm and Judhâm and Madlajah rose against him and sought to slay him, that they might take possession of the city. So they began to fight with him, but could not prevail against him. And there was among the Spaniards a very old man who had come to Alexandria in his youth, and was skilful in all guile and deceit; and he acted as mediator between the tribe of Lakhm and the Spaniards, in order that the latter might assist the former to kill the governor; and they all came to an agreement upon this matter. Accordingly the Spaniards joined the Lakhmites on the 10th. day of Ba'ûnah, in the year 530 of the Martyrs; and, after the old man's suggestions had been accepted by them, he acted as their guide in this deed. Then they killed the governor and took possession of the city. And that which happened subsequently is such as to sadden and grieve us. For on the day after the murder of the governor, namely the 11th. of Ba'ûnah, there was a quarrel between the Lakhmites and the Spaniards; and instead of peace hostility and war broke out. And there was an encounter between |431 them, and the fighting did not cease till night, when the Spaniards were victorious.

When the Alexandrians saw these things, they drew their swords and marched into the streets and lanes and baths and houses, and killed any of the Spaniards that they found in any place; and the number of those whom they slew was eighty souls. When the combatants parted, and the Lakhmites fled, the Spaniards enquired after their comrades; and, having been informed that the Alexandrians had slain them, were filled with fury like fierce lions, for they were very courageous, and drew their swords, and sallied forth raging through the city, and killed all the townsmen that they met, whether Muslims or Christians or Jews. And wherever the Spaniards found one of their comrades who had been slain, they burnt that place with fire. Thus when they reached the church of the Saviour, which is called the Soter and was rebuilt by our father Mark, they found some of their nation lying at its doors, because the Muslims had killed them there in the houses, and carried them out and cast them by the door of the church. This sight exasperated the Spaniards; and at that moment there appeared a wicked old man, looking down upon the street from the roof of the houses; and he was Satan who appeared in that form. And he said to the Spaniards : «I saw the master of this church kill your comrades.» Then they |432 set fire to the church; and the conflagration spread so far that it consumed buildings at a distance from the church.

When our father heard of this calamity, he wept bitterly and was exceedingly sad. For those men slew a countless number of people, and pillaged and burnt many buildings. After this narrative we now desire to speak of the sufferings which entered the heart of our father, the patriarch Mark, especially with regard to the church of the Soter. He lamented in the words of the Psalm : «O God, the heathen are entered into thine inheritance, and have defiled thy holy temple. They have turned Jerusalem into ruins like the darkness of a prison. They have made the dead bodies of thy servants food for the birds of the air, and the flesh of thy saints for the beasts of the earth, and have shed their blood like water around Jerusalem, and they have none to bury them». Then he descended from his throne, and sat on the ground, and continued this lamentation, as the blessed Job says : «I was in peace and he scattered me abroad, and stripped my garment from me, and shot his arrows at me». These and similar words he uttered, and did not break his fast that day nor that night; and none could make him sit upon his throne nor even on a mat; but he lay upon the ground mourning. Then at midnight he arose to pray according |433 to his custom. And early on the next day he went out in company with two of his sons.

And he said : «O holy city, in which much slaughter has been committed, and of which the enemy has taken possession! O throne on which I believed that I should never sit! O home of my holy fathers, clothed with light, where they died in joy and gladness, while I have become a stranger therein for my sins!» This he said; and then he went forth from the city, and journeyed from place to place, crossing rivers of waters and passing over difficult ground. In this state of distress he remained during five years after his departure from the city, like one who has been taken captive. Yet all this time he used to thank God day and night.

What trials befell the children of the church at that time, and the fathers and bishops, and the chief of the laity! But they used to come to the patriarch, and console him, and consult him; and each of them begged to be allowed to entertain him as a guest, in order to receive his blessing; but he would never consent. And the pious official Macarius, son of Seth, a native of Nebrûwah, was of the diocese of Samannûd. Therefore when he heard what had happened, he arose and went to the residence of Abd al-Azîz, who was in possession of the eastern provinces, and solicited his protection for the father patriarch, Abba Mark, saying : «The tribes which have conquered Alexandria have robbed him of all his goods, and he has left his |434 see, and is come to live beneath the shadow of God and thy shadow. Therefore, if I have gained any favour before thee, write him a letter in thine own name, that he may be encouraged by thy command to dwell in his place in confidence».

Then Abd al-Azîz wrote an urgent decree, as the pious official requested. At that time the official acted the part of Dorotheus, the magistrate of Sakhâ, with whom the holy father Severus lodged until he died; for he sent messengers from his house with the decree of the Amir to the father patriarch, praying him to come and live in the dwelling of that official. So our father the patriarch arose and prayed, and journeyed till he arrived at Nebrûwah. And the official came forth with all his household to meet the patriarch, in honour of his primacy, and, on seeing the father, prostrated himself before him in the power of his faith, saying : «The Lord has done for me to-day a merciful deed in bringing thy Paternity to lodge at the house of thy servant. For I believe that thy coming to us will be a blessing and a healing to our souls». Thereupon he conducted him to the church, with chanting before him, as the rule for the patriarchs is. Afterwards he established him in a place befitting his primacy, in a building erected by that magistrate's parents, and dedicated to Saint Macarius of Wadî Habîb.

But in spite of all these troubles the holy father did not relinquish his care for the holy churches at Alexandria, and the patriarchate, and the |435 church of the martyr Saint Mennas at Maryût, nor for the union of the separated members of the church of Antioch, who had been led astray by the metropolitan Abraham and his followers. While Abba Mark was taking thought for these matters, the Lord removed the father Cyriacus of Antioch, and he went to his rest. After him an excellent person, named Dionysius, was elected. When he took his seat upon the throne, he began to make gentle advances to Abraham, and brought back many of those who had erred in his company; and they showed signs of repentance, and confessed their error. As soon therefore as our holy father Mark heard of this, he rejoiced greatly, and hastened to write a letter to the father Dionysius, patriarch of Antioch, expressing interest in the conversion of the erring. The opening of the letter was thus : «Blessed be the Lord and God of glory, who has never ceased to care for his flock, that is his Church, those whom he bought with his pure Blood and taught at the beginning. Verily thy Paternity will become by his holy name, as he testified of Paul : He shall be for me a chosen vessel in my Name before kings and gentiles.

So by his holy will he has elected thee especially at this time to which we have been assigned, and which is the end, as the blessed apostle says . Now I beg thy Paternity to offer many prayers and supplications to the merciful Lord Christ, our God, that he may guide us and his Church, since we are in |436 great poverty; for by his inscrutable decrees he will finish what he has begun». Abba Mark continued : «The gentiles have entered his inheritance, and defiled our holy temples, and made the great city of Alexandria like a prison, through the fighting that has taken place therein between the tribes. At last the slain found none to bury them; and many of their corpses became food for the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth». Such were the thoughts which he expressed, because these events were like that which is written concerning Jerusalem in the Lamentations of the prophet Jeremias, with reference to the fate of that city after the Resurrection of the Lord Christ, when, in punishment for the sins of the misbelieving Jews, God sent against them Titus, prince of the Romans, the miscreant Magian, to do to them what is described in the second part of the writings of Josephus, son of Cyrtus, who undertook to compile the history of the Jews. «For this reason,» pursued the patriarch, «we quitted the city because of what we had witnessed therein. For they refrained not from slaying and plundering and burning.

And there was none to hinder them. Therefore we have chosen to live in exile, and to pray to the Lord Christ our God. These things we desired to make known to thy Paternity. But there is great sorrow on account of those that have separated themselves from the Church, through the fault of him that is called Abraham! |437 Therefore when we heard recently that some of them have sought repentance, and are returning from their errors, we rejoiced greatly, and forgot the griefs which surround us. For if there were unity in the holy Church, and she remained at peace, graces would be doubled among us. Now, my holy Father, we know the mercy of the Lord Christ, our God, who came into the world not for the sake of the good, but for the sake of sinners. Therefore open to them now the door of repentance, and lead them to the way of truth, that the heavenly orders may rejoice at their return, because they are numbered among the children of light».

When this letter reached the father Dionysius, he, as well as the whole Syrian people, was much pleased by the forethought and goodness of our father, Abba Mark. And by this means the patriarch brought back those that had gone astray in those days, when they heard his letter, all but a few who continued to adhere to Abraham, the source of their error, and who are called Abrahamites to this day. So the Church of Antioch rejoiced greatly. Then the father Dionysius, patriarch of Antioch, wrote a synodical letter to the father, Abba Mark, to show him the bond of charity which existed between them, and to thank him for his love and care for the salvation of all men. For this there was great joy in the land of Egypt and in the East, on account of this unity; and they glorified God. |438

But when God's favour had thus been shown, Satan, the perpetual adversary of peace and supporter of evil, would not endure it. Therefore he began to bring great trouble upon the desert of Wadî Habîb, which is a place where the Arabs dwell. Now the desert of Wadî Habîb had been like the Garden of Eden. But the Arabs plundered it, and took the monks captive,

and demolished the churches and the cells there. And the holy seniors were scattered in every part of the world. When therefore the father, Abba Mark, saw such a calamity, this saint and mine of spiritual charity, whence love and faith abounded towards all men, especially those in the holy desert of our fathers, meditated on these things. And he could not bear this grief, but besought the Lord from the depths of his heart, repeating the words of David in the Psalm : «My heart is disquieted within me, and in my reins a fire is kindled. O Lord, let me know my end; for my hope is vanished, and I have no harbour of safety where I can be secure. For the joy of Egypt has ceased, and Wadî Habîb, the Holy of Holies, has become a ruin, the dwelling of wild beasts. The homes of our blessed fathers, who passed their nights in prayer, have become the resort of the owl and the dens of cruel foxes, namely this |439 foul tribe.» Thus our father did not cease to weep night and day for the distress and grief which had come, and especially for the ruin of the holy monasteries and their churches.

So when the Lord saw these trials and griefs which this holy man was enduring, he desired to give him rest from the treachery of this world. Accordingly he was attacked by a fever during a few days. Then Mark the evangelist appeared to him in a dream on the 17th. day of Barmûdah, which was the Sunday of Easter that year, and said to him : «Rejoice, O Mark, my trusted successor; rejoice, O champion of the Truth! Behold the Lord Jesus Christ grants thee this favour, that he will transfer thee to his eternal mansions on the day of his holy Resurrection. Be ready to meet him this night, when thou shalt be parted from this body. And this shall be a sign to thee. When thou shall partake of the Holy Mysteries, God will receive thy soul to himself.» Therefore the holy father on awaking said to the bishops sitting with him : «Hasten to celebrate the Liturgy in honour of the Resurrection of Christ our Lord.» But as the fathers and bishops saw him much agitated, they did not wish to leave him; nevertheless, after he had made the sign of the Cross over them, they did as he desired, and said the Liturgy. And when the Liturgy was finished, they brought the Chalice to him; and he partook of the Body and Blood of Christ our God. Afterwards, having said to them : «I |440 commend you all to the Lord», he opened his mouth and gave up the ghost.

O how great was that sorrow which fell upon all the orthodox! Thereupon they gathered around his body, and read the appointed office over him, and enshrouded him, and laid him in a wooden coffin, which they placed in the church of Nebrûwah, until God should permit its removal to Alexandria. Abba Mark had occupied the see twenty years and seventy days; and he died on the 22nd. of Barmûdah, in the year 535 of the Martyrs, ruling the holy Church. He wrote during his pontificate twenty one books of Mystagogia, and twenty Festal Letters. And he went to dwell with the Saints in the Land of the Living. Glory belongs to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost for ever. Amen.

Vol. 1, Part 4 -- Mennas I to Joseph (849 AD) — JAMES, THE FIFTIETH PATRIARCH. A. D. 819-830

Before the decease of the holy father, Abba Mark, the holy desert of Wadî Habîb had been laid waste; and this devastation had so tried the |441 said father, that he besought the Lord to remove him from this world, and not to leave him to the sorrow which he endured for those monasteries, because of what they suffered at the hands of the miscreant Arabs, through their having taken possession of them and driven out our holy fathers who dwelt there, and killed many, and burnt the churches and the manshûbahs , that is to say, the cells, with fire. In consequence of this slaughter, the monks were dispersed among the cities and villages and monasteries, in the various provinces of Egypt and the two Thebaids. Thus none was left in the cells of Wadî Habîb save a few persons, who chose death, that they might redeem the life of their brothers by their own life, and so inherited eternal life by their endurance. And God protected them, so that none did them any further hurt or injury.

At that time there was in the monastery of our father Macarius a priest, called James, who shed light around him by his conduct. When the devastation of the monasteries began, he quitted them and departed to a monastery in Upper Egypt, that he might serve God there, while awaiting a time when he might return to the holy mountain of Mîzân al-Kulûb, or Wadî Habîb. And the Lord, the Lover of mankind, who knows the hidden secrets, which he reveals to his saints at all times, working his will among them, |442 performed a wonderful thing concerning this holy priest James, whom we have named, since he was counted worthy to receive a revelation. For while he was in his cell at prayer according to his custom, he saw a marvellous vision, in which our pure Lady, the Mother of the Light, appeared to him standing beside his head at night, wearing a great crown, and shining with a very great light, and accompanied by two angels. And the Queen of Truth said to him : «O my son James, what harm have I done to thee? It is I that have brought thee up from thy childhood, and preserved thee till now, since my beloved son elected thee from the time when thou wast in thy mother's womb, to set thee over his household; and yet now thou hast departed from me. Do not so, but rise up and return to the place which thou hast quitted.

For thou shalt be chief over a great congregation, namely those who have been chosen for the place of rest; and that time is near and not far off». Then a great fear fell upon him. But he had not two minds nor any manner of doubt concerning the dream which he had beheld; nay, he rose up quickly, and returned to the holy desert, Mîzân al-Qulûb. As soon as he arrived there, the Lord desired that he should be comforted, and caused the spiritual father Macarius to appear to him, saying : «Blessed is thy coming hither, O thou in whom the Lord has confidence! See now, be not of two minds, and doubt not concerning the dream which thou hast seen, for through thee my sons shall reassemble in their dwellings, from which Satan has scattered them». |443

Thus James continued among the monks who had remained in their places, comforting and consoling them day after day. After he had seen that dream, he grew in devotion and in good works, until he witnessed great and sublime wonders; and all those that saw the light that shone around him knew that God had chosen him. At that time God granted him a wonderful communication. While he was standing in prayer at night, and spending the rest of the night working with his hands according to his custom, fear and dread came over him, and he wept sore. His companions said to him : «What has befallen thee, my holy Father, art thou not asleep?» And he replied : «My sons, my thoughts have been caught up to high places, and I heard things concerning our holy father, Abba Mark, that he would remain patriarch forty years. But afterwards I heard another thing from the Lord, that he will take our father the patriarch to his rest this year. Therefore I wept with a burning heart. Then I prayed the Lord to choose him whom he will seat upon this throne for his merit». After these words he was silent. And only a short time passed after he had seen that vision before the holy father Mark first fell sick of his mortal sickness, as we have related that he prayed the Lord to remove him to himself.

And there were with the father Mark bishops, who prayed him humbly, |444 saying : «Our blessed Father, we beg thee to tell us what the Lord has revealed to thee. Who is worthy to sit after thee upon the evangelical throne?» But the holy father would not reveal nor declare to the bishops that he knew aught of this matter, only answering them thus : «The Lord has lighted the lamp, and set it on the candlestick, that it may give light to all in the house, which is his Church». But one of the bishops, in whom was a firm faith in the father patriarch, stood up and began to beg and adjure him, in the name of the Lord and of the holy see, to declare who it was that the Lord had chosen to sit after him upon the throne. Then he answered in a low voice and said to that bishop : «The holy James of the church of our father, Saint Macarius, is the man adorned by his deeds». And he commanded the bishop not to disclose this secret to anyone, and made him swear this for the sake of the Church, that they might see the glory of God perfected in him. After that the holy father died, as we have before related. O the great glory of the throne of Saint Mark the evangelist, and of all that sit thereupon!

For by the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Fire, they are chosen and elected through his descent upon each one of them. As the Lord said to his disciples and apostles : «Behold, I am with you all days even unto the end of the world». |445

Now I would recount to you a few of the deeds of the holy James, the priest, while he was a monk, before he was ordained priest, and before he sat upon the throne, if I did not know my incapacity, and that I cannot at all attain to an adequate description of the magnitude of his actions, and of the glory of the Trinity which surrounded him. For this reason I will abridge my discourse. As for his ordination and that which he endured at first, those things were a profit and a blessing to all the orthodox.

When our father, the patriarch Abba Mark, went to his rest, the Church and all the people mourned for him deeply, and above all the God-loving city of Alexandria, because they missed the sight of their father among them, and because of his absence from them. After a time the fighting and conflict ceased in Alexandria and Egypt, and among all the tribes of the Spaniards and Lakhmites and Madlajites. Then the people began to pray and beseech God to remember his Church, which he bought with his Blood, and to show them their shepherd, who should feed and console them in their trouble. So the bishops and the Christ-loving laity gathered together, to seek one who was worthy of this degree. And they mentioned many names, and among them that of the illuminator, James the priest. This was a dispensation from God, who placed this name in |446 their mouths because James was the one worthy of this primacy. Then the blessed bishop, to whom the deceased patriarch Mark had spoken of James, the pillar of light, mentioned this fact, and made the secret known to the assembled bishops. Therefore they cried with one voice : «He is worthy, he is worthy, he is worthy, whose deeds are as the deeds of the angels. He is of earth, and yet he is of heaven». So they hastened, and came to the desert, to the church of Saint Macarius, and took the priest James suddenly, before he knew.

And they conducted him to the city of Alexandria, while he wept, saying : «Blessed is the Lord! Alas for me, who am unworthy of this great honour! For I am unfit for this office and the great glory to which I am promoted». And he prayed God the whole of that night and day to remove him from this world, before investing him with this dignity. And behold, while he was weeping and praying for this release, he saw a wonderful dream, as he often did; for God consoled him, and said to him, as he said to Jacob , the ancient father : «Fear not James, for behold I go with thee to Egypt; and I will strengthen thee and be with thee in thy conflict, that thou mayest deserve the crown like thy militant brethren Severus and Dioscorus, whose life thine own resembles». Then he awoke trembling. Afterwards he was brought |447 into Alexandria, and consecrated archbishop with full authority and valid ordination. And he was counted worthy of this ---- that an aged monk, who had come out of the desert, when the open book of the gospels was held over the head of Abba James, beheld two forms, one of them like the picture of Dioscorus and the other like that of Severus, which grasped the gospels on this side and on that; and the name of the patriarch James was between them.

After he had witnessed this wonder, and while he was thinking upon it, he saw men conversing together, who said : «This man's conduct indeed resembles the conduct of these two men».

O my fathers, the life of this saint was virtuous like the life of the holy Severus! Moreover Abba James was an admonition to the heretics, because they stood in awe of him, and because of the excellence of his faith, and his confession and his office; and they held his words in reverence. For when he was enthroned, he delivered an admonitory discourse, in which he anathematized all the banished heresies, and the impure council of Chalcedon, and the Phantasiasts, that is the Gaianites, who deny the |448 lifegiving Passion of God the Word, which he accepted in the flesh. On a certain day the patriarch communicated the people, and then came to his residence. Now it was the custom of the Alexandrians that the heretics used to pray with them, in order to see their festivals and the glory of the patriarch. And they used to do this, that the orthodox might show the glory that God had given them to the heretics, and the works which he manifested for his people of the fathers, who came and sat upon the throne of Mark the evangelist. So the heretics did the same thing with the father and patriarch James; for a company of them were present, and saw him full of the grace of the Holy Ghost, while they were mixed with the orthodox. Thereupon he exclaimed, like Paul the apostle : «What fellowship has truth with error, or light with darkness? Or how does Christ agree with Satan?

Or what share has one that believes with a heretic?» Then he added : «Let these heretics and their congregation remain far from this faithful and blessed assembly! For as they have no share with us in spiritual things, so they shall have none in material things!» So all the heretics went out in shame and confusion through |449 the door of the church. And there was among them a rich man, who had been set over the collection of the taxes at Alexandria at that time, and had authority and superintendence among the Spaniards. Therefore that man quickly departed, and informed the superintendent of the revenue of what had happened, and accused the father patriarch, Abba James, declaring that he had excommunicated them. The heretic, on hearing this, was filled with wrath against our father, the patriarch, and uttered violent words, and sent a message to the father, saying : «I will make thee turn round in the church, when thou sayest Peace be with you, and not find a person to answer And with thy spirit». But our father, when he heard these words from the heretic, answered by the grace of the Holy Ghost thus : «Well did Isaias prophesy against this heretic, saying that his wrath and fury and imagination should return upon his own head. And thy violence and anger have come up to me, and therefore I will fasten thee with a bridle between thy lips. And he shall not remove from his place till this judgment be executed upon him;

and so his fate shall be. And I tell you truly that I shall not enter the church of the Lord before God shall swiftly carry out this sentence upon him». After that, a lawsuit was brought against this man, and he was put to death, and everything that was in his house was seized, and nothing was left that belonged to him. Therefore, when the heretics of Alexandria saw

this wonder that had |450 taken place, and the fulfilment of that which was said by the father, who was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, not one of them could say a word against him. And their own patriarch respected and feared him, and would not oppose him. And the good works of Abba James increased and grew more than those of his monastic days. And he did not look for the praise of men, but worked the works of God; and his mind was set on high like that of Paul the apostle , who did not cease to proclaim and preach the name of Jesus Christ, and to praise God.

And Abba James said to his people : «I hear that there are among you vain idlers. But I pray you to do your work quietly, and eat your bread, according to the words of the apostle Paul : I served with my own hand, and was not a burden upon you. And it is good to improve the lot of the needy». And he did not take from anyone, and little of this world's goods sufficed him; nor did he take up arms against misfortunes, as men do; but he ate his bread with tears. Yea, his works shone forth in his face. And all that he asked of God he gave him. And his word was sharper than a two-edged sword. Now I will inform you, my brethren, that in the days of this blessed father, Abba James, there was a near relation of his, named Macarius, who loved Christ; and he was a prominent official at Nebrûwah. This man, |451 when he heard that Abba James had been enthroned, rejoiced greatly, and glorified God who chooses his elect, and increased in almsgiving and in charity towards his brethren, and sent to Alexandria what was needed by the churches, on the ground that he was a kinsman of the patriarch. And Macarius honoured the bishops and respected them.

But famine and plunder began to reappear at Alexandria; and the patriarch could not find that which he was wont to give to the churches, for nothing was left to him. And the visits of the faithful from all parts to the church of the martyr Saint Mennas at Maryût were interrupted; and with them the patriarch used to trade. The cause of all this was the war and fighting that took place between the Egyptians and the Madlajites and Spaniards; and the scene of these disturbances was at Alexandria. And there was a deacon, named George, who was one of the chief of the clergy of Alexandria, and superintendent of the church of Alexandria. But he began to speak against this father, Abba James, and even said to him : «Thou shalt give us what we need according to custom, or else go back to the desert whence thou earnest». When the father patriarch heard this rebel speak thus, and perceived that he stood in no awe of the patriarchal dignity, but increased in his insolence, he said to him : «Henceforth thy foot shall never again enter through this door into this chamber». And the deacon went out in great wrath from his presence, and departed to |452 his own house, and did not beg for absolution from the holy father, nor did he repent. And a fever, accompanied by shivering fits, attacked him; so that they had to hold him on account of the violent convulsions which seized him; and he died on that very day.

When the patriarch was informed, he lamented deeply, and prayed God to absolve the soul of the deacon George from the bonds of excommunication with which he was bound, and to absolve him also from sin. And from the day on which that deacon died, death and dissolution visited all his household, and none of them has remained to this day. Therefore when

the multitude saw this wonder, and that the word of Abba James had authority like that of the apostles, they were awestruck, and trembled with tear; and none dared to rebuke him, for he was among them as a prophet.

On the approach of the Forty Days, the holy fast, the father resolved to visit the desert of Saint Macarius, that he might comfort and console the brethren and monks, and remain among them till the feast of holy Easter, as the custom of the patriarchs was. When he reached the desert, the monks rejoiced, and met him, crying : «Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord». And all the fathers and seniors came from their caves and from |453 the mountains, running like deer which long for the waterbrooks . And they received his blessing with great gladness. And this desert was like the Paradise of the Lord, through the prayers of the father patriarch and the assistance of the baptized Egyptians. The patriarch had a great affection for the desert, more than the monks had. And he acted there as Corneliusdid in his time; for he sent a message to all the fathers and to the cells, saying : «If anyone need anything for his cell, let him come and take it». For the barbarians had robbed them of all their goods, and wrecked the churches, and burnt the cells with fire. So when the monks came together again, they praised the Lord for the renewal of his favour upon them, and glorified God for these mercies. The father also rejoiced, seeing that the doves had returned to their former nest. In the days of his priesthood he had begun to build a sanctuary in the name of Saint Sinuthius, to the south of the sanctuary of Saint Macarius; and there the monks began to assemble instead of the ruined churches. Now he finished it, and restored the other churches. And they praised and glorified the Trinity, as the angels do.

But when Satan saw this, he roared like a lion, and prepared arrows to discharge against the patriarch and the Church. Now the patriarch had at that time a deacon, who was attached to him for his service, and who did |454 what he liked without taking advice. This deacon punished one of the disciples by a severe beating for something that he had done; and the blows were so many that the disciple died. And this accident was caused by the snares of the Enemy, the Devil. When therefore the Madlajites, the protectors of the monastery, heard of this crime, they seized the father patriarch, and troubled him on account of the death of that person, and demanded of him that he should deliver the deacon to them, that they might put him to death in retaliation for the murder. But the father strove hard to save the life of the deacon, whom he had brought up from his youth, and had intented to promote to a higher degree among the clergy. Thereupon the Madlajites, seeing that the father was greatly interested in that deacon, and would not give him up to them, grew violent in their demand, and required a large sum of money. But the patriarch had nothing with which to satisfy them, and therefore the bishops and the God-loving people assisted him, and contributed a sum of money, and so saved him from the hands of that tribe.

After this the blessed father James departed to Upper Egypt, to make a visitation of the people and the monasteries. And whenever the people and the monks came out to meet him, they glorified God, saying : «Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord». And

they marvelled at his works, |455 and said : «Blessed is our father, the new Elias». He remained among them a few days, and then returned. But they continued to boast of his deeds and excellent virtues. And our father remembered the unity and charity and bonds between himself and Dionysius, patriarch of Antioch, and desired to see him either by bodily presence with him or by interchange of letters. But he was hindered in this by the wars, carried on in the land of Egypt and on the roads to Syria; for they lasted fourteen years. And ho used to pray God to confirm the love between the two glorious sees, the Alexandrian and the Antiochene; and he implored God to join them together by personal intercourse and by letters. And God did not disregard the prayer of this father, but granted it by allowing him to behold the father Dionysius in the body. I will give you an account of this event, and of the trouble and distress that came upon the land of Egypt and upon the father James, the patriarch.

The Spaniards had possession of Alexandria, and Abd al-Azîz al-Jarawi ruled over part of the country. And the father was praying and weeping over the devastation of the land and the long continuance of the wars and fighting, and because the bodies of men became food for the birds of the air, and because Al-Jarawi did not cease to slay the people and take their goods. Al-Jarawi used to bury in the ground by night the money that |456 he had seized; and when he had buried it, he killed the men who had helped him to bury it, so that none might be left, who knew where his buried treasures lay. So in him the words of the prophet Michaeas were fulfilled, where he says : «These are they that meditate evil and wickedness; for they raise their hands to this, and take fields, and oppress orphans, and seize a man and his house and his heritage. Therefore, saith the Lord, I will bring evil upon their tribes, and what they purpose shall not be accomplished». For the judgment of God, the high and mighty One, came upon this man in the following way.

He had collected the wheat from the whole of Egypt, and stored it in the granaries which were under his own authority, saying : «I will cause a dearth throughout Egypt, and gather in their money, as Joseph's Pharao did, so that all my adversaries will submit to me.» And he did this, and there came a great dearth, so that wheat reached the price of a dinar for one waibah. And he refused to send wheat to Alexandria, aiming at the destruction of the Spaniards, who had taken possession of the city. So a waibah of wheat was sold at Alexandria for two dinars and one dirhem; and the people in the land of. Egypt found nothing to buy, and therefore they perished, especially at Alexandria. Then that proud man heard that the people had perished, and he opened his mouth and said a word, |457 which God did not say : «I will make them sell wheat at a kadah for a dinar». But in him the words of the prophet Nahum were fulfilled, where he says : «God declares : To me belongs vengeance upon my foe, and I will destroy my adversaries and my enemies swiftly». For the Lord pitied the sighs of men, and the dearth which he beheld, and the condition of the people, and took vengeance on that man Abd al-Azîz, as we will now relate. For he departed with his army to Alexandria, to fight the Spaniards; and they fled from him within the walls, and shut the gates.

And the blockade lasted until they were driven by hunger to devour the flesh of their horses. Meanwhile Abd al-Azîz was beating upon the walls with catapults, in order to demolish them; and it was his intention to destroy all the inhabitants of Alexandria with the sword. At the same time he was in pursuit of the patriarch, to whom he had sent a message, in order to intercede for a certain person, and to request the patriarch to make that person a bishop. But the patriarch refused to break the canon of the church. Nevertheless the pious Macarius, seeing how angry Abd al-Azîz al-Jarawi was, wrote to the father patriarch, and begged him to ordain that person bishop; and the patriarch consented to do so. Still Al-Jarawi was eager in pursuit of the patriarch, and declared that he would demolish the churches and slay the bishops everywhere, if the patriarch would not meet him. Then Macarius, |458 the magistrate of Nebrûwah, having heard of this threat, wrote a letter to the patriarch, saying : «Thou canst not avoid consenting to an interview with this man; for otherwise he will destroy the churches and kill the people». Macarius also swore to Abba James, saying : «I will give all my money for thee, that thou mayest suffer no distress». Thereupon the patriarch repeated the words of the prophet Isaias : «My life is not precious to me, but belongs to God;

therefore let the Lord see to my salvation, for I trust in him, and fear not what men can do to me ». So he went out to meet Abd al-Azîz. And there was with them a priest, who loved God, named Joseph, of the church of Saint Macarius; and this priest was counted worthy to sit upon the apostolic throne; and we shall record his virtues in this history. So while the patriarch was on the way, after he had finished his prayers, he said to the priest Joseph : «I trust in God, my son, that this man will not see us, nor we see him alive». And when morning came, a stone from the wall fell upon Abd al-Azîz, and his eyes were struck out of his face, and the top of his skull was fractured, and so he died. Thus on him was fulfilled the word of the prophet Zacharias : «He purposed evil, but did not attain to the performance of it». And he was extricated from the stones; and when his companions saw this, they carried his body away, and buried it in one of the hamlets. And they stopped their noses for the odour of him and the stench of his corpse. And when the news came to the |459 father, his friends who had been with him glorified God;

and, as they had heard what he said to them before the event, they exclaimed : «Our father, what thou didst foretell has been accomplished!» He answered : «My children, God has punished this man thus, because he desired to kill human beings by starvation».

Then the son of Abd al-Azîz became governor after him, and his name was Alî; and he did not act according to the deeds of his father. So there came a great abundance, such that men forgot the dearth, from which they had suffered. Therefore they said : «We praise thee, O God, on this day according to the words of the prophet Isaias . For thou hast been angry with us, and then didst turn thine anger from us and have mercy on us ; for thou art our Lord and our Saviour, and we trust in thee». At that time God looked upon the dispersion and separation of the monks, the sons of Saint Macarius, in every place, and so he brought them back to their holy dwellings. For this cause the father patriarch gave thanks to God, and glorified him, saying like the prophet David in Psalm 83 : «Thou hast brought us back

to life. Thy people rejoice in thee. Show us, O Lord, thy mercy and grant us thy salvation». And again : «He speaks peace concerning his people and his saints». Now the father, Abba James, saw |460 that the sanctuary of Saint Sinuthius was not large enough to contain the congregation of the monks; and therefore he rebuilt the church which is named after Saint Macarius, and which is the sanctuary of Benjamin. For it was in a state of decay, but Abba James adorned it with every kind of ornament, and, when it was completed, he consecrated it on the first day of Barmûdah. And this edifice became a monument to the patriarch, and a glory to the Lord.

Now Macarius of Nebrûwah, the magistrate, desired to see the father patriarch and congratulate him in his own dwelling, and therefore came to his house. A son had been born to Macarius, in whom he took delight; and he remained with the patriarch, and gave large alms, and did works of charity. And it was God's purpose to glorify the patriarch on this occasion; and so he manifested the following miracle. For after a few days the child fell sick and died. Then his father took him in faith, and brought him to the patriarch's cell, like the ruler of the synagogue, whose daughter Christ raised. And the magistrate said to the patriarch : «Help thy servant, for my son is dying». The patriarch replied : «Bring him to me». So he brought the child, and the patriarch received him, and made the sign of the Cross on his breast and heart and forehead, saying : «O Lord Jesus Christ, who givest life and bestowest grace from thyself, restore this infant to life for his father». Thereupon the breath of life returned to the child, and he |461 opened his eyes and moved his hands and feet. So our father said in a loud voice to Macarius, the father of the child, as the Lord Christ said to the ruler of the synagogue : «Thy son is not dead, but was asleep». And when the magistrate saw this great miracle, he was struck with profound awe of the patriarch, and glorified God, who works wonders among his saints.

And at that hour the magistrate increased in his almsgiving and doing good; and his alms flowed from his hands like a running and overflowing river, and he gave a third of his wealth to the widows and orphans, and clothed them with garments, and did all that it was right to do. And a report of these things reached the city of Jerusalem, whither Macarius the magistrate sent, and built a church there, which is now to this day the place of refuge of the orthodox, and of those who make pilgrimages to that city, in order to pray there. Macarius built this church as a monument of himself for ever; and it is called the church of the Magdalene. Therefore God blessed the work of his hands, and doubled his wealth, as he did to the holy Job. Moreover it was God's will to show this man a great and wonderful mystery for his abundant faith and charity, that God might give him the hope of eternal life. And on a certain day Macarius took an oath that he would carry out two resolutions, namely that he would never repulse any one who begged of him, nor shut his door in the face of any one.

Hear now what happened to him! He used to put faith and hope in the |462 intercession of Saint Theodore, who guided him in his conduct, and satisfied his wants. Now under the caliphate of Hârûn ar-Rashîd the taxes which Macarius had to pay were very heavy,

because of his large fortune and extensive possessions. So he left his home and went to the prince, in order to pay what was due from him, and was away so long, that he spent all the money that he had with him. For Macarius did not refrain from almsgiving, and could not have an interview with the prince. But there came a day when Macarius was proceeding to the prince's palace, and he perceived on the way a large mansion, highly adorned, which he had not seen before that day. So Macarius said to his servants : «We have missed our way, for we have never seen this house on our road before to-day». And he became like a person bewildered or without his senses. Then he beheld a shining personage, resembling one whom Macarius knew in Egypt, who came out of the house, and said to the official : «O Macarius, many days have passed since thou camest hither, and yet thou hast not visited me». And the magistrate, in the presence of those who accompanied him, answered his acquaintance, who approached and embraced him; and they kissed one another.

And the master of the house took the magistrate's hand, and led him into the building through many doors, and brought him into a chamber containing much money, which looked like kings' treasures, and said to him : «Take all that thou needest for thy expenses, and when thou shalt return to thine own country thou shalt repay me. Moreover today I will accomplish what thou requirest with the prince, and do all that |463 is necessary for thee». Accordingly the official, having received the money from the house of that bright being who was conversing with him, went out and handed it over to his servants, who had accompanied him and were standing at the door. And the man mounted his horse, and rode off in haste before the magistrate. So as soon as the latter approached the palace, the courtiers began to call for him, saying : «Where is Macarius, the Egyptian?» Then they took his hand and led him to the prince, who addressed him, saying : «Ask for all that thou needest and whatever thou requirest, so that I may accomplish it for thee this day». So the prince brought to pass that which Macarius desired. But the shining personage, who had accosted him, after having conducted him through the palace, and brought him outside, disappeared from beside him. The magistrate, seeing him no longer, supposed that he had returned to his own house, where the two friends had first met one another.

When, however, Macarius reached the spot where the mansion had stood, he found no trace of it at all. Thereupon the man gazed around, and lost his understanding for a moment. But after a time he comprehended that his benefactor was the great martyr Theodore, the commander of the troops, who had acted thus because Macarius had a devotion for him. Therefore Macarius glorified God and increased in charity and almsgiving and good works, and remained steadfast in this way of life until God removed him from this world.

Now let us proceed with the history of the patriarch Abba James. For |464 our only purpose in relating these incidents in the life of Macarius, the magistrate, was to show the value of the orthodox laity, since God does not desert them in this world nor in the world to come. As Paul the apostle says : «Cease not to do good, so that thou mayest reap what thou hast sown. As long therefore as our time lasts, let us do good to all men, especially to our brethren, the people of faith». Again he exhorted Timothy, his son, saying to him more concerning the

doing of good to the faithful. For he writes thus to him : «Charge the rich of this world that their hearts be not proud, and that they set not their hope and trust on the rich, for there is no profit in riches; but let their trust be in God, who gives us all things richly; and let our actions be good, and let our riches be in laudable works, that we may be upright and loving, so that we may have a firm foundation in the time to come, and may lay hold on the true life». Therefore accept my excuse, and hear from me the remaining deeds of this holy and inspired father, who was a prophet, and to whom God granted the gift of seeing hidden things from afar.

When God remembered the sick land of Egypt, that he might make wars to cease therein, he revealed the matter to the holy father, that it was near and not far off. So Abba James, as he had learnt that his archdeacon was |465 acting against his will in certain matters, called him and said to him : «My son, a governor will come soon to the land of Egypt, and rule over Misr and her chiefs and over Alexandria and all her province. Therefore when we come to Alexandria with the peace of God, beware of listening to any man, or of raising thine eye to anything that belongs to this world. For in that case thou wilt sin against the works of God, and we shall be abased before the heretical tribe, which God has abased before us with their wicked leader. Know then that if thou shalt neglect my advice, the Church of God will fall into great trials». Shortly after he had said this, there came to Egypt from the prince of the Muslims an Amir, named Abd Allah son of Tâhir, who was a good and merciful man in his religion, and loved justice and hated tyranny. Therefore God subdued all rebels under him, and humbled before him the tribe of the Spaniards who were at Alexandria. And he remained some days in Egypt until public affairs were settled.

Now let us return to the story of Abba James and his relations with Dionysius, patriarch of Antioch. Abba James had been unable to send a synodical letter on account of the wars in Egypt and the East. In this way the father patriarch Dionysius, since he was hearing of the works of the father patriarch Abba James, desired to salute him, while he was still in the body. Therefore when this Amir, on his way to Egypt, made an |466 agreement with the patriarch Dionysius, he travelled in his company as far as this country. Our father, Abba James, on seeing Dionysius, rejoiced with a great spiritual joy, and met him with the best of welcomes. And the whole land of Egypt exulted when those two beheld one another. And the Egyptian clergy chanted before them from the words of David : «Mercy and justice have met together, truth and peace have come to us». Then the father Dionysius, patriarch of Antioch, remained many days with the father, Abba James the patriarch, that each of them might be satisfied with the holiness of the other. But the bishops of Egypt began to lay complaints before the father Dionysius concerning the archdeacon of our father Abba James, «because he imparts to him all that we undertake or say».

Upon this the father Dionysius began as one who wished to remind this holy man, Abba James, that he should reprove the archdeacon, and that he ought not to be a cause of distress to the bishops, nor to address them unless he were required by the canons to do so. But when the pillar of light, Abba James, heard this, the spirit of prophecy flowed forth from him, and

he said to the father Dionysius : «How could the bishops send this message, and accuse one who is the elect of God and preaches him? But blessed is he, like him who worked for one hour in the vineyard , together with him |467 who had worked eleven hours, and received the wages for the whole day». When the patriarch Dionysius heard the words of the father, Abba James, and saw the Holy Ghost shining forth in his face, he prostrated himself before him and said, like the prophet David : «As we have heard so have we seen. I believe that I have beheld a man who holds with God the post of intercessor for the land of Egypt». Then he prayed our father the patriarch James to let him depart to his see. So Abba James gave him splendid gifts in proportion to his primacy, and then with the bishops bade him farewell in peace, glorifying and blessing God, because they had witnessed his holiness and comeliness and dignity and chastity.

And when Dionysius reached the East, the land of Syria, he discoursed on what he had witnessed of the holiness of our father Abba James, and thanked the Lord Jesus Christ, who glorifies his elect.

The Amir Abd Allah, son of Tâhir, on arriving in Egypt, appointed an Amir, who was one of his companions, as governor of Alexandria and collector of taxes there and in the neighbouring districts. And the name of him whom he thus nominated was Elias, son of Yazîd. At that time the |468 deacon of our father James, mentioned above, neglected the advice which he had formerly given him, namely that he should not raise his eyes to any of the things of this world, for he went to certain villages and levied a rate upon them, thinking that he would gain something for the Church thereby. For he did not know that the prophecy of the father James would be accomplished; and therefore both the father and the deacon fell into great sorrow through the taxes which they were compelled to pay, when they had not the means of paying them. And the blessed father repeated to that deacon the words of Paul, the wise apostle, saying : «It was not right for thee, my son, to make for thyself an argument, but to obey what I enjoined thee to do, in faith and love of the Lord Christ. Hast thou not heard, my son, what Paul said , that those who desire to be rich fall into trials and errors and foolish longings, which do not profit at all, but cast men into destruction and perdition? For the root of all evil is the love of money, which many have loved; and so they have gone astray from the faith, and drawn upon themselves great cares». Thereupon that deacon wept and begged the patriarch to pardon his disobedience.

Now that Amir began to act harshly towards the father in demanding taxes when he had nothing with which he could pay, as we related, through |469 the poverty of the Church, arising from the interruption of the pilgrimages to the church of Saint Mennas, the Martyr, in consequence of the continual wars. When Abba James found no means of paying the taxes, he brought forth the vessels of the church, to give them to the miscreant tribe. But the Lord, who loves mankind and shows his wonders at all times in his Church, and makes her victorious over princes in all ages, manifested a miracle, at which we must marvel. While the Amir was sitting one day that he might break up the vessels, and the goldsmith was breaking up one of the holy chalices, much blood flowed over his hands, like the blood of

a Lamb that had been slain. So when they saw this miracle, great fear fell upon them, and the Amir and all these that were present were afraid. And the Amir commanded that none of those vessels should be broken; and after that he feared to place them in his treasury, and therefore he ordered that they should be restored to the father. But he demanded the taxes with greater severity than before, and the patriarch was in great difficulties before he could pay the taxes that he owed.

Afterwards the Amir in the city of Alexandria was removed, and departed to his own country, where he was attacked by a mortal sickness. Many days later he remembered the great miracle of the issue of blood from the Chalice; and at that time he commanded his sons with insistence to send |470 to Egypt the money that he had taken from the patriarch, that it might be handed over to him who should be found to be patriarch of Alexandria. So his sons obeyed him. And this miracle was accomplished in the days of one who deserved that it should come to pass in his hands, as we will show to your charity at the end of this history.

Now hear another wonder which was also manifested in the days of this holy man, Abba James, the patriarch. While the Amir Elias was governor of Alexandria, a bishop, who held the see of Fau in Upper Egypt, died; and a person was sent to the patriarch, that he might consecrate him as successor to the deceased. But this man feared lest God should make his conduct known to the patriarch, who would then refuse him. Therefore he went to the Amir, and gave him money, and prayed him to command the father patriarch, Abba James, to appoint him. In consequence of this the Amir requested that the appointment might be made; but the father patriarch refused, because his faith and his attachment to the canons were strong. Those that were present, however, asked him, saying : «Wilt thou consent to the request of the Amir, lest evil befall both thee and the Church?» Thus they did not cease to cajole him until he appointed that man. But when the newly made bishop departed, Abba James uttered concerning him the following words, like those of Peter to Simon the Magician in his time; for he said : «In the place where this bishop expected to gain wealth, he shall disappear after a little while, and the wealth which he has acquired |471 shall be far from him». And when that bishop drew near to his diocese, he fell sick on the way; and he died before he could see his diocese.

Who now will not fear these wonderful works, and glorify God, who shows them forth in this chosen one? But if we were to record a few out of the many miracles and the noble struggles that we have heard related of this holy man, the account would be long. And we cannot explain such things, because our darkened understanding is too weak to deal with them. Yet we will relate what must be related, and describe the end of his conflict, for the profit of those that listen, and as a blessing to them.

When Abba James proceeded to the eastern provinces, to visit the churches and the people, and came to a village called Bait Tashmat, they brought to him a young man possessed by a devil, which had made him dumb and deaf; and they begged the patriarch to lay his hand upon him. Then the father took a little oil from the lamp which hung over the bones of Saint Severus, and anointed the youth therewith, making the sign of the cross on his face

and ears, and saying : «In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, who delivered his creatures from the service of Satan, may this young man be healed, and may the bonds of Satan be loosed from him!» And the young man was healed on the spot, and his mouth and ears were opened, and he both spoke and heard; and all that saw him marvelled, |472 and glorified God in truth. Now this father was in his holiness like the disciples, through the trials that he endured and the miracles performed by him; for he brought the dead to life, and cast out devils, and cured many that were sick. And our Lady, the Mother of the Light, appeared to him before he became patriarch, and the Lord Christ also, and the Saints whom he was counted worthy to see.

Then Abba James desired to remain a few days in the city of Tandâ, when he passed by it. And when he stayed there, one of the bishops, an honourable and trustworthy man, bore witness to us, saying : «I went to him, to pay him a visit and receive his blessing. And when I stood at the door of his chamber, I heard him say something in a low voice; and the words were : O my Lady, Mother of my Lord, I pray thee to pardon me, for I am ready to carry out what thou commandest me, and to observe it to my last breath». The bishop continued : «And when I was intending to show myself through the door within which he was, and before I could enter, he cried aloud at what he saw, and I was afraid through my respect for his dignity, and turned back. But I heard him say : God pardon thee, my brother, for having hindered me from beholding the glory and light of my Lady, and allowed her to depart from me.»

After the blessed patriarch had seen these great mysteries which were shown to him, he bore witness that no patriarch sits upon this throne except |473 those whom God chooses, but that Satan resists their advancement and hinders their doing good. There are indeed men who say in their hearts : «If we advance so far as to receive this degree, that is on account of our birth». But it is not so, for it is the Lord of glory who chooses. And the father Abba James said this before his death, that it is God who elects the man whom he will appoint; and although Satan tries to oppose him, it is God who prevails. It was the custom of this patriarch, when he purposed to appoint bishops, to watch and fast strictly, so that God might reveal their deeds to him. He used also to observe the anniversaries of the death of the fathers, from Mark the evangelist to Mark, his own father in the Spirit. On such days he used to keep festival in their honour, and put on his vestments, and celebrate the Liturgy, whether he were in the city or in the monasteries, or in the villages, to the glory of our Lord Christ, and in commemoration of his fathers.

And when God willed to give him rest from labour and translate him to the heavenly mansions of the illuminated, the Lord appeared to him, seated on a cloud of light, and accompanied by the twelve disciples, and said to him : «Have courage, thou good servant, who hast made use of the talents of thy Lord, and gained a profit. Now will I take thee to myself, and give thee rest from thy labours ; and thou shalt sit with thy companions, who carried on the warfare like thee, for thou hast become perfect like them». Now before this marvellous vision, Zacharias, bishop of Tandâ, had died; and the archdeacon, whom we have before

mentioned, and of whom we said that he |474 would be a chosen vessel of God, had been enthroned in his stead. So our father James fell sick, and his strength diminished; and on the 14th. day of Amshir he went to his rest, that being the day of the death of the holy father Severus. And at the fourth hour of the night they heard him saying : «Happy is your coming, my fathers Severus and Dioscorus». And again he said : «The whole world is absolved through the prayers of the saints». Thereupon he gave up his spirit into the hand of the Lord. And a sweet perfume exhaled from his body, and filled the whole chamber.

When morning came, they enshrouded his body. And they offered the Sacrifice in commemoration of the two blessed fathers, Severus and the father James. Thus the holy monk's vision of the two figures, which he saw consecrating Abba James with the gospel, was fulfilled. And so his life ended in a good old age, when he had held the evangelical see during ten years and eight months. He committed his flock to the Lord of Sabaoth, strong in the faith; and he was worthy to hear the voice saying : «Come to me, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the creation of the world». |475 The brother, who had prophesied of him, he ordained bishop; and he was firm and strong, and did not lay by for himself a single dirhem, but was rich in the works of the Lord, and in spiritual writings. He was counted worthy to close the patriarch's eyes, and to receive his last blessing. And in the strength of his faith he laid the body of Abba James in a coffin, and kept it in his city of Tandâ, that he might be blessed by its presence, and offer intercessions at its feet. And after a short time the bishop died, through the prayers which his father offered for him before the Lord Christ. To whom belongs glory, with his Father and the Holy Ghost, the Giver of life, the Consubstantial, now and for ever. Amen.

Vol. 1, Part 4 -- Mennas I to Joseph (849 AD) — SIMON II, THE FIFTY-FIRST PATRIARCH. A. D. 830

After the going to rest and departure to the Lord of the holy and glorious father, the patriarch Abba James, the chosen and elect of the Lord, and the pillar of light, through whose prayers God had scattered the armies and the wars and the ceaselessly fighting tribes, which prevailed over Alexandria and the provinces of Egypt, then a short time after his decease |476 they appointed as his successor, by the command of the most high God, a deacon and monk, whose name was Simon, a native of the city of Alexandria of good family. He was a son of the father, Abba James, and dwelt in his cell; and he had been brought up from boyhood with the late father Abba Mark. Abba Simon remained upon the evangelical throne five months and sixteen days. And he went to his rest on the third day of Bâbah. During the whole time that he occupied the see he was afflicted by the disease of the gout, from which he suffered greatly until he died.

May the Lord have mercy upon us through the prayers of all of these saints!

Vol. 1, Part 4 -- Mennas I to Joseph (849 AD) — JOSEPH, THE FIFTY-SECOND PATRIARCH. A.D. 830-849

So after the father Simon went to his rest, the orthodox people met in the city of Alexandria, and deliberated together with a view to the appointment of a patriarch, since the see was vacant. For it had remained without a patriarch after the father, Abba James, during a long interval; but then they had received consolation in the appointment of the father, Abba Simon. Then upon his death, their trouble increased; and they said, like the |477 prophet David : «Remember not, O Lord, my first offences, but let thy mercy reach us soon, for we are become very poor.» And all of them went about the city, and the community of the Alexandrians and the bishops sought and enquired who was lit to sit upon the throne. You are acquainted with the people of Alexandria, and are aware that they love material pleasures. Accordingly they devised an evil plan in those days, contrary to the canons of the Church. For there was at Fustât Misr at that time a man of family and wealth; and he and his kinsmen possessed gold and silver and furniture. He was the chief of the Divan of the governor of Egypt; and his name was the lord Isaac, son of Anthony. So, when the Alexandrians saw his position and his wealth, together with the consideration in which he was held, they wrote him a letter, saying : «We will not elect any man, to appoint him patriarch, except thee». But he was a layman and married to a wife.

So some of the bishops held aloof from this transaction of the hypocritical Alexandrians, who followed this man for the sake of human glory, not remembering that which is written in the fifty-second Psalm of David : «The Lord shall scatter the bones of those that act hypocritically towards men.» And again he says : «They are ashamed because the Lord |478 brings them to nought.» At that time some of the bishops visited Isaac, and paid court to him, saying : a We can have no patriarch except thee». The names of these bishops were Zacharias, bishop of Wasîm, and Theodore, bishop of Misr. These two men next persuaded Isaac to write a letter to Alexandria, promising to confer many benefits on the clergy and

people there, when he should become patriarch. For he said : «If I take my seat upon this throne, I will rebuild your ruined churches for you, and restore the dwellings attached to the churches. And I will relieve you of the taxes as long as I live, by paying them out of my own money for the clergy and the poorer laity». And he promised them many other things. Therefore when they heard all this, they were inclined to him, and desired him, forgetting the words of the gospel : «No man takes an honour of himself, unless it be given him from heaven from God».

But there were at that time holy bishops, such as speak the truth, and are filled with grace. Such were Abba Michael, bishop of Bilbais, and Abba Michael, bishop of Sâ, and Abba John, bishop of Bana; and there were many like them, perfect in faith and religion. And when they were informed of what the two bishops and the assembly of the Alexandrians had |479 done, the grace of God stirred within them, and they called together a synod concerning those two. And they proceeded to Alexandria, as the canon prescribes. Having subsequently verified the design of the Alexandrians, they said to them : «Where have you left the fear of the Lord, since you have broken the canons so far as to have recourse to a layman married to a wife, in order to seat him upon the throne of Saint Mark the evangelist, in opposition to custom and to the canons?» Thereupon the people were silent, knowing their fault, and uttered not a syllable in answer to the bishops. Then by the inspiration of God, who visits his people at all times, and makes his face to shine upon his heritage, mention was made of a holy man, perfect in good works; and his name was confirmed in the assembly by the dispensation of God's grace. This man was the shining lamp Joseph, the priest and superintendent of the church of Saint Macarius in Wadî Habîb. And when he was named, my heart rejoiced, and my tongue sang praises.

Now I should desire to relate a little of his life and the works which he did while he was a monk, only I fear to interrupt the description of the events which took place at his enthronement. Yet will I relate those things subsequently, that the hearts of those that hear the history of this holy |480 man may rejoice. When the assembly, together with the bishops and clergy, had accepted him, because they knew him when he was a lamp to the father, Abba Mark, then they sent some of the bishops and Alexandrian clergy to the Wadi. And while they were on the journey, they said thus : «If the Lord approves the appointment of this person, we shall find the door of his cell open». So when they reached the monastery on the morrow, and presented themselves at the door of his cell, they found him standing there, for he had come out to shut the door after his sons, who had gone to draw water. Upon this they marvelled, and looked one at another, saving : «What we said on the way is fulfilled. The Lord has made our journey easy; and we believe that God has chosen this holy man.» When this blessed one, steadfast in purity and humility, saw the visitors, he made obeisance before them, and saluted them, and at once conducted them into his cell.

As soon as they were within his chamber, they laid hands upon him, and put the iron fetters over his feet, and said to him; «Thou art indeed worthy of the patriarchal office». But he began to weep profusely, saying : «What is the use of an incompetent man, who takes upon

him this heavy yoke?» On hearing these words, they consoled him and pacified him. And they assembled in the church, and partook of the Holy Mysteries; for it was the feast of the Angel Michael, the 12th. of Hatûr. And Joseph received the benediction of the holy fathers, and |481 begged them to pray for him, that God would bring his course to an end. So they all prayed for him, and blessed him from the depth of their hearts, and bade him farewell, weeping because they had lost from their monastery a holy man, full of the Spirit of God.

So they started on their homeward journey. When they reached the top of the rock, Joseph being with them, they heard a voice behind him saying : «The Lord will be with thee, Joseph, and strengthen thee, that thou mayest endure the troubles which will befall thee, and by which thou wilt obtain the crown of life». The holy man and his companions, hearing this great voice, but seeing no one, marvelled and were amazed, and knew that great trials and bitter griefs would come upon him. Then they arrived at the city of Alexandria. And the multitude, as soon as they heard that the envoys had returned, came forth to meet them, singing praises and glorifying God. Then the people learnt from the envoys what had happened to them on the way, and how they had found the door of Joseph's cell open, and how they had taken him prisoner, and of the voice which they had heard behind them near the road of the Cherubim on the top of the rock. Therefore the people glorified God, who alone works wonders at all times.

After this they informed the Amir, who was governor of Alexandria, and was called Abd Allah son of Yezîd, that they had brought this holy man, in order to obtain the governor's consent and order, according to the perpetual custom before they consecrated the patriarch. But the governor |482 refused, and would not authorize them to appoint Joseph, saying : «Isaac, the son of Antony, of Misr, has sent to me, and promised me a thousand dinars, if he shall sit upon this throne. Therefore, if you have elected this man, give me the same sum that Isaac has promised me». Thus Abd Allah prevented them from ordaining Joseph for some days. But the bishops continued to visit the governor's house, begging and imploring him to give them his consent. Yet he refused, because he loved money. Then the bishops from the eastern provinces assembled, and said to him : «We are not under thy authority. Therefore, if thou wilt not grant our request, we will go to Fustât Misr and ordain him there.» So when he saw their firmness, and understood that they would do what they said, he gave them his permission.

So they met together in the Church of Mark the evangelist, as it is customary, on the 21st. day of Hatûr in the year 547 of the Martyrs. And they recited all the prayers in the sanctuary, and inaugurated the elevation of Joseph to the rank of patriarch, blessing and glorifying God.

Now I desire in this place to record the life of that blessed saint from his youth, so that all who hear it may glorify God, before I describe the end of his consecration, and the troubles which befell him, and which he patiently endured. This holy man was of a good family of repute in the city of Upper Manûf, and his fathers were well known among the chief men |483 of Egypt. When his parents were dead and the saint was left an orphan, an official,

named Theodore, who had the rank of metwalli in Egypt, and was a native of Nakyus, saw Joseph in this condition, and took him to himself, that he might make him his son for the love of Christ, and on account of his honourable kindred. So the child remained with that magistrate a long time. Then Joseph thought within himself : «Behold, I am now an orphan; therefore there is nothing better for me than the holy desert which is a place of refuge for orphans». So he went to the chief in whose house he lived, and who had brought him up, and begged him humbly for permission to depart to the holy desert. But Theodore replied : «O my son, thou art of an excellent family, and hast been brought up in the midst of wealth. Thou wouldst therefore be overcome by weariness in the desert, and couldst not endure its hardships.» Thus Theodore would not allow him to depart thither, but sent him to the city of Alexandria to the father patriarch, Abba Mark, to whom the magistrate wrote a letter, in which he recounted the history of Joseph's life, and confided him to the patriarch as a pledge.

So the holy Mark rejoiced over him, and put him under the care of a deacon, who had charge of the sons of the Cell at that time and was a learned man, that he might teach the youth to write in the Greek language. And God's assistance was with Joseph, and did not allow him to forget |484 his desire to retire to the monasteries. Accordingly, after a short sojourn with the holy Abba Mark, Joseph made a prostration before him, and prayed the patriarch to send him to the holy mountain. And the patriarch observed how he longed to go thither, and knew by revelation from God that the youth had found grace. For this reason Abba Mark speedily despatched him to the monastery of Saint Macarius, and placed him in charge with a holy priest and hegumen named Paul, whose mode of life was admired by all. For God revealed secrets to him, and enabled him to prophesy. So Paul, when he looked upon the young man, was pleased with him and with his good conduct and humility, and did not cease to nourish him with the holy teachings of the monks, and blessed him by night and by day, especially on seeing his modesty. Then Joseph was counted worthy to be made a deacon, and shortly afterwards to be ordained priest by the father, Abba Mark, the patriarch.

As the hegumen Paul grew old, he fell sick of various diseases, and Joseph, the young saint, served him day and night in hope and faith, in order to obtain his blessing. And the old man laid his hand upon Joseph's head, invoking upon him great blessings without number, and, on the approach of death, began to say to this young man, upon whom his spirit rested : «Behold, Joseph, the Lord grants thee his grace and his inheritance that thou mayest inherit it». Afterwards the |485 hegumen added, using the words of the Lord to Peter : «Return some time, thou also, and strengthen thy brethren, who have become thy partners in the labour of this ministry, and promote them among the clergy». For Paul had sons with him, who ministered to him, besides Joseph. And Paul's words were fulfilled when Joseph was seated on the throne, and those brethren of his in service were counted worthy of the grace of the diaconate and the priesthood for a time in the church of Saint Macarius. I have related this incident, that it may be profitable to all who hear it among the young monks, that they may learn that God chooses those who serve him with an honest intention.

Now I will return to the continuation of the history of this holy man, the glorious father Abba Joseph. When he had taken his seat upon the evangelical throne, since the Church had no real property, he began to make monuments, vineyards and mills and oil-presses, which were to belong to the Church. But Satan, the hater of good, as he is wont, would not endure this peace, and stirred up, at the beginning of Abba Joseph's pontificate, a great war in the eastern and western parts of Egypt, which led to universal plunder and slaughter. For there was much fighting throughout the country. In the words of the prophet Amos : «This is what the Lord, the Ruler, says. There shall be lamentation in all places». |486

So when the holy father saw these calamities, he mourned, and besought the Lord to protect and preserve the Church and the orthodox people, wherever they were. For the patriarch prayed, saying, like David in the 73rd. Psalm : «O Lord, remember thy congregation, which has been from the beginning. And thou hast delivered the rod of thine inheritance, mount Sion wherein thou hast dwelt. Raise up thy hand against their pride for ever, for many are the wicked deeds that the enemy has done». Thus Satan did not cease to stir up wars and murder. Two men at that time were overseers of taxes, one of whom was named Ahmad son of Al-Asbat, and the other Ibrahîm son of Tamîm. These two men, in spite of the troubles from which the people were suffering, persisted in demanding the taxes without mercy, and men were increasingly and incalculably distressed. Their greatest trouble arose from the extortion practised by the two overseers of taxes; for what they could not pay was required of them. After this the merciful God by his righteous judgment sent down a great dearth upon Egypt, so that wheat reached the price of one dinar for five waibahs. Many of the women and infants and young people, and of the old and the middle-aged, died of starvation, in fact of the whole population a countless number, through the severity of the famine. And the overseer of taxes was doing harm to the people in every place. And most of the |487 Bashmurite Christians were severely chastised, like the Israelites; so that at last they even sold their own children to pay their taxes, because they were greatly distressed. For they were tied to the mills and beaten, so that they should work the mills like cattle. And their tormentor was a man named Ghaith. So, after long and wearisome days, death put an end to their sufferings.

But afterward the Bashmurites, seeing that they had no means of escape, and at the same time that no troops could enter their country on account of the abundance of marshes which it contained, and because none was acquainted with the roads except themselves, began to rebel and to refuse to pay the taxes. And they came to an agreement and plotted together over this matter. Now the prince at that time was Abd Allah al-Ma'mûn, son of Hârûn ar-Rashîd. When the state of Egypt and the conduct of the conquerors and the overseers was reported to him, he sent an army thither under the command of an Amir, named Al-Afshîn. Then this man slew the conspirators and rebels, from the eastern parts of Egypt until he reached the great city of Alexandria. He even wished to kill all the inhabitants of Alexandria, since they had not fought, because they had allowed the enemy to enter their city. But God prevented his doing this on account of the tears of the faithful and the prayers of the patriarch, Abba Joseph. For Al-Afshîn used even to put the innocent to death

for |488 the fault of the guilty, so that he would have allowed no one that he could see to escape slaughter. And he killed many of the chief men of the Christians in every place.

The patriarch Joseph was grieved by these troubles that he witnessed : the plague and the famine and the sword. Meanwhile the Bashmurites developed their plot, and prepared weapons for themselves, and made war against the government. For they bound themselves not to pay the taxes; and they rose up against any one who came to them for the purpose of acting as mediator in their affairs, and put him to death.

When our father, the patriarch Abba Joseph, saw this rebellion, he mourned over those weak ones, for they had no power to withstand the government, and had deliberately chosen destruction for themselves. And since he was full of anxiety for the salvation of his people, and was their true steward, he began to write to the Bashmurites letters full of fear, and reminded them of the fate that would befall them, hoping that they might return and repent, and give up their disobedience, and cease to resist authority. But they refused to return to their obedience. Yet he continued to write to them every day, and quoted for them passages of the scriptures, saying : «Paul, the sweet-tongued, declares that whoever resists the power |489 resists the ordinances of God, and he that resists him shall be condemned». When the patriarch's letters by means of his bishops were conveyed to the Bashmurites, those wicked men as soon as they saw the bishops assaulted them, and robbed them of all that they had with them, and treated them with ignominy. Therefore the bishops returned to the patriarch, and made known to him what had been done to them. Then he said : «Destruction will not be slow in coming to those men. Yea, the words of the prophet Isaias will be fulfilled upon them, where he says : I will give you up to the sword, and ye shall all fall by slaughter; because I called you, and ye listened not to my words, but disobeyed and did evil before me».

On account of these troubles and sorrows which have been mentioned, the father patriarch was unable to write a synodical letter to his partner in the ministry and in the faith, the patriarch of Antioch. This omission caused Abba Joseph more auxiety than the trials which befell him. For indeed he did not find rest for a single day after he was enthroned, so that he could address to the see of Antioch a letter containing assurances of union in charity and unswerving orthodoxy. Nevertheless the Lover of |490 mankind did not leave him thus in his sadness, for the sake of the union of the two sees, Alexandria and Antioch; for he ordained a wonderful thing, namely that the father Dionysius, patriarch of Antioch, should come to Egypt, and that the two patriarchs should behold one another, as we. will relate hereafter. The commander Al-Afshîn, seeing that the Bashmurites continued long in their hostility, and would not change their conduct, wrote a letter to the caliph, Abd Allah al-Ma'mûn, to inform him of the events that had taken place.

Listen now to this also. There was on the episcopal throne of Tinnîs a bishop, named Isaac, against whom his people had repeatedly brought serious accusations. They said to the father Joseph : «If thou wilt not remove this bishop, and take him away from us, we will forsake the religion of orthodoxy». There was also at Misr another bishop, named Theodore, and his flock spoke of him in a similar manner. For the inhabitants of Misr wrote to the patriarch,

saying : «If thou wilt not remove him and take him away from us, we will stone him to death». The holy patriarch, seeing this rising of the people, was much grieved and troubled, saying : «What shall I do in this distress?» And he prayed, saying : «O Lord, confirm thy people in loyalty to their pastors, and let there be no disaffection in my days! » Moreover he continued to send letters to the people at the two |491 cities of Tinnîs and Misr, saying, from the words of Paul : «Why are you glad when we are sick and you are strong ? This is what I pray for on your behalf, that you may be saved. And I write this to you, being absent from you, as if I were present with you. I will not pronounce a sentence of excommunication nor suspension, since the Lord commands me to build up and not to pull down».

But the people persisted in their conduct, saying with one voice which they never altered : «If these two bishops are not removed, not one of us will remain in the orthodox faith, but we will join the dissident party; and thou art responsible for our action». When Abba Joseph heard this, he hastened to Tinnîs, and begged the people to cease from their wrath; but they refused, and grew still more furious. So also did the city of Misr with its bishop. When the patriarch saw this, he sent and gathered together the bishops from every place, and made the matter known to them. And he said to them : «I and you are innocent of this offence at last. Let us therefore write and suspend the two bishops, Isaac, bishop of Tinnîs, and Theodore, bishop of Misr». |492 Accordingly they deposed those two men from their dignity, and removed them from the rank of. bishop. Yet our charitable father did not cease to pray continually, nor to shed profuse tears, nor to give vent to sighs over the cutting off of these two bishops.

Now Al-Afshîn at Misr was awaiting the answer to the letter which he had adressed to Al-Ma'mûn concerning the Bashmurites. Al-Ma'mûn was a wise man in his conduct, and used to make enquiries into our religion. And wise men used to sit with him, explaining our scriptures for him. In this way he began to love the Christians. So he came to Egypt, and assembled his army. And he invited the patriarch Dionysius of Antioch to accompany him

When the father patriarch, Abba Joseph, learnt that Al-Ma'mûn had arrived, and in his company the patriarch of Antioch, he gathered the bishops together and journeyed to Fustât Misr, to salute the caliph according to the respect which is due to princes. And when the father Dionysius saw the father, Abba Joseph, he rejoiced with great spiritual joy. And this was a dispensation from God, as I said at first, because Abba Joseph had not been able to send the synodical letter to Dionysius. And Abba Joseph was honoured according to his rank at the court of Abd Allah Al-Ma'mûn, |493 who, being informed of his arrival, commanded that he should be brought before him, and when he came into his presence received him with joy, through the divine grace which descended upon the patriarch. Then Abba Dionysius made known to the prince that our father had not delayed to write to the Bashmurites, and to dissuade them from resisting the commands of their sovereign; and this information was gratifying to Al-Ma'mûn. Upon hearing it, he said to the father, Abba Joseph : «Behold, I command thee and thy colleague, the patriarch Dionysius, to pay a visit to those people, and to lay your prohibition upon them, as you are bound to do according to

your law, in order that they may return from their disobedience and may submit to my rule. Then if they consent, I will confer upon them all the benefits that they shall ask of me. But if they persist in their rebellion, then we shall be innocent of their blood».

Therefore our fathers, the two patriarchs, obeyed his command, and journeyed to the Bashmurites, and besought them, and admonished them, and reprimanded them, that they might cease from their deeds. But the insurgents refused to listen, and would not accept the entreaties of the |494 prelates. So the patriarchs returned, and informed Al-Ma'mûn of this state of affairs. Then the caliph commanded the amir Al-Afshîn to march against the Bashmurites with his army, and to fight them. But he could do nothing against them, because their districts, which are named At-Tanfir, were fortified by the waters. The Bashmurites, on the other hand, slew every day many of the soldiers of Al-Afshîn. Therefore as soon as this was reported to Al-Ma'mûn, he started with his troops, and went down to that region. And he gave orders to collect from the cities and neighbouring villages and all places all the men who knew the roads of the Bashmurites, and from among the natives of Tandâ and Shubra Sunbût those who were acquainted with the ways through those places. And the troops followed those guides until they betrayed the Bashmurites to them. Then the soldiers destroyed the insurgents and slew them with the sword without sparing any, and plundered them and wrecked and burnt their dwellings, and demolished their churches. Thus the words of the prophet David in the 77th. Psalmwere fulfilled upon them : «He delivered their strength into captivity and their wealth to their enemies, and gave his people over to the sword, and had no pity on his inheritance». But when Al-Ma'mûn saw the multitude of the slain, he bad his soldiers hold their swords; and those of the |495 Bashmurites who remained he carried as prisoners to the city of Baghdad, both men and women.

When the father patriarch, Abba Dionysius, asked what was the cause of the rebellion of these people, he was told that it was because of the extortions of the two overseers of taxes from which they had formerly suffered. Therefore his heart was grieved for their destruction, and he approached Al-Ma'mûn, and told him this, relying on the position which he held at court. And there was in the suite of Al-Ma'mûn his brother Ibrahîm, who reigned after him. And Dionysius said to the caliph : «These men were disaffected against the government because they suffered from the tyranny of the two overseers of taxes, who also taunted and insulted them». On hearing these words, the caliph answered : «Take care of thyself, and remain no longer in Egypt; for if this saying be reported to my brother Ibrahîm, he will put thee to death, because the tax-collectors came from among his followers». So when the father Dionysius received this reply, he went forth sadly troubled, and took leave of the father, Abba Joseph, saying to him. : «I cannot stay in Egypt an hour longer». Then he enquired what the reason might be, and the patriarch Dionysius told him what |496 had happened. And he bade him farewell weeping. And when Ibrahîm was informed of this matter, he sought the patriarch Dionysius, and sent after him, but learnt that he had departed to his own city. Thereupon he was greatly enraged, and his wrath overpowered him for many days. And after the death of Al-Ma'mûn and the enthronement of his brother Ibrahîm, the patriarch Dionysius fled, and would not remain in Antioch or its province, until the caliph promised

him that he would not slay him. And when Ibrahîm, the prince, returned again to Misr, and the patriarch went out, he took leave of him according to the respect due from him to princes. And he came to Misr, and remained there.

When the patriarch, Abba Joseph, was at Misr, he saw that official, Isaac, who had solicited the patriarchal dignity, burning with inward fire because he and the bishops were mocked by the Alexandrians. But the patriarch, meeting and accosting him, addressed him pleasantly, as was his wont with all men, speaking soft words to him, in order to calm his troubled thoughts. Next he contrived a wise plan, that he might thereby appease him, for he said to him : «O my Lord Isaac, I have been longing after thee, and I have a strong affection for thee. I desire that thou be equal to myself, I wish thee to be my deputy in all my affairs, and hold the |497 patriarchal signet-ring, so that all men may know that thou art my administrator in all my business, both ecclesiastical and civil». When Isaac heard this, he rejoiced greatly, and was consoled, and said to our father, the patriarch : «I am thy servant, and under thy orders in whatsoever thou shalt command me to do». And when the people attended the church of our Lady at Misr, in the Fort of Ash-Shama', on the Feast of Palms, the patriarch ordained the official Isaac deacon. And there was a great congregation in the church on that day, so that the number of those who were present could not be counted.

But Satan the hater of good was there, and stirred up great trouble. For he entered into the two deposed bishops, and made them his vessels. Accordingly they visited Al-Afshîn, who was military commander under the caliph, and said to him : «God has delivered up to thee thine enemies and those of the prince, and thou hast exterminated them. Now it is binding on thee not to leave one surviving of those who were the cause of their rebellion.» He answered : «Who was it then that drove them to conspire against the prince?» And they replied : «It was the patriarch Joseph who did this, and he desired thereby even to slay the prince. And behold, |498 Joseph is now present at the church, accompanied by a large body of men who never disobey him. All that has been done was done by his orders; and thus this great calamity befell the prince and the amir, may God preserve him». Now when the two bishops entered into the presence of Al-Afshîn, he was drunk. So he was filled with wrath, and sent his brother to the church, and many men with him, that he might bring the patriarch to him, in order that he might put him to death. And Isaac, who had been bishop of Tinnîs, acted as their guide, like Judas Iscariot, who betrayed the Lord Christ to the Jews.

For he entered into the sanctuary and pointed with his finger at the patriarch, that he might make known to his companions which he was, so that they might seize him. Thereupon the brother of Al-Afshîn drew his sword to cut off the patriarch's head. But when he was in the act, his hand slipped; and so the sword struck against a marble column, and was broken. At this he grew still more angry. And he had at his waist a knife, which he took and aimed at the patriarch's side, intending to kill him. But ah the greatness of the miracle that was worked at that moment in the presence of all, and which God manifested among his saints! When that man struck the patriarch |499 with the knife, it cut the vestments which he

was wearing, and penetrated as far as the girdle which was around his waist, and cut that; but his body-was not wounded at all. Then all the congregation in the church were thrown into disorder and shouted loudly, thinking that he was dead. But when he who was clothed in good works saw the confusion, and perceived the anxiety and excitement of the people, he made a sign to them with his hand, and exclaimed : «Be not troubled!». And when they understood that Abba Joseph was alive, they rejoiced greatly, and glorified God, and moved over towards him, to see what had happened to him; and they found him safe and sound, for nothing had been cut save the vestments and the girdle.

Therefore they praised God, and cried aloud in the words of the prophet David : «The Lord preserves his chosen ones; the Lord preserves the righteous, and will deliver them from the hand of sinners». And they thanked God for the patriarch's safety, and said : «If the Lord had not delivered us, my soul would have been in Hell; and if I said that my foot had slipped, thy mercy, O Lord, assisted me. And on account of the multitude of the griefs of my heart thy consolation rejoiced me». |500

The brother of Al-Afshîn, seeing this miracle, and perceiving that the Lord was with the patriarch, took him that he might conduct him to his brother, as he had commanded. And while he was being drawn along, that he might be brought outside, while the people hung upon him, he said to them : «Keep me not back, for we do not resist the government». So he went out, while the people followed him weeping, and kissed his feet and hands, thinking that he would be put to death. And when the brother of the amir saw them holding him, he was greatly enraged, and, lifting up his hand, struck him with a rod on the head with such violence that his eyes were injured.

So the patriarch entered into the presence of Al-Afshîn, who addressed him as it was necessary, and told him what the bishops said of him, and of what they accused him. Thereupon the patriarch said to those present, by the grace of God : «The affair of the two bishops is a strange matter. For the fact is that I deposed them from their episcopal rank. And the cause of that was----». And he proceeded to make the events known to Al-Afshîn, and showed him the falsity of their charges. For nothing that they had said of him was true. Then he told the amir the reason of his |501 removing those two bishops because their people rose up against them. And Al-Afshîn perceived the truth, and saw that the bishops' words concerning the patriarch were lies; and he began to think that those two were responsible for the trouble. And he observed to those that were present : «These two men intended to make me share in a great crime, and put the father of all the Christians to death». Then when the holy man saw that vengeance was descending upon those two for his sake, he said to the amir : «My religion bids me do good to those that do harm to me. God has now shown thee the truth with regard to the accusations that these two men brought; and therefore I pray thee to treat them generously, as thou hast authority to do. Leave them alone then in honour of God». And when Al-Afshîn saw what the patriarch did, he marvelled; and he set the two bishops free. So the people glorified God and gave thanks to him, declaring that he

was worthy of praise, because he had raised up as their leader this holy father, who acted according to the divine commandments.

And when Al-Ma'mûn learnt the news from those who visited him, he commanded that a decree should be written, directing that the patriarch should be honoured and respected, and that none should oppose him in his judgments or with regard to those whom he should appoint or depose. Afterwards Al-Ma'mûn gave orders that search should be made for the |502 Bashmurites still remaining in Egypt, and that they should be deported to Baghdad. So they were removed, and remained in the prisons for a long period, until it was God's will to save them from the hand of Ibrahîm, who reigned after his brother. Then some of them returned to their native towns while others remained there at Baghdad, and laid out gardens there, and continued in those parts until the present day, still bearing the name of Bashrûdites.

After this the father Joseph desired to appoint two bishops at Tinnîs and at Misr, in the place of those who had been deposed, that the words of the apostle Paul might be fulfilled : «The greatest of my duties is the care of the churches». Therefore he consecrated as bishop over Wasîm Isaac, the official, whom he had made a deacon and his own deputy. And he appointed a person named Demetrius over Tinnîs. But Fustât Misr was left without a bishop; and the bishop of Wasîm continued to be administrator of the diocese of Misr, and exercised authority over it; and none could resist him because of the influence which his words had with the governors and his brethren and his community, and he remained over the two sees until his death, |503 When the patriarch had recovered his strength a little, he took thought for the affairs of Abyssinia and Nubia, and sent a letter to the people of those countries, and enquired after them and their churches. But he did not succeed in communicating with them on account of hostility between their kings and the Muslim governors of Egypt. And he prayed to God that there might be peace between them, so that he might attain his object, which was to restore the buildings under the jurisdiction of the Father, Saint Mark the Evangelist. And God heard his prayer, and answered his petition. Now this war had lasted fourteen years between them, until Ibrahîm, brother of Al-Ma'mûn, began to reign.

He set guards on the road to Abyssinia and Nubia. Now the king over the Nubians was Zacharias. So Ibrahîm sent, and said to him : «If thou wilt do what other kings have done before thee, then send the tribute for the past fourteen years. Otherwise we will make war upon thee.» Now a deacon, named George, was the secretary of the governor of Upper Egypt. So he wrote to the patriarch to make known to him what was contained in the letter of Ibrahîm, the prince. And the patriarch, on hearing it, glorified God, and rejoiced, saying : «This is an opportunity for me also to write to the kings of what |504 concerns the Church». So he wrote a letter, full of the grace of the Holy-Ghost, as it behoved him; and he saluted and praised the kings, and informed them of the kindly treatment that he had received from the princes of the Muslims, since the Lord had seated him upon the glorious and holy throne. And he added : «I am unworthy of this post, but I was desirous of

obtaining news of you. Only my sin prevented my communicating with you, on account of the wars which have been waged in the land of Egypt, and the rebellion of the Bashrûdites against the commands of the prince, until he slew them, and laid their dwellings waste, and demolished their churches. But now we have found an opportunity by this correspondence of making known to you what has happened. And now, my.

friends, you are bound to accomplish your duty to these princes. And if it were wrong that we should bid you do any of these things, then I have undergone punishment from my brethren, as Joseph, the son of Jacob, suffered from his brethren. And now you are bound to pray that there may be peace between you, O you that love God, and that peace may appear in the Church for your sake».

This epistle Abba Joseph despatched to the governor of the mines near Uswân, that he might forward it. And when this letter reached king Zacharias, and was read to him, he said : «What shall I do concerning the |505 prince's demand upon me? Who will collect for me the tribute of fourteen years in human souls, that I may send them to him? For I cannot leave my capital, lest the savages who are in rebellion against me should take possession of it. Now must I despatch my son to the prince.» So the king sent for his eldest son, whose name was George. And he had the trumpet blown, and appointed a herald who proclaimed that George should reign after him. Then he sent him to Misr, in company with the envoys who had come thence, together with gifts which he had prepared. And when George arrived at Misr, he was met by the blessed father Abba Joseph. On seeing the patriarch, George, son of king Zacharias, rejoiced greatly, and prostrated himself before him. Then the patriarch gave him his benediction, and informed him of some of the events that had taken place, in order to excuse himself for the delay in sending a letter to the kingdom of the Nubians. But George replied : «Blessed is the Lord, who deals not with us after our sins! But it was our fault that hindered thee till this time; and it is thy holiness that has made me worthy to kiss |506 thy holy hands, O thou Lamp, that enlightenest the orthodox throughout the world!»

Then George started upon the road to Baghdad. And he begged the patriarch to pray for him that God might bring him back in safety. On his arrival at Baghdad, the capital of the empire, the prince received him with joy and said to him : «God gives thee the tribute of all the past years, in return for thy coming to my court and thy obedience to me». And George remained with him many days in honour. Afterwards the prince dismissed him with many gifts of gold and silver and garments, and despatched a troop of soldiers with him, that they might conduct him to his own country in safety. So he returned to Misr with great glory and ceremony, holding a golden cross in his hand, while all the people welcomed him, according to the honour which the caliph had paid him. And George requested leave of the patriarch that he might transport into the governor's palace, where he was lodging, a consecrated sanctuary, made of wood, that could be taken to pieces and put together again. And there were with him bishops from his own country, |507 who celebrated the Liturgy for him, so that the king's son and all his companions made their communion there. And he gave orders that the wooden gong should be struck on the roof of the palace at the time

of the Liturgy, as it is done at the churches. And all men marvelled thereat; and all the Christians rejoiced and glorified God for what he had shown forth through the prayers of this holy man, the patriarch. And in his days the said king's son set out and started upon his homeward journey. Therefore our father, the patriarch, proceeded with him, as far as a place called Bûlâk, with great state. And the father was thereby consoled for the trials which he had passed through.

Now who will not marvel when he hears these wonders, namely that every patriarch who sits upon this holy throne directs his care towards three departments of business : the care for the synodical letter to the patriarch of Antioch; secondly our relations with the Abyssinians and the Nubians; and thirdly the carrying out of decrees issued by the governor of Egypt to the patriarch and bishops, that the affairs of the orthodox churches may be kept in good order? And God brought these three |508 departments together for our father, the patriarch Abba Joseph, by the coming of the caliph Al-Ma'mûn from his country and the patriarch's interviews with him, and the arrival of his brother Dionysius, patriarch of Antioch, with whom he held intercourse, and the coming of the son of the king of the Nubians, as we have related, and the prosperity of affairs, and his seeing the great glory in truth, as the prophet David says : «All nations shall worship before him».

And God worked for him another wonder, so that he performed for him all that he had prayed for, in order that the see of the illustrious father, Saint Mark the Evangelist, might be glorified. May the blessings of his prayers preserve us! There was at that time a bishop named John, whom the father, Abba James, had ordained for the land of the Abyssinians. Now the king of the Abyssinians had gone forth to war. Then the people became disaffected, and drove away that bishop, and appointed another of their own free choice, thus breaking the canon. And the aforesaid bishop returned to Egypt and took up his abode at the Monastery of Baramus in Wadî Habîb, because he had first become a monk there. But the Lord, who loves mankind, and desires to save them and restore them to the knowdedge of |509 the truth, did not allow that country and its inhabitants to remain in their disobedience, but he raised up against them the evangelical throne once more, that the Lord might show forth wonders in the following manner. For he sent down upon them and upon their cattle a plague with great mortality, and caused their king to be defeated by all who fought against him; and his followers were slain. So, when he came back from the war, great sadness fell upon him. And he did not know what had been done to the bishop, nor how he had been banished from their city.

For it was the queen who had caused this mischief, acting as Eudoxia did in her time against John the Golden Mouth. As soon therefore as the king learnt this, he hastened and wrote a letter to the good shepherd, Abba Joseph, saying to him : «I prostrate myself before the evangelical throne, upon which thy Paternity has been counted worthy to sit, and by the grace of which my royal authority is confirmed. Now the people of my country have strayed away from the light of the holy see, and have set their feet in a path full of thorns by driving away thy vicar. Therefore the Lord has sent down the punishment of that deed upon our

heads, and has given us a taste of his vengeance through the death of men and cattle by the plague. Moreover he has forbidden heaven to rain upon us. But now, our holy father, overlook |510 our folly, and send us someone who will pray to God for us, and intercede for us, that we may be saved by thy acceptable prayers».

When the father had read this letter, he rejoiced over the king's faith and quickly sent and summoned that bishop from the monastery of Baramus, and having encouraged and consoled him sent him back to the Abyssinians. And he despatched an escort of trustworthy men with him on account of the dangers of the road, and gave him sufficient provision for the journey. And he dismissed the party, giving them his blessing that God might make their path easy. And God heard him; for they safely reached the friendly king, who rejoiced over them with all the natives of the land.

After this, Satan, the enemy of peace, suggested an idea to some of the people of that country. Accordingly, they waited upon the king, and said to him : «We request thy majesty to command this bishop to be circumcised. For all the inhabitants of our country are circumcised except him». And the working of Satan was so powerful that the king approved this proposal, namely that the aged bishop should be taken and circumcised, or else that he should return to the place whence he had come. And when the bishop recollected the hardships of his journeys, both when he departed and when he returned, and then of what he would experience again, he dreaded the difficulties of the road both by land and water. So he said : «I will submit |511 to this, for the salvation of these souls, of which the Lord has appointed me shepherd without any merit of mine. Yet now Paul the apostle enjoins us, saying : If any man is called without circumcision, let him not be circumcised». So when he made this concession to them, God manifested a miracle in him, as he wrote to our father the patriarch, Abba Joseph; namely, that when they took him to circumcise him, and stripped him, they found the mark of circumcision in him, as if he had been circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. And he swore in his letter that he knew nothing of this before that day. Thus the king and the people of the country were satisfied, and rejoiced greatly over this wonder, and accepted the bishop with joy.

When the letter containing an account of this matter reached the patriarch, he rejoiced greatly over the return of those erring ones to their shepherd and over the miracle which had been manifested, saying : «Blessed is the Lord, who has turned the captivity of his people and saved them from the hand of the enemy, and has not left them in error for ever». And |512 because this good shepherd took so much care of his sheep and gave his life for them, he appointed many bishops, and sent them to all places under the see of Saint Mark the evangelist, which include Africa and the Five Cities and Al-Kairuwân and Tripoli and the land of Egypt and Abyssinia and Nubia. For he said : «If the shepherds be not many to guard the flock, the sheep will perish; therefore I do not neglect them, lest any of them be lost or destroyed, even one, for whom I should be held responsible by Christ. For with what purpose did he appoint me, unless it were to protect his flock from the lion which is always watching for negligence on the part of the shepherd, that it may seize and devour

and destroy. Afterwards I shall say also in the presence of the Lord : Not one of those whom thou gavest me has perished». Yet while he was acting thus, the adversary who is ever fighting bestirred himself that he might raise up trials and sorrows for him. But the Lord was with this holy father, and delivered him at all times, and showed him the weakness of his enemies and of the enemies of the Church day after day, according to the words of the Lord, who said : «The gates of Hell shall never prevail against my Church».

At that period the prince Ibrahîm sent men to Egypt with orders that |513 the columns and the marble should be taken from the churches in everyplace. He who came to search for these things was a malignant heretic of the Nestorian sect, named Lazarus. So when he arrived at Misr, the people of his foul sect gathered together to meet him; and they were the Chalcedonian heretics dwelling at Alexandria. They did not cease denouncing the churches by night and by day, and they persuaded Lazarus to demolish the churches of Alexandria. And they guided him to the places where there were columns and pavements; and so he carried them off by force and violence. Afterwards they led him out to the church of the martyr, Saint Mennas, at Maryût, in their great jealousy against it, and then they said to him : «None of the churches is like this one, for all that thou hast come to seek thou wilt find herein». So that Nestorian hastily arose, by the advice of the informers, and entered the church of the martyr Saint Mennas. And when he looked at the building and its ornaments, and saw the beauty of the columns and coloured marbles which it contained, he marvelled and was amazed, and said : «This is what the prince needs. This is here, and I knew nothing of it!» Therefore our father, Abba Joseph the patriarch, hearing that this wicked person did not hold back his hand through the evil |514 and malice that was in his heart, and learning what the heretics had found, said to him : «Behold, all the churches under my jurisdiction are before thee. Do with them therefore as the prince commands thee. But this church alone I desire of thee that thou injure not. And whatever thou shalt ask of me I will deliver to thee».

Yet the heretic would not listen to the patriarch's words nor to his request, but answered him face to face with unseemly language, and then set to work and robbed the church of its coloured marbles and its unequalled pavement, which was composed of all colours and had no match, nor was its value known. And when the marble arrived at the city of Alexandria, that it might be forwarded to the court, the father was greatly grieved for the church, and said : «I know that thou art able, O holy Martyr, to exact just punishment for the wrong done to thee by this heretic, who has not respected thy house, although it is a consolation for all the faithful». And he did not cease to mourn thus night and day for the calamity that had befallen this holy church. And he took care to restore it quickly. For he sent for surface decoration from Misr and Alexandria, and began to repair with all beautiful ornament the places from which the pavements had |515 been stripped, until no one who looked at them could perceive that anything was gone from them.

And in those days, while the heretic Lazarus was at Alexandria, the words that are written were fulfilled concerning him : «Who is he that resists the Lord? For he shall be crushed.»

For the Lord struck him speedily with a plague in the following manner. His body and his inward parts were swollen with the disease called the dropsy, and the colour of his face was changed, and he remained in a recumbent posture, unable to raise his head. He had also fallen into great poverty, so that he found none to supply nourishment for himself or his beasts, nor to treat him medically. Therefore he begged and implored the father patriarch to give him something to spend upon himself. And this father did what Lazarus asked, according to that which is written , namely : «If thine enemy hunger feed him, and if he thirst give him to drink». And the pains grew upon Lazarus greatly, as he lay prostrate, and all who beheld him glorified God and his martyr, Saint Mennas, and blessed the good shepherd, because he had done good |516 to all who did evil to him. And the father's tongue was like a sharp sword. Who would not be filled with admiration on hearing of the virtues of this holy and blessed father, Abba Joseph? Listen now to yet another wonder, my friends, concerning this father. There was at Alexandria a man who was one of the Chalcedonian heretics; and he was very rich, and possessed water-wheels.

So when he went out one day to take recreation in one of his vineyards outside Alexandria, he saw a broken water-wheel, and asked for a carpenter. Now there was an old man, a priest, who was also a carpenter. So the Chalcedonian said to him : «Wilt thou come now with me, that thou mayest mend the water-wheel for me?» But the priest replied : «To-day is the Great Friday; and I can do no work to-day, because it is the day on which the Word of God, the Saviour of the world, was crucified». Then that cursed heretic opened his cavilling mouth in answer, and blasphemed God the Word, saying what must not be recorded. So the aged priest reproved him, and went away and left him. Now our father, the patriarch, was staying in the desert of Wadî Habîb, in order to keep Easter in the monastery, and to finish the celebration of the Resurrection of Christ: but as soon as he returned to Alexandria, the aged priest reported |517 to him the blasphemies that had been uttered by the heretic. Thereupon he who was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost answered with the voice of prophecy : «Let the lips which utter blasphemy against Christ my God be struck with dumbness!» And he said also in the words of David : «An enemy has invented lies against the Lord, and a foolish people has provoked thy name to anger». Ah that great miracle! At that very moment the heretic became dumb and could not speak;

and he remained paralysed to the day of his death. And a great dread fell upon all the Alexandrian heretics who beheld this, so that even their chief, the pseudo-patriarch, whose name was Sophronius, began to have faith and trust in our father, and paid several visits to him, and acted humbly towards him, and saluted him.

In the seventh year after Abba Joseph's appointment, namely the year 554 of the Martyrs, God showed a great sign in the sky. For a great star appeared in the east and reached to the west, like a gleaming sword; and it remained many days. And men said : «We have never seen anything like this. What is likely to happen through this star?» And after some days there came a terrible pestilence upon the cattle, and the beasts began |518 to fall down dead in the enclosures and in all places, until the people of Egypt had not a beast

left, and lost the means of carrying on their work. And no one could walk through the streets without stopping his nose for the multitude of dead animals. Thus the cultivation of the land was interrupted, and there was little produce; and the land of Egypt was full of sadness. Afterwards the plague attacked men also, so that they perished like the cattle. As David says of the people of Egypt : «He spared them not from death, nor their beasts». Meanwhile our father did not cease to weep for the men and the beasts, nor to pray to God with tears, saying : «O Lord, thou hast turned thy face away from thy people on account of my sins. Yet deal not with them according to my transgressions; but let thy mercy reach them speedily, and save thy people, and renew the face of the earth, O God, Lover of mankind». And God heard his servant's prayer, and changed his wrath into health for men and beasts, and taught them that He can do all things. For men and beasts multiplied in Egypt, and the people forgot what had taken place; and the beasts even began to bring forth two at a birth, until men and beasts became as if not one of them had died nor any of them perished. |519

I wish to relate to you an incident which occurred during the struggles and labours of this father, that you may hear and glorify God, who worked wonders for him, and saved him from his sorrows and distress. Upon the death of Isaac, bishop of Wasîm, who also ruled the see of Misr, and who had formerly solicited the patriarchate, Abba Joseph appointed in his place Banah the deacon, at the request of the chief men of Misr. But he promoted to the see of Wasîm another of his sons, named Apacyrus, who died after a short time. Now Isaac the deceased had a son named Theodore, a name common to three bishops who sat in succession upon the episcopal throne of Misr. This man solicited the see of Wasîm, but the people did not approve him; and the father did not think it right to appoint him against the will of the people. There was in Egypt at that time a governor named Alî, son of Yahya, the Armenian, acting on behalf of Abû Ishâk Ibrahîm al-Mu'tasim, son of Hârûn ar-Rashîd, and brother of Abd Allah al-Ma'mûn. So Theodore cast aside the fear of God, and paid a visit to the governor, and promised him money that he might compel the patriarch to raise him to the episcopate. Therefore the governor sent and enquired concerning the father |520 patriarch, and interceded with him for Theodore. But the patriarch answered that Theodore should never become bishop, and resisted the governor, saying : «I have no power in this matter».

Then the governor was greatly enraged for the sake of the money which Theodore had promised him, and began to pull down the churches of Fustât Misr. And he began by attacking first of all the church which is in the Fort of Ash-Shama', called the Hanging Church. So they demolished its upper part, until they reached the gallery. And the father patriarch and the people were lamenting sadly and in great grief, and were weeping bitter tears. As David the prophet says : «O Lord God, God of Hosts, how long wilt thou be wrath against the prayer of thy servant? Thou feedest me with bread with my tears, and givest me tears to drink. Thou makest me a byword to my acquaintances and a sorrow and mockery to my enemies. O Lord God of Hosts, return, O Lord, and make thy face shine upon us, so that we shall be saved». And Abba Joseph gave vent to deep sighs in sadness of heart for the demolition of the church.

But certain persons came to the father, and said to him : «How long wilt thou refuse to appoint this man bishop? Until all the churches are |521 demolished? God has seen thy solicitude and thy struggle for the truth. Deal with this man who relies upon worldly authority as he demands, and God will give him his portion, and his sin shall be on his own head». Then the patriarch consented to that which the people proposed. Yet the governor did not cease from his fury, but required money of the father, saying : «I will not put a stop to the destruction of the churches unless thou give me three thousand dinars». Thereupon the laymen and the bishops present with him were vexed and exclaimed : «O our father be not distressed, we will furnish this money. Therefore divide the debt equally among us, that thou mayest save the churches and no harm may befall them». So the officials proceeded to visit the governor, and gave him sureties that they would pay three thousand dinars. Upon that his anger was appeased, and he commanded that the bishop should be ordained. Accordingly the father ordained him. And he said from the depth of his heart concerning the governor, as the prophet David says in the fifth Psalm : «The Lord abhors the wicked man, but does justice to the poor».

He quoted also the word which is in the Law of Moses : «On the day of vengeance I will reward them, on the day when their feet shall slip». And he added : «On the day of their destruction I will reward them, and |522 will judge the enemies and the oppressors». And all men knew that his words were like prophecy, and said : «What, thinkest thou, will come to pass after this prophecy?» A short time afterwards, indeed, the caliph sent this governor to the land of the Romans, to make a raid upon it; and he took some of them captive, and conquered territory. Then the caliph sent him a second time; and some of the Romans came out against him, and slew him and all his soldiers with cruelty, as the father had foretold with regard to him.

When the trouble ceased from the churches, and that which had been pulled down was restored, and the faithful provided for it and improved it, so that it became finer and more beautiful than it had been before, because the Church is founded upon the Rock, and nothing prevails against her, but she prevails over those who oppose her, and destroys them, then the father said, in the words of the prophet David : «O Lord, who is like unto thee? Thou hast shown us great troubles, but thou hast returned and quickened us, and brought us up from the depth of the earth». And again : «The Lord has stripped off my sackcloth, and clothed me with gladness, and turned my lamentation into joy». |523

And the bishop of Misr began to request further promotion of the father patriarch. And there was a judge at Misr, named Muhammad, son of Abd Allah, whom that man used to consult in all his business. And this judge was a man to be feared, and one whose words none could resist, for he was looked up to by all the Muslims as a lawyer and a leader, and was learned in their religion. But he secretly did deeds that were worthy of blame, and loved to drink wine and to hear singing, and he purchased beautiful slave-girls, and indulged in amusement and debauchery without fear of God or shame before men, according to the words of the Gospel concerning those like him. Nevertheless God endured him, and allowed him a respite, and

added to his days one equal to a thousand years, while he persisted in his folly and insolence against the people of this orthodox religion and the other Christian communities, and swore against Christ. In accordance with this character, he brought lawsuits against the father patriarch several times, and mocked him. So God brought down his deeds upon his own pate, as David says in the Psalm : «Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee». Therefore when Banah, bishop of Misr, saw the power of this judge, and his influence over the governor and commanders of the Muslims, he made friends with him, in order that the judge might do what he desired, and that none might oppose him in his administration, just as |524 the judge acted among the Muslims in what he decreed, whether it were honest or perverse or deceitful.

But the father, Abba Joseph, did not cease to fight for the truth, and to declare his trust in God; and therefore he feared none but God, who created him. Now the patriarch knew what had taken place between the bishop and the judge. And the judge began to think what evil he should do to the patriarch. So one day he gave orders that the father patriarch should be summoned. And certain bishops were present at the judge's house that day, and were trying to conciliate Banah, bishop of Misr; and their names were Abba Pachomius, bishop of Bastah, and George, bishop of Taha, and another George, bishop of Ahnâs, and Zacharias, bishop of Al-Buhairah, and Mennas, bishop of Al-Bahnasa, besides others. So when the patriarch appeared before the judge, the latter said to him : «Who gave thee authority to be chief over all the Christians ?» The patriarch replied : «God gave me this authority». Then the judge turned to the aforesaid bishops and to the bishop of Misr, who was with them, and said to them : «Obey this patriarch no longer from this day forth, and call him not father; but make this man your father (that is to say Banah, bishop of Misr), and let him be |525 your leader». And the bishops assented to his words, and said : «This that thou sayest is good, O judge, and what thou commandest shall be done».

Now this took place by a previous agreement made by them with the judge, and they had promised to give him money. Then Zacharias, bishop of Al-Buhairah, said to our father, the patriarch : «Did I not say to thee yesterday : Hinder not the bishop, Abba Banah, from doing all that he desires, as the judge commands?» Our holy father, Abba Joseph, answered him and said with an awful voice, in the Coptic language : «O you that have no understanding, how have you gone astray thus, how have you accepted these words that have no accomplishment? But true is that which Paul the Apostle prophesied of you; and he showed your folly when he said : We did not do the truth of God with understanding, that we should be converted of ourselves. And you have not obeyed the truth of God». And there were some of the lawyers sitting in the presence of the judge, and among them were some who understood the Coptic tongue, and they discerned the meaning of the patriarch's words, and how he was admonishing the bishops; and so they reported to the judge all that he had said. When the judge heard it, he was furious, and said to the father : «Thinkest |526 thou that my commands will not be carried out?» Our father answered in a humble voice : «Hast thou power to lay thy hand upon the sun, and hide its brightness? For if thou canst do this, then thou wilt be able to do what thou sayest.

Or canst thou resist God, or the commands of my lord the prince, whom thou servest? I said before that my primacy is of God, not of man. But now I also hold a decree from the prince which establishes my power. Yet behold, thou sayest these words to these bishops who have no authority over me: whereas my authority over them is from God and from the prince, and the execution of my sentence takes place among my people and my flock; and I have power tocut off and banish all those who err from the right path». When the judge heard these words from the patriarch's mouth he said to him : «Holdest thou a decree from the prince, giving thee power to do what thou wilt?» Our father replied : «Yes, it is so». The judge said to him : «Bring it to me that I may read it». Now Abba Joseph had with him diplomas from the princes, from Al-Ma'mûn Abd Allah, son of Hârûn ar-Rashîd, issued when he came to Egypt, and from Ibrahîm, his brother. And when |527 Hârûn al-Wâthik, son of Ibrahîm, began to reign, he was asked to issue a new decree for our father, and accordingly it was written for him. And it was Harûn al-Wâthik who appointed this judge over Egypt. Therefore our father handed him the decrees; and he read them, and learnt from them the superior strength of those that walk straight over those that deviate from duty and from the right path.

And the judge was ashamed and confounded, and bade our father depart with honour, so that all that were present were amazed. Now there were many of the bishops who had disapproved of these transactions, and had remained loyal to the patriarch, namely, Mennas, bishop of Tânah, and Sinuthius, bishop of Sâ, and the rest of the bishops. So he gave them the fruit of his lips , praying for them and blessing them. The father patriarch also used to say concerning the bishops who rebelled : «O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge ».

After this Satan brought upon Abba Joseph another trial. For this father was merciful, and desired not the perdition of any man. So Satan put it into the heart of the unjust judge, who had become his instrument, that he should seize the Roman and Abyssinian pages of the patriarch, who were |528 not yet of full age, and try to make Muslims of them. Now many people used to give information, one against another, for this cause concerning the pages belonging to their households, whom the judge thereupon took and into custody and perverted to the religion of Islam, by means of persecution and intimidation. He also sometimes imprisoned their masters for a time, and when they bribed him, he set them free. Then he made curious inquiries concerning the Roman and Abyssinian pages of the patriarch, who had been sent as presents to him from Africa and the Five Cities and Abyssinia and Nubia. For he was told that the patriarch had pages at Alexandria, who were being taught in the school. So he sent his officers thither in the company of the deposed bishop of Misr, whose name was Banah, the interpretation of which is Fire. The bishop went as far as the city of Alexandria, and entered the house wherein the pages were. And he took them and led them away like lambs to the slaughter, while they wept helplessly until they were brought into Misr, being eight in number.

Then when the unjust judge saw them, he rejoiced, saying : «This is a matter which will disappoint and vex the patriarch». Next he said to our father : « It is not lawful for thee

to resist the princes' command nor to |529 trample upon their orders; and it is not lawful for thee to attempt to enslave these youths and make Christians of them». The patriarch answered : «I do not resist the prince's command nor any good words, but only unjust orders». The judge said to him : «Then am I unjust in thy opinion?» He replied : «Thou knowest that none of thy predecessors forced any one like these, who are Christians and the sons of Christians, to become Muslims. For they were presented to the churches as gifts, and came from the king of the Abyssinians, or from the Nubians or Romans; and they were sent to me as a present, and given to me». But the judge, through Satan's power over him, would not listen; and, as David says , he was like the deaf asp that stops her ears, and will not hear the voice of the charmer. Therefore he gave orders that the youths should be brought in, while the patriarch was there, and intimidated them so that they acknowledged themselves Muslims before him in the patriarch's presence, although he tried to hold them to the Christian faith. So he said, weeping : «Woe is me, my sadness is renewed, and my heart burns within me ;

I have seen my punishment, my limbs are cut asunder from me. Now, O Lord, let me know my end, for the sorrows of Hell encompass me». Then the judge said to the father : «There can be no further communication between |530 thee and these youths, for they are become Muslims. Take their price and leave them». The father replied : «If it is thy desire to make slaves of the free, I have no such wish; for these are free and the limbs of my body; and God will judge thee for them, and thou wilt give an account of them before God, the God of all». After that the judge gave orders that the pages should be separated, and accordingly the Muslims shared them among themselves. And when this compassionate father saw this transaction, he sighed, and said before the Lord : «Thou seekest out blood and rememberest them. Forget not the voice of the poor ». He said also : «They have humbled thy people, and done harm to thy heritage, and slain the orphans and the strangers, and said : God doth not see ». Thus he ceased not to weep and sigh and lament. And he said : «If any one outrage these youths, may God destroy him !» Further he said : «O Lord, I am a sinful man, but yet, O Lord, thou wilt take vengeance upon this unjust judge in return for his wicked conduct, and thou wilt fulfil upon him the words of wise Solomon :

In the day of vengeance the hypocrites shall perish». Such grief did the father endure, while he prayed night and day, |531 saying : «O Lord, them wilt not forsake thy people on account of my sin».

There were in his time faithful men, holy monks, who prayed for him that patience might be given to him under these trials that afflicted him. And there was a hermit among them whose name was Ammonius, at the monastery of Saint John. There was also Abba Mennas, the hermit, on Mount Armûn, who was endowed with the spirit of prophecy, and healed all the sick; many testified of him that he had power over unclean spirits and cast them out of men. And I, the mean and feeble one, visited him, and he discoursed with me concerning the Church. He was a eunuch from birth, pure unto God, and had been a monk from his youth in the monastery of Saint John. But when the desert was ravaged in the last years

of the patriarch, Abba Mark, as we related above, this monk took refuge in a church named after the Disciples, in a certain village. And he showed forth many miracles by healing the sick and casting out devils. And I, the mean one, was present with him, and he taught me writing; and that was in the tenth year of the patriarchate of the father, Abba Joseph.

This holy old man was sitting one day, reading in the history of the ancient churches and of what happened to the fathers, in the seventeenth part |532 of the history of the church, and I said to him in my simplicity, not knowing what I said : «What is this that he says?» And he answered me in the words of the Holy Ghost : «O my son, blessed is he who wrote and provided for the history of the patriarchs. Believe what I say to thee, my son, that none shall begin the eighteenth part of the history of the Church, before he comes, whose name is eighteen. And thou art he that shall take thought for the writing of it, for the Lord calls thee to it». Thereupon I became as if I were absent-minded, and could not ask him anything further. Now this old man remained all his life a hermit. And he frequently gave me his blessing. But I have abridged what I have written, and have left much unwritten through fear of those who will read what I have written concerning this holy old hermit. Here I have left the history of the fathers, and ceased to relate their history. Severus, bishop of Sanabû, dilates in one of his homilies upon the history of this hermit.

But let us now return to that which God did by means of the father patriarch, Abba Joseph, and I will relate the following miracle. When this father was at Misr in the time of the unjust judge, whose dealing with him we have recounted, there came to him a Christian person who said to him : «O my spiritual father, take pity on me! For I have a son who has been |533 possessed many days by a diabolical spirit which torments him. And he cries aloud saying : I will not leave him until Abba Joseph, the patriarch, commands me. Therefore have mercy on my son, thy servant, O father». Now the father was exceedingly humble, and he said to the man with a pure and humble heart : «What have I to do, my son, with these of whom thou speakest? Yet on account of thy faith, thy son shall be delivered». Then the man accepted his words, as the centurion accepted the words of the Lord, exclaiming : «I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under the roof of my house, but speak the word only, and my lad shall be healed». So this faithful person did not cease to beg and implore the patriarch, saying : «Have pity on me, O my father!» Again the father asked : «What wilt thou that I should do unto thee ?» He answered : «I am not worthy that thou shouldest go with me nor enter my house;

but wilt thou write for me with thine own hand a sentence in thine own name, and nothing more, commanding the devil to depart? For then he will depart from my son». When our father heard him say this, he marvelled at him, and at the greatness of his faith, and thought that he ought not to allow him to go away without that which he asked of him. And I, the writer of this history, hearing this, became like the God-loving deacon Theopistus, while he |534 was with the holy father Dioscorus in the island of Gangra, on account of the man with the withered arm who was cured by the blood from the confessor's hand. For I believed that the Lord would do by means of this father that which would cure this man's son. And

while I was meditating on this, the Lord willed to increase my faith by this holy man. For he bade me take a sheet of paper and an inkstand, and write upon the sheet thus : «Joseph, the mean one, the least of all the patriarchs, speaks and bids thee, unclean spirit, depart from the servant of Christ our God, and forbids thee to return to him henceforth, through the power of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the one God».

Thereupon the father of the youth took this letter, and departed quickly to his house, and read the writing over his son; and at once the devil went out of him, and did not return to him. And while our father remained at Misr, that man came to him and prostrated himself before him with great faith, saying : «I thank the Lord for thy prayers; for by thy words my son was healed». But our father forbad him under pain of ecclesiastical penance to tell anyone of this matter. And the man swore to us that the devil had never returned to his son since that day. In those days the father Dionysius, patriarch of Antioch, went to his rest. So the metropolitans and the bishops and the orthodox laity took thought |535 and appointed in his place a person, perfect in his qualities, named John. This was in the 15th. year of the patriarchate of Abba Joseph, and in the year 562 of the Martyrs. After John's enthronement at Antioch he wrote to our father a synodical letter according to custom, proclaiming the unity of the two sees, and sent it by two metropolitans, namely Athanasius, metropolitan of Apamea, and Timothy, metropolitan of Damascus, accompanied by others of the clergy. Therefore the father, Abba Joseph, having heard that they were approaching Egypt, with the synodical letter in their charge, travelled to Alexandria, in order that they might meet him there with honour. And as they drew near to the city, he sent to welcome them a body of bishops and clergy, who chanted before them, and conducted them as far as the patriarchal cell with glory and reverence. And when our father had received the synodical letter, he commanded that it should be read aloud to the orthodox people; and they rejoiced exceedingly. .

But the perpetual enemy saw this grace, and immediately began to stir up troubles against our father the patriarch by means of one who was his instrument, as he had done with the unjust judge. Now that judge |536 employed a man worse than himself, who acted as his deputy at Alexandria and in the neighbouring province; and this man's name was Muhammad son of Bashîr. So those whom the patriarch had formerly excommunicated went to this man, and advised him to put the patriarch to shame in the presence of the metropolitans. These children of fire contrived this plan, thinking that this action would weigh heavily upon him; whereas he, being clothed with humility, paid no heed, and did not think of what they were thinking. For they thought in their hearts that, if they disgraced him before the metropolitans, his dignity would be lessened, and knew not that their counsels were contemptible; while the ever victorious one conquered, and gained the crown after the contest, and received a blessing for his endurance. And by this his fame and the report of his patience reached the ends of the east, after those righteous metropolitans had witnessed that which was done to him.

At that time the judge of Alexandria sent and summoned the holy father, Abba Joseph the patriarch, and the metropolitans with him. And when he appeared in the judge's presence, he said to him : «I am informed that thou hast pages, whom the judge, my master, commanded thee not to take to thyself again. Some of them are in thy house, and thou hast |537 converted them to thy religion». Then the holy man answered and said to him : «I have none of those of whom thou speakest, nor have I beheld the face of one of them since that day». Thereupon the judge ordered that the patriarch should be beaten upon his neck without mercy; and they belaboured him soundly, and did not cease from beating him for a considerable time. In consequence of this his head was bowed, and he could not raise it for his weakness; and he did not open his mouth to utter a word, except when he said thus : «I thank thee, Lord Jesus Christ». But we, his children, wept bitterly for witnessing what was done to him by this wicked judge. Yet the patriarch did not despair of mercy, but was filled with courage. And so those metropolitans marvelled, and said : «Blessed be God, who has counted us worthy to behold so faithful a champion !» And our blessed father repeated the words of the Lord concerning the unjust judge, that the Lord would show forth vengeance in him, which should come upon him, as Luke says : «God shall soon avenge his elect who pray to him day and night, though he is longsuffering concerning them» .

After this the patriarch Joseph wrote to the patriarch John an answer to his synodical letter, and dismissed the envoys with the glory and honour |538 which befitted them. And they praised our father Joseph, and began to publish his deeds throughout their country. And there were in his days grace and peace. A wonderful thing took place in his time; for he beheld the monasteries in every place grow and increase every day, through his prayers and the prayers of the holy men who lived at that time. Above all the monasteries of the Wadî Habîb were like the Paradise of God, especially that of Saint Macarius. And God's assistance was with all the monks, and more than any with that oeconomus Sinuthius, the holy priest, by whose means God manifested countless good works through his faith in Saint Macarius. For Sinuthius raised monuments in honour of Saint Macarius, vineyards and gardens and cattle and mills and oilpresses, and many useful things that cannot be numbered. And when the faithful people beheld what he did, they rejoiced thereat, and were zealous for his deeds, and helped him with good intentions.

And there were in the holy monastery innumerable persons, not only the orthodox, but also heretics, on account of the wonders that were manifested in that church. This was the doing of this oeconomus Sinuthius, who |539 hoped for a reward from God, as Paul, the Apostle, says : «We in the spirit in faith wait for a true hope». And when Sinuthius saw the monks increasing in numbers through the grace of God which called them, he began and built a church to the north of the Great Church, and named it after the Fathers and Disciples. And he completed it, and adorned it with every kind of ornament. And he invited our holy father, Abba Joseph the patriarch, to visit this church; and when he saw it, his heart was filled with joy; and he consecrated it on the first day of Barmûdah in the seventeenth year of his patriarchate. And the father did not cease to bless this oeconomus Sinuthius from the depths of his heart, and looked upon the monuments which Sinuthius made day after day,

and especially this holy church, which was capacious in size, and beautiful in structure. And we, the sons of this father, had a great affection for this oeconomus Sinuthius, on account of our father's love for him which we beheld. And the father said to us by the power of the Holy Ghost, who descended upon him : «My sons, believe me, this brother has many monuments which he will make, and there is building of churches and chapels for him». When we heard him say this, we |540 said to him : «Thinkest thou that he will build other churches on this mountain ?» . And his words were like a prophecy, but we did not know it until there was manifested to us after that a thing that we will record.

Our father had in his hand an elegant pastoral staff, which he gave to Sinuthius, the oeconomus, saying to him : «Take this, my son, as a memorial for thyself». On seeing this, we said : «Verily this refers to something that will appear; for all his actions are done by the grace of the Holy Ghost». In the eighteenth year of Abba Joseph's patriarchate there was made governor of Alexandria an amir, named Mâlik, son of Nâsir al Hadar, who was a wicked man and unjust. So when he entered the city he began to do harm to many people, more than the governor who preceded him. For he interfered with the artisans and the great merchants and dealers in woven stuffs and shopkeepers, ordering them not to sell or buy except within certain limits which he laid down for them. And he made a great measure; and a crier began to proclaim thus : «If anyone is found having a garment less than this measure, I will imprison him and put him to shame and slay him». So when the people of Alexandria saw this, they were sad and |541 said : «We know now that God has abased this city and its inhabitants by the hand of this unjust man». But the poor people, the weavers and the tailors, were left without employment because their means of livelihood were cut off, and their children were forced to be idle, so that they were without food, and were inclined to emigrate and depart to other countries, that they might earn a living. And they were crying out night and day that God would save them from this tyrant.

And God did not neglect their supplication, but heard them speedily. For he said by the prophet David's tongue in the ninetieth Psalm : «Cry unto me, and I will answer thee and deliver thee». And again : «The Lord is near those that call upon him ». So on a certain day that amir mounted his horse and came to the patriarch's Cell, accompanied by certain female slaves; and he ate and drank with them. Then he arose and walked round all the patriarch's chambers, until he reached the closet in which the patriarchs always slept. Thereupon he drove the father out of it, and brought in his slaves and ate and drank with them there, and reposed in that |542 chamber, which was full of the savour of incense and sweet perfume from the prayers of the holy patriarchs. Therefore the holy father, seeing this, was grieved and wept much, repeating the words of David, the prophet , in the 78th. Psalm : «O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance, and have defiled thy holy temple». After this man had done these foul deeds without fear, he departed and returned to his own house. And God, the worker of miracles at all times, took revenge upon him; for that very day he was attacked by a pain in the inward parts, and quickly drew near to death. Yet he did not cease from his injustice and wicked deeds.

At that time the children of fire went and laid information against the father, saying : «This man writes letters to the princes of the Romans, and they send him much money». So the amir sent speedily, and summoned our father, and commanded that he should be imprisoned in a narrow dungeon, and entrusted him to the charge of certain guards, who were to watch over him. And he desired to torment the patriarch until he should give him a thousand dinars, while the patriarch patiently endured; and the amir did not cease to threaten him, and finally insisted on the sum of four hundred dinars. But during |543 all this the pains were increasing upon him; and the blood ran from his body, and he could not sleep by night or by day. And he could not find a physician who could treat him, nor did medicine benefit him. Meanwhile the father remained in prison for the sake of the four hundred dinars, and prayed to God night and day, saying : «Let my supplication come before thee, O Lord, and the sighing of the sick and the captives». And he remained in straits many days, while the governor threatened and intimidated him, in order that he might bring the money. And the patriarch's disciples and friends were in great grief and trouble, and counselled him to pay the money.

So he, upon whom the spirit of prophecy rested, said to them, that if he were not to quit that place until he had paid what that tyrant demanded of him, then on the seventh day after they had entered therein, one of God's sudden judgments would be manifested, at which all men would marvel. Then Abba Joseph paid the four hundred dinars, and he and his companions were released from the prison. And I, the mean writer of this history, was with him in the dungeon. And the Lord, who beholds all things, accomplished the words of this holy man; for on the seventh day after he paid the money, while we were with him, certain men entered to him and informed him that the governor was dead, and that the crier was calling in |544 the streets to the people : «Rise up and bury the governor!» And all men praised God, the worker of wonders among his saints. And the people of the city began to respect and honour the father for the troubles and sorrows and straits which he had endured, and because God had saved him from them all, manifesting wonders by his means.

Then on account of the straits and the sorrow and distress that had afflicted Abba Joseph, it was God's will to give him rest from this world, and to call him to the mansions of light, that he might enjoy eternal life. For so God had promised to that saint, saying to him : «Thou shalt be happy for ever, and shalt live eternally». Accordingly after these events the patriarch fell sick of a fever. And on the seventh day of his sickness the Lord visited him, and took him to himself. So he went to his rest on the twenty-third day of Bâbah, in the year 566 of the Martyrs, at the time of the communion of the Holy Mysteries, the day being Sunday. Thus he had remained upon the evangelic and apostolic throne eighteen years and eleven months. And they carried his body to the city of Alexandria and laid him with his holy fathers, with glory and honour. And the people of Alexandria, both men and women, wept copious tears over him, because they had lost a |545 man who was constant in his fight against evil. And he obtained the crown of victory.

Such were the events which I witnessed with my own eyes; but I have abridged my narrative on account of the multitude of its wonders. We pray the Lord to allow the prayers of that saint to be with us.

Now it is right for you, my holy lords, and my duty also that I should make known to you and you should listen to the fulfilment of a prophecy which he uttered to me, while he was living, and which the Lord accomplished after his death, that those who hear may marvel and glorify God who is glorified in his elect. I related before that, at the time when the unjust judge brought troubles upon Egypt, the patriarch said : «As I am a sinner. God will send down vengeance upon this tyrant for his deeds, yet not in my lifetime, but after my death». And when Abba Joseph went to his rest, there was a prince of the Muslims, named Ja'far, son of Ibrahîm; and he sent to Egypt a man named Ya'kûb, son of Ibrahîm, to enquire into the state of Egypt, and make it known to him. So when Ya'kûb came hither, he was informed, by God's decree, of the conduct of the unjust judge, and of his evil deeds which he committed secretly and openly. Thereupon Ya'kûb suddenly arrested the Superintendent of Public |546 Order without his previous knowledge; and accordingly all the judge's hypocritical acts by which he deceived the people were brought to light, as well as his secret, foul, and reprehensible conduct So Ya'kûb took him, and paraded him through all the streets of Misr, after shaving his beard and baring his bead, while all gazed upon him; then he threw him into prison, and confiscated his goods.

And all his companions who surrounded him, and even his children, were scattered in all directions. Afterwards he banished him to the capital city of the empire, and there he died a cruel death. Ya'kûb also dealt with the judge who was the other's deputy at Alexandria, and who commanded that the father Abba Joseph should be beaten, as he had dealt with his superior, and he was imprisoned; but he escaped subsequently and none ever saw him again in the city, nor has anyone set eyes upon him to this day. And all who saw these things or heard of them marvelled, and glorified God on account of these two unjust judges upon whom vengeance was executed as they deserved. As it is written : «The fool and he that is without understanding shall perish together».

We have recorded, on account of your love, the combat of the holy father, Abba Joseph. We will now mention to you what he did during his |547 whole time. As long as he remained upon the patriarchal throne his heart was never preoccupied, nor was he distracted by the troubles that came upon him, but he continued in prayer night and day. And he completed the reading of the whole Psalter every day; seventy-five Psalms in the daytime, and seventy-five Psalms up to midnight. This was in addition to the hymns that he recited, in supplication to the Lord with devotion and humility. These were his qualities all the days of his life, I mean humility and charity and tranquillity and chastity and continuance in prayer and giving alms; so that, after all these years during which he remained patriarch, his cares and thoughts and feelings were like those of one who lives in the corner of a cell in the Wadî Habîb. By these means he gained the crown of his deeds from the Lord Jesus

Christ, and entered with the saints into the land of the living. Glory belongs to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost for ever. Amen.

End of the second division of [the first part of] the Histories of the holy Patriarchs. May their prayers be with us and their supplications protect us! Amen. [Footnotes renumbered and moved to the end] 1. 1. Ps. li. 17 (Sept. l). 2. 1. Acts, viii, 21. 3. 1. S. Matth., iii, 10; vii, 19; S. Luke, iii, 9. 4. 1. S. John, iii, 27; viii, 54. 5. 2. S. Matth., xv, 33. 6. 1. Rom„ xiii. 2. 7. 1. S. Matth., xvi, 18. 8. 2. II Tim., ii, 5. 9. 1. Ps. cxvi, 3; cf. xviii, 6 (Sept. cxiv, xvii). 10. 1. I Cor., iv, 12,13. 11. 1. Prov., xvii, 20. 12. 1. Is., viii, 10; xix, 3. 13. 2. Mal., iii, 20 (iv, 2). 14. 3. Ezech., xxxiii, 11. 15. 1. Father of good. 16. 2. Jer., xvii, 5. 17. 1. S. Matth., x, 33; cf. S. Mark, viii, 38; S. Luke, ix, 26.

18. 2. S. Mark., ix, 44;Is., lxvi, 24. 19. 3. S. Matth., xxv, 41. 20. 1. S. John, xvii, 12. 21. 2. Ps. lxxxix, 11 (Sept. lxxxviii). 22. 3. Ps. cxix, 21 (Sept.cxviii) . 23. 1. Ps. lxix, 10 (Sept. lxviii). 24. 1. III Kings, v, 21 (7). 25. 1. Is., lxvi, 2. 26. 2. II Cor., xi, 2. 27. 1. Is., lxiv, 7, 8, 9. 28. 1. Tob., iv, 7. 29. 2. Tob., iv, 10 (11). 30. 3. I Tim., vi, 17. 19. 31. 1. Ps. lxxviii. 3 (Sept, lxxvii). 32. 2. Acts, xi, 22, 23. 33. 3. Prov.. xxix, 2 (Sept.). 34. 1. Ps. xlv, 17 (Sept. xliv). 35. 1. Ps. lxvi, 20 (Sept. lxv). 36. 1. Eph., i, 10; 11, 16. 17; Col. i. 20. 37. 2. S. Matth., xviii, 12. 38. 3. S. Luke, xv, 6. 39. 4. S. John. x. 16. 40. 5. Jer., ii, 13.

41. 1. Ps. cxxvi, 1; xiv, 7; liii, 7 (Sept. cxxv, xiii, lii). 42. 2. II Cor., vi, 14, 15. 43. 1. Rom., xv, 13. 44. 1. I Cor., xii, 26. 45. 1. Rom., xiv, 1. 46. 1. Ps. vii, 17. 47. 2. Dan., xiii, 52, 55, 59 (Greek). 48. 1. I Cor., ii. 9. 49. 2. Ps. cv, 34, 35 (Sept. civ). 50. 1. S. Matth. viii. 29. 51. 1. S. John, v, 14. 52. 1. Acts, v, 15. 53. 2. II Cor., xii, 7. 54. 1. Ps. lxxix, i, 2. 3 (Sept. lxxviii); cf. I Mach., vii, 17. 55. 2. Job, xvi, 12. 56. 1. Acts, ix, 15. 57. 2. I Cor., x, 11, etc. 58. 1. Ps. xxxix, 4. 5 (Sept. xxxviii). 59. 1. Coptic [Coptic]. 60. 1. S. Matth., xxviii, 20. 61. 1. Gen., xlvi, 3, 4. 62. 1. II Cor., vi, 14, 15. 63. 1. Is., xxxvii, 29; IV Kings, xix, 28.

64. 1. Eph., ii, 6; Phil., iii, 20; Col., iii, 1. 65. 2. I Thess., ii, 9; II Thess., iii, 8; cf. I Cor., iv, 12; II Cor., xi, 9. 66. 1. Ps. xlii, 1 (Sept. xli). 67. 2. Acts, x. 2. 31. 68. 1. Mich., ii. 1,2.3. 69. 1. Nah., i. 2. Cf. Deut., xxxii, 35, 41, 43; Ps. xciv, 1 (Sept. xciii); Rom., xii. 19: Hebr., x. 30. 70. 1. Is., li, 12: Ps. lvi, 5, 12; cxviii, 6 (Sept. lv, cxvii); Hebr., xiii. 6. 71. 2. Zach., vii, 10: viii. 17; Job. v. 12; Ps. xxxiii, 10 (Sept. xxxii). 72. 1. Is., lvii. 17, 18: xxv, 9, etc. 73. 2. Ps. lxxxv, 7. 8, 9 (Sept. lxxxiv). 74. 1. Gal., vi, 9, 10. 75. 2. I Tim., vi, 17, 18, 19. 76. 1. Ps. lxxxv, 11 (Sept. lxxxiv). 77. 2. S. Matth., xx, 6 ff. 78. 1. Ps. lxxviii, 3 (Sept. lxxvii).

79. 1. I Tim., vi. 9. 10. 80. 1. Apoc., v. 6, 12. 81. 1. S. Matth., xxv, 34. 82. 1. Ps. xxv, 7, 16 (Sept. xxiv). 83. 2. Ps. liii, 6 (Sept. lii). 84. 1. S. John, iii, 27. Heb., v, 4. 85. 1. Num., vi. 25; Ps. xxxi, 17 (Sept. xxx), etc. 86. 1. S. Luke. xxii, 32. 87. 2. Am., v. 16. 88. 1. Ps. lxxiv, 2 (Sept. lxxiii). 89. 1. Rom., xiii. 2. 90. 1. Is., lxv, 12. 91. 1. ii Cor., xiii. 9, 10. 92. 1. Ps. lxxviii, 61 (Sept. lxxvii). 93. 1. Ps. xcvii, 10 (Sept. xcvi). 94. 2. Ps. xciv, 17, 18, 19 (Sept. xciii). 95. 1. II Cor., xi, 28. 96. 1. Ps. ciii, 10 (Sept. cii). 97. 1. Ps. lxxii, 11 (Sept. lxxi). 98. 1. I Cor., vii. 18. 99. 1. S. John, xviii, 9. 100. 2. S. Matth., xvi, 18.

101. 1. I Kings, ii, 10. 102. 2. Prov., xxv, 21; Rom., xii, 20. 103. 1. Ps. lxxiv, 18 (Sept. lxxiii). 104. 1. Ps. lxxviii, 50 (Sept. lxxvii). 105. 1. Ps. lxxx, 5, 6. 7, 8 (Sept. lxxix). 106. 1. Ps. v, 7; cxl, 13 (Sept. cxxxix). 107. 2. Deut., xxxii, 35. 108. 1. Ps. lxxi, 19, 20 (Sept. lxx). 109. 2. Ps. xxx, 12 (Sept. xxix). 110. 1. S. Luke, xviii. 2. 111. 2. Ps. vii, 17; lxxix, 6 (Sept. lxxviii). 112. 1. Gal., iii, 1. 113. 1. Osee, xiv, 3 (Sept.); Hebr., xiii, 15. 114. 2. Acts, vii, 60 (59). 115. 1. Ps. lviii, 5, 6 (Sept. lvii). 116. 2. Ps. xxxix, 4, 5 (Sept. xxxviii). 117. 1. Ps. ix, 13. 118. 2. Ps. xciv, 5, 6, 7 (Sept. xciii). 119. 3. Prov.. vi. 34. 120. 1. S. Luke, xviii, 7. 121. 1. Gal., v, 5. 122. 1. Ps. xci, 15 (Sept. xc).

123. 2. Ps, cxlv, 18 (Sept. cxliv). 124. 1. Ps. lxxix, 1 (Sept. lxxviii). 125. 1. Ps. lxxix. 11 (Sept. lxxviii).

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