



BARLAAM AND IOASAPH

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translated by

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PREFACE

THE TALE

There is no doubt that the author of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* himself regarded his story as a true narrative of the lives of real characters and that this view was universally held until quite recent times. The names of Saint Barlaam and Saint Ioasaph have figured in the Calendars both of the Roman and of the Greek Church and still retain their place in the latter. Today, however, this view can be no longer held. A comparison of the story with the well-known legend of Buddha must convince every open-minded reader, that the outline of the plot is derived from the same Eastern source; in spite of all difference in detail, the general resemblance is quite undeniable. The writer himself tells us, that the story was brought to him from India, and it is highly probable, that what he heard was simply a version of the life of Buddha, adapted by Christians of the East to their own use. But we should be going too far, if we sought for traces of Buddhist influence in the doctrinal teaching of the story. No real relationship has ever yet been proved between Christian and Buddhist monasticism; in fact, in spite of certain obvious resemblances, the two differ profoundly in spirit. The aim of the Buddhist monk is mainly negative—deliverance from the evils of the flesh; that of the Christian has also a positive aspect—surrender of the semblance of happiness in this world in order to gain the reality hereafter, the “ἀπόρρητα ἀγαθά” laid up for the righteous in Heaven.

The main aim of the author was the glorification of this Christian monasticism. Marriage, the cares of social and business life, the duties of citizenship—all these, though not represented as inconsistent with Christian living, appear only as a second best. The ideal is the complete devotion of

the whole personality to religious contemplation, the renunciation of wealth and pleasure and the mortification of the flesh. In his enthusiasm for the monastic life, as too in his passionate defence of the veneration of Images, our author shows himself clearly an obstinate adversary of the great Iconoclastic movement of the eighth century AD.

Our book falls roughly into three distinct parts: the narrative—the thread on which the whole is strung: the speeches—many of them of great length—containing long expositions of Christian doctrine, confessions of Faith and hymns of praise, and frequent long quotations from early Christian writers;¹ and the Apologues,² fables or parables, introduced in the speeches to illustrate pictorially some moral truth. The whole work is steeped in the language of the Bible and of the Christian Fathers; and it is this fact that has led the translators to adopt a style modelled on that of the Authorised Version. The task is not easy or without its perils; but in no other way, we believe, could the unity of the book be maintained; the Biblical quotations, frequent as they are, would harmonise badly with a more modern style.

Books, like men, have their vicissitudes of fate. The favourite work of one generation may be the laughingstock of the next; and the “edifying story of Barlaam and Ioasaph,” which once enjoyed a popularity comparable to that of the *Pilgrim’s Progress* and furnished material for storybooks and romances, for sermons and plays, has fallen into deep oblivion. That it will ever regain this lost fame is hardly to be expected; its world of thought is far removed from ours and its controversies have in many cases ceased to concern us very deeply. But the tale has still life and vigour; it is no corpse of a book that we are dragging from its tomb: we found it, as the seekers found the bodies of the dead Saints, Barlaam and Ioasaph, “οὐδὲν τοῦ προτέρου χρωτὸς παράλλαττον, ὀλόκληρον δὲ καὶ ἀκριβῶς ὑγιές.”

THE APOLOGUES

It is probable that these picturesque and effective little stories came with the main narrative from an Eastern source.³ The first ten are put into the mouth of Barlaam, the last into that of Theudas, and all are used to point some moral truth. The style is simple and graphic and to some readers the Apologues may form the most attractive part of the book.

The best known is, of course, the tale of the Caskets, made famous by its repetition in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*.

THE APOLOGY OF ARISTIDES

In 1889 Professor Rendel Harris discovered a Syriac version of the Apology of Aristides in St. Katharine's Convent on Mt. Sinai. While engaged on a study of the new text Dr. Armitage Robinson was reminded of a passage in *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, and, on turning to the text made the interesting discovery, that the speech of Nachor ([see here](#)) was nothing but the Apology in a Greek dress, fitted, with some deftness, into its new context.⁴ For all details we will refer to Dr. Armitage Robinson's work. We need only remind our readers here, that, according to Eusebius of Caesarea, the "Apology" was a defence of Christianity presented by Aristides, a philosopher of Athens, in 124 to the Emperor Hadrian, when on a visit to that city; that modern scholars have found some reasons for assigning the work to the reign of Antoninus Pius, but that beyond all question, it is an early and authentic Christian document. The tone is calm and reasonable and the appeal made is rather to common sense and plain facts than to subtleties of logic or to exalted emotion.

THE AUTHORSHIP

The question of the authorship of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* cannot be passed over in silence, but considerations of space will only allow us to sum up the arguments and conclusions as briefly as possible.

Throughout the Middle Ages down to quite recent times the book was almost universally attributed to St. John of Damascus. No other attributions need be seriously considered, and the only question for us to decide is whether we can accept the traditional authorship of the Damascene or must let the book remain anonymous. The earliest MSS. mention as author a certain "John the Monk"; but a Latin MS. of the twelfth century in the British Museum gives it to John of Damascus by name, and after that time the tradition becomes increasingly strong in his favour. But in 1886 H. Zotenberg, in an elaborate monograph, attempted to prove that St. John could not have been the author, and many writers have accepted his conclusions in simple trust. We will sum up the more important of his arguments:—

1. He points out that the definite attribution to St. John does not occur in the earliest MSS.
2. The importance of the questions of the two natures and the two wills of Christ suggests an earlier date than the eighth century—a date nearer to the time of the great controversies on these subtle points.
3. There is absolutely no mention of the Mohammedan religion.
4. The style is quite unlike that of St. John in his works of certain authenticity.

Zotenberg has a few other arguments that seem to us to carry no weight whatever; and he has also attempted, without much success, to dispose of the definite arguments in favour of the traditional attribution.

These arguments must now be stated:—

1. Our work exhibits the most striking resemblances on points of doctrine and use to the doctrinal works of St. John; in many passages the resemblance amounts almost to verbal identity.

2. There are frequent quotations from favourite authors of St. John, especially from St. Gregory of Nazianzus and St. Basil.
3. The defence of Images, coupled with the denunciation of Idolatry, the enthusiasm for the monastic ideal, and the scant regard shown for the bishops and the secular clergy, almost compel us to place the work in the time of the Iconoclastic Controversy. The position, taken up and defended, is exactly that of the Icon-venerators; and we regard this fact alone as conclusive evidence for an eighth century date.

In answer to Zotenberg's arguments we may say:—

1. That "John the Monk," to whom the earliest MSS. assign the work, may very well be St. John of Damascus; he seems to have been commonly known under this name.
2. The references to the controversies over the two natures and two wills of Christ are not nearly so frequent or so pointed as are those to the Icon Controversy. This argument, in any case, does not tell seriously against the traditional date.
3. The lack of any mention of Islam is more remarkable. But St. John had stood in friendly relations with the Mohammedans, and, as they were infidels indeed, but not idolators, they did not come within the special scope of his attack. He was actually accused by his enemies of being a "favourer of Mussulmans." Hence his silence on this point, though striking, is not inexplicable.
4. The question of style is rather a difficult one. Zotenberg's treatment of the subject is not very successful, and he has made several gross blunders, which justify serious doubts of his competency to pronounce on the subject. The case seems to stand thus: parts of the speeches, dealing with points of doctrine, are strikingly like St. John's doctrinal works; other parts of the work, particularly the narrative sections, are less similar, but are not unlike some of St. John's homilies. On such a point certainty is hardly attainable. We think it may safely be said that the style certainly does not rule out the possibility of St. John's authorship; some readers will go further and maintain that it actually confirms it.

Our general conclusion then is this. There is a tradition in favour of St. John of Damascus as the author of *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. The book was undoubtedly written during the Iconoclastic Controversy, in the eighth century, probably at a time when the Iconoclasts were in the ascendant (c. 750 AD?). It was written either by St. John of Damascus himself or by another monk bearing the name of John, who was intimately acquainted with the works of the Damascene, quoted freely from the same authors, held the same views on general points of doctrine and took the same side in the Iconoclastic Controversy. We have examined Zotenberg's arguments and found them insufficient; his followers have added little or nothing to his case. Langen, after a thorough inquiry, accepts the tradition: Max Müller characterises the arguments brought against it as very weak. We think therefore that the name of St. John of Damascus has still a right to appear on the title-page.

BARLAAM AND IOASAPH

AN EDIFYING STORY FROM THE INNER LAND OF THE ETHIOPIANS, CALLED THE LAND OF THE INDIANS, THENCE BROUGHT TO THE HOLY CITY, BY JOHN THE MONK (AN HONOURABLE MAN AND A VIRTUOUS, OF THE MONASTERY OF SAINT SABAS); WHEREIN ARE THE LIVES OF THE FAMOUS AND BLESSED BARLAAM AND IOASAPH.

INTRODUCTION

“As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are sons of God” saith the inspired Apostle. Now to have been accounted worthy of the Holy Spirit and to have become sons of God is of all things most to be coveted; and, as it is written, “They that have become his sons find rest from all enquiry.” This marvellous, and above all else desirable, blessedness have the Saints from the beginning won by the practice of the virtues, some having striven as Martyrs, and resisted sin unto blood, and others having struggled in self-discipline, and having trodden the narrow way, proving Martyrs in will. Now, that one should hand down to memory the prowess and virtuous deeds of these, both of them that were made perfect by blood, and of them that by self-denial did emulate the conversation of Angels, and should deliver to the generations that follow a pattern of virtue, this hath the Church of Christ received as a tradition from the inspired Apostles, and the blessed Fathers, who did thus enact for the salvation of our race. For the pathway to virtue is rough and steep, especially for such as have not yet wholly turned unto the Lord, but are still at warfare, through the tyranny of their passions. For this reason also we need many encouragements thereto, whether it be exhortations, or the record of the lives of them that have travelled on the road before us; which latter draweth us towards it the less painfully, and doth accustom us not to despair on account of the difficulty of the journey. For even as with a man that would tread a hard and difficult path; by exhortation and encouragement one may scarce win him to essay it, but rather by pointing to the many who have already completed the course, and at the last have arrived safely. So I too, “walking by this rule,” and heedful of the danger hanging over that servant who, having received of his lord the talent, buried it in the earth, and hid out of use that which was given him to trade withal, will in no wise pass over in silence the edifying story that hath come to me, the which devout men from the inner land of the Ethiopians,

whom our tale calleth Indians, delivered unto me, translated from trustworthy records. It readeth thus.

I

The country of the Indians, as it is called, is vast and populous, lying far beyond Egypt. On the side of Egypt it is washed by seas and navigable gulfs, but on the mainland it marcheth with the borders of Persia, a land formerly darkened with the gloom of idolatry, barbarous to the last degree, and wholly given up to unlawful practices. But when “the only-begotten Son of God, which is in the bosom of the Father,” being grieved to see his own handiwork in bondage unto sin, was moved with compassion for the same, and showed himself amongst us without sin, and, without leaving his Father’s throne, dwelt for a season in the Virgin’s womb for our sakes, that we might dwell in heaven, and be reclaimed from the ancient fall, and freed from sin by receiving again the adoption of sons; when he had fulfilled every stage of his life in the flesh for our sake, and endured the death of the Cross, and marvellously united earth and heaven; when he had risen again from the dead, and had been received up into heaven, and was seated at the right hand of the majesty of the Father, whence, according to his promise, he sent down the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, unto his eyewitnesses and disciples, in the shape of fiery tongues, and despatched them unto all nations, for to give light to them that sat in the darkness of ignorance, and to baptize them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—whereby it fell to the lot of some of the Apostles to travel to the far-off East and to some to journey to the Westward, while others traversed the regions North and South, fulfilling their appointed tasks—then it was, I say, that one of the company of Christ’s Twelve Apostles, most holy Thomas, was sent out to the land of the Indians, preaching the Gospel of Salvation. “The Lord working with him and confirming the word with signs following,” the darkness of superstition was banished; and men were delivered from idolatrous sacrifices and abominations, and added to the true Faith, and being thus transformed by the hands of the Apostle, were made

members of Christ's household by Baptism, and, waxing ever with fresh increase, made advancement in the blameless Faith and built churches in all their lands.

Now when monasteries began to be formed in Egypt, and numbers of monks banded themselves together, and when the fame of their virtues and Angelic conversation "was gone out into all the ends of the world" and came to the Indians, it stirred them up also to the like zeal, insomuch that many of them forsook everything and withdrew to the deserts; and, though but men in mortal bodies, adopted the spiritual life of Angels. While matters were thus prospering and many were soaring upward to heaven on wings of gold, as the saying is, there arose in that country a king named Abenner, mighty in riches and power, and in victory over his enemies, brave in warfare, vain of his splendid stature and comeliness of face, and boastful of all worldly honours, that pass so soon away. But his soul was utterly crushed by poverty, and choked with many vices, for he was of the Greek way, and sore distraught by the superstitious error of his idol-worship. But, although he lived in luxury, and in the enjoyment of the sweet and pleasant things of life, and was never baulked of any of his wishes and desires, yet one thing there was that marred his happiness, and pierced his soul with care, the curse of childlessness. For being without issue, he took ceaseless thought how he might be rid of this hobble, and be called the father of children, a name greatly coveted by most people. Such was the king, and such his condition.

Meanwhile the glorious band of Christians and the companies of monks, paying no regard to the king's majesty, and in no wise terrified by his threats, advanced in the grace of Christ, and grew in number beyond measure, making short account of the king's words, but cleaving closely to everything that led to the service of God. For this reason many, who had adopted the monastic rule, abhorred alike all the sweets of this world, and were enamoured of one thing only, namely godliness, thirsting to lay down their lives for Christ his sake, and yearning for the happiness beyond. Wherefore they preached, not with fear and trembling, but rather even with excess of boldness, the saving Name of God, and naught but Christ was on their lips, as they plainly proclaimed to all men the transitory and fading nature of this present time, and the fixedness and incorruptibility of the life to come, and sowed in men the first seeds, as it were, towards their becoming of the household of God, and winning that life which is hid in

Christ. Wherefore many, profiting by this most pleasant teaching, turned away from the bitter darkness of error, and approached the sweet light of Truth; insomuch that certain of their noblemen and senators laid aside all the burdens of life, and thenceforth became monks.

But when the king heard thereof, he was filled with wrath, and, boiling over with indignation, passed a decree forthwith, compelling all Christians to renounce their religion. Thereupon he planned and practised new kinds of torture against them, and threatened new forms of death. So throughout all his dominions he sent letters to his rulers and governors ordering penalties against the righteous, and unlawful massacres. But chiefly was his displeasure turned against the ranks of the monastic orders, and against them he waged a truceless and unrelenting warfare. Hence, of a truth, many of the Faithful were shaken in spirit, and others, unable to endure torture, yielded to his ungodly decrees. But of the chiefs and rulers of the monastic order some in rebuking his wickedness ended their lives by suffering martyrdom, and thus attained to everlasting felicity; while others hid themselves in deserts and mountains, not from dread of the threatened tortures, but by a more divine dispensation.

II

Now while the land of the Indians lay under the shroud of this moonless night, and while the Faithful were harried on every side, and the champions of ungodliness prospered, the very air reeking with the smell of bloody sacrifices, a certain man of the royal household, chief satrap in rank, in courage, stature, comeliness, and in all those qualities which mark beauty of body and nobility of soul, far above all his fellows, hearing of this iniquitous decree, bade farewell to all the grovelling pomps and vanities of the world, joined the ranks of the monks, and retired across the border into the desert. There, by fastings and vigils, and by diligent study of the divine oracles, he thoroughly purged his senses, and illumined a soul, set free from every passion, with the glorious light of a perfect calm.

But when the king, who loved and esteemed him highly, heard thereof, he was grieved in spirit at the loss of his friend, but his anger was the more hotly kindled against the monks. And so he sent everywhere in search of him, leaving “no stone unturned,” as the saying is, to find him. After a long while, they that were sent in quest of him, having learnt that he abode in the desert, after diligent search, apprehended him and brought him before the king’s judgement seat. When the king saw him in such vile and coarse raiment who before had been clad in rich apparel—saw him, who had lived in the lap of luxury, shrunken and wasted by the severe practice of discipline, and bearing about in his body outward and visible signs of his hermit-life, he was filled with mingled grief and fury, and, in speech blended of these two passions, he spake unto him thus:

“O thou dullard and mad man, wherefore hast thou exchanged thine honour for shame, and thy glorious estate for this unseemly show? To what end hath the president of my kingdom, and chief commander of my realm made himself the laughingstock of boys, and not only forgotten utterly our friendship and fellowship, but revolted against nature herself, and had no

pity on his own children, and cared naught for riches and all the splendour of the world, and chosen ignominy such as this rather than the glory that men covet? And what shall it profit thee to have chosen above all gods and men him whom they call Jesus, and to have preferred this rough life of sackcloth to the pleasures and enjoyments of the palace?”

When the man of God heard these words, he made reply, at once courteous and unruffled: “If it be thy pleasure, O king, to converse with me, remove thine enemies out of mid court; which done, I will answer thee concerning whatsoever thou mayest desire to learn; for while these are here, I cannot speak with thee. But, without speech, torment me, kill me, do as thou wilt, for ‘the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world,’ as saith my divine teacher.” The king said, “And who are these enemies whom thou biddest me turn out of court?” The saintly man answered and said, “Anger and Desire. For at the beginning these twain were brought into being by the Creator to be fellow-workers with nature; and such they still are to those ‘who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.’ But in you who are altogether carnal, having nothing of the Spirit, they are adversaries, and play the part of enemies and foemen. For Desire, working in you, stirreth up pleasure, but, when made of none effect, Anger. Today therefore let these be banished from thee, and let Wisdom and Righteousness sit to hear and judge that which we say. For if thou put Anger and Desire out of court, and in their room bring in Wisdom and Righteousness, I will truthfully tell thee all.” Then spake the king, “Lo I yield to thy request, and will banish out of the assembly both Desire and Anger, and make Wisdom and Righteousness to sit between us. So now, tell me without fear, how wast thou so greatly taken with this error, to prefer the bird in the bush to the bird already in the hand?”

The hermit answered and said, “O king, if thou askest the cause how I came to despise things temporal, and to devote my whole self to the hope of things eternal, hearken unto me. In former days, when I was still but a stripling, I heard a certain good and wholesome saying, which, by its force took my soul by storm; and the remembrance of it, like some divine seed, being planted in my heart, unmoved, was preserved ever until it took root, blossomed, and bare that fruit which thou seest in me. Now the meaning of that sentence was this: ‘It seemed good to the foolish to despise the things that are, as though they were not, and to cleave and cling to the things that are not, as though they were. So he, that hath never tasted the sweetness of

the things that are, will not be able to understand the nature of the things that are not. And never having understood them, how shall he despise them?' Now that saying meant by 'things that are' the things eternal and fixed, but by 'things that are not' earthly life, luxury, false prosperity, and glory, whereon, O king, thine heart alas! is fixed amiss. Time was when I also clung thereto myself. But the force of that sentence continually goading my heart, stirred my governing power, my mind, to make the better choice. But 'the law of sin, warring against the law of my mind,' and binding me, as with iron chains, held me captive to the love of things present.

"But 'after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour' was pleased to deliver me from that harsh captivity, he enabled my mind to overcome the law of sin, and opened mine eyes to discern good from evil. Thereupon I perceived and looked, and behold! all things present are vanity and vexation of spirit, as somewhere in his writings saith Solomon the wise. Then was the veil of sin lifted from mine heart, and the dullness, proceeding from the grossness of my body, which pressed upon my soul, was scattered, and I perceived the end for which I was created, and how that it behoved me to move upward to my Creator by the keeping of his Commandments. Wherefore I left all and followed him, and I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord that he delivered me out of the mire, and from the making of bricks, and from the harsh and deadly ruler of the darkness of this world, and that he showed me the short and easy road whereby I shall be able, in this earthen body, eagerly to embrace the Angelic life. Seeking to attain to it the sooner, I chose to walk the strait and narrow way, renouncing the vanity of things present and the unstable changes and chances thereof, and refusing to call anything good except the true good, from which thou, O king, art miserably sundered and alienated. Wherefore also we ourselves were alienated and separated from thee, because thou wert falling into plain and manifest destruction, and wouldst constrain us also to descend into like peril. But as long as we were tried in the warfare of this world, we failed in no point of duty. Thou thyself will bear me witness that we were never charged with sloth or heedlessness.

"But when thou hast endeavoured to rob us of the chiefest of all blessings, our religion, and to deprive us of God, the worst of deprivations, and, in this intent, dost remind us of past honours and preferments, how should I not rightly tax thee with ignorance of good, seeing that thou dost at

all compare these two things, righteousness toward God, and human friendship, and glory, that runneth apace like water? And how, in such case, may we have fellowship with thee, and not the rather deny ourselves friendship and honours and love of children, and if there be any other tie greater than these? When we see thee, O king, the rather forgetting thy reverence toward that God, who giveth thee the power to live and breathe, Christ Jesus, the Lord of all; who, being alike without beginning, and coeternal with the Father, and having created the heavens and the earth by his word, made man with his own hands and endowed him with immortality, and set him king of all on earth and assigned him Paradise, the fairest place of all, as his royal dwelling. But man, beguiled by envy, and (woe is me!) caught by the bait of pleasure, miserably fell from all these blessings. So he that once was enviable became a piteous spectacle, and by his misfortune deserving of tears. Wherefore he, that had made and fashioned us, looked again with eyes of compassion upon the work of his own hands. He, not laying aside his Godhead, which he had from the beginning, was made man for our sakes, like ourselves, but without sin, and was content to suffer death upon the Cross. He overthrew the foeman that from the beginning had looked with malice on our race; he rescued us from that bitter captivity; he, of his goodness, restored to us our former freedom, and, of his tender love towards mankind, raised us up again to that place from whence by our disobedience we had fallen, granting us even greater honour than at the first.

“Him therefore, who endured such sufferings for our sakes, and again bestowed such blessings upon us, him dost thou reject and scoff at his Cross? And, thyself wholly riveted to carnal delights and deadly passions, dost thou proclaim the idols of shame and dishonour gods? Not only hast thou alienated thyself from the commonwealth of heavenly felicity but thou hast also severed from the same all others who obey thy commands, to the peril of their souls. Know therefore that I will not obey thee, nor join thee in such ingratitude to God-ward; neither will I deny my benefactor and Saviour, though thou slay me by wild beasts, or give me to the fire and sword, as thou hast the power. For I neither fear death, nor desire the present world, having passed judgement on the frailty and vanity thereof. For what is there profitable, abiding or stable therein? Nay, in very existence, great is the misery, great the pain, great and ceaseless the attendant care. Of its gladness and enjoyment the yoke-fellows are dejection

and pain. Its riches is poverty; its loftiness die lowest humiliation; and who shall tell the full tale of its miseries, which Saint John the Divine hath shown me in few words? For he saith, ‘The whole world lieth in wickedness’; and, ‘Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. For all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.’ Seeking, then, this good will of God, I have forsaken everything, and joined myself to those who possess the same desire, and seek after the same God. Amongst these there is no strife or envy, sorrow or care, but all run the like race that they may obtain those everlasting habitations which the Father of lights hath prepared for them that love him. Them have I gained for my fathers, my brothers, my friends and mine acquaintances. But from my former friends and brethren ‘I have got me away far off, and lodged in the wilderness’ waiting for the God, who saveth me from faintness of spirit, and from the stormy tempest.”

When the man of God had made answer thus gently and in good reason, the king was stirred by anger, and was minded cruelly to torment the saint; but again he hesitated and delayed, regarding his venerable and noble mien. So he answered and said:

“Unhappy man, that hast contrived thine own utter ruin, driven thereto, I ween, by fate, surely thou hast made thy tongue as sharp as thy wits. Hence thou hast uttered these vain and ambiguous babblings. Had I not promised, at the beginning of our converse, to banish Anger from mid court, I had now given thy body to be burned. But since thou hast prevented and tied me down fast by my words, I bear with thine effrontery, by reason of my former friendship with thee. Now, arise, and flee forever from my sight, lest I see thee again and miserably destroy thee.”

So the man of God went out and withdrew to the desert, grieved to have lost the crown of martyrdom, but daily a martyr in his conscience, and “wrestling against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness”; as saith Blessed Paul. But after his departure, the king waxed yet more wroth, and devised a yet fiercer persecution of the monastic order, while treating with greater honour the ministers and temple-keepers of his idols.

While the king was under this terrible delusion and error, there was born unto him a son, a right goodly child, whose beauty from his very birth was prophetic of his future fortunes. Nowhere in that land, they said, had there

ever been seen so charming and lovely a babe. Full of the keenest joy at the birth of the child, the king called him Ioasaph,⁵ and in his folly went in person to the temples of his idols, for to do sacrifice and offer hymns of praise to his still more foolish gods, unaware of the real giver of all good things, to whom he should have offered the spiritual sacrifice. He then, ascribing the cause of his son's birth to things lifeless and dumb, sent out into all quarters to gather the people together to celebrate his son's birthday: and thou mightest have seen all the folk running together for fear of the king, and bringing their offerings ready for the sacrifice, according to the store at each man's hand, and his favour toward his lord. But chiefly the king stirred them up to emulation. He brought full many oxen, of goodly size, for sacrifice, and thus, making a feast for all his people, he bestowed largesses on all his counsellors and officers, and on all his soldiers, and all the poor, and men of low degree.

III

Now on his son's birthday feast there came unto the king some five and fifty chosen men, schooled in the star-lore of the Chaldaeans. These the king called into his presence, and asked them, severally, to tell him the future of the newborn babe. After long counsel held, they said that he should be mighty in riches and power, and should surpass all that had reigned before him. But one of the astrologers, the most learned of all his fellows, spake thus:—"From that which I learn from the courses of the stars, O king, the advancement of the child, now born unto thee, will not be in thy kingdom, but in another, a better and a greater one beyond compare. Methinketh also that he will embrace the Christian religion, which thou persecutest, and I trow that he will not be disappointed of his aim and hope." Thus spake the astrologer, like Balaam of old, not that his star-lore told him true, but because God signifieth the truth by the mouth of his enemies, that all excuse may be taken from the ungodly.

But when the king heard thereof, he received the tidings with a heavy heart, and sorrow cut short his joy. Howsoever he built, in a city set apart, an exceeding beautiful palace, with cunningly devised gorgeous chambers, and there set his son to dwell, after he had ended his first infancy; and he forbade any to approach him, appointing, for instructors and servants, youths right seemly to behold. These he charged to reveal to him none of the annoys of life, neither death, nor old age, nor disease, nor poverty, nor anything else grievous that might break his happiness: but to place before him everything pleasant and enjoyable, that his heart, revelling in these delights, might not gain strength to consider the future, nor ever hear the bare mention of the tale of Christ and his doctrines. For he was heedful of the astrologer's warning, and it was this most that he was minded to conceal from his son. And if any of the attendants chanced to fall sick, he commanded to have him speedily removed, and put another plump and

well-favoured servant in his place, that the boy's eyes might never once behold anything to disquiet them. Such then was the intent and doing of the king, for, "seeing, he did not see, and hearing, he did not understand."

But, learning that some monks still remained, of whom he fondly imagined that not a trace was left, he became angry above measure, and his fury was hotly kindled against them. And he commanded heralds to scour all the city and all the country, proclaiming that after three days no monk whatsoever should be found therein. But and if any were discovered after the set time, they should be delivered to destruction by fire and sword. "For," said he, "these be they that persuade the people to worship the Crucified as God." Meanwhile a thing befell, that made the king still more angry and bitter against the monks.

IV

There was at court a man preeminent among the rulers, of virtuous life and devout in religion. But while working out his own salvation, as best he might, he kept it secret for fear of the king. Wherefore certain men, looking enviously on his free converse with the king, studied how they might slander him; and this was all their thought. On a day, when the king went forth a-hunting with his bodyguard, as was his wont, this good man was of the hunting party. While he was walking alone, by divine providence, as I believe, he found a man in a covert, cast to the ground, his foot grievously crushed by a wild-beast. Seeing him passing by, the wounded man importuned him not to go his way, but to pity his misfortune, and take him to his own home, adding thereto: "I hope that I shall not be found unprofitable, nor altogether useless unto thee." Our nobleman said unto him, "For very charity I will take thee up, and render thee such service as I may. But what is this profit which thou saidest that I should receive of thee?" The poor sick man answered, "I am a physician of words. If ever in speech or converse any wound or damage be found, I will heal it with befitting medicines, that so the evil spread no further." The devout man gave no heed to his word, but on account of the commandment, ordered him to be carried home, and grudged him not that tending which he required. But the aforesaid envious and malignant persons, bringing forth to light that ungodliness with which they had long been in travail, slandered this good man to the king; that not only did he forget his friendship with the king, and neglect the worship of the gods, and incline to Christianity, but more, that he was grievously intriguing against the kingly power, and was turning aside the common people, and stealing all hearts for himself. "But," said they, "if thou wilt prove that our charge is not ungrounded, call him to thee privately; and, to try him, say that thou desirest to leave thy fathers' religion, and the glory of thy kingship, and to become a Christian, and to

put on the monkish habit which formerly thou didst persecute, having, thou shalt tell him, found thine old course evil." The authors of this villainous charge against the Christian knew the tenderness of his heart, how that, if he heard such speech from the king, he would advise him, who had made this better choice, not to put off his good determinations, and so they would be found just accusers.

But the king, not forgetful of his friend's great kindness toward him, thought these accusations incredible and false; and because he might not accept them without proof, he resolved to try the fact and the charge. So he called the man apart and said, to prove him, "Friend, thou knowest of all my past dealings with them that are called monks and with all the Christians. But now, I have repented in this matter, and, lightly esteeming the present world, would fain become partaker of those hopes whereof I have heard them speak, of some immortal kingdom in the life to come; for the present is of a surety cut short by death. And in none other way, methinks, can I succeed herein and not miss the mark except I become a Christian, and, bidding farewell to the glory of my kingdom and all the pleasures and joys of life, go seek those hermits and monks, wheresoever they be, whom I have banished, and join myself to their number. Now what sayest thou thereto, and what is thine advice? Say on; I adjure thee in the name of truth; for I know thee to be true and wise above all men."

The worthy man, hearing this, but never guessing the hidden pitfall, was pricked in spirit, and, melting into tears, answered in his simplicity, "O king, live forever! Good and sound is the determination that thou hast determined; for though the kingdom of heaven be difficult to find, yet must a man seek it with all his might, for it is written, 'He that seeketh shall find it.' The enjoyment of the present life, though in seeming it give delight and sweetness, is well thrust from us. At the very moment of its being it ceaseth to be, and for our joy repayeth us with sorrow sevenfold. Its happiness and its sorrow are more frail than a shadow, and, like the traces of a ship passing over the sea, or of a bird flying through the air, quickly disappear. But the hope of the life to come which the Christians preach is certain, and as surety sure; howbeit in this world it hath tribulation, whereas our pleasures now are short-lived, and in the beyond they only win us correction and everlasting punishment without release. For the pleasures of such life are temporary, but its pains eternal; while the Christians' labours are temporary, but their pleasure and gain immortal. Therefore well befall this good

determination of the king! for right good it is to exchange the corruptible for the eternal.”

The king heard these words and waxed exceeding wrath: nevertheless he restrained his anger, and for the season let no word fall. But the other, being shrewd and quick of wit, perceived that the king took his word ill, and was craftily sounding him. So, on his coming home, he fell into much grief and distress in his perplexity how to conciliate the king and to escape the peril hanging over his own head. But as he lay awake all the night long, there came to his remembrance the man with the crushed foot; so he had him brought before him, and said, “I remember thy saying that thou wert an healer of injured speech.” “Yea,” quoth he, “and if thou wilt I will give thee proof of my skill.” The senator answered and told him of his aforetime friendship with the king, and of the confidence which he had enjoyed, and of the snare laid for him in his late converse with the king; how he had given a good answer, but the king had taken his words amiss, and by his change of countenance betrayed the anger lurking within his heart.

The sick beggar-man considered and said, “Be it known unto thee, most noble sir, that the king harboureth against thee the suspicion, that thou wouldest usurp his kingdom, and he spake, as he spake, to sound thee. Arise therefore, and crop thy hair. Doff these thy fine garments, and don an hair-shirt, and at daybreak present thyself before the king. And when he asketh thee, ‘What meaneth this apparel?’ answer him, ‘It hath to do with thy communing with me yesterday, O king. Behold, I am ready to follow thee along the road that thou art eager to travel; for though luxury be desirable and passing sweet, God forbid that I embrace it after thou art gone! Though the path of virtue, which thou art about to tread, be difficult and rough, yet in thy company I shall find it easy and pleasant, for as I have shared with thee this thy prosperity so now will I share thy distresses, that in the future, as in the past, I may be thy fellow.’” Our nobleman, approving of the sick man’s saying, did as he said. When the king saw and heard him, he was delighted, and beyond measure gratified by his devotion towards him. He saw that the accusations against his senator were false, and promoted him to more honour and to a greater enjoyment of his confidence. But against the monks he again raged above measure, declaring that this was of their teaching, that men should abstain from the pleasures of life, and rock themselves in visionary hopes.

Another day, when he was gone a-hunting, he espied two monks crossing the desert. These he ordered to be apprehended and brought to his chariot. Looking angrily upon them, and breathing fire, as they say, “Ye vagabonds and deceivers,” he cried, “have ye not heard the plain proclamation of the heralds, that if any of your execrable religion were found, after three days, in any city or country within my realm, he should be burned with fire?” The monks answered, “Lo! obedient to thine order, we be coming out of thy cities and coasts. But as the journey before us is long, to get us away to our brethren, being in want of victuals, we were making provision for the way, that we perish not with hunger.” Said the king, “He that dreadeth menace of death busieth not himself with the purveyance of victuals.” “Well spoken, O king,” cried the monks. “They that dread death have concern how to escape it. And who are these but such as cling to things temporary and are enamoured of them, who, having no good hopes yonder, find it hard to be wrenched from this present world, and therefore dread death? But we, who have long since hated the world and the things of the world, and are walking along the narrow and strait road, for Christ his sake, neither dread death, nor desire the present world, but only long for the world to come. Therefore, forasmuch the death that thou art bringing upon us proveth but the passage to that everlasting and better life, it is rather to be desired of us than feared.”

Hereupon the king, wishing to entrap the monks, as I ween, shrewdly said, “How now? Said ye not but this instant, that ye were withdrawing even as I commanded you? And, if ye fear not death, how came ye to be fleeing? Lo! this is but another of your idle boasts and lies.” The monks answered, “’Tis not because we dread the death wherewith thou dost threaten us that we flee, but because we pity thee. ’Twas in order that we might not bring on thee greater condemnation, that we were eager to escape. Else for ourselves we are never a whit terrified by thy threats.” At this the king waxed wroth and bade burn them with fire. So by fire were these servants of God made perfect, and received the Martyr’s crown. And the king published a decree that, should any be found leading a monk’s life, he should be put to death without trial. Thus was there left in that country none of the monastic order, save those that had hid them in mountains and caverns and holes of the earth. So much then concerning this matter.

V

But meanwhile, the king's son, of whom our tale began to tell, never departing from the palace prepared for him, attained to the age of manhood. He had pursued all the learning of the Ethiopians and Persians, and was as fair and well favoured in mind as in body, intelligent and prudent, and shining in all excellencies. To his teachers he would propound such questions of natural history that even they marvelled at the boy's quickness and understanding, while the king was astounded at the charm of his countenance and the disposition of his soul. He charged the attendants of the young prince on no account to make known unto him any of the annoyances of life, least of all to tell him that death ensueth on the pleasures of this world. But vain was the hope whereon he stayed, and he was like the archer in the tale that would shoot at the sky. For how could death have remained unknown to any human creature? Nor did it to this boy; for his mind was fertile of wit, and he would reason within himself, why his father had condemned him never to go abroad, and had forbidden access to all. He knew, without hearing it, that this was his father's express command. Nevertheless he feared to ask him; it was not to be believed that his father intended aught but his good; and again, if it were so by his father's will, his father would not reveal the true reason, for all his asking. Wherefore he determined to learn the secret from some other source. There was one of his tutors nearer and dearer to him than the rest, whose devotion he won even further by handsome gifts. To him he put the question what his father might mean by thus enclosing him within those walls, adding, "If thou wilt plainly tell me this, of all thou shalt stand first in my favour, and I will make with thee a covenant of everlasting friendship." The tutor, himself a prudent man, knowing how bright and mature was the boy's wit and that he would not betray him, to his peril, discovered to him the whole matter—the persecution of the Christians and especially of the anchorites decreed by the

king, and how they were driven forth and banished from the country round about; also the prophecies of the astrologers at his birth. "'Twas in order," said he, "that thou mightest never hear of their teaching, and choose it before our religion, that the king hath thus devised that none but a small company should dwell with thee, and hath commanded us to acquaint thee with none of the woes of life." When the young prince heard this he said never a word more, but the word of salvation took hold of his heart, and the grace of the Comforter began to open wide the eyes of his understanding, leading him by the hand to the true God, as our tale in its course shall tell.

Now the king his father came oftentimes to see his boy, for he loved him passing well. On a day his son said unto him, "There is something that I long to learn from thee, my lord the king, by reason of which continual grief and unceasing care consumeth my soul." His father was grieved at heart at the very word, and said, "Tell me, darling child, what is the sadness that constraineth thee, and straightway I will do my diligence to turn it into gladness." The boy said, "What is the reason of mine imprisonment here? Why hast thou barred me within walls and doors, never going forth and seen of none?" His father replied, "Because I will not, my son, that thou shouldest behold anything to embitter thy heart or mar thy happiness. I intend that thou shalt spend all thy days in luxury unbroken, and in all manner joy and pleasance." "But," said the son unto his father, "know well, Sir, that thus I live not in joy and pleasance, but rather in affliction and great straits, so that my very meat and drink seem distasteful unto me and bitter. I yearn to see all that lieth without these gates. If then thou wouldest not have me live in anguish of mind, bid me go abroad as I desire, and let me rejoice my soul with sights hitherto unseen by mine eyes."

Grieved was the king to hear these words, but, perceiving that to deny this request would but increase his boy's pain and grief, he answered, "My son, I will grant thee thy heart's desire." And immediately he ordered that choice steeds, and an escort fit for a king, be made ready, and gave him license to go abroad whensoever he would, charging his companions to suffer nothing unpleasant to come in his way, but to show him all that was beautiful and gladsome. He bade them muster in the way troops of folk intuning melodies in every mode, and presenting divers mimic shows, that these might occupy and delight his mind.

So thus it came to pass that the king's son often went abroad. One day, through the negligence of his attendants, he descried two men, the one

maimed, and the other blind. In abhorrence of the sight, he cried to his esquires, "Who are these, and what is this distressing spectacle?" They, unable to conceal what he had with his own eyes seen, answered, "These be human sufferings, which spring from corrupt matter, and from a body full of evil humours." The young prince asked, "Are these the fortune of all men?" They answered, "Not of all, but of those in whom the principle of health is turned away by the badness of the humours." Again the youth asked, "If then this is wont to happen not to all, but only to some, can they be known on whom this terrible calamity shall fall? or is it undefined and unforeseeable?" "What man," said they, "can discern the future, and accurately ascertain it? This is beyond human nature, and is reserved for the immortal gods alone." The young prince ceased from his questioning, but his heart was grieved at the sight that he had witnessed, and the form of his visage was changed by the strangeness of the matter.

Not many days after, as he was again taking his walks abroad, he happened with an old man, well stricken in years, shrivelled in countenance, feeble-kneed, bent double, grey-haired, toothless, and with broken utterance. The prince was seized with astonishment, and, calling the old man near, desired to know the meaning of this strange sight. His companions answered, "This man is now well advanced in years, and his gradual decrease of strength, with increase of weakness, hath brought him to the misery that thou seest." "And," said he, "what will be his end?" They answered, "Naught but death will relieve him." "But," said he, "is this the appointed doom of all mankind? Or doth it happen only to some?" They answered, "Unless death come before hand to remove him, no dweller on earth, but, as life advanceth, must make trial of this lot." Then the young prince asked in how many years this overtook a man, and whether the doom of death was without reprieve, and whether there was no way to escape it, and avoid coming to such misery. They answered him, "In eighty or an hundred years men arrive at this old age, and then they die, since there is none other way; for death is a debt due to nature, laid on man from the beginning, and its approach is inexorable."

When our wise and sagacious young prince saw and heard all this, he sighed from the bottom of his heart. "Bitter is this life," cried he, "and fulfilled of all pain and anguish, if this be so. And how can a body be careless in the expectation of an unknown death, whose approach (ye say) is as uncertain as it is inexorable?" So he went away, restlessly turning over

all these things in his mind, pondering without end, and ever calling up remembrances of death. Wherefore trouble and despondency were his companions, and his grief knew no ease; for he said to himself, "And is it true that death shall one day overtake me? And who is he that shall make mention of me after death, when time delivereth all things to forgetfulness? When dead, shall I dissolve into nothingness? Or is there life beyond, and another world?" Ever fretting over these and the like considerations, he waxed pale and wasted away, but in the presence of his father, whenever he chanced to come to him, he made as though he were cheerful and without trouble, unwilling that his cares should come to his father's knowledge. But he longed with an unrestrainable yearning, to meet with the man that might accomplish his heart's desire, and fill his ears with the sound of good tidings.

Again he enquired of the tutor of whom we have spoken, whether he knew of anybody able to help him towards his desire, and to establish a mind, dazed and shuddering at its cogitations, and unable to throw off its burden. He, recollecting their former communications, said, "I have told thee already how thy father hath dealt with the wise men and anchorets who spend their lives in such philosophies. Some hath he slain, and others he hath wrathfully persecuted, and I wot not whether any of this sort be in this country side." Thereat the prince was overwhelmed with woe, and grievously wounded in spirit. He was like unto a man that hath lost a great treasure, whose whole heart is occupied in seeking after it. Thenceforth he lived in perpetual conflict and distress of mind, and all the pleasures and delights of this world were in his eyes an abomination and a curse. While the youth was in this way, and his soul was crying out to discover that which is good, the eye that beholdeth all things looked upon him, and he that willeth that "all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth," passed him not by, but showed this man also the tender love that he hath toward mankind, and made known upon him the path whereon he needs must go. Befell it thus.

VI

There was at that time a certain monk, learned in heavenly things, graced in word and deed, a model follower of every monastic rule. Whence he sprang, and what his race, I cannot say, but he dwelt in a waste howling wilderness in the land of Senaar, and had been perfected through the grace of the priesthood. Barlaam was this elder's name. He, learning by divine revelation the state of the king's son, left the desert and returned to the world. Changing his habit, he put on lay attire, and, embarking on ship board, arrived at the seat of the empire of the Indians. Disguised as a merchant man, he entered the city, where was the palace of the king's son. There he tarried many days, and enquired diligently concerning the prince's affairs, and those that had access to him. Learning that the tutor, of whom we have spoken, was the prince's most familiar friend, he privily approached him, saying,

“I would have thee understand, my lord, that I am a merchant man, come from a far country; and I possess a precious gem, the like of which was never yet found, and hitherto I have showed it to no man. But now I reveal the secret to thee, seeing thee to be wise and prudent, that thou mayest bring me before the king's son, and I will present it to him. Beyond compare, it surpasseth all beautiful things; for on the blind in heart it hath virtue to bestow the light of wisdom, to open the ears of the deaf, to give speech to the dumb and strength to the ailing. It maketh the foolish wise and driveth away devils, and without stint furnisheth its possessor with everything that is lovely and desirable.” The tutor said, “Though, to all seeming, thou art a man of staid and steadfast judgment, yet thy words prove thee to be boastful beyond measure. Time would fail me to tell thee the full tale of the costly and precious gems and pearls that I have seen. But gems, with such power as thou tellest of, I never saw nor heard of yet. Nevertheless show me the stone; and if it be as thou affirmest, I immediately bear it to the king's son,

from whom thou shalt receive most high honours and rewards. But, before I be assured by the certain witness of mine own eyes, I may not carry to my lord and master so swollen a tale about so doubtful a thing.” Quoth Barlaam, “Well hast thou said that thou hast never seen or heard of such powers and virtues; for my speech to thee is on no ordinary matter, but on a wondrous and a great. But, as thou desiredst to behold it, listen to my words.

“This exceeding precious gem, amongst these its powers and virtues, possesseth this property besides. It cannot be seen out of hand, save by one whose eyesight is strong and sound, and his body pure and thoroughly undefiled. If any man, lacking in these two good qualities, do rashly gaze upon this precious stone, he shall, I suppose lose even the eyesight that he hath, and his wits as well. Now I, that am initiated in the physician’s art, observe that thine eyes are not healthy, and I fear lest I may cause thee to lose even the eyesight that thou hast. But of the king’s son, I have heard that he leadeth a sober life, and that his eyes are young and fair, and healthy. Wherefore to him I make bold to display this treasure. Be not thou then negligent herein, nor rob thy master of so wondrous a boon.” The other answered, “If this be so, in no wise show me the gem; for my life hath been polluted by many sins, and also, as thou sayest, I am not possess of good eyesight. But I am won by thy words, and will not hesitate to make known these things unto my lord the prince.” So saying, he went in, and, word by word, reported everything to the king’s son. He, hearing his tutor’s words, felt a strange joy and spiritual gladness breathing into his heart, and, like one inspired, bade bring in the man forthwith.

So when Barlaam was come in, and had in due order wished him “Peace!” the prince bade him be seated. Then his tutor withdrew, and Ioasaph said unto the elder, “Show me the precious gem, concerning which, as my tutor hath narrated, thou tellest such great and marvellous tales.” Then began Barlaam to discourse with him thus: “It is not fitting, O prince, that I should say anything falsely or unadvisedly to thine excellent majesty. All that hath been signified to thee from me is true and may not be gainsaid. But, except I first make trial of thy mind, it is not lawful to declare to thee this mystery; for my master saith, ‘There went out a sower to sow his seed: and, as he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprang up, because they had no deepness

of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched: and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up and choked them: but others fell upon good ground, and brought forth fruit an hundredfold.’ Now, if I find in thine heart fruit-bearing ground, and good, I shall not be slow to plant therein the heavenly seed, and manifest to thee the mighty mystery. But and if the ground be stony and thorny, and the wayside trodden down by all who will, it were better never to let fall this seed of salvation, nor to cast it for a prey to fowls and beasts, before which I have been charged not to cast pearls. But I am ‘persuaded better things of thee, and things that accompany salvation,’—how that thou shalt see the priceless stone, and it shall be given thee in the light of that stone to become light, and bring forth fruit an hundredfold. Aye, for thy sake I gave diligence and accomplished a long journey, to show thee things which thou hast never seen, and teach thee things which thou hast never heard.”

Ioasaph said unto him, “For myself, reverend elder, I have a longing, an irresistible passion to hear some new and goodly word, and in mine heart there is kindled fire, cruelly burning and urging me to learn the answer to some questions that will not rest. But until now I never happened on one that could satisfy me as touching them. But if I meet with some wise and understanding man, and hear the word of salvation, I shall not deliver it to the fowls of the air, I trow, nor yet to the beasts of the field; nor shall I be found either stony or thorny-hearted, as thou saidest, but I shall receive the word kindly, and guard it wisely. So if thou knowest any suchlike thing, conceal it not from me, but declare it. When I heard that thou were come from a far country, my spirit rejoiced, and I had good hope of obtaining through thee that which I desire. Wherefore I called thee straightway into my presence, and received thee in friendly wise as one of my companions and peers, if so be that I may not be disappointed of my hope.” Barlaam answered, “Fair are thy deeds, and worthy of thy royal majesty; seeing that thou hast paid no heed to my mean show, but hast devoted thyself to the hope that lieth within. For hearken unto me.

“There was once a great and famous king: and it came to pass, when he was riding on a day in his golden chariot, with his royal guard, that there met him two men, clad in filthy rags, with fallen-in faces, and pale as death. Now the king knew that it was by buffetings of the body and by the sweats of the monastic life that they had thus wasted their miserable flesh. So,

seeing them, he leapt anon from his chariot, fell on the ground, and did obeisance. Then rising, he embraced and greeted them tenderly. But his noblemen and counsellors took offence thereat, deeming that their sovran had disgraced his kingly honour. But not daring to reprove him to the face, they bade the king's own brother tell the king not thus to insult the majesty of his crown. When he had told the king thereof, and had upbraided him for his untimely humility, the king gave his brother an answer which he failed to understand.

“It was the custom of that king, whenever he sentenced anyone to death, to send a herald to his door, with a trumpet reserved for that purpose, and at the sound of this trumpet all understood that that man was liable to the penalty of death. So when evening was come, the king sent the death-trumpet to sound at his brother's door; who, when he heard its blast, despaired of his life, and all night long set his house in order. At daybreak, robed in black and garments of mourning, with wife and children, he went to the palace gate, weeping and lamenting. The king fetched him in, and seeing him in tears, said, ‘O fool, and slow of understanding, how didst thou, who hast had such dread of the herald of thy peer and brother (against whom thy conscience doth not accuse thee of having committed any trespass) blame me for my humility in greeting the heralds of my God, when they warned me, in gentler tones than those of the trumpet, of my death and fearful meeting with that Master against whom I know that I have often grievously offended? Lo! then, it was in reproof of thy folly that I played thee this turn, even as I will shortly convict of vanity those that prompted thy reproof.’ Thus he comforted his brother and sent him home with a gift.

“Then he ordered four wooden caskets to be made. Two of these he covered over all with gold, and, placing dead men's mouldering bones therein, secured them with golden clasps. The other two he smeared over with pitch and tar, but filled them with costly stones and precious pearls, and all manner of aromatic sweet perfume. He bound them fast with cords of hair, and called for the noblemen who had blamed him for his manner of accosting the men by the wayside. Before them he set the four caskets, that they might appraise the value of these and those. They decided that the golden ones were of greatest value, for, peradventure, they contained kingly diadems and girdles. But those, that were besmeared with pitch and tar, were cheap and of paltry worth, said they. Then said the king to them, ‘I

know that such is your answer, for with the eyes of sense ye judge the objects of sense, but so ought ye not to do, but ye should rather see with the inner eye the hidden worthlessness or value.’ Whereupon he ordered the golden chests to be opened. And when they were thrown open, they gave out a loathsome smell and presented a hideous sight.

“Said the king, ‘Here is a figure of those who are clothed in glory and honour, and make great display of power and glory, but within is the stink of dead men’s bones and works of iniquity.’ Next, he commanded the pitched and tarred caskets also to be opened, and delighted the company with the beauty and sweet savour of their stores. And he said unto them, ‘Know ye to whom these are like? They are like those lowly men, clad in vile apparel, whose outward form alone ye beheld, and deemed it outrageous that I bowed down to do them obeisance. But through the eyes of my mind I perceived the value and exceeding beauty of their souls, and was glorified by their touch, and I counted them more honourable than any chaplet or royal purple.’ Thus he shamed his courtiers, and taught them not to be deceived by outward appearances, but to give heed to the things of the soul. After the example of that devout and wise king hast thou also done, in that thou hast received me in good hope, wherein, as I ween, thou shalt not be disappointed.” Ioasaph said unto him, “Fair and fitting hath been all thy speech; but now I fain would learn who is thy Master, who, as thou saidest at the first, spake concerning the Sower.”

VII

Again therefore Barlaam took up his parable and said, “If thou wilt learn who is my Master, it is Jesus Christ the Lord, the only-begotten Son of God, ‘the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings, and Lords of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto’; who with the Father and the Holy Ghost is glorified. I am not one of those who proclaim from the housetop their wild rout of gods, and worship lifeless and dumb idols, but one God do I acknowledge and confess, in three persons glorified, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, but in one nature and substance, in one glory and kingdom undivided. He then is in three persons one God, without beginning, and without end, eternal and everlasting, uncreate, immutable and incorporeal, invisible, infinite, incomprehensible, alone good and righteous, who created all things out of nothing, whether visible or invisible. First, he made the heavenly and invisible powers, countless multitudes, immaterial and bodiless, ministering spirits of the majesty of God. Afterward he created this visible world, heaven and earth and sea, which also he made glorious with light and richly adorned it; the heavens with the sun, moon and stars, and the earth with all manner of herbs and divers living beasts, and the sea in turn with all kinds of fishes. ‘He spake the word and these all were made; he commanded and they were created.’ Then with his own hands he created man, taking dust of the ground for the fashioning of his body, but by his own in-breathing giving him a reasonable and intelligent soul, which, as it is written, was made after the image and likeness of God: after his image, because of reason and free will; after his likeness, because of the likeness of virtue, in its degree, to God. Him he endowed with free will and immortality and appointed sovran over everything upon earth; and from man he made woman, to be an helpmeet of like nature for him.

“And he planted a garden eastward in Eden, full of delight and all heart’s ease, and set thereto the man whom he had formed, and commanded him freely to eat of all the heavenly trees therein, but forbade him wholly the taste of a certain one which was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thus saying, ‘In the day that ye eat thereof ye shall surely die.’ But one of the aforesaid angel powers, the marshall of one host, though he bore in himself no trace of natural evil from his Maker’s hand but had been created for good, yet by his own free and deliberate choice turned aside from good to evil, and was stirred up by madness to the desire to take up arms against his Lord God. Wherefore he was cast out of his rank and dignity, and in the stead of his former blissful glory and angelic name received the name of the ‘Devil’ and ‘Satan’ for his title. God banished him as unworthy of the glory above. And together with him there was drawn away and hurled forth a great multitude of the company of angels under him, who were evil of choice, and chose in place of good, to follow in the rebellion of their leader. These were called Devils, as being deluders and deceivers.

“Thus then did the devil utterly renounce the good, and assume an evil nature; and he conceived spite against man, seeing himself hurled from such glory, and man raised to such honour; and he schemed to oust him from that blissful state. So he took the serpent for the workshop of his own guile. Through him he conversed with the woman, and persuaded her to eat of that forbidden tree in the hope of being as God, and through her he deceived Adam also, for that was the first man’s name. So Adam ate of the tree of disobedience, and was banished by his maker from that paradise of delight, and, in lieu of those happy days and that immortal life, fell alas! into this life of misery and woe, and at the last received sentence of death. Thenceforth the devil waxed strong and boastful through his victory; and, as the race of man multiplied, he prompted them in all manner of wickedness. So, wishing to cut short the growth of sin, God brought a deluge on the earth, and destroyed every living soul. But one single righteous man did God find in that generation; and him, with wife and children, he saved alive in an Ark, and established him on a desolate earth. But, when the human race again began to multiply, they forgot God, and ran into worse excess of wickedness, being in subjection to divers sins and strange delusions, and wandering apart into many branches of error.

“Some deemed that everything moved by mere chance, and taught that there was no Providence, since there was no master to govern. Others brought in fate, and committed everything to the stars at birth. Others worshipped many evil deities subject to many passions, to the end that they might have them to advocate their own passions and shameful deeds, whose forms they moulded, and whose dumb figures and senseless idols they set up, and enclosed them in temples, and did homage to them, ‘serving the creature more than the Creator.’ Some worshipped the sun, moon and stars which God fixed, for to give light to our earthly sphere; things without soul or sense, enlightened and sustained by the providence of God, but unable to accomplish anything of themselves. Others again worshipped fire and water, and the other elements, things without soul or sense; and men, possest of soul and reason, were not ashamed to worship the like of these. Others assigned worship to beasts, creeping and four-footed things, proving themselves more beastly than the things that they worshipped. Others made them images of vile and worthless men, and named them gods, some of whom they called males, and some females, and they themselves set them forth as adulterers, murderers, victims of anger, jealousy, wrath, slayers of fathers, slayers of brothers, thieves and robbers, lame and maim, sorcerers and madmen. Others they showed dead, struck by thunderbolts, or beating their breasts, or being mourned over, or in enslavement to mankind, or exiled, or, for foul and shameful unions, taking the forms of animals. Whence men, taking occasion by the gods themselves, took heart to pollute themselves in all manner of uncleanness. So an horrible darkness overspread our race in those times, and ‘there was none that did understand and seek after God.’

“Now in that generation one Abraham alone was found strong in his spiritual senses; and by contemplation of Creation he recognized the Creator. When he considered heaven, earth and sea, the sun, moon and the like, he marvelled at their harmonious ordering. Seeing the world, and all that therein is, he could not believe that it had been created, and was upheld, by its own power, nor did he ascribe such a fair ordering to earthly elements or lifeless idols. But therein he recognized the true God, and understood him to be the maker and sustainer of the whole. And God, approving his fair wisdom and right judgement, manifested himself unto him, not as he essentially is (for it is impossible for a created being to see God), but by certain manifestations in material forms, as he alone can, and he planted in

Abraham more perfect knowledge; he magnified him and made him his own servant. Which Abraham in turn handed down to his children his own righteousness, and taught them to know the true God. Wherefore also the Lord was pleased to multiply his seed beyond measure, and called them ‘a peculiar people,’ and brought them forth out of bondage to the Egyptian nation, and to one Pharaoh a tyrant, by strange and terrible signs and wonders wrought by the hand of Moses and Aaron, holy men, honoured with the gift of prophecy; by whom also he punished the Egyptians in fashion worthy of their wickedness, and led the Israelites (for thus the people descended from Abraham were called) through the Red Sea upon dry land, the waters dividing and making a wall on the right hand and a wall on the left. But when Pharaoh and the Egyptians pursued and went in after them, the waters returned and utterly destroyed them. Then with exceeding mighty miracles and divine manifestations by the space of forty years he led the people in the wilderness, and fed them with bread from heaven, and gave the Law divinely written on tables of stone, which he delivered unto Moses on the mount, ‘a type and shadow of things to come’ leading men away from idols and all manner of wickedness, and teaching them to worship only the one true God, and to cleave to good works. By such wondrous deeds, he brought them into a certain goodly land, the which he had promised aforetime to Abraham the patriarch, that he would give it unto his seed. And the task were long, to tell of all the mighty and marvellous works full of glory and wonder, without number, which he showed unto them, by which it was his purpose to pluck the human race from all unlawful worship and practice, and to bring men back to their first estate. But even so our nature was in bondage by its freedom to err, and death had dominion over mankind, delivering all to the tyranny of the devil, and to the damnation of hell.

“So when we had sunk to this depth of misfortune and misery, we were not forgotten by him that formed and brought us out of nothing into being, nor did he suffer his own handiwork utterly to perish. By the good pleasure of our God and Father, and the cooperation of the Holy Ghost, the only-begotten Son, even the Word of God, which is in the bosom of the Father, being of one substance with the Father and with the Holy Ghost, he that was before all worlds, without beginning, who was in the beginning, and was with God even the Father, and was God, he, I say, condescended toward his servants with an unspeakable and incomprehensible condescension; and,

being perfect God, was made perfect man, of the Holy Ghost, and of Mary the Holy Virgin and Mother of God, not of the seed of man, nor of the will of man, nor by carnal union, being conceived in the Virgin's undefiled womb, of the Holy Ghost; as also, before his conception, one of the Archangels was sent to announce to the Virgin that miraculous conception and ineffable birth. For without seed was the Son of God conceived of the Holy Ghost, and in the Virgin's womb he formed for himself a fleshy body, animate with a reasonable and intelligent soul, and thence came forth in one substance, but in two natures, perfect God and perfect man, and preserved undefiled, even after birth, the virginity of her that bore him. He, being made of like passions with ourselves in all things, yet without sin, took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses. For, since by sin death entered into the world, need was that he, that should redeem the world, should be without sin, and not by sin subject unto death.

“When he had lived thirty years among men, he was baptized in the river Jordan by John, an holy man, and great above all the prophets. And when he was baptized there came a voice from heaven, from God, even the Father, saying, ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,’ and the Holy Ghost descended upon him in likeness of a dove. From that time forth he began to do great signs and wonders, raising the dead, giving sight to the blind, casting out devils, healing the lame and maim, cleansing lepers, and everywhere renewing our outworn nature, instructing men both by word and deed, and teaching the way of virtue, turning men from destruction and guiding their feet toward life eternal. Wherefore also he chose twelve disciples, whom he called Apostles, and commanded them to preach the kingdom of heaven which he came upon earth to declare, and to make heavenly us who are low and earthly, by virtue of his Incarnation.

“But, through envy of his marvellous and divine conversation and endless miracles, the chief priests and rulers of the Jews (amongst whom also he dwelt, on whom he had wrought his aforesaid signs and miracles), in their madness forgetting all, condemned him to death, having seized one of the Twelve to betray him. And, when they had taken him, they delivered him to the Gentiles, him that was the life of the world, he of his free will consenting thereto; for he came for our sakes to suffer all things, that he might free us from sufferings. But when they had done him much despite, at the last they condemned him to the Cross. All this he endured in the nature of that flesh which he took from us, his divine nature remaining free of

suffering: for, being of two natures, both the divine and that which he took from us, his human nature suffered, while his Godhead continued free from suffering and death. So our Lord Jesus Christ, being without sin, was crucified in the flesh, for he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; and he was not subject unto death, for by sin, as I have said before, came death into the world; but for our sakes he suffered death in the flesh, that he might redeem us from the tyranny of death. He descended into hell, and having harrowed it, he delivered thence souls that had been imprisoned therein for ages long. He was buried, and on the third day he rose again, vanquishing death and granting us the victory over death: and he, the giver of immortality, having made flesh immortal, was seen of his disciples, and bestowed upon them peace, and, through them, peace on the whole human race.

“After forty days he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again to judge the quick and the dead, and to reward every man according to his works. After his glorious Ascension into heaven he sent forth upon his disciples the Holy Ghost in likeness of fire, and they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. From thence by his grace they were scattered abroad among all nations, and preached the true Catholic Faith, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and teaching them to observe all the commandments of the Saviour. So they gave light to the people that wandered in darkness, and abolished the superstitious error of idolatry. Though the enemy chafeth under his defeat, and even now stirreth up war against us, the faithful, persuading the fools and unwise to cling to the worship of idols, yet is his power grown feeble, and his swords have at last failed him by the power of Christ. Lo, in few words I have made known unto thee my Master, my God, and my Saviour; but thou shalt know him more perfectly, if thou wilt receive his grace into thy soul, and gain the blessing to become his servant.”

VIII

When the king's son had heard these words, there flashed a light upon his soul. Rising from his seat in the fullness of his joy, he embraced Barlaam, saying: "Most honoured sir, methinks this might be that priceless stone which thou dost rightly keep secret, not displaying it to all that would see it, but only to these whose spiritual sense is strong. For lo, as these words dropped upon mine ear, sweetest light entered into my heart, and the heavy veil of sorrow, that hath now this long time enveloped my heart, was in an instant removed. Tell me if my guess be true: or if thou knowest aught better than that which thou hast spoken, delay not to declare it to me."

Again, therefore, Barlaam answered, "Yea, my lord and prince, this is the mighty mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but in these last days hath been made known unto mankind; the manifestation whereof, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, was foretold by many prophets and righteous men, instructed at sundry times and in divers manners. In trumpet tones they proclaimed it, and all looked forward to the salvation that should be: this they desired to see, but saw it not. But this latest generation was counted worthy to receive salvation. Wherefore he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Said Ioasaph, "All that thou hast told me I believe without question, and him whom thou declarest I glorify as God. Only make all plain to me, and teach me clearly what I must do. But especially go on to tell me what is that Baptism which thou sayest that the Faithful receive."

The other answered him thus, "The root mid sure foundation of this holy and perfect Christian Faith is the grace of heavenly Baptism, fraught with the cleansing from all original sins, and complete purification of all defilements of evil that come after. For thus the Saviour commanded a man to be born again of water and of the spirit, and be restored to his first dignity, to wit, by supplication and by calling on the Saving Name, the Holy

Spirit brooding on the water. We are baptized, then, according to the word of the Lord, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and thus the grace of the Holy Ghost dwelleth in the soul of the baptized, illuminating and making it Godlike and renewing that which was made after his own image and likeness. And for the time to come we cast away all the old works of wickedness, and we make covenant with God of a second life and begin a purer conversation, that we may also become fellow-heirs with them that are born again to incorruption and lay hold of everlasting salvation. But without Baptism it is impossible to attain to that good hope, even though a man be more pious than piety itself. For thus spake God, the Word, who was incarnate for the salvation of our race, ‘Verily I say unto you, except ye be born of water and of the Spirit, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.’ Wherefore before all things I require thee to receive faith within thy soul, and to draw near to Baptism anon with hearty desire, and on no account to delay herein, for delay is parlous, because of the uncertainty of the appointed day of death.”

Ioasaph said unto him, “And what is this good hope whereto thou sayest it is impossible without baptism to attain? And what this kingdom which thou callest the kingdom of Heaven? And how cometh it that thou hast heard the words of God incarnate? And what is the uncertain day of death? For on this account much anxiety hath fallen on my heart, and consumeth my flesh in pain and grief, and fasteneth on my very bones. And shall we men, appointed to die, return to nothing, or is there some other life after our departure hence? These and kindred questions I have been longing to resolve.”

Thus questioned he; and Barlaam answered thus: “The good hope, whereof I spake, is that of the kingdom of Heaven. But that kingdom is far beyond the utterance of mortal tongue; for the Scripture saith, ‘Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.’ But when we have shuffled off this gross flesh, and attained to that blessedness, then will that Master, which hath granted to us not to fail of this hope, teach and make known unto us the glory of those good things, whose glory passeth all understanding:—that light ineffable, that life that hath no ending, that converse with Angels. For if it be granted us to hold communion with God, so far as is attainable to human nature, then shall we know all things from his lips which now we know not. This doth my initiation into the teaching

of the divine Scriptures teach me to be the real meaning of the kingdom of Heaven; to approach the vision of the blessed and life-giving Trinity, and to be illumined with his unapproachable light, and with clearer and purer sight, and with unveiled face, to behold as in a glass his unspeakable glory. But, if it be impossible to express in language that glory, that light, and those mysterious blessings, what marvel? For they had not been mighty and singular, if they had been comprehended by reason and expressed in words by us who are earthly, and corruptible, and clothed in this heavy garment of sinful flesh. Holding then such knowledge in simple faith, believe thou undoubtingly, that these are no fictions; but by good works be urgent to lay hold on that immortal kingdom, to which when thou hast attained, thou shalt have perfect knowledge.

“As touching thy question, How it is that we have heard the words of the Incarnate God, know thou that we have been taught all that appertaineth to the divine Incarnation by the Holy Gospels, for thus that holy book is called, because it telleth us, who are corruptible and earthly, the ‘good spell’ of immortality and incorruption, of life eternal, of the remission of sins, and of the kingdom of heaven. This book was written by the eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word, and of these I have already said that our Lord Jesus Christ chose them for disciples and apostles; and they delivered it unto us in writing, after the glorious Ascension of our Master into Heaven, a record of his life on earth, his teachings and miracles, so far as it was possible to commit them to writing. For thus, toward the end of his volume, saith he that is the flower of the holy Evangelists, ‘And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.’

“So in this heavenly Gospel, written by the Spirit of God, is recorded the history of his Incarnation, his manifestation, his miracles and acts. Afterward, it telleth of the innocent suffering which the Lord endured for our sake, of his holy Resurrection on the third day, his Ascent into the heavens, and of his glorious and dreadful second coming; for the Son of God shall come again on earth, with unspeakable glory, and with a multitude of the heavenly host to judge our race, and to reward every man according to his works. For, at the beginning, God created man out of earth, as I have already told thee, and breathed into him breath, which is called a reasonable and understanding soul. But since we were sentenced to death,

we die all: and it is not possible for this cup to pass any man by. Now death is the separation of the soul from the body. And that body which was formed out of earth, when severed from the soul, returneth to earth from whence also it was taken, and, decaying, perisheth; but the soul, being immortal, fareth whither her Maker calleth, or rather to the place where she, while still in the body, hath prepared for herself lodgement. For as a man hath lived here, so shall he receive reward there.

“Then, after long seasons, Christ our God shall come to judge the world in awful glory, beyond words to tell; and for fear of him the powers of heaven shall be shaken, and all the angel hosts stand beside him in dread. Then, at the voice of the archangel, and at the trump of God, shall the dead arise and stand before his awful throne. Now the Resurrection is the reuniting of soul and body. So that very body, which decayeth and perisheth, shall arise incorruptible. And concerning this, beware lest the reasoning of unbelief overtake thee; for it is not impossible for him, who at the beginning formed the body out of earth, when according to its Maker’s doom it hath returned to earth whence it was taken, to raise the same again. If thou wilt but consider how many things God hath made out of nothing, this proof shall suffice thee. He took earth and made man, though earth was not man before. How then did earth become man? And how was earth, that did not exist, produced? And what foundation hath it? And how were countless kind of things without reason, of seeds and plants, produced out of it! Nay, now also consider the manner of our birth. Is not a little seed thrown into the womb that receiveth it? Whence then cometh such a marvellous fashioning of a living creature?

“So for him, who hath made everything out of nothing, and still doth make, it is not impossible to raise deadened and corrupt bodies from the earth, that every man may be rewarded according to his works; for he saith, ‘The present is the time for work, the future for recompense.’ Else, where were the justice of God, if there were no Resurrection? Many righteous men in this present life have suffered much ill-usage and torment, and have died violent deaths; and the impious and the lawbreaker hath spent his days here in luxury and prosperity. But God, who is good and just, hath appointed a day of resurrection and inquisition, that each soul may receive her own body, and that the wicked, who received his good things here, may there be punished for his misdeeds, and that the good, who was here chastised for his misdeeds, may there inherit his bliss. For, saith the Lord, ‘They that are

in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of doom.’ Then also shall thrones be set, and the Ancient of days and Maker of all things shall sit as Judge, and there shall be opened books with records of the deeds and words and thoughts of all of us, and a fiery stream shall issue, and all hidden things shall be revealed. There can no advocate, no persuasive words, no false excuse, no mightiness of riches, no pomp of rank, no lavishment of bribes, avail to pervert righteous judgement. For he, the uncorrupt and truthful Judge, shall weigh everything in the balance of justice, every act, word and thought. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting, into light unspeakable, rejoicing in the fellowship of the Angels, to enjoy bliss ineffable, standing in purity before the Holy Trinity. But they that have done evil, and all the ungodly and sinners, shall go into everlasting punishment, which is called Gehenna, and outer darkness, and the worm that dieth not, and the gnashing of teeth, and a thousand other names of punishment; which meaneth rather—bitterest of all—alienation from God, the being cast away from the sweetness of his presence, the being deprived of that glory which baffleth description, the being made a spectacle unto the whole creation, and the being put to shame, and shame that hath no ending. For, after the passing of that terrible sentence, all things shall abide immutable and unchangeable. The blissful life of the righteous shall have no close, neither shall the misery and punishment of sinners find an end: because, after him, there is no higher Judge, and no defence by after-works, no time for amendment, no other way for them that are punished, their vengeance being coeternal with them.

“Seeing that this is so, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, that we may be counted worthy to escape the wrath to come, and to be ranged on the right hand of the Son of God? For this is the station of the righteous: but to sinners is allotted the station of misery on the left. Then shall the Lord call the righteous ‘Blessed,’ and shall lead them into his everlasting kingdom. But, as for sinners, with anger and curse he will banish them from his serene and gentle countenance the bitterest and hardest lot of all and will send them away into everlasting punishment.”

IX

Ioasaph said unto him, “Great and marvellous, sir, are the things whereof thou tellest me, fearful and terrible, if indeed these things be so, and, if there be after death and dissolution into dust and ashes, a resurrection and rebirth, and rewards and punishments for the deeds done during life. But what is the proof thereof? And how have ye come to learn that which ye have not seen, that ye have so steadfastly and undoubtingly believed it? As for things that have already been done and made manifest in deed, though ye saw them not, yet have ye heard them from the writers of history. But, when it is of the future that ye preach tidings of such vast import, how have ye made your conviction on these matters sure?”

Quoth Barlaam, “From the past I gain certainty about the future; for they that preached the Gospel, without erring from the truth, but establishing their sayings by signs and wonders and divers miracles, themselves also spake of the future. So, as in the one case they taught us nothing amiss or false, but made all that they said and did to shine clearer than the sun, so also in the other matter they gave us true doctrine, even that which our Lord and Master Jesus Christ himself confirmed both by word and deed. ‘Verily,’ he spake, ‘I say unto you, the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live:’ and again, ‘The hour cometh when the dead shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.’ And again he said concerning the resurrection of the dead, ‘Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead but of the living.’ ‘For as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this age. The Son of God shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast

them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father.' Thus spake he and added this thereto, 'Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.'

"In such words and many more did the Lord make manifest the resurrection of our bodies, and confirm his words in deed, by raising many that were dead. And, toward the end of his life upon earth, he called from the grave one Lazarus his friend, that had already been four days dead and stank, and thus he restored the lifeless to life. Moreover, the Lord himself became the firstfruits of that resurrection which is final and no longer subject unto death, after he had in the flesh tasted of death; and on the third day he rose again, and became the firstborn from the dead. For other men also were raised from the dead, but died once more, and might not yet attain to the likeness of the future true resurrection. But he alone was the leader of that resurrection, the first to be raised to the resurrection immortal.

"This was the preaching also of them that from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word; for thus saith blessed Paul, whose calling was not of men, but from heaven, 'Brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised. And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' And after a little while, 'For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' For then the power of death is utterly annulled and destroyed, no longer working in us, but for the future there is given unto men immortality and incorruption forevermore.

"Beyond all question, therefore, there shall be a resurrection of the dead, and this we believe undoubtingly. Moreover we know that there shall be

rewards and punishments for the deeds done in our lifetime, on the dreadful day of Christ's coming, 'wherein the heavens shall be dissolved in fire and the elements shall melt with fervent heat,' as saith one of the inspired clerks of God; 'nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth.' For that there shall be rewards and punishments for men's works, and that absolutely nothing, good or bad, shall be overlooked, but that there is reserved a requital for words, deeds and thoughts, is plain. The Lord saith, 'Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, he shall in no wise lose his reward.' And again he saith, 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."'" Wherefore saith he this, except he count the kind acts we do unto the needy as done unto himself? And in another place he saith, 'Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven.'

"Lo, by all these examples and many more he proveth that the rewards of good works are certain and sure. Further, that punishments are in store for the bad, he foretold by parables strange and wonderful, which he, the Well of Wisdom most wisely put forth. At one time he brought into his tale a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, but who was so niggardly and pitiless toward the destitute as to overlook a certain beggar named Lazarus laid at his gate, and not even to give him of the crumbs from his table. So when one and other were dead, the poor man, full of sores, was carried away, he saith, into Abraham's bosom, for thus he describeth the habitation of the righteous—but the rich man was delivered to the fire of bitter torment in hell. To him said Abraham, 'Thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus his evil things, but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.'

“And otherwhere he likeneth the kingdom of heaven to a certain king which made a marriage-feast for his son and thereby he declared future happiness and splendour. For as he was wont to speak to humble and earthly minded men, he would draw his parables from homely and familiar things. Not that he meant that marriages and feasts exist in that world; but in condescension to men’s grossness, he employed these names when he would make known to them the future. So, as he telleth, the king with high proclamation called all to come to the marriage to take their fill of his wondrous store of good things. But many of them that were bidden made light of it and came not, and busied themselves: some went to their farms, some to their merchandize, and others to their newly wedded wives, and thus deprived themselves of the splendour of the bride chamber. Now when these had, of their own choice, absented themselves from this joyous merriment, others were bidden thereto, and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment, and he said unto him, ‘Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ Now they who made excuses and paid no heed to the call are they that hasten not to the faith of Christ, but continue in idolatry or heresy. But he that had no wedding garment is he that believeth, but hath soiled his spiritual garment with unclean acts, and was rightly cast forth from the joy of the bride chamber.

“And he put forth yet another parable, in harmony with this, in his picture of the Ten Virgins, ‘five of whom were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil.’ By the oil he signifieth the acquiring of good works. ‘And at midnight,’ he saith, ‘there was a cry made, “Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.”’ By midnight he denoteth the uncertainty of that time. Then all those virgins arose. ‘They that were ready went forth to meet the bridegroom and went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut.’ But they that were unready (whom rightly he calleth foolish), seeing that their lamps were going out, went forth to buy oil. Afterward they drew nigh, the door being now shut, and cried, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us.’ But he answered and said, ‘Verily I say unto you, I know you not.’ Wherefore from all this it is manifest that there is a requital not only for

overt acts, but also for words and even secret thoughts; for the Saviour said, 'I say unto you, that for every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement.' And again he saith, 'But the very hairs of your head are numbered,' by the hairs meaning the smallest and slightest fantasy or thought. And in harmony herewith is the teaching of blessed Paul, 'For the word of God,' saith he, 'is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and laid bare unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.'

"These things also were proclaimed with wondrous clearness by the prophets of old time, illumined by the grace of the Spirit. For Esay saith, 'I know their works and their thoughts,' and will repay them. 'Behold, I come to gather all nations and all tongues; and they shall come and see my glory. And the heaven shall be new, and the earth, which I make before me. And all flesh shall come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be a spectacle unto all flesh.' And again he saith concerning that day, 'And the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all the stars shall fall down as leaves from the vine. For behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the whole world desolate and to destroy the sinners out of it. For the stars of heaven and Orion and all the constellations of heaven shall not give their light, and there shall be darkness at the sun's rising, and the moon shall not give her light. And I will cause the arrogancy of the sinners to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the proud.' And again he saith, 'Woe unto them that draw their iniquities as with a long cord, and their sins as with an heifer's cart-rope! Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto those of you that are mighty, that are princes, that mingle strong drink, which justify the wicked for reward, and take justice from the just, and turn aside the judgement from the needy, and take away the right from the poor, that the widow may be their spoil and the fatherless their prey! And what will they do in the day of visitation, and to whom will they flee for help? And where will they leave their glory, that they fall not into arrest? Like as

stubble shall be burnt by live coal of fire, and consumed by kindled flame, so their root shall be as foam, and their blossom shall go up as dust, for they would not the law of the Lord of hosts, and provoked the oracle of the Holy One of Israel.’

“In tune therewith saith also another prophet, ‘The great day of the Lord is near, and hasteth greatly. The bitter and austere voice of the day of the Lord hath been appointed. A mighty day of wrath is that day, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of blackness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm. And I will bring distress upon the wicked, and they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord’s wrath; for the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy, for he shall make a riddance of all them that dwell in the land.’ Moreover David, the king and prophet, crieth thus, ‘God shall come visibly, even our God, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall be kindled before him, and a mighty tempest round about him. He shall call the heaven from above, and the earth, that he may judge his people.’ And again he saith, ‘Arise, O God, judge thou the earth, because “the fierceness of man shall turn to thy praise.” And thou shalt “reward every man according to his works.”’ And many other such things have been spoken by the Psalmist, and all the Prophets inspired by the Holy Ghost, concerning the judgement and the recompense to come. Their words also have been most surely confirmed by the Saviour who hath taught us to believe the resurrection of the dead, and the recompense of the deeds done in the flesh, and the unending life of the world to come.”

X

But Ioasaph was filled hereby with deep compunction, and was melted into tears; and he said to the elder, “Thou hast told me everything plainly, and hast completed unerringly thy terrible and marvellous tale. With such truths set before us, what must we do to escape the punishments in store for sinners, and to gain the joy of the righteous?”

Barlaam answered: “It is written of Peter, who was also called chief of the Apostles, that once when he was preaching the people were pricked in their heart, like thyself today: and when they asked, ‘What shall we do?’ Peter said unto them, ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off even as many as the Lord our God shall call.’ Behold therefore upon thee also hath he poured forth the riches of his mercy, and hath called thee that wert afar off from him in heart, and didst serve others, not Gods, but pernicious devils and dumb and senseless wooden images. Wherefore before all things approach thou him who hath called thee, and from him shalt thou receive the true knowledge of things visible and invisible. But if, after thy calling, thou be loth or slack, thou shalt be disherited by the just judgement of God, and by thy rejection of him thou shalt be rejected. For thus too spake the same Apostle Peter to a certain disciple.⁶ But I believe that thou hast heard the call, and that, when thou hast heard it more plainly, thou wilt take up thy Cross, and follow that God and Master that calleth thee, calleth thee to himself from death unto life, and from darkness unto light. For, soothly, ignorance of God is darkness and death of the soul; and to serve idols, to the destruction of all nature, is to my thinking the extreme of all senselessness.

“But idolaters—to whom shall I compare them, and to what likeness shall I liken their silliness? Well, I will set before thee an example which I

heard from the lips of one most wise.

“‘Idol worshippers,’ said he, ‘are like a fowler who caught a tiny bird, called nightingale. He took a knife, for to kill and eat her; but the nightingale, being given the power of articulate speech, said to the fowler, “Man, what advantageth it thee to slay me? for thou shalt not be able by my means to fill thy belly. Now free me of my fetters, and I will give thee three precepts, by the keeping of which thou shalt be greatly benefited all thy life long.” He, astonished at her speech, promised that, if he heard anything new from her, he would quickly free her from her captivity. The nightingale turned towards our friend and said, “Never try to attain to the unattainable: never regret the thing past and gone: and never believe the word that passeth belief. Keep these three precepts, and may it be well with thee.” The man, admiring the lucidity and sense of her words, freed the bird from her captivity, and sent her forth aloft. She, therefore, desirous to know whether the man had understood the force of her words, and whether he had gleaned any profit therefrom, said, as she flew aloft, “Shame, sir, on thy fecklessness! What a treasure that hast lost today! For I have inside me a pearl larger than an ostrich-egg.” When the fowler heard thereof, he was distraught with grief, regretting that the bird had escaped out of his hands. And he would fain have taken her again. “Come hither,” said he, “into my house: I will make thee right welcome, and send thee forth with honour.” But the nightingale said unto him, “Now I know thee to be a mighty fool. Though thou didst receive my words readily and gladly, thou hast gained no profit thereby. I bade thee never regret the thing past and gone; and behold thou art distraught with grief because I have escaped out of thy hands—there thou regrettest a thing past and gone. I charged thee not to try to attain to the unattainable, and thou triest to catch me, though thou canst not attain to my path. Besides which, I bade thee never believe a word past belief, and behold thou hast believed that I had inside me a pearl exceeding the measure of my size, and hadst not the sense to see that my whole body doth not attain to the bulk of ostrich eggs. How then could I contain such a pearl?”’

“Thus senseless, then, are also they that trust in idols: for these be their handiwork, and they worship that which their fingers made, saying, ‘These be our creators.’ How then deem they their creators those which have been formed and fashioned by themselves? Nay more, they safeguard their gods, lest they be stolen by thieves, and yet they call them guardians of their

safety. And yet what folly not to know that they, which be unable to guard and aid themselves, can in no wise guard and save others! 'For' saith he, 'why, on behalf of the living, should they seek unto the dead?' They expend wealth, for to raise statues and images to devils, and vainly boast that these give them good gifts, and crave to receive of their hands things which those idols never possessed, nor ever shall possess. Wherefore it is written, 'May they that make them be like unto them, and so be all such as put their trust in them, who,' he saith, 'hire a goldsmith, and make them gods, and they fall down, yea, they worship them. They bear them upon the shoulders, and go forward. And if they set them in their place, they stand therein: they shall not remove. Yea, one shall cry unto them, yet call they not answer him, nor save him out of his trouble.' 'Wherefore be ye ashamed with everlasting shame, ye that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye are our gods.' 'For they sacrificed,' he saith, 'unto devils, and not to God; to gods whom their fathers knew not. There came new and fresh gods; because it is a froward generation, and there is no faith in them.'

"Wherefore out of this wicked and faithless generation the Lord calleth thee to him, saying, 'Come out from among them, and be thou separate, and touch no unclean thing,' but 'save thyself from this untoward generation.' 'Arise thou, and depart, for this is not thy rest;' for that divided lordship, which your gods hold, is a thing of confusion and strife and hath no real being whatsoever. But with us it is not so, neither have we many gods and lords, but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him: and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we by him, 'who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature' and of all ages, 'for in him were all things created that are in the heavens and that are upon the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers.' 'All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made:' and one Holy Ghost, in whom are all things, 'the Lord and Giver of life,' God and making God, the good Spirit, the right Spirit, 'the Spirit the Comforter,' 'the Spirit of adoption.' Of these each person, severally, is God. As the Father is, so also is the Son, and as the Son, so also the Holy Ghost. And there is one God in three, one nature, one kingdom, one power, one glory, one substance, distinct in persons, and so only distinct. One is the Father, whose property it is not to have been begotten; one is the only-begotten Son, and his property it is to have been begotten; and one is the Holy Ghost, and his property it is that he

proceedeth. Thus illuminated *by* that light, which is the Father, *with* that light, which is the Son, *in* that light, which is the Holy Ghost, we glorify one Godhead in three persons. And he is one very and only God, known in the Trinity: for of him and through him, and unto him are all things.

“By his grace also, I came to know thy case, and was sent to teach thee the lessons that I have learned and observed from my youth even to these grey hairs. If then thou shalt believe and be baptized, thou shalt be saved; but if thou believe not, thou shalt be damned. All the things that thou seest today, wherein thou gloriest—pomp, luxury, riches, and all the deceitfulness of life—quickly pass away; and they shall cast thee hence whether thou wilt or no. And thy body will be imprisoned in a tiny grave, left in utter loneliness, and bereft of all company of kith and kin. And all the pleasant things of the world shall perish; and instead of the beauty and fragrance of today, thou shalt be encompassed with horror and the stink of corruption. But thy soul shall they hurl into the nether-regions of the earth, into the condemnation of Hades, until the final resurrection, when reunited to her body, she shall be cast forth from the presence of the Lord and be delivered to hell fire, which burneth everlastingly. These, and far worse haps than these, shall be thy destiny, if thou continue in unbelief.

“But and if thou readily obey him that calleth thee to salvation, and if thou run unto him with desire and joy, and be signed with his light, and follow him without turn, renouncing everything, and cleaving only unto him, hear what manner of security and happiness shall be thine. ‘When thou sittest down, thou shalt not be afraid of sudden fear. When thou liest down, sweet shall be thy sleep.’ And thou shalt not be afraid of terror coming or the assaults of evil spirits, but shalt go thy way bold as any lion, and shalt live in bliss and everlasting joyance. For ‘joy and praise shall crown thy head, and gladness shall befall thee there, where pain and sorrow and wailing shall flee away.’ ‘Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall rise speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee, and the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.’ Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; while thou art yet speaking, he shall say, ‘Here am I.’ ‘I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, and will not remember them. Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou thy sins that thou mayst be justified.’ ‘Though thy sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow: though they be red as crimson I will make them white as wool, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.’”

XI

Ioasaph said unto him, “All thy words are fair and wonderful, and, while thou spakest, I believed them and still believe them; and I hate all idolatry with all my heart. And indeed, even before thy coming hither, my soul was, in uncertain fashion, doubtful of it. But now I hate it with a perfect hatred, since I have learned from thy lips the vanity thereof, and the folly of those who worship idols; and I yearn to become the servant of the true God, if haply he will not refuse me, that am unworthy by reason of my sins, and I trust that he will forgive me everything, because he is a lover of men, and compassionate, as thou tellest me, and will count me worthy to become his servant. So I am ready anon to receive baptism, and to observe all thy sayings. But what must I do after baptism? And is this alone sufficient for salvation, to believe and be baptized, or must one add other services thereto?”

Barlaam answered him, “Hear what thou must do after baptism. Thou must abstain from all sin, and every evil affection, and build upon the foundation of the Catholic Faith the practice of the virtues; for faith without works is dead, as also are works without faith. For, saith the Apostle, ‘Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.’ Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, love of money, railing, love of pleasure, drunkenness, revelling, arrogance, and suchlike, of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, sanctification of soul and body, lowliness of heart and contrition, almsgiving, forgiveness of injuries, loving-kindness, watchings, perfect repentance of all past offences, tears of compunction, sorrow for our

own sins and those of our neighbours, and the like. These, even as steps and ladders that support one another and are clinched together, conduct the soul to heaven. Lo, to these we are commanded to cleave after baptism, and to abstain from their contraries.

“But if, after receiving the knowledge of the truth, we again lay hold on dead works, and, like a dog, return to our vomit, it shall happen unto us according to the word of the Lord; ‘for,’ saith he, ‘when the unclean spirit is gone out of a man’ (to wit, by the grace of baptism) ‘he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none.’ But enduring not for long to wander homeless and hearthless, he saith, ‘I will return to my house whence I came out.’ And, when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished, but empty and unoccupied, not having received the operation of grace, nor having filled itself with the riches of the virtues. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man becometh worse than the first.’ For baptism burieth in the water and completely blotteth out the handwriting of all former sins, and is to us for the future a sure fortress and tower of defence, and a strong weapon against the marshalled host of the enemy; but it taketh not away free will, nor alloweth the forgiving of sins after baptism, or immersion in the font a second time. For it is one baptism that we confess, and need is that we keep ourselves with all watchfulness that so we fall not into defilement a second time, but hold fast to the commandments of the Lord. For when he said to the Apostles, ‘Go make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,’ he did not stop there, but added, ‘teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.’

“Now he commanded men to be poor in spirit, and such he calleth blessed and worthy of the kingdom of heaven. Again he chargeth us to mourn in the present life, that we may obtain comfort hereafter, and to be meek, and to be ever hungering and thirsting after righteousness: to be merciful, and ready to distribute, pitiful and compassionate, pure in heart, abstaining from all defilement of flesh and spirit, peacemakers with our neighbours and with our own souls, by bringing the worse into subjection to the better, and thus by a just decision making peace in that continual warfare betwixt the twain; also to endure all persecution and tribulation and reviling, inflicted upon us for righteousness’ sake in defence of his name, that we may obtain everlasting felicity in the glorious distribution of his

rewards. Ay, and in this world he exhorteth us to let our 'light so shine before men, that they may see,' he saith, 'your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.'

“For the law of Moses, formerly given to the Israelites, saith, ‘Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness:’ but Christ saith ‘Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgement; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire:’ and, ‘if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way and first be reconciled to thy brother.’ And he also saith, ‘Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her in his heart.’ And hereby he calleth the defilement and consent of the affection adultery. Furthermore, where the law forbade a man to forswear himself, Christ commanded him to swear not at all beyond Yea and Nay. There we read, ‘Eye for eye and tooth for tooth’: here, ‘Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Judge not, that ye be not judged. Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on: for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.’ He therefore that gave life and body will assuredly give food and raiment: he that feedeth the fowls of the air and arrayeth with such beauty the lilies of the field. ‘But, seek ye first,’ saith Christ, ‘the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Therefore all

things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Strait and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it. Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son and daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not up his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.' Lo these and the like of these be the things which the Saviour commanded his Apostles to teach the Faithful: and all these things we are bound to observe, if we desire to attain to perfection and receive the incorruptible crowns of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give at that day unto all them that love his appearing."

Ioasaph said unto the elder, "Well then, as the strictness of these doctrines demandeth such chaste conversation, if, after baptism, I chance to fail in one or two of these commandments, shall I therefore utterly miss the goal, and shall all my hope be vain?"

Barlaam answered, "Deem not so. God, the Word, made man for the salvation of our race, aware of the exceeding frailty and misery of our nature, hath not even here suffered our sickness to be without remedy. But, like a skilful leech, he hath mixed for our unsteady and sin-loving heart the potion of repentance, prescribing this for the remission of sins. For after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, and have been sanctified by water and the Spirit, and cleansed without effort from all sin and all defilement, if we should fortune to fall into any transgression, there is, it is true, no second regeneration made within us by the spirit through baptism in the water of the font, and wholly recreating us (that gift is given once for all); but, by means of painful repentance, hot tears, toils and sweats, there is a purifying and pardoning of our offences through the tender mercy of our God. For the fount of tears is also called baptism, according to the grace of the Master, but it needeth labour and time; and many hath it saved after many a fall; because there is no sin too great for the clemency of God, if we be quick to repent, and purge the shame of our offences, and death overtake us not, and depart us not from this life still defiled; for in the grave there is no confession nor repentance. But as long as we are among the living, while the foundation of our true faith continueth unshattered, even if somewhat of

the outer roof-work or inner building be disabled, it is allowed to renew by repentance the part rotted by sins. It is impossible to count the multitude of the mercies of God, or measure the greatness of his compassion: whereas sins and offences, of whatever kind, are subject to measure and may be numbered. So our offences, being subject to measure and number, cannot overcome the immeasurable compassion, and innumerable mercies of God.

“Wherefore we are commanded not to despair for our trespasses, but to acknowledge the goodness of God, and condemn the sins whereof forgiveness is offered us by reason of the loving-kindness of Christ, who for our sins shed his precious blood. In many places of Scripture we are taught the power of repentance, and especially by the precepts and parables of our Lord Jesus Christ. For it saith, ‘From that time began Jesus to preach and to say, “Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”’ Moreover he setteth before us, in a parable, a certain son that had received his father’s substance, and taken his journey into a far country, and there spent all in riotous living. Then, when there arose a famine in that land, he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that land of iniquity, who sent him into his fields to feed swine—thus doth he designate the most coarse and loathsome sin. When, after much labour, he had come to the utmost misery, and might not even fill his belly with the husks that the swine did eat, at last he came to perceive his shameful plight, and, bemoaning himself, said, ‘How many hired servants of my father’s have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.”’ And he arose, and came to his father. But, when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and embraced him, and kissed him tenderly, and, restoring him to his former rank, made a feast of joyance because his son was found again, and killed the fatted calf. Lo, this parable, that Jesus spake to us, concerneth such as turn again from sin, and fall at his feet in repentance. Again, he representeth a certain good shepherd that had an hundred sheep, and, when one was lost, left the ninety and nine, and went forth to seek that which was gone astray, until he found it: and he laid it on his shoulders, and folded it with those that had not gone astray, and called together his friends and neighbours to a banquet, because that it was found. ‘Likewise,’ saith the Saviour, ‘joy shall be in heaven over one

sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.’

“And, in sooth, even the chief of the disciples, Peter, the Rock of the Faith, in the very season of the Saviour’s Passion, failing for a little while in his stewardship, that he might understand the worthlessness and misery of human frailty, fell under the guilt of denial. Then he straightway remembered the Lord’s words, and went out and wept bitterly, and with those hot tears made good his defeat, and transferred the victory to his own side. Like a skilful man of war, though fallen, he was not undone, nor did he despair, but, springing to his feet, he brought up, as a reserve, bitter tears from the agony of his soul; and straightway, when the enemy saw that sight, like a man whose eyes are scorched with a fierce flame, he leaped off and fled afar, howling horribly. So the chief became chief again, as he had before been chosen teacher of the whole world, being now become its pattern of penitence. And after his holy resurrection Christ made good this threefold denial with the threefold question, ‘Peter, lovest thou me?’ the Apostle answering, ‘Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.’

“So from all these and many other examples beyond count we learn the virtue of tears and repentance. Only the manner thereof must be noted it must arise from a heart that abominateth sin and weepeth, as saith the prophet David, ‘I am weary of my groaning: every night will I wash my bed and water my couch with my tears.’ Again the cleansing of sins will be wrought by the blood of Christ, in the greatness of his compassion and the multitude of the mercies of that God who saith, ‘Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow,’ and so forth.

“Thus therefore it is, and thus we believe. But after receiving the knowledge of the truth and winning regeneration and adoption as sons, and tasting of the divine mysteries, we must strive hard to keep our feet lest we fall. For to fall cometh not the athlete, since many have fallen and been unable to rise. Some, opening a door to sinful lusts, and clinging obstinately to them, have no more had strength to hasten back to repentance; and others, being untimely snatched by death, and having not made speed enough to wash them from the pollution of their sin, have been damned. And for this cause it is parlous to fall into any kind of sinful affection whatsoever. But if any man fall, he must at once leap up, and stand again to fight the good fight: and, as often as there cometh a fall, so often must there

at once ensue this rising and standing, unto the end. For, 'Turn ye unto me, and I will turn unto you,' saith the Lord God."

XII

To this said Ioasaph, “But how, after baptism, shall a man keep himself clear from all sin? For even if there be, as thou sayest, repentance for them that stumble, yet it is attended with toil and trouble, with weeping and mourning; things which, methinks, are not easy for the many to accomplish. But I desired rather to find a way to keep strictly the commandments of God, and not swerve from them, and, after his pardoning of my past misdeeds, never again to provoke that most sweet God and Master.”

Barlaam answered, “Well said, my lord and king. That also is my desire; but it is hard, nay quite impossible, for a man living with fire not to be blackened with smoke: for it is an uphill task, and one not easy of accomplishment, for a man that is tied to the matters of this life and busied with its cares and troubles, and liveth in riches and luxury, to walk unswervingly in the way of the commandments of the Lord, and to preserve his life pure of these evils. ‘For,’ saith the Lord, ‘no man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.’ So also writeth the beloved Evangelist and Divine in his Epistle, thus saying, ‘Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.’

“These things were well understood by our holy and inspired fathers; and mindful of the Apostle’s word that we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, they strove, after holy baptism, to keep their garment of immortality spotless and undefiled. Whence some of them also thought fit to receive yet another baptism; I mean that which is by blood and martyrdom. For this too is called baptism, the most honourable, and

reverend of all, inasmuch as its waters are not polluted by fresh sin; which also our Lord underwent for our sakes, and rightly called it baptism. So as imitators and followers of him, first his eyewitness, disciples, and Apostles, and then the whole band of holy martyrs yielded themselves, for the name of Christ, to kings and tyrants that worshipped idols, and endured every form of torment, being exposed to wild beasts, fire and sword, confessing the good confession, running the course and keeping the faith. Thus they gained the prizes of righteousness, and became the companions of Angels, and fellow-heirs with Christ. Their virtue shone so bright that their sound went out into all lands, and the splendour of their good deeds flashed like lightning into the ends of the earth. Of these men, not only the words and works, but even the very blood and bones are full of all sanctity, mightily casting out devils, and giving to such as touch them in faith the healing of incurable diseases: yea, and even their garments, and anything else that hath been brought near their honoured bodies, are always worthy of the reverence of all creation. And it were a long tale to tell one by one their deeds of prowess.

“But when those cruel and brutal tyrants brought their miserable lives to a miserable end, and persecution ceased, and Christian kings ruled throughout the world, then others too in succession emulated the Martyrs’ zeal and divine desire, and, wounded at heart with the same love, considered well how they might present soul and body without blemish unto God, by cutting off all the workings of sinful lusts and purifying themselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit. But, as they perceived that this could only be accomplished by the keeping of the commandments of Christ, and that the keeping of his commandments and the practice of the virtues was difficult to attain in the midst of the turmoils of the world, they adopted for themselves a strange and changed manner of life, and, obedient to the voice divine, forsook all, parents, children, friends, kinsfolk, riches and luxury, and, hating everything in the world, withdrew, as exiles, into the deserts, being destitute, afflicted, evil entreated, wandering in wildernesses and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, self-banished from all the pleasures and delights upon earth, and standing in sore need even of bread and shelter. This they did for two causes: firstly, that never seeing the objects of sinful lust, they might pluck such desires by the root out of their soul, and blot out the memory thereof, and plant within themselves the love and desire of divine and heavenly things: and secondly, that, by exhausting

the flesh by austerities, and becoming Martyrs in will, they might not miss the glory of them that were made perfect by blood, but might be themselves, in their degree, imitators of the sufferings of Christ, and become partakers of the kingdom that hath no end. Having then come to this wise resolve, they adopted the quiet of monastic life, some facing the rigours of the open air, and braving the blaze of the scorching heat and fierce frosts and rainstorms and tempestuous winds, others spending their lives in the hovels which they had builded them, or in the hiding of holes and caverns. Thus, in pursuit of virtue, they utterly denied themselves all fleshly comfort and repose, submitting to a diet of uncooked herbs and worts, or acorns, or hard dry bread, not merely saying goodbye to delights in their quality, but, in very excess of temperance, extending their zeal to limit even the quantity of enjoyment. For even of those common and necessary meats they took only so much as was sufficient to sustain life. Some of them continued fasting the whole week, and partook of victuals only of a Sunday: others thought of food twice only in the week: others ate every other day, or daily at eventide, that is, took but a taste of food. In prayers and watchings they almost rivalled the life of Angels, bidding a long farewell to the possession of gold and silver, and quite forgetting that buyings and sellings are concerns of men.

“But envy and pride, the evils most prone to follow good works, had no place amongst them. He that was weaker in ascetic exercises entertained no thought of malice against him of brighter example. Nor again was he, that had accomplished great feats, deceived and puffed up by arrogance to despise his weaker brethren, or set at nought his neighbour, or boast of his rigours, or glory in his achievements. He that excelled in virtue ascribed nothing to his own labours, but all to the power of God, in humility of mind persuading himself that his labours were nought and that he was debtor even for more, as saith the Lord, ‘When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, “We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.”’ Others again persuaded themselves that they had not done even the things which they were commanded to do, but that the things left undone outnumbered the things already well done. Again, he that was far behind in austerity, perchance through bodily weakness, would disparage and blame himself, attributing his failure to slothfulness of mind rather than to natural frailty. So each excelled each, and all excelled all in this sweet reasonableness. But the spirit of vain glory

and pleasing of men—what place had it among them? For they had fled from the world, and were dwelling in the desert, to the end that they might show their virtues not to men, but to God, from whom also they hope to receive the rewards of their good deeds, well aware that religious exercises performed for vain glory go without recompense; for these are done for the praise of men and not for God. Whence all that do thus are doubly defrauded: they waste their body, and receive no reward. But they who yearn for glory above, and strive thereafter, despise all earthly and human glory.

“As to their dwellings, some monks finish the contest in utter retirement and solitude, having removed themselves far from the haunts of men throughout the whole of their earthly lifetime, and having drawn nigh to God. Others build their homes at a distance one from another, but meet on the Lord’s Day at one Church, and communicate of the Holy Mysteries, I mean the unbloody Sacrifice of the undefiled Body and precious Blood of Christ, which the Lord gave to the Faithful for the remission of sins, for the enlightenment and sanctification of soul and body. They entertain one another with the exercises of the divine Oracles and moral exhortations, and make public the secret wiles of their adversaries, that none, through ignorance of the manner of wrestling, may be caught thus. Then turn they again, each to his own home, eagerly storing the honey of virtue in the cells of their hearts, and husbanding sweet fruits worthy of the heavenly board.

“Others again spend their life in monasteries. These gather in multitudes in one spot, and range themselves under one superior and president, the best of their number, slaying all self-will with the sword of obedience. Of their own free choice they consider themselves as slaves bought at a price, and no longer live for themselves, but for him, to whom, for Christ his sake, they have become obedient; or rather, to speak more properly, they live no more for themselves, but Christ liveth in them, whom to follow, they renounce all. This is retirement, a voluntary hatred of the world, and denial of nature by desire of things above nature. These men therefore live the lives of Angels on earth, chanting psalms and hymns with one consent unto the Lord, and purchasing for themselves the title of Confessors by labours of obedience. And in them is fulfilled the word of the Lord, when he saith, ‘Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.’ By this number he limiteth not the gathering together in his name, but by ‘two or three’ signifieth that the number is indefinite. For,

whether there be many, or few, gathered together because of his holy name, serving him with fervent zeal, there we believe him to be present in the midst of his servants.

“By these ensamples and suchlike assemblies men of earth and clay imitate the life of heavenly beings, in fastings and prayers and watchings, in hot tears and sober sorrow, as soldiers in the field with death before their eyes, in meekness and gentleness, in silence of the lips, in poverty and want, in chastity and temperance, in humbleness and quietude of mind, in perfect charity toward God and their neighbour, carrying their present life down to the grave, and becoming Angels in their ways. Wherefore God hath graced them with miracles, signs and various virtues and made the voice of their marvellous life to be sounded forth to the ends of the world. If I open my mouth to declare in every point the life of one of them who is said to have been the founder of the monastic life, Antony by name, by this one tree thou shalt assuredly know the sweet fruits of other trees of the like kind and form, and shalt know what a foundation of religious life that great man laid, and what a roof he built, and what gifts he merited to receive from the Saviour. After him many fought the like fight and won like crowns and guerdons.

“Blessed, yea, thrice blessed, are they that have loved God, and, for his love’s sake, have counted everything as nothing worth. For they wept and mourned, day and night, that they might gain everlasting comfort: they humbled themselves willingly, that there they might be exalted: they afflicted the flesh with hunger and thirst and vigil, that there they might come to the pleasures and joys of Paradise. By their purity of heart they became a tabernacle of the Holy Ghost, as it is written, ‘I will dwell in them and walk in them.’ They crucified themselves unto the world, that they might stand at the right hand of the Crucified: they girt their loins with truth, and always had their lamps ready, looking for the coming of the immortal bridegroom. The eye of their mind being enlightened, they continually looked forward to that awful hour, and kept the contemplation of future happiness and everlasting punishment immovable from their hearts, and pained themselves to labour, that they might not lose eternal glory. They became passionless as the Angels, and now they weave the dance in their fellowship, whose lives also they imitated. Blessed, yea, thrice blessed are they, because with sure spiritual vision they discerned the vanity of this present world and the uncertainty and inconstancy of mortal

fortune, and cast it aside, and laid up for themselves everlasting blessings, and laid hold of that life which never faileth, nor is broken by death.

“These then are the marvellous holy men whose examples we, that are poor and vile, strive to imitate, but cannot attain to the high level of the life of these heavenly citizens. Nevertheless, so far as is possible for our weakness and feeble power, we take the stamp of their lives, and wear their habit: even though we fail to equal their works; for we are assured that this holy profession is a means to perfection and an aid to the incorruption given us by holy baptism. So, following the teachings of these blessed Saints, we utterly renounce these corruptible and perishable things of life, wherein may be found nothing stable or constant, or that continueth in one stay; but all things are vanity and vexation of spirit, and many are the changes that they bring in a moment; for they are slighter than dreams and a shadow, or the breeze that bloweth the air. Small and short-lived is their charm, that is after all no charm, but illusion and deception of the wickedness of the world; which world we have been taught to love not at all, but rather to hate with all our heart. Yea, and verily it is worthy of hatred and abhorrence; for whatsoever gifts it giveth to its friends, these in turn in passion it taketh away, and shall hand over its victims, stripped of all good things, clad in the garment of shame, and bound under heavy burdens, to eternal tribulation. And those again whom it exalteth, it quickly abaseth to the utmost wretchedness, making them a footstool and a laughing stock for their enemies. Such are its charms, such its bounties. For it is an enemy of its friends, and traitor to such as carry out its wishes: dasheth to dire destruction all them that lean upon it, and enervateth those that put their trust therein. It maketh covenants with fools and fair false promises, only that it may allure them to itself. But, as they have dealt treacherously, it proveth itself treacherous and false in fulfilling none of its pledges. Today it tickleth their gullet with pleasant dainties; tomorrow it maketh them nought but a gobbet for their enemies. Today it maketh a man a king: tomorrow it delivereth him into bitter servitude. Today its thrall is fattening on a thousand good things; tomorrow he is a beggar, and drudge of drudges. Today it placeth on his head a crown of glory; tomorrow it dasheth his face upon the ground. Today it adorneth his neck with brilliant badges of dignity; tomorrow it humbleth him with a collar of iron. For a little while it causeth him to be the desire of all men; but after a time it maketh him their hate and abomination. Today it gladdeneth him: but tomorrow it weareth

him to a shadow with lamentations and wailings. What is the end thereof, thou shalt hear. Ruthlessly it bringeth its former lovers to dwell in hell. Such is ever its mind, such its purposes. It lamenteth not its departed, nor pitieth the survivor. For after that it hath cruelly duped and entangled in its meshes the one party, it immediately transferreth the resources of its ingenuity against the other, not willing that any should escape its cruel snares,

“These men that have foolishly alienated themselves from a good and kind master, to seek the service of so harsh and savage a lord, that are all agog for present joys and are glued thereto, that take never a thought for the future, that always grasp after bodily enjoyments, but suffer their souls to waste with hunger, and to be worn with myriad ills, these I consider to be like a man flying before the face of a rampant unicorn, who, unable to endure the sound of the beast’s cry, and its terrible bellowing, to avoid being devoured, ran away at full speed. But while he ran hastily, he fell into a great pit; and as he fell, he stretched forth his hands, and laid hold on a tree, to which he held tightly. There he established some sort of foothold and thought himself from that moment in peace and safety. But he looked and descried two mice, the one white, the other black, that never ceased to gnaw the root of the tree whereon he hung, and were all but on the point of severing it. Then he looked down to the bottom of the pit and espied below a dragon, breathing fire, fearful for eye to see, exceeding fierce and grim, with terrible wide jaws, all agape to swallow him. Again looking closely at the ledge whereon his feet rested, he discerned four heads of asps projecting from the wall whereon he was perched. Then he lift up his eyes and saw that from the branches of the tree there dropped a little honey. And thereat he ceased to think of the troubles whereby he was surrounded; how, outside, the unicorn was madly raging to devour him: how, below, the fierce dragon was yawning to swallow him: how the tree, which he had clutched, was all but severed; and how his feet rested on slippery, treacherous ground. Yea, he forgot, without care, all those sights of awe and terror, and his whole mind hung on the sweetness of that tiny drop of honey.

“This is the likeness of those who cleave to the deceitfulness of this present life—the interpretation whereof I will declare to thee anon. The unicorn is the type of death, ever in eager pursuit to overtake the race of Adam. The pit is the world, full of all manner of ills and deadly snares. The tree, which was being continually fretted by the two mice, to which the man

clung, is the course of every man's life, that spendeth and consuming itself hour by hour, day and night, and gradually draweth nigh its severance. The fourfold asps signify the structure of man's body upon four treacherous and unstable elements which, being disordered and disturbed, bring that body to destruction. Furthermore, the fiery cruel dragon betokeneth the maw of hell that is hungry to receive those who choose present pleasures rather than future blessings. The dropping of honey denoteth the sweetness of the delights of the world, whereby it deceiveth its own friends, nor suffereth them to take timely thought for their salvation."

XIII

Ioasaph received this parable with great joy and said, "How true this story is, and most apt! Grudge not, then, to show me other suchlike figures, that I may know for certain what the manner of our life is, and what it hath in store for its friends."

The elder answered, "Again, those who are enamoured of the pleasures of life, and glamoured by the sweetness thereof, who prefer fleeting and paltry objects to those which are future and stable, are like a certain man who had three friends. On the first two of these he was extravagantly lavish of his honours, and clave passionately to their love, fighting to the death and deliberately hazarding his life for their sakes. But to the third he bore himself right arrogantly, never once granting him the honour nor the love that was his due, but only making show of some slight and inconsiderable regard for him. Now one day he was apprehended by certain dread and strange soldiers, that made speed to hale him to the king, there to render account for a debt of ten thousand talents. Being in a great strait, this debtor sought for a helper, able to take his part in this terrible reckoning with the king. So he ran to his first and truest friend of all, and said, 'Thou wottest, friend, that I ever jeopardied my life for thy sake. Now today I require help in a necessity that presseth me sore. In how many talents wilt thou undertake to assist me now? What is the hope that I may count upon at thy hands, O my dearest friend?' The other answered and said unto him, 'Man, I am not thy friend: I know not who thou art. Other friends I have, with whom I must needs make merry today, and so win their friendship for the time to come. But, see, I present thee with two ragged garments, that thou mayest have them on the way whereon thou goest, though they will do thee no manner of good. Further help from me thou mayest expect none.' The other, hearing this, despaired of the succour whereon he had reckoned, and went to his second friend, saying, 'Friend, thou rememberest how much

honour and kindness thou hast enjoyed at my hands. Today I have fallen into tribulation and sorrow, and need a helping hand. To what extent then canst thou share my labour? Tell me at once.’ Said he, ‘I too have fallen among cares and perils, and am myself in tribulation. Howbeit, I will go a little way with thee, even if I shall fail to be of service to thee. Then will I turn quickly homeward, and busy myself with mine own anxieties.’ So the man returned from him too empty-handed and baulked at every turn; and he cried misery on himself for his vain hope in those ungrateful friends, and the unavailing hardships that he had endured through love of them. At the last he went away to the third friend, whom he had never courted, nor invited to share his happiness. With countenance ashamed and downcast, he said unto him, ‘I can scarce open my lips to speak with thee, knowing full well that I have never done thee service, or shown thee any kindness that thou mightest now remember. But seeing that a heavy misfortune hath overtaken me, and that I have found nowhere among my friends any hope of deliverance, I address myself to thee, praying thee, if it lie in thy power, to afford me some little aid. Bear no grudge for my past unkindness, and refuse me not.’ The other with a smiling and gracious countenance answered, ‘Assuredly I own thee my very true friend. I have not forgotten those slight services of thine: and I will repay them today with interest. Fear not therefore, neither be afraid. I will go before thee and entreat the king for thee, and will by no means deliver thee into the hands of thine enemies. Wherefore be of good courage, dear friend, and fret not thyself.’ Then, pricked at heart, the other said with tears, ‘Woe is me! Which shall I first lament, or which first deplore? Condemn my vain preference for my forgetful, thankless and false friends, or blame the mad ingratitude that I have shown to thee, the sincere and true?’”

Ioasaph heard this tale also with amazement and asked the interpretation thereof. Then said Barlaam, “The first friend is the abundance of riches, and love of money, by reason of which a man falleth into the midst of ten thousand perils, and endureth many miseries: but when at last the appointed day of death is come, of all these things he carrieth away nothing but the useless burial cloths. By the second friend is signified our wife and children and the remnant of kinsfolk and acquaintance, to whom we are passionately attached, and from whom with difficulty we tear ourselves away, neglecting our very soul and body for the love of them. But no help did man ever derive from these in the hour of death, save only that they will accompany

and follow him to the sepulchre, and then straightway turning them homeward again they are occupied with their own cares and matters, and bury his memory in oblivion as they have buried his body in the grave. But the third friend, that was altogether neglected and held cheap, whom the man never approached, but rather shunned and fled in horror, is the company of good deeds—faith, hope, charity, alms, kindness, and the whole band of virtues, that can go before us, when we quit the body, and may plead with the Lord on our behalf, and deliver us from our enemies and dread creditors, who urge that strict rendering of account in the air, and try bitterly to get the mastery of us. This is the grateful and true friend, who beareth in mind those small kindnesses that we have shown him and repayeth the whole with interest.”

XIV

Again said Ioasaph, “The Lord God prosper thee, O thou wisest of men! For thou hast gladdened my soul with thine apt and excellent sayings. Wherefore sketch me yet another picture of the vanity of the world, and how a man may pass through it in peace and safety.”

Barlaam took up his parable and said, “Hear then a similitude of this matter too. I once heard tell of a great city whose citizens had, from old time, the custom of taking some foreigner and stranger, who knew nothing of their laws and traditions, and of making him their king, to enjoy absolute power, and follow his own will and pleasure without hindrance, until the completion of a year. Then suddenly, while he was living with never a care in rioting and wantonness, without fear, and alway supposing that his reign would only terminate with his life, they would rise up against him, strip him bare of his royal robes, lead him in triumph up and down the city, and thence dispatch him beyond their borders into a distant great island; there, for lack of food and raiment, in hunger and nakedness he would waste miserably away, the luxury and pleasure so unexpectedly showered upon him changed as unexpectedly into woe. In accordance therefore with the unbroken custom of these citizens, a certain man was ordained to the kingship. But his mind was fertile of understanding, and he was not carried away by this sudden access of prosperity, nor did he emulate the heedlessness of the kings that had gone before him, and had been miserably expelled, but his soul was plunged in care and trouble how he might order his affairs. After long and careful search, he learned from a wise counsellor the custom of the citizens, and the place of perpetual banishment, and was taught of him without guile how to ensure himself against this fate. So with this knowledge that within a very little while he must reach that island and leave to strangers this chance kingdom among strangers, he opened the treasures whereof he had awhile absolute and unforbidden use, and took a

great store of money and huge masses of gold and silver and precious stones and delivered the same to trusty servants and sent them before him to the island whither he was bound. When the appointed year came to an end, the citizens rose against him, and sent him naked into banishment like those that went before him. But while the rest of these foolish kings, kings only for a season, were sore anhungred, he, that had timely deposited his wealth, passed his time in continual plenty mid dainties free of expense, and, rid of all fear of those mutinous and evil citizens, could count himself happy on his wise forethought.

“Understand thou, therefore, that the city is this vain and deceitful world; that the citizens are the principalities and powers of the devils, the rulers of the darkness of this world, who entice us by the soft bait of pleasure, and counsel us to consider corruptible and perishable things as incorruptible, as though the enjoyment that cometh from them were coexistent with us, and immortal as we. Thus then are we deceived; we have taken no thought concerning the things which are abiding and eternal, and have laid up in store for ourselves no treasure for that life beyond, when of a sudden there standeth over us the doom of death. Then, then at last do those evil and cruel citizens of darkness, that received us, dispatch us stript of all worldly goods—for all our time has been wasted on their service—and carry us off ‘to a dark land and a gloomy, to a land of eternal darkness, where there is no light, nor can one behold the life of men.’ As for that good counsellor, who made known all the truth and taught that sagacious and wise king the way of salvation, understand thou that I, thy poor and humble servant, am he, who am come hither for to show thee the good and infallible way to lead thee to things eternal and unending, and to counsel thee to lay up all thy treasure there; and I am come to lead thee away from the error of this world, which, to my woe, I also loved, and clave to its pleasures and delights. But, when I perceived, with the unerring eyes of my mind how all human life is wasted in these things that come and go; when I saw that no man hath aught that is stable and steadfast, neither the rich in his wealth, nor the mighty in his strength, nor the wise in his wisdom, nor the prosperous in his prosperity, nor the luxurious in his wantonness, nor he that dreameth of security of life in that vain and feeble security of his dreams, nor any man in any of those things that men on earth commend (’tis like the boundless rush of torrents that discharge themselves into the deep sea, thus fleeting and temporary are all present things); then, I say, I

understood that all such things are vanity, and that their enjoyment is naught; and, that even as the past is all buried in oblivion, be it past glory, or past kingship, or the splendour of rank, or amplitude of power, or arrogance of tyranny, or aught else like them, so also present things will vanish in the darkness of the days to come. And, as I am myself of the present, I also shall doubtless be subject to its accustomed change; and, even as my fathers before me were not allowed to take delight forever in the present world, so also shall it be with me. For I have observed how this tyrannical and troublesome world treateth mankind, shifting men hither and thither, from wealth to poverty, and from poverty to honour, carrying some out of life and bringing others in, rejecting some that are wise and understanding, making the honourable and illustrious dishonoured and despised, but seating others who are unwise and of no understanding upon a throne of honour, and making the dishonoured and obscure to be honoured of all.

“One may see how the race of mankind may never abide before the face of the cruel tyranny of the world. But, as when a dove fleeing from an eagle or a hawk flitteth from place to place, now beating against this tree, now against that bush, and then anon against the clefts of the rocks and all manner of bramble-thorns, and, nowhere finding any safe place of refuge, is wearied with continual tossing and crossing to and fro, so are they which are flustered by the present world. They labour painfully under unreasoning impulse, on no sure or firm bases: they know not to what goal they are driving, nor whither this vain life leadeth them; this vain life, whereto they have in miserable folly subjected themselves, choosing evil instead of good, and pursuing vice instead of goodness; and they know not who shall gather the fruits of their many idle labours, whether it be a kinsman or a stranger, and, as oft times it haps, not even a friend or acquaintance at all, but an enemy and foeman.

“On all these things, and others akin to them, I held judgement in the tribunal of my soul, and I came to hate my whole life that had been wasted in these vanities, while I still lived engrossed in earthly things. But when I had put off from my soul the lust thereof, and cast it from me, then was there revealed unto me the true good, to fear God and do his will; for this I saw to be the sum of all good. This also is called the beginning of wisdom, and perfect wisdom. For life is without pain and reproach to those that hold by her, and safe to those who lean upon her as upon the Lord. So, when I

had set my reason on the unerring way of the commandments of the Lord, and had surely learned that there is nothing froward or perverse therein, and that it is not full of chasms and rocks, nor of thorns and thistles, but lieth altogether smooth and even, rejoicing the eyes of the traveller with the brightest sights, making beautiful his feet, and shoeing them with 'the preparation of the Gospel of peace,' that he may walk safely and without delay, this way, then, I rightly chose above all others, and began to rebuild my soul's habitation, which had fallen into ruin and decay.

"In such wise was I devising mine estate, and establishing mine unstable mind, when I heard the words of a wise teacher calling loudly to me thus, 'Come ye out,' said he, 'all ye that will to be saved. Be ye separate from the vanity of the world, for the fashion thereof quickly passeth away, and behold it shall not be. Come ye out, without turning back, not for nothing and without reward, but winning supplies for travelling to life eternal, for ye are like to journey a long road, needing much supplies from hence, and ye shall arrive at the place eternal that hath two regions, wherein are many mansions; one of which places God hath prepared for them that love him and keep his commandments, full of all manner of good things; and they that attain thereto shall live forever in incorruption, enjoying immortality without death, where pain and sorrow and sighing are fled away. But the other place is full of darkness and tribulation and pain, prepared for the devil and his angels, wherein also shall be cast they who by evil deeds have deserved it, who have bartered the incorruptible and eternal for the present world, and have made themselves fuel for eternal fire.'

"When I heard this voice, and recognized the truth, I did my diligence to attain to that abode, that is free from all pain and sorrow, and full of security and all good things, whereof I have knowledge now only in part, being but a babe in my spiritual life, and seeing the sights yonder as through mirrors and riddles; but when that which is perfect is come, and I shall see face to face, then that which is in part shall be done away. Wherefore I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord; for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and of death, and hath opened mine eyes to see clearly that the will of the flesh is death, but the will of the Spirit is life and peace. And even as I did discern the vanity of present things and hate them with a perfect hatred, so likewise I counsel thee to decide thereon, that thou mayest treat them as something alien and quickly passing away, and mayest remove all thy store from earth and lay up for

thyself in the incorruptible world a treasure that can not be stolen, wealth inexhaustible, in that place whither thou must shortly fare, that when thou comest thither thou mayest not be destitute, but be laden with riches, after the manner of that aptest of parables that I lately showed thee.”

XV

Said Ioasaph unto the elder, “How then shall I be able to send before me thither treasures of money and riches, that, when I depart hence, I may find these unharmed and unwasted for my enjoyment? How must I show my hatred for things present and lay hold on things eternal? This make thou right plain unto me.” Quoth Barlaam, “The sending before thee of money to that eternal home is wrought by the hands of the poor. For thus saith one of the prophets, Daniel the wise, unto the king of Babylon, ‘Wherefore, O Prince, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and redeem thy sins by almsgiving, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor.’ The Saviour also saith, ‘Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.’ And, in divers places, the Master maketh much mention of almsgiving and liberality to the poor, as we learn in the Gospel. Thus shalt thou most surely send all thy treasure before thee by the hands of the needy, for whatsoever thou shalt do unto these the Master counteth done unto himself, and will reward thee manifold; for, in the recompense of benefits, he ever surpasseth them that love him. So in this manner by seizing for awhile the treasures of the darkness of this world, in whose slavery for a long time past thou hast been miserable, thou shalt by these means make good provision for thy journey, and by plundering another’s goods thou shalt store all up for thyself, with things fleeting and transient purchasing for thyself things that are stable and enduring. Afterwards, God working with thee, thou shalt perceive the uncertainty and inconstancy of the world, and saying farewell to all, shalt remove thy barque to anchor in the future, and, passing by the things that pass away, thou shalt hold to the things that we look for, the things that abide. Thou shalt depart from darkness and the shadow of death, and hate the world and the ruler of the world; and, counting thy perishable flesh thine enemy, thou shalt run toward the light that is unapproachable,

and taking the Cross on thy shoulders, shalt follow Christ without looking back, that thou mayest also be glorified with him, and be made inheritor of the life that never changeth nor deceiveth.”

Ioasaph said, “When thou spakest a minute past of despising all things, and taking up such a life of toil, was that an old tradition handed down from the teaching of the Apostles, or is this a late invention of your wits, which ye have chosen for yourselves as a more excellent way?”

The elder answered and said, “I teach thee no law introduced but yesterday, God forbid! but one given unto us of old. For when a certain rich young man asked the Lord, ‘What shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ and boasted that he had observed all that was written in the Law, Jesus said unto him, ‘One thing thou lackest yet. Go sell all that thou hast and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, take up thy cross and follow me.’ But when the young man heard this he was very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, ‘How hardly shall they which have riches enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God!’ So, when all the Saints heard this command, they thought fit by all means to withdraw from this hardness of riches. They parted with all their goods, and by this distribution of their riches to the poor laid up for themselves eternal riches; and they took up their Cross and followed Christ, some being made perfect by martyrdom, even as I have already told thee; and some by the practice of self-denial falling not a whit short of those others in the life of the true philosophy. Know thou, then, that this is a command of Christ our King and God, which leadeth us from things corruptible and maketh us partakers of things everlasting.”

Said Ioasaph, “If, then, this kind of philosophy be so ancient and so salutary, how cometh it that so few folk nowadays follow it?”

The elder answered, “Many have followed, and do follow it; but the greatest part hesitate and draw back. For few, saith the Lord, are the travellers along the strait and narrow way, but along the wide and broad way many. For they that have once been taken prisoners by the love of money, and the evils that come from the love of pleasure, and are given up to idle and vain glory, are hardly to be torn therefrom, seeing that they have of their own free will sold themselves as slaves to a strange master, and setting themselves on the opposite side to God, who gave these commands,

are held in bondage to that other. For the soul that hath once rejected her own salvation, and given the reins to unreasonable lusts, is carried about hither and thither. Therefore saith the prophet, mourning the folly that encompasseth such souls, and lamenting the thick darkness that lieth on them, ‘O ye sons of men, how long will ye be of heavy heart? Why love ye vanity, and seek after leasing?’ And in the same tone as he, but adding thereto some thing of his own, one of our wise teachers, a most excellent divine, crieth aloud to all, as from some exceeding high place of vantage, ‘O ye sons of men, how long will ye be of heavy heart? Why love ye vanity and seek after leasing? Trow ye that this present life, and luxury, and these shreds of glory, and petty lordship and false prosperity are any great thing?’—things which no more belong to those that possess them than to them that hope for them, nor to these latter any more than to those who never thought of them: things like the dust carried and whirled about to and fro by the tempest, or vanishing as the smoke, or delusive as a dream, or intangible as a shadow; which, when absent, need not be despaired of by them that have them not, and, when present, cannot be trusted by their owners.

“This then was the commandment of the Saviour; this the preaching of the Prophets and Apostles; in such wise do all the Saints, by word and deed, constrain us to enter the unerring road of virtue. And though few walk therein and more choose the broad way that leadeth to destruction, yet not for this shall the life of this divine philosophy be minished in fame. But as the sun, rising to shine on all, doth bounteously send forth his beams, inviting all to enjoy his light, even so doth our true philosophy, like the sun, lead with her light those that are her lovers, and warmeth and brighteneth them. But if any shut their eyes, and will not behold the light thereof, not for that must the sun be blamed, or scorned by others: still less shall the glory of his brightness be dishonoured through their silliness. But while they, self-deprived of light, grope like blind men along a wall, and fall into many a ditch, and scratch out their eyes on many a bramble bush, the sun, firmly established on his own glory, shall illuminate them that gaze upon his beams with unveiled face. Even so shineth the light of Christ on all men abundantly, imparting to us of his lustre. But every man shareth thereof in proportion to his desire and zeal. For the Sun of righteousness disappointeth none of them that would fix their gaze on him, yet doth he not compel those

who willingly choose darkness; but every man, so long as he is in this present life, is committed to his own free will and choice.”

Ioasaph asked, “What is free will and what is choice?” The elder answered, “Free will is the willing of a reasonable soul, moving without hindrance toward whatever it wisheth, whether to virtue or to vice, the soul being thus constituted by the Creator. Free will again is the sovran motion of an intelligent soul. Choice is desire accompanied by deliberation, or deliberation accompanied by desire for things that lie in our power; for in choosing we desire that which we have deliberately preferred. Deliberation is a motion towards enquiry about actions possible to us; a man deliberateth whether he ought to pursue an object or no. Then he judgeth which is the better, and so ariseth judgement. Then he is inclined towards it, and loveth that which was so judged by the deliberative faculty, and this is called resolve; for, if he judge a thing, and yet be not inclined toward the thing that he hath judged, and love it not, it is not called resolve. Then, after inclination toward it, there ariseth choice or rather selection. For choice is to choose one or other of two things in view, and to select this rather than that. And it is manifest that choice is deliberation *plus* discrimination, and this from the very etymology. For that which is the ‘object of choice’ is the thing chosen before the other thing. And no man preferreth a thing without deliberation, nor makeeth a choice without having conceived a preference. For, since we are not zealous to carry into action all that seemeth good to us, choice only ariseth and the deliberately preferred only becometh the chosen, when desire is added thereto. Thus we conclude that choice is desire accompanied by deliberation for things that lie in our power; in choosing we desire that which we have deliberately preferred. All deliberation aimeth at action and dependeth on action; and thus deliberation goeth before all choice, and choice before all action. For this reason not only our actions, but also our thoughts, inasmuch as they give occasion for choice, bring in their train crowns or punishments. For the beginning of sin and righteous dealing is choice, exercised in action possible to us. Where the power of activity is ours, there too are the actions that follow that activity in our power. Virtuous activities are in our power, therefore in our power are virtues also; for we are absolute masters over all our souls’ affairs and all our deliberations. Since then it is of free will that men deliberate, and of free will that men choose, a man partaketh of the light divine, and advanceth in the practice of this philosophy in exact measure of his choice,

for there are differences of choice. And even as water-springs, issuing from the hollows of the earth, sometimes gush forth from the surface soil, and sometimes from a lower source, and at other times from a great depth, and even as some of these waters bubble forth continuously, and their taste is sweet, while others that come from deep wells are brackish or sulphurous, even as some pour forth in abundance while others flow drop by drop, thus, understand thou, is it also with our choices. Some choices are swift and exceeding fervent, others languid and cold: some have a bias entirely toward virtue, while others incline with all their force to its opposite. And like in nature to these choices are the ensuing impulses to action.”

XVI

Ioasaph said unto the elder, “Are there now others, too, who preach the same doctrines as thou? Or art thou today the only one that teacheth this hatred of the present world?”

The other answered and said, “In this your most unhappy country I know of none: the tyranny of thy father hath netted all such in a thousand forms of death; and he hath made it his aim that the preaching of the knowledge of God be not once heard in your midst. But in all other tongues these doctrines are sung and glorified, by some in perfect truth, but by others perversely; for the enemy of our souls hath made them decline from the straight road, and divided them by strange teachings, and taught them to interpret certain sayings of the Scriptures falsely, and not after the sense contained therein. But the truth is one, even that which was preached by the glorious Apostles and inspired Fathers, and shineth in the Catholic Church above the brightness of the sun from the one end of the world unto the other; and as an herald and teacher of that truth have I been sent to thee.”

Ioasaph said unto him, “Hath my father then, learned naught of these things?”

The elder answered, “Clearly and duly he hath learned naught; for he stoppeth up his senses, and will not admit that which is good, being of his own free choice inclined to evil.”

“Would God,” said Ioasaph, “that he too were instructed in these mysteries?” The elder answered, “The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. For how knowest thou whether thou shalt save thy sire, and in wondrous fashion be stiled the spiritual father of thy father?”

“I have heard that, once upon a time, there was a king who governed his kingdom right well, and dealt kindly and gently with his subjects, only failing in this point, that he was not rich in the light of the knowledge of God, but held fast to the errors of idolatry. Now he had a counsellor, which

was a good man and endued with righteousness toward God and with all other virtuous wisdom. Grieved and vexed though he was at the error of the king, and willing to convince him thereof, he nevertheless drew back from the attempt, for fear that he might earn trouble for himself and his friends, and cut short those services which he rendered to others. Yet sought he a convenient season to draw his sovereign toward that which was good. One night the king said unto him, 'Come now, let us go forth and walk about the city, if haply we may see something to edify us.' Now while they were walking about the city, they saw a ray of light shining through an aperture. Fixing their eyes thereon, they descried an underground cavernous chamber, in the forefront of which there sat a man, plunged in poverty, and clad in rags and tatters. Beside him stood his wife, mixing wine. When the man took the cup in his hands, she sung a clear sweet melody, and delighted him by dancing and cozening him with flatteries. The king's companions observed this for a time, and marvelled that people, pinched by such poverty as not to afford house and raiment, yet passed their lives in such good cheer. The king said to his chief counsellor, 'Friend, how marvellous a thing it is, that our life, though bright with such honour and luxury, hath never pleased us so well as this poor and miserable life doth delight and rejoice these fools: and that this life, which appeareth to us so cruel and abominable, is to them sweet and alluring!' The chief counsellor seized the happy moment and said, 'But to thee, O king, how seemeth their life?' 'Of all that I have ever seen,' quoth the king, 'the most hateful and wretched, the most loathsome and abhorrent.' Then spake the chief counsellor unto him, 'Such, know thou well, O king, and even more unendurable is our life reckoned by those who are initiated into the sight of the mysteries of yonder everlasting glory, and the blessings that pass all understanding. Your palaces glittering with gold, and these splendid garments, and all the delights of this life are more loathsome than dung and filth in the eyes of those that know the unspeakable beauties of the tabernacles in heaven made without hands, and the apparel woven by God, and the incorruptible diadems which God, the Creator and Lord of all, hath prepared for them that love him. For like as this couple were accounted fools by us, so much the more are we, who go astray in this world and please ourselves in this false glory and senseless pleasure, worthy of lamentation and tears in the eyes of those who have tasted of the sweets of the bliss beyond.'

“When the king heard this, he became as one dumb. He said, ‘Who then are these men that live a life better than ours?’ ‘All,’ said the chief-counsellor, ‘who prefer the eternal to the temporal.’ Again, when the king desired to know what the eternal might be the other replied, ‘A kingdom that knoweth no succession, a life that is not subject unto death, riches that dread no poverty: joy and gladness that have no share of grief and vexation; perpetual peace free from all hatred and love of strife. Blessed, thrice blessed are they that are found worthy of these enjoyments! Free from pain and free from toil is the life that they shall live forever, enjoying without labour all the sweets and pleasance of the kingdom of God, and reigning with Christ world without end.’

“‘And who is worthy to obtain this?’ asked the king. The other answered, ‘All they that hold on the road that leadeth thither; for none forbiddeth entrance, if a man but will.’

“Said the king, ‘And what is the way that beareth thither?’ That bright spirit answered, ‘To know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, his only-begotten Son, and the Holy and quickening Spirit.’

“The king, endowed with understanding worthy of the purple, said unto him, ‘What hath hindered thee until now from doing me to wit of these things? For they appear to me too good to be put off or passed over, if they indeed be true; and, if they be doubtful, I must search diligently, until I find the truth without shadow of doubt.’

“The chief counsellor said, ‘It was not from negligence or indifference that I delayed to make this known unto thee, for it is true and beyond question, but ’twas because I revered the excellency of thy majesty, lest thou mightest think me a meddler. If therefore thou bid thy servant put thee in mind of these things for the future, I shall obey thy behest.’ ‘Yea,’ said the king, ‘not every day only, but every hour, renew in me the remembrance thereof: for it behoveth us not to turn our mind inattentively to these things, but with very fervent zeal.’

“We have heard,” said Barlaam, “that this king lived, for the time to come, a godly life, and, having brought his days without tempest to an end, failed not to gain the felicity of the world to come. If then at a convenient season one shall call these things to thy father’s mind also, peradventure he shall understand and know the dire evil in which he is held, and turn therefrom and choose the good; since, for the present at least, ‘he is blind

and cannot see afar off,' having deprived himself of the true light and being a deserter of his own accord to the darkness of ungodliness."

Ioasaph said unto him, "The Lord undertake my father's matters, as he ordereth! For, even as thou sayest, the things that are impossible with men, are possible with him. But for myself, thanks to thine unsurpassable speech, I renounce the vanity of things present, and am resolved to withdraw from them altogether, and to spend the rest of my life with thee, lest, by means of these transitory and fleeting things, I lose the enjoyment of the eternal and incorruptible."

The elder answered him, "This do, and thou shalt be like unto a youth of great understanding of whom I have heard tell, that was born of rich and distinguished parents. For him his father sought in marriage the exceeding fair young daughter of a man of high rank and wealth. But when he communed with his son concerning the espousals, and informed him of his plans, the son thought it strange and ill-sounding, and cast it off, and left his father and went into exile. On his journey he found entertainment in the house of a poor old man, where he rested awhile during the heat of the day.

"Now this poor man's daughter, his only child, a virgin, was sitting before the door, and, while she wrought with her hands, with her lips she loudly sang the praises of God with thanksgiving from the ground of her heart. The young man heard her hymn of praise and said, 'Damsel, what is thine employment? and wherefore, poor and needy as thou art, givest thou thanks as though for great blessings, singing praise to the Giver?' She answered, 'Knowest thou not that, as a little medicine often times delivereth a man from great ailments, even so the giving of thanks to God for small mercies winneth great ones? Therefore I, the daughter of a poor old man, thank and bless God for these small mercies, knowing that the Giver thereof is able to give even greater gifts. And this applieth but to those external things that are not our own from whence there accrueth no gain to those who possess much (not to mention the loss that often ariseth), nor cometh there harm to those who have less; for both sorts journey along the same road, and hasten to the same end. But, in things most necessary and vital, many and great the blessings I have enjoyed of my Lord, though indeed they are without number and beyond compare. I have been made in the image of God, and have gained the knowledge of him, and have been endowed with reason beyond all the beasts, and have been called again from death unto life, through the tender mercy of our God, and have

received power to share in his mysteries; and the gate of Paradise hath been opened to me, allowing me to enter without hindrance, if I will. Wherefore for gifts so many and so fine, shared alike by rich and poor, I can indeed in no wise praise him as I ought, yet if I fail to render to the Giver this little hymn of praise, what excuse shall I have?’

“The youth, astonished at her wit, called to her father, and said unto him, ‘Give me thy daughter: for I love her wisdom and piety.’ But the elder said, ‘It is not possible for thee, the son of wealthy parents, to take this a beggar’s daughter.’ Again the young man said, ‘Yea, but I will take her, unless thou forbid: for a daughter of noble and wealthy family hath been betrothed unto me in marriage, and her I have cast off and taken to flight. But I have fallen in love with thy daughter because of her righteousness to God-ward, and her discreet wisdom, and I heartily desire to wed-her.’ But the old man said unto him, ‘I cannot give her unto thee, to carry away to thy father’s house, and depart her from mine arms, for she is mine only child.’ ‘But,’ said the youth, ‘I will abide here with your folk and adopt your manner of life.’ Thereupon he stripped him of his own goodly raiment, and asked for the old man’s clothes and put them on. When the father had much tried his purpose, and proved him in manifold ways, and knew that his intent was fixed, and that it was no light passion that led him to ask for his daughter, but love of godliness that constrained him to embrace a life of poverty, preferring it to his own glory and noble birth, he took him by the hand, and brought him into his treasure-house, where he showed him much riches laid up, and a vast heap of money, such as the young man had never beheld. And he said unto him, ‘Son, all these things give I unto thee, forasmuch as thou hast chosen to become the husband to my daughter, and also thereby the heir of all my substance.’ So the young man acquired the inheritance, and surpassed all the famous and wealthy men of the land.”

XVII

Said Ioasaph unto Barlaam, “This story also fitly setteth forth mine own estate. Whence also me thinketh that thou hadst me in mind when thou spakest it. But what is the proof whereby thou seekest to know the steadfastness of my purpose?”

Said the elder, “I have already proved thee, and know how wise and steadfast is thy purpose, and how truly upright is thine heart. But the end of thy fortune shall confirm it. For this cause I bow my knees unto our God glorified in Three Persons, the Maker of all things visible and invisible, who verily is, and is forever, that never had beginning of his glorious being, nor hath end, the terrible and almighty, the good and pitiful, that he may enlighten the eyes of thine heart, and give thee the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, that thou mayest know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe; that thou mayest be no more a stranger and sojourner, but a fellow-citizen with the Saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ our Lord himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.”

Ioasaph, keenly pricked at the heart, said, “All this I too long to learn: and I beseech thee make known to me the riches of the glory of God, and the exceeding greatness of his power.”

Barlaam said unto him, “I pray God to teach thee this, and to plant in thy soul the knowledge of the same; since with men it is impossible that his glory and power be told, yea, even if the tongues of all men that now are and have ever been were combined in one. For, as saith the Evangelist and Divine, ‘No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.’ But the glory and

majesty of the invisible and infinite God, what son of earth shall skill to comprehend it, save he to whom he himself shall reveal it, in so far as he will, as he hath revealed it, to his Prophets and Apostles? But we learn it, so far as in us lieth, by their teaching, and from the very nature of the world. For the Scripture saith, 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork;' and, 'The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.'

"Even as a man, beholding an house splendidly and skilfully builded, or a vessel fairly framed, taketh note of the builder or workman and marvelleth thereat, even so I that was fashioned out of nothing and brought into being, though I cannot see the maker and provider, yet from his harmonious and marvellous fashioning of me have come to the knowledge of his wisdom, not to the full measure of that wisdom, but to the full compass of my powers; yea I have seen that I was not brought forth by chance, nor made of myself, but that he fashioned me, as it pleased him, and set me to have dominion over his creatures, howbeit making me lower than some; that, when I was broken, he recreated me with a better renewal; and that he shall draw me by his divine will from this world and place me in that other life that is endless and eternal; and that in nothing I could withstand the might of his providence, nor add anything to myself nor take anything away, whether in stature or bodily form, and that I am not able to renew for myself that which is waxen old, nor raise that which hath been destroyed. For never was man able to accomplish aught of these things, neither king, nor wise man, nor rich man, nor ruler, nor any other that pursueth the tasks of men. For he saith, 'There is no king, or mighty man, that had any other beginning of birth. For all men have one entrance into life, and the like going out.'

"So from mine own nature, I am led by the hand to the knowledge of the mighty working of the Creator; and at the same time I think upon the well-ordered structure and preservation of the whole creation, how that in itself it is subject everywhere to variableness and change, in the world of thought by choice, whether by advance in the good, or departure from it, in the world of sense by birth and decay, increase and decrease, and change in quality and motion in space. And thus all things proclaim, by voices that cannot be heard, that they were created, and are held together, and preserved, and ever watched over by the providence of the uncreate,

unturning and unchanging God. Else how could diverse elements have met, for the consummation of a single world, one with another, and remained inseparable, unless some almighty power had knit them together, and still were keeping them from dissolution? ‘For how could anything have endured, if it had not been his will? or been preserved, if not called by him?’ as saith the Scripture.

“A ship holdeth not together without a steersman, but easily foundereth; and a small house shall not stand without a protector. How then could the world have subsisted for long ages, a work so great, and so fair and wondrous—without some glorious mighty and marvellous steersmanship and all-wise providence? Behold the heavens, how long they have stood, and have not been darkened: and the earth hath not been exhausted, though she hath been bearing offspring so long. The water-springs have not failed to gush out since they were made. The sea, that receiveth so many rivers, hath not exceeded her measure. The courses of Sun and Moon have not varied: the order of day and night hath not changed. From all these objects is declared unto us the unspeakable power and magnificence of God, witnessed by Prophets and Apostles. But no man can fitly conceive or sound forth his glory. For the holy Apostle, that had Christ speaking within him, after perceiving all objects of thought and sense, still said, ‘We know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.’ Wherefore also, astonished at the infinite riches of his wisdom and knowledge, he cried for all to understand, ‘O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!’

“Now, if he, that attained unto the third heaven and heard such unspeakable words, uttered such sentences, what man of my sort shall have strength to look eye to eye upon the abysses of such mysteries, or speak rightly thereof, or think meetly of the things whereof we speak, unless the very giver of wisdom, and the amender of the unwise, vouchsafe that power? For in his hand are we and our words, and all prudence and knowledge of wisdom is with him. And he himself hath given us the true understanding of the things that are; to know the structure of the world, the working of the elements, the beginning, end and middle of times, the changes of the solstices, the succession of seasons, and how he hath ordered all things by measure and weight. For he can show his great strength at all times, and who may withstand the power of his arm? For the whole world

before him is as a little grain of the balance, yea, as a drop of the morning dew that falleth down upon the earth. But he hath mercy upon all; for he can do all things, and winketh at the sins of men, because they should amend. For he abhorreth nothing, nor turneth away from them that run unto him, he, the only good Lord and lover of souls. Blessed be the holy name of his glory, praised and exalted above all forever! Amen.”

XVIII

Ioasaph said unto him, “If thou hadst for a long time considered, most wise Sir, how thou mightest best declare to me the explanation of the questions that I propounded, methinks thou couldest not have done it better than by uttering such words as thou hast now spoken unto me. Thou hast taught me that God is the Maker and preserver of all things; and in unanswerable language thou hast shown me that the glory of his majesty is incomprehensible to human reasonings, and that no man is able to attain thereto, except those to whom, by his behest, he revealeth it. Wherefore am I lost in amaze at thine eloquent wisdom.

“But tell me, good Sir, of what age thou art, and in what manner of place is thy dwelling, and who are thy fellow philosophers; for my soul hangeth fast on thine, and fain would I never be parted from thee all the days of my life.”

The elder said, “Mine age is, as I reckon, forty and five years, and in the deserts of the land of Senaar do I dwell. For my fellow combatants I have those who labour and contend together with me on the course of the heavenly journey.”

“What sayest thou?” quoth Ioasaph. “Thou seemest to me upwards of seventy years old. How speakest thou of forty and five? Herein methinks thou tellest not the truth.”

Barlaam said unto him, “If it be the number of years from my birth that thou askest, thou hast well reckoned them at upwards of seventy. But, for myself, I count not amongst the number of my days the years that I wasted in the vanity of the world. When I lived to the flesh in the bondage of sin, I was dead in the inner man; and those years of deadness I can never call years of life. But now the world hath been crucified to me, and I to the world, and I have put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and live no longer to the flesh, but Christ liveth in me; and

the life that I live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. And the years, that have passed since then, I may rightly call years of life, and days of salvation. And in numbering these at about forty and five, I reckoned by the true tale, and not off the mark. So do thou also always hold by this reckoning; and be sure that there is no true life for them that are dead to all good works, and live in sin, and serve the world-ruler of them that are dragged downward, and waste their time in pleasures and lusts: but rather be well assured that these are dead and defunct in the activity of life. For a wise man hath fitly called sin the death of the immortal soul. And the Apostle also saith, ‘When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.’”

Ioasaph said unto him, “Since thou reckonest not the life in the flesh in the measure of life, neither canst thou reckon that death, which all men undergo, as death.”

The elder answered, “Without doubt thus think I of these matters also, and fear this temporal death never a whit, nor do I call it death at all, if only it overtake me walking in the way of the commandments of God, but rather a passage from death to the better and more perfect life, which is hid in Christ, in desire to obtain which the Saints were impatient of the present. Wherefore saith the Apostle, ‘We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.’ And again, ‘O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?’ And once more, ‘I desire to depart and be with Christ.’ And the prophet saith, ‘When shall I come and appear before the presence of God?’ Now that I the least of all men, choose not to fear bodily death, thou mayest learn by this, that I have set at nought thy father’s threat, and come boldly unto thee, and have preached to thee the tidings of salvation, though I knew for sure that, if this came to his knowledge, he would, were that possible, put me to a thousand

deaths. But I, honouring the word of God afore all things, and longing to win it, dread not temporal death, nor reek on it at all worthy of such an appellation, in obedience to my Lord's command, which saith, 'Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.'"

"These then," said Ioasaph, "are the good deeds of that true philosophy, that far surpass the nature of these earthly men who cleave fast to the present life. Blessed are ye that hold to so noble a purpose! But tell me truly what is thy manner of life and that of thy companions in the desert, and from whence cometh your raiment and of what sort may it be? Tell me as thou lovest truth."

Said Barlaam, "Our sustenance consisteth of acorns and herbs that we find in the desert, watered by the dew of heaven, and in obedience to the Creator's command; and for this there is none to fight and quarrel with us, seeking by the rule and law of covetousness to snatch more than his share, but in abundance for all is food provided from unploughed lands, and a ready table spread. But, should any of the faithful brethren in the neighbourhood bring a blessed dole of bread, we receive it as sent by providence, and bless the faith that brought it. Our raiment is of hair, sheepskins or shirts of palm fibre, all threadbare and much patched, to mortify the frailty of the flesh. We wear the same clothing winter and summer, which, once put on, we may on no account put off until it be old and quite outworn. For by thus afflicting our bodies with the constraints of cold and heat we purvey for ourselves the vesture of our future robes of immortality."

Ioasaph said, "But whence cometh this garment that thou wearest?" The elder answered, "I received it as a loan from one of our faithful brethren, when about to make my journey unto thee; for it behoved me not to arrive in mine ordinary dress. If one had a beloved kinsman carried captive into a foreign land, and wished to recover him thence, one would lay aside one's own clothing, and put on the guise of the enemy, and pass into their country and by divers crafts deliver one's friend from that cruel tyranny. Even so I also, having been made aware of thine estate, clad myself in this dress, and came to sow the seed of the divine message in thine heart, and ransom thee from the slavery of the dread ruler of this world. And now behold by the power of God, as far as in me lay, I have accomplished my ministry, announcing to thee the knowledge of him, and making known unto thee the

preaching of the Prophets and Apostles, and teaching thee unerringly and soothingly the vanity of the present life, and the evils with which this world teems, which cruelly deceiveth them that trust therein, and taketh them in many a gin. Now must I return thither whence I came, and thereupon doff this robe belonging to another, and don mine own again.”

Ioasaph therefore begged the elder to show himself in his wonted apparel. Then did Barlaam strip off the mantle that he wore, and lo, a terrible sight met Ioasaph’s eyes: for all the fashion of his flesh was wasted away, and his skin blackened by the scorching sun, and drawn tight over his bones like an hide stretched over thin canes. And he wore an hair shirt, stiff and rough, from his loins to his knees, and over his shoulders there hung a coat of like sort.⁷

But Ioasaph, being sore amazed at the hardship of his austere life, and astonished at his excess of endurance, burst into tears, and said to the elder, “Since thou art come to deliver me from the slavery of the devil, crown thy good service to me, and ‘bring my soul out of prison,’ and take me with thee, and let us go hence, that I may be fully ransomed from this deceitful world and then receive the seal of saving Baptism, and share with thee this thy marvellous philosophy, and this more than human discipline.”

But Barlaam said unto him, “A certain rich man once reared the fawn of a gazelle; which, when grown up, was impelled by natural desire to long for the desert. So on a day she went out and found an herd of gazelles browsing; and, joining them, she would roam through the glades of the forest, returning at evenfall, but issuing forth at dawn, through the heedlessness of her keepers, to herd with her wild companions. When these removed, to graze further afield, she followed them. But the rich man’s servants, when they learned thereof, mounted on horseback, and gave chase, and caught the pet fawn, and brought her home again, and set her in captivity for the time to come. But of the residue of the herd, some they killed, and roughly handled others. Even so I fear that it may happen unto us also if thou follow me; that I may be deprived of thy fellowship, and bring many ills to my comrades, and everlasting damnation to thy father. But this is the will of the Lord concerning thee; thou now indeed must be signed with the seal of holy Baptism, and abide in this country, cleaving to all righteousness, and the fulfilling of the commandments of Christ; but when the Giver of all good things shall give thee opportunity, then shalt thou come to us, and for the remainder of this present life we shall dwell

together; and I trust in the Lord also that in the world to come we shall not be parted asunder.”

Again Ioasaph, in tears, said unto him, “If this be the Lord’s pleasure, his will be done! For the rest, perfect me in holy Baptism. Then receive at my hands money and garments for the support and clothing both of thyself and thy companions, and depart to the place of thy monastic life, and the peace of God be thy guard! But cease not to make supplications on my behalf, that I may not fall away from my hope, but may soon be able to reach thee, and in peace profound may enjoy thy ministration.”

Barlaam answered, “Nought forbiddeth thee to receive the seal of Christ. Make thee ready now; and, the Lord working with thee, thou shalt be perfected. But as concerning the money that thou didst promise to bestow on my companions, how shall this be, that thou, a poor man, shouldest give alms to the rich? The rich always help the poor, not the needy the wealthy. And the least of all my comrades is incomparably richer than thou. But I trust in the mercies of God that thou too shalt soon be passing rich as never afore: and then thou wilt not be ready to distribute.”

Ioasaph said unto him, “Make plain to me this saying; how the least of all thy companions surpasseth me in riches—thou saidest but now that they lived in utter penury, and were pinched by extreme poverty—and why thou callest me a poor man, but sayest that, when I shall be passing rich, I, who am ready to distribute, shall be ready to distribute no more.”

Barlaam answered, “I said not that these men were pinched by poverty, but that they plume themselves on their inexhaustible wealth. For to be ever adding money to money, and never to curb the passion for it, but insatiably to covet more and more, betokeneth the extreme of poverty. But those who despise the present for love of the eternal and count it but dung, if only they win Christ, who have laid aside all care for meat and raiment and cast that care on the Lord, and rejoice in penury as no lover of the world could rejoice, were he rolling in riches, who have laid up for themselves plenteously the riches of virtue, and are fed by the hope of good things without end, may more fitly be termed rich than thou, or any other earthly kingdom. But, God working with thee, thou shalt lay hold on such spiritual abundance that, if thou keep it in safety and ever rightfully desire more, thou shalt never wish to dispend any part of it. This is true abundance: but the mass of material riches will damage rather than benefit its friends. Meetly therefore called I it the extreme of poverty, which the lovers of

heavenly blessings utterly renounce and eschew, and flee from it, as a man fleeth from an adder. But if I take from thee and so bring back to life that foe, whom my comrades in discipline and battle have slain and trampled under foot, and carry him back to them, and so be the occasion of wars and lusts, then shall I verily be unto them an evil angel, which heaven forfend!

“Let the same, I pray thee, be thy thoughts about raiment. As for them that have put off the corruption of the old man, and, as far as possible, cast away the robe of disobedience, and put on Christ as a coat of salvation and garment of gladness, how shall I again clothe these in their coats of hide, and gird them about with the covering of shame? But be assured that my companions have no need of such things, but are content with their hard life in the desert, and reckon it the truest luxury; and bestow thou on the poor the money and garments which thou promisedst to give unto our monks, and lay up for thyself, for the time to come, treasure that cannot be stolen, and by the orisons of these poor folk make God thine ally; for thus shalt thou employ thy riches as an help toward noble things. Then also put on the whole armour of the Spirit, having thy loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and wearing the helmet of salvation, and having thy feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and taking in thine hands the shield of faith, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. And, being thus excellently armed and guarded on every side, in this confidence go forth to the warfare against ungodliness, until, this put to flight, and its prince, the devil, dashed headlong to the earth, thou be adorned with the crowns of victory from the right hand of thy master, the Lord of life.”

XIX

With suchlike doctrines and saving words did Barlaam instruct the king's son, and fit him for holy Baptism, charging him to fast and pray, according to custom, several days; and he ceased not to resort unto him, teaching him every article of the Catholic Faith and expounding him the holy Gospel. Moreover he interpreted the Apostolic exhortations and the sayings of the Prophets: for, taught of God, Barlaam had alway ready on his lips the Old and New Scripture; and, being stirred by the Spirit, he enlightened his young disciple to see the true knowledge of God. But on the day, whereon the prince should be baptized, he taught him, saying, "Behold thou art moved to receive the seal of Christ, and be signed with the light of the countenance of the Lord: and thou comest a son of God, and temple of the Holy Ghost, the giver of life. Believe thou therefore in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, the holy and life-giving Trinity, glorified in three persons and one Godhead, different indeed in persons and personal properties, but united in substance; acknowledging one God unbegotten, the Father; and one begotten Lord, the Son, light of light, very God of very God, begotten before all worlds; for of the good Father is begotten the good Son, and of the unbegotten light shone forth the everlasting light; and from very life came forth the life-giving spring, and from original might shone forth the might of the Son, who is the brightness of his glory and the Word in personality, who was in the beginning with God, and God without beginning and without end, by whom all things, visible and invisible, were made: knowing also one Holy Ghost, which proceedeth from the Father, perfect, life-giving and sanctifying God, with the same will, the same power, coeternal and impersonate. Thus therefore worship thou the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in three persons or properties and one Godhead. For the Godhead is common of the three, and one is their nature, one their substance, one their glory, one their kingdom, one their might, one

their authority; but it is common of the Son and of the Holy Ghost that they are of the Father; and it is proper of the Father that he is unbegotten, and of the Son that he is begotten, and of the Holy Ghost that he proceedeth.

“This therefore be thy belief; but seek not to understand the manner of the generation or procession, for it is incomprehensible. In uprightness of heart and without question accept the truth that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are in all points one except in the being unbegotten, and begotten, and proceeding; and that the only begotten Son, the Word of God, and God, for our salvation came down upon earth, by the good pleasure of the Father, and, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, was conceived without seed in the womb of Mary the holy Virgin and Mother of God, by the Holy Ghost, and was born of her without defilement and was made perfect man and that he is perfect God and perfect man, being of two natures, the Godhead and the manhood, and in two natures, endowed with reason, will, activity, and free will, and in all points perfect according to the proper rule and law in either case, that is in the Godhead and the manhood, and in one united person. And do thou receive these things without question, never seeking to know the manner, how the Son of God emptied himself, and was made man of the blood of the Virgin, without seed and without defilement; or what is this meeting in one person of two natures? For by faith we are taught to hold fast those things that have been divinely taught us out of Holy Scripture; but of the manner we are ignorant, and cannot declare it.

“Believe thou that the Son of God, who, of his tender mercy was made man, took upon him all the affections that are natural to man, and are blameless (he hungered and thirsted and slept and was weary and endured agony in his human nature, and for our transgressions was led to death, was crucified and was buried, and tasted of death, his Godhead continuing without suffering and without change; for we attach no sufferings whatsoever to that nature which is free from suffering, but we recognize him as suffering and buried in that nature which he assumed, and in his heavenly glory rising again from the dead, and in immortality ascending into heaven); and believe that he shall come again, with glory, to judge quick and dead, and by the words which himself knoweth, of that diviner body,⁸ and to reward every man by his own just standards. For the dead shall rise again, and they that are in their graves shall awake: and they that have kept the commandments of Christ, and have departed this life in the true faith shall inherit eternal life, and they, that have died in their sins, and

have turned aside from the right faith, shall go away into eternal punishment. Believe not that there is any true being or kingdom of evil, nor suppose that it is without beginning, or self-originate, or born of God: out on such an absurdity! but believe rather that it is the work of us and the devil, come upon us through our heedlessness, because we were endowed with free will, and we make our choice, of deliberate purpose, whether it be good or evil. Beside this, acknowledge one Baptism, by water and the Spirit, for the remission of sins.

“Receive also the Communion of the spotless Mysteries of Christ, believing in truth that they are the Body and Blood of Christ our God, which he hath given unto the faithful for the remission of sins. For in the same night in which he was betrayed he ordained a new testament with his holy disciples and Apostles, and through them for all that should believe on him, saying, ‘Take, eat: this is my Body, which is broken for you, for the remission of sins.’ After the same manner also he took the cup, and gave unto them saying, ‘Drink ye all of this: this is my Blood, of the new testament, which is shed for you for the remission of sins: this do in remembrance of me.’ He then, the Word of God, being quick and powerful, and, working all things by his might, maketh and transformeth, through his divine operation, the bread and wine of the oblation into his own Body and Blood, by the visitation of the Holy Ghost, for the sanctification and enlightenment of them that with desire partake thereof.

“Faithfully worship, with honour and reverence, the venerable likeness of the features of the Lord, the Word of God, who for our sake was made man, thinking to behold in the Image thy Creator himself. ‘For the honour of the Image,’ saith one of the Saints, ‘passeth over to the original.’ The original is the thing imaged, and from it cometh the derivation. For when we see the drawing in the Image, in our mind’s eye we pass over to the true form of which it is an Image, and devoutly worship the form of him who for our sake was made flesh, not making a god of it, but saluting it as an image of God made flesh, with desire and love of him who for us men emptied himself, and even took the form of a servant. Likewise also for this reason we salute the pictures of his undefiled Mother, and of all the Saints. In the same spirit also faithfully worship and salute the emblem of the life-giving and venerable Cross, for the sake of him that hung thereon in the flesh, for the salvation of our race, Christ the God and Saviour of the world, who gave it to us as the sign of victory over the devil; for the devil trembleth and

quaketh at the virtue thereof, and endureth not to behold it. In such doctrines and in such faith shalt thou be baptized, keeping thy faith unwavering and pure of all heresy until thy latest breath. But all teaching and every speech of doctrine contrary to this blameless faith abhor, and consider it an alienation from God. For, as saith the Apostle, 'Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.' For there is none other Gospel or none other Faith than that which hath been preached by the Apostles, and established by the inspired Fathers at divers Councils, and delivered to the Catholic Church."

When Barlaam had thus spoken, and taught the king's son the Creed which was set forth at the Council of Nicaea, he baptized him in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, in the pool of water which was in his garden. And there came upon him the grace of the Holy Spirit. Then did Barlaam come back to his chamber, and offer the holy Mysteries of the unbloody Sacrifice, and communicate him with the undefiled Mysteries of Christ: and Ioasaph rejoiced in spirit, giving thanks to Christ his God.

Then said Barlaam unto him, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten thee again unto a lively hope, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven in Christ Jesus our Lord by the Holy Ghost; for today thou hast been made free from sin, and hast become the servant of God, and hast received the earnest of everlasting life: thou hast left darkness and put on light, being enrolled in the glorious liberty of the children of God. For he saith, 'As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.' Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son and an heir of God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Ghost. Wherefore, beloved, give diligence that thou mayest be found of him without spot and blameless, working that which is good upon the foundation of faith: for faith without works is dead, as also are works without faith; even as I remember to have told thee afore. Put off therefore now all malice, and hate all the works of the old man, which are corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and, as newborn babe, desire to drink the reasonable and sincere milk of the virtues, that thou mayest grow thereby, and attain unto the knowledge of the commandments of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of

Christ: that thou mayest henceforth be no more a child in mind, tossed to and fro, and carried about on the wild and raging waves of thy passions: or rather in malice be a child, but have thy mind settled and made steadfast toward that which is good, and walk worthy of the vocation wherewith thou wast called, in the keeping of the commandments of the Lord, casting off and putting far from thee the vanity of thy former conversation, henceforth walking not as the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, having their understanding darkened, alienated from the glory of God, in subjection to their lusts and unreasonable affections. But as for thee, even as thou hast approached the living and true God, so walk thou as a child of light; for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth; and no longer destroy by the works of the old man the new man, which thou hast today put on. But day by day renew thyself in righteousness and holiness and truth: for this is possible with every man that willeth, as thou hearest that unto them that believe on his name he hath given power to become the sons of God; so that we can no longer say that the acquiring of virtues is impossible for us, for the road is plain and easy. For, though with respect to the buffeting of the body, it hath been called a strait and narrow way, yet through the hope of future blessings is it desirable and divine for such as walk, not as fools but circumspectly, understanding what the will of God is, clad in the whole armour of God to stand in battle against the wiles of the adversary, and with all prayer and supplication watching thereunto, in all patience and hope. Therefore, even as thou hast heard from me, and been instructed, and hast laid a sure foundation, do thou abound therein, increasing and advancing, and warring the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience, witnessed by good works, following after righteousness, godliness, faith, charity, patience, meekness, laying hold on eternal life whereunto thou wast called. But remove far from thee all pleasure and lust of the affections, not only in act and operation, but even in the thoughts of thine heart, that thou mayest present thy soul without blemish to God. For not our actions only, but our thoughts also are recorded, and procure us crowns or punishments: and we know that Christ, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, dwelleth in pure hearts. But, just as smoke driveth away bees, so, we learn, do evil imaginations drive out of us the Holy Spirit's grace. Wherefore take good heed hereto, that thou blot out every imagination of sinful passion from thy soul, and plant good thoughts therein, making thyself a temple of the Holy Ghost. For from imaginations we come also

to actual deeds, and every work, advancing from thought and reflection, catcheth at small beginnings, and then, by small increases, arriveth at great endings.

“Wherefore on no account suffer any evil habit to master thee; but, while it is yet young, pluck the evil root out of thine heart, lest it fasten on and strike root so deep that time and labour be required to uproot it. And the reason that greater sins assault us and get the mastery of our souls is that those which appear to be less, such as wicked thoughts, unseemly words and evil communications, fail to receive proper correction. For as in the case of the body, they that neglect small wounds often bring mortification and death upon themselves, so too with the soul: thus they that overlook little passions and sins bring on greater ones. And the more those greater sins grow on them, the more cloth the soul become accustomed therto and think light of them. For he saith, ‘When the wicked cometh to the depth of evil things, he thinketh light of them’: and finally, like the hog, that delighteth to wallow in mire, the soul, that hath been buried in evil habits, doth not even perceive the stink of her sin, but rather delighteth and rejoiceth therein, cleaving to wickedness as it were good. And even if at last she issue from the mire and come to herself again, she is delivered only by much labour and sweat from the bondage of those sins, to which she hath by evil custom enslaved herself.

“Wherefore with all thy might remove thyself far from every evil thought and fancy, and every sinful custom; and school thyself the rather in virtuous deeds, and form the habit of practising them. For if thou labour but a little therein, and have strength to form the habit, at the last, God helping thee, thou shalt advance without labour. For the habit of virtue, taking its quality from the soul, seeing that it hath some natural kinship therewith and claimeth God for an helpmate, becometh hard to alter and exceeding strong; as thou seest, courage and prudence, temperance and righteousness are hard to alter, being deeply seated habits, qualities and activities of the soul. For if the evil affections, not being natural to us, but attacking us from without, be hard to alter when they become habits, how much harder shall it be to shift virtue, which hath been by nature planted in us by our Maker, and hath him for an helpmate, if so be, through our brief endeavour, it shall have been rooted in habit in the soul?”

XX

“Wherefore a practician of virtue once spake to me on this wise: ‘After I had made divine meditation my constant habit, and through the practice of it my soul had received her right quality, I once resolved to make trial of her, and put a check upon her, not allowing her to devote herself to her wonted exercises. I felt that she was chafing and fretting, and yearning for meditation with an ungovernable desire, and was utterly unable to incline to any contrary thought. No sooner had I given her the reins than immediately she ran in hot haste to her own task, as saith the Prophet, “Like as the hart desireth the water brooks, so longeth my soul after the strong, the living God.”’ Wherefore from all these proofs it is evident that the acquirement of virtue is within our reach, and that we are lords over it, whether we will embrace or else the rather choose sin. They then, that are in the thraldom of wickedness, can hardly be torn away therefrom, as I have already said.

“But thou, who hast been delivered therefrom, through the tender mercy of our God, and hast put on Christ by the grace of the Holy Ghost, now transfer thyself wholly to the Lord’s side, and never open a door to thy passions, but adorn thy soul with the sweet savour and splendour of virtue, and make her a temple of the Holy Trinity, and to his contemplation see thou devote all the powers of thy mind. He that liveth and converseth with an earthly king is pointed out by all as a right happy man: what happiness then must be his who is privileged to converse and be in spirit with God! Behold thou then his likeness alway, and converse with him. How shalt thou converse with God? By drawing near him in prayer and supplication. He that prayeth with exceeding fervent desire and pure heart, his mind estranged from all that is earthly and grovelling, and standeth before God, eye to eye, and presenteth his prayers to him in fear and trembling, such an one hath converse and speaketh with him face to face.

“Our good Master is present everywhere, hearkening to them that approach him in purity and truth, as saith the Prophet, ‘The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.’ For this reason the Fathers define Prayer as ‘the union of man with God,’ and call it ‘Angels’ work,’ and ‘the prelude of gladness to come.’ For since they lay down before all things that ‘the kingdom of heaven’ consisteth in nearness to and contemplation of the Holy Trinity, and since all the importunity of prayer leadeth the mind thither, Prayer is rightly called ‘the prelude’ and, as it were, the ‘fore-glimpse’ of that blessedness. But not all prayer is of this nature, but only such prayer as is worthy of the name, which hath God for its teacher, who giveth prayer to him that prayeth; prayer which soareth above all things on earth and entreateth directly with God.

“This acquire thou for thyself, and strive to advance thereto, for it is able to exalt thee from earth to heaven. But without preparation and at haphazard thou shalt not advance therein. But first purify thy soul from all passion, and cleanse it like a bright and newly cleansed mirror from every evil thought, and banish far all remembrance of injury and anger, which most of all hindereth our prayers from ascending to God-ward: and from the heart forgive all those that have trespassed against thee, and with alms and charities to the poor lend wings to thy prayer, and so bring it before God with fervent tears. Thus praying thou shalt be able to say with blessed David, who, for all that he was king, and distraught with ten thousand cares, yet cleansed his soul from all passions, and could say unto God, ‘As for iniquity, I hate and abhor it, but thy law do I love. Seven times a day do I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgements. My soul hath kept thy testimonies, and loved them exceedingly. Let my complaint come before thee, O Lord: give me understanding according to thy word.’

“While thou art calling thus, the Lord shall hear thee: while thou art yet speaking, he shall say, ‘Behold I am here.’ If then thou attain to such prayer, blessed shalt thou be; for it is impossible for a man praying and calling upon God with such purpose not to advance daily in that which is good, and soar over all the snares of the enemy. For, as saith one of the Saints, ‘He that hath made fervent his understanding, and hath lift up his soul and migrated to heaven, and hath thus called upon his Master, and remembered his own sins, and spoken concerning the forgiveness of the same, and with hot tears hath besought the Lover of mankind to be merciful to him: such an one, I say, by his continuance in such words and considerations, layeth

aside every care of this life, and waxeth superior to human passions, and meriteth to be called an associate of God.' Than which state what can be more blessed and higher? May the Lord vouchsafe thee to attain to this blessedness!

“Lo I have shown thee the way of the commandments of the Lord, and have not shunned to declare unto thee all the counsel of God. And now I have fulfilled my ministry unto thee. It remaineth that thou gird up the loins of thy mind, obedient to the Holy One that hath called thee, and be thou thyself holy in all manner of conversation: for, ‘Be ye holy: for I am holy,’ saith the Lord. And the chief prince of the Apostles also writeth, saying, ‘If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear; knowing that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.’

“All these things therefore store thou up in thine heart, and remember them unceasingly, ever keeping before thine eyes the fear of God, and his terrible judgement seat, and the splendour of the righteous which they shall receive in the world to come, and the shame of sinners in the depths of darkness, and the frailty and vanity of things present, and the eternity of things hereafter; for, ‘All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth forever.’ Meditate upon these things alway and the peace of God be with thee, enlightening and informing thee, and leading thee into the way of salvation, chasing afar out of thy mind every evil wish, and sealing thy soul with the sign of the Cross, that no stumbling block of the evil one come nigh thee, but that thou mayest merit, in all fullness of virtue, to obtain the kingdom that is to come, without end or successor, and be illumined with the light of the blessed life-giving Trinity, which, in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, is glorified.”

XXI

With such moral words did the reverend elder exhort the king's son, and then withdrew to his own hospice. But the young prince's servants and tutors marvelled to see the frequency of Barlaam's visits to the palace; and one of the chiefest among them, whom, for his fidelity and prudence, the king had set over his son's palace, named Zardan, said to the prince, "Thou knowest well, sir, how much I dread thy father, and how great is my faith toward him: wherefore he ordered me, for my faithfulness, to wait upon thee. Now, when I see this stranger constantly conversing with thee, I fear he may be of the Christian religion, toward which thy father hath a deadly hate; and I shall be found subject to the penalty of death. Either then make known to thy father this man's business, or in future cease to converse with him. Else cast me forth from thy presence, that I be not blameable, and ask thy father to appoint another in my room."

The king's son said unto him, "This do, Zardan, first of all. Sit thou down behind the curtain, and hear his communication with me: and then thus will I tell thee what thou oughtest to do."

So when Barlaam was about to enter into his presence, Ioasaph hid Zardan within the curtain, and said to the elder, "Sum me up the matter of thy divine teaching, that it may the more firmly be implanted in my heart." Barlaam took up his parable and uttered many sayings touching God, and righteousness toward him, and how we must love him alone with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and keep his commandments with fear and love: and how he is the Maker of all things visible and invisible. Thereon he called to remembrance the creation of the first man, the command given unto him, and his transgression thereof, and the sentence pronounced by the Creator for this transgression. Then he reckoned up in order the good things wherefrom we excluded ourselves by the disannulling of his commandment. Again he made mention of the many

grievous misfortunes that unhappily overtook man, after the loss of the blessings. Besides this he brought forward God's love toward mankind; how our Maker, heedful of our salvation, sent forth teachers and prophets proclaiming the Incarnation of the Only-begotten. Then he spake of the Son, his dwelling among men, his deeds of kindness, his miracles, his sufferings for us thankless creatures, his Cross, his spear, his voluntary death; finally, of our recovery and recall, our return to our first good estate; after this, of the kingdom of heaven awaiting such as are worthy thereof; of the torment in store for the wicked; the fire that is not quenched, the never ending darkness, the undying worm, and all the other tortures which the slaves of sin have laid up in store for themselves. When he had fully related these matters, he ended his speech with moral instruction, and dwelt much upon purity of life, and utterly condemned the vanity of things present, and proved the utter misery of such as cleave thereto, and finally made an end with prayer. And therewith he prayed for the prince, that he might hold fast the profession of the Catholic Faith without turning and without wavering, and keep his life blameless and his conversation pure, and so ending with prayer again withdrew to his hospice.

But the king's son called Zardan forth, and, to try his disposition, said unto him, "Thou hast heard what sort of discourses this babbler maketh me, endeavouring to be-jape me with his specious follies, and rob me of this pleasing happiness and enjoyment, to worship a strange God." Zardan answered, "Why hath it pleased thee, O prince, to prove me that am thy servant? I wot that the words of that man have sunk deep into thine heart; for, otherwise, thou hadst not listened gladly and unceasingly to his words. Yea, and we also are not ignorant of this preaching. But from the time when thy father stirred up truceless warfare against the Christians, the men have been banished hence, and their teaching is silenced. But if now their doctrine commend itself unto thee, and if thou have the strength to accept its austerity, may thy wishes be guided straight toward the good! But for myself, what shall I do, that am unable to bear the very sight of such austerity, and through fear of the King am divided in soul with pain and anguish? What excuse shall I make, for neglecting his orders, and giving this fellow access unto thee?"

The King's son said unto him, "I knew full well that in none other wise could I requite thee worthily for thy much kindness, and therefore have I tasked myself to make known unto thee this more than human good, which

doth even exceed the worth of thy good service, that thou mightest know to what end thou wast born, and acknowledge thy Creator, and, leaving darkness, run to the light. And I hoped that when thou heardest thereof thou wouldst follow it with irresistible desire. But, as I perceive, I am disappointed of my hope, seeing that thou art listless to that which hath been spoken. But if thou reveal these secrets to the king my father, thou shalt but distress his mind with sorrows and griefs. If thou be well disposed to him, on no account reveal this matter to him until a convenient season.” Speaking thus, he seemed to be only casting seed upon the water; for wisdom shall not enter into a soul void of understanding.

Upon the morrow came Barlaam and spake of his departure: but Ioasaph, unable to bear the separation, was distressed at heart, and his eyes filled with tears. The elder made a long discourse, and adjured him to continue unshaken in good works, and with words of exhortation established his heart, and begged him to send him cheerfully on his way; and at the same time he foretold that they should shortly be at one, never to be parted more. But Ioasaph, unable to impose fresh labours on the elder, and to restrain his desire to be on his way, and suspecting moreover that the man Zardan might make known his case to the King and subject him to punishment, said unto Barlaam, “Since it seemeth thee good, my spiritual father, best of teachers and minister of all good to me, to leave me to live in the vanity of the world, while thou journeyest to thy place of spiritual rest, I dare no longer let and hinder thee. Depart therefore, with the peace of God for thy guardian, and ever in thy worthy prayers, for the Lord’s sake, think upon my misery, that I may be enabled to overtake thee, and behold thine honoured face forever. But fulfil this my one request; since thou couldst not receive aught for thy fellow monks, yet for thyself accept a little money for sustenance, and a cloak to cover thee.” But Barlaam answered and said unto him, “Seeing that I would not receive aught for my brethren (for they need not grasp at the world’s chattels which they have chosen to forsake), how shall I acquire for myself that which I have denied them? If the possession of money were a good thing, I should have let them share it before me. But, as I understand that the possession thereof is deadly, I will hazard neither them nor myself in such snares.”

But when Ioasaph had failed once again to persuade Barlaam, ’twas but a sign for a second petition, and he made yet another request, that Barlaam should not altogether overlook his prayer, nor plunge him in utter despair,

but should leave him that stiff shirt and rough mantle, both to remind him of his teacher's austerities and to safeguard him from all the workings of Satan, and should take from him another cloak instead, in order that "When thou seest my gift," said he, "thou mayest bear my lowliness in remembrance."

But the elder said, "It is not lawful for me to give thee my old and worn out vestment, and take one that is new, lest I be condemned to receive here the recompense of my slight labour. But, not to thwart thy willing mind, let the garments given me by thee be old ones, nothing different from mine own." So the king's son sought for old shirts of hair, which he gave the aged man, rejoicing to receive his in exchange, deeming them beyond compare more precious than any regal purple.

Now saintly Barlaam, all but ready for to start, spake concerning his journey, and delivered Ioasaph his last lesson, saying, "Brother beloved, and dearest son, whom I have begotten through the Gospel, thou knowest of what King thou art the soldier, and with whom thou hast made thy covenant. This thou must keep steadfastly, and readily perform the duties of thy service, even as thou didst promise the Lord of all in the script of thy covenant, with the whole heavenly host present to attest it, and record the terms; which if thou keep, thou shalt be blessed. Esteem therefore nought in the present world above God and his blessings. For what terror of this life can be so terrible as the Gehenna of eternal fire, that burneth and yet hath no light, that punisheth and never ceaseth? And which of the goodly things of this world can give such gladness as that which the great God giveth to those that love him? Whose beauty is unspeakable, and power invincible, and glory everlasting; whose good things, prepared for his friends, exceed beyond comparison all that is seen; which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man: whereof mayest thou be shown an inheritor, preserved by the mighty hand of God!"

Here the king's son burst into tears of pain and vexation, unable to bear the parting from a loving father and excellent teacher. "And who," quoth he, "shall fill thy place, O my father? And whom like unto thee shall I find to be shepherd and guide of my soul's salvation? What consolation may I find in my loss of thee? Behold thou hast brought me, the wicked and rebellious servant, back to God, and set me in the place of son and heir! Thou hast sought me that was lost and astray on the mountain, a prey for every evil beast, and folded me amongst the sheep that had never wandered. Thou hast

shown me the direct road to truth, bringing me out of darkness and the shadow of death, and, changing the course of my feet from the slippery, deadly, crooked and winding pathway, hast ministered to me great and marvellous blessings, whereof speech would fail to recount the exceeding excellence. Great be the gifts that thou receivest at God's hand, on account of me who am small! And may the Lord, who in the rewards of his gifts alone overpasseth them that love him, supply that which is lacking to my gratitude!"

Here Barlaam cut short his lamentation, and rose and stood up to pray, lifting up his either hand, and saying, "O God and Father of our Lord Jesu Christ, which didst illuminate the things that once were darkened, and bring this visible and invisible creation out of nothing, and didst turn again this thine handiwork, and sufferedst us not to walk after our foolishness, we give thanks to thee and to thy Wisdom and Might, our Lord Jesu Christ, by whom thou didst make the worlds, didst raise us from our fall, didst forgive us our trespasses, didst restore us from wandering, didst ransom us from captivity, didst quicken us from death by the precious blood of thy Son our Lord. Upon thee I call, and upon thine only begotten Son, and upon the Holy Ghost. Look upon this thy spiritual sheep that hath come to be a sacrifice unto thee through me thine unworthy servant, and do thou sanctify his soul with thy might and grace. Visit this vine, which was planted by thy Holy Spirit, and grant it to bear fruit, the fruit of righteousness. Strengthen him, and confirm in him thy covenant, and rescue him from the deceit of the devil. With the wisdom of thy good Spirit teach him to do thy will, and take not thy succour from him, but grant unto him, with me thine unprofitable servant, to become an inheritor of thine everlasting bliss, because thou art blessed and glorified forever, Amen."

When that he had ended his prayer, he turned him round and embraced Ioasaph, now a son of his heavenly father, wishing him eternal peace and salvation, and he departed out of the palace, and went his way, rejoicing and giving thanks to God, who had well ordered his steps for good.

XXII

After Barlaam was gone forth, Ioasaph gave himself unto prayer and bitter tears, and said, “O God, haste thee to help me: O Lord, make speed to help me, because the poor hath committed himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the orphan. Look upon me, and have mercy upon me; thou who willest have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth, save me, and strengthen me, unworthy though I be, to walk the way of thy holy commandments, for I am weak and miserable, and not able to do the thing that is good. But thou art mighty to save me, who sustainest and holdest together all things visible and invisible. Suffer me not to walk after the evil will of the flesh, but teach me to do thy will, and preserve me unto thine eternal and blissful life. O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the consubstantial and undivided Godhead, I call upon thee and glorify thee. Thou art praised by all creation; thou art glorified by the intelligent powers of the Angels forever and ever. Amen.”

From that time forth he kept himself with all vigilance, seeking to attain purity of soul and body, and living in continency and prayers and intercessions all night long. In the daytime he was often interrupted by the company of his fellows, and at times by a visit from the king, or a call to the king’s presence, but the night would then make good the shortcomings of the day, whilst he stood, in prayer and weeping until daybreak, calling upon God. Whence in him was fulfilled the saying of the prophet, “In nights raise your hands unto holy things; and bless ye the Lord.”

But Zardan observed Ioasaph’s way of life, and was full of sorrow, and his soul was pierced with grievous anxieties; and he knew not what to do. At the last, worn down with pain, he withdrew to his own home, feigning sickness. When this had come to the knowledge of the king he appointed in his place another of his trusty men to minister unto his son, while he

himself, being concerned for Zardan's health, sent a physician of reputation, and took great pains that he should be healed.

The physician, seeing that Zardan was in favour with the king, attended him diligently, and, having right well judged his case, soon made this report to the king; "I have been unable to discover any root of disease in the man: wherefore I suppose that this weakness is to be ascribed to distress of spirit." But, on hearing his words, the king suspected that his son had been wroth with Zardan, and that this slight had caused his retirement. So, wishing to search the matter, he sent Zardan word, saying "Tomorrow I shall come to see thee, and judge of the malady that hath befallen thee."

But Zardan, on hearing this message, at daybreak wrapt his cloak around him and went to the king, and entered and fell in obeisance on the ground. The king spake unto him, "Why hast thou forced thyself to appear? I was minded to visit thee myself, and so make known to all my friendship for thee." He answered, "My sickness, O king, is no malady common to man; but pain of heart, arising from an anxious and careful mind, hath caused my body to suffer in sympathy. It had been folly in me, being as I am, not to attend as a slave before thy might, but to wait for thy Majesty to be troubled to come to me thy servant." Then the king enquired after the cause of his despondency; Zardan answered and said, "Mighty is my peril, and mighty are the penalties that I deserve, and many deaths do I merit, for that I have been guilty of neglect of thy behests, and have brought on thee such sorrow as never before."

Again said the king, "And of what neglect hast thou been guilty? And what is the dread that encompasseth thee?" "I have been guilty," said he, "of negligence in my close care of my lord thy son. There came an evil man and a sorcerer, and communicated to him the precepts of the Christian religion." Then he related to the king, point by point, the words which the old man spake with his son, and how gladly Ioasaph received his word, and how he had altogether become Christ's. Moreover he gave the old man's name, saying that it was Barlaam. Even before then the king had heard tell of Barlaam's ways and his extreme severity of life; but, when this came to the ears of the king, he was straightway astonished by the dismay that fell on him, and was filled with anger, and his blood well-nigh curdled at the tidings. Immediately he bade call one Araches, who held the second rank after the king, and was the chief in all his private councils: besides which the man was learned in star-lore. When he was come, with much

despondency and dejection the king told him of that which had happened. He, seeing the king's trouble and confusion of mind, said, "O king, trouble and distress thyself no more. We are not without hope that the prince will yet change for the better: nay, I know for very certain that he will speedily renounce the teaching of this deceiver, and conform to thy will."

By these words then did Araches set the king in happier frame of mind; and they turned their thoughts to the thorough sifting of the matter. "This, O king," said Araches, "do we first of all. Make we haste to apprehend that infamous Barlaam. If we take him, I am assured that we shall not miss the mark, nor be cheated of our hope. Barlaam himself shall be persuaded, either by persuasion or by divers engines of torture, against his will to confess that he hath been talking falsely and at random, and shall persuade my lord, thy son, to cleave to his father's creed. But if we fail to take Barlaam, I know of an eremite, Nachor by name, in every way like unto him; it is impossible to distinguish the one from the other. He is of our opinion, and was my teacher in studies. I will give him the hint, and go by night, and tell him the full tale. Then will we blazon it abroad that Barlaam hath been caught; but we shall exhibit Nachor, who, calling himself Barlaam, shall feign that he is pleading the cause of the Christians and standing forth as their champion. Then, after much disputation, he shall be worsted and utterly discomfited. The prince, seeing Barlaam worsted, and our side victorious, will doubtless join the victors; the more so that he counteth it a great duty to reverence thy majesty, and do thy pleasure. Also the man who hath played the part of Barlaam shall be converted, and stoutly proclaim that he hath been in error."

Tim king was delighted with his words, and rocked himself on idle hopes, and thought it excellent counsel. Thereupon, learning that Barlaam was but lately departed, he was zealous to take him prisoner. He therefore occupied most of the passes with troops and captains, and, himself, mounting his chariot, gave furious chase along the one road of which he was especially suspicious, being minded to surprise Barlaam at all costs. But though he toiled by the space of six full days, his labour was but spent in vain. Then he himself remained behind in one of his palaces situate in the country, but sent forward Araches, with horsemen not a few, as far as the wilderness of Senaar, in quest of Barlaam. When Araches arrived in that place, he threw all the neighbour folk into commotion: and when they constantly affirmed that they had never seen the man, he went forth into the

desert places, for to hunt out the Faithful. When he had gone through a great tract of desert, and made the circuit of the fells around, and journeyed afoot over untrodden and pathless ravines, he and his hosts arrived at a plateau. Standing thereon, he descried at the foot of the mountain a company of hermits a-walking. Straightway at their governor's word of command all his men ran upon them in breathless haste, vying one with another, who should arrive first. When they arrived, they came about the monks like so many dogs, or evil beasts that plague mankind. And they seized these men of reverend mien and mind, that bore on their faces the hallmark of their hermit life, and haled them before the governor; but the monks showed no sign of alarm, no sign of meanness or sullenness, and spake never a word. Their leader and captain bore a wallet of hair, charged with the relics of some holy Fathers departed this life.

When Araches beheld them, but saw no Barlaam—for he knew him by sight—he was overwhelmed with grief, and said unto them, “Where is that deceiver who hath led the king's son astray?” The bearer of the wallet answered, “He is not amongst us, God forbid! For, driven forth by the grace of Christ, he avoideth us; but amongst you he hath his dwelling.” The governor said, “Thou knowest him then?” “Yea,” said the hermit, “I know him that is called the deceiver, which is the devil, who dwelleth in your midst and is worshipped and served by you.” The governor said, “It is for Barlaam that I make search, and I asked thee of him, to learn where he is.” The monk answered, “And wherefore then spakest thou in this ambiguous manner, asking about him that had deceived the king's son? If thou wast seeking Barlaam, thou shouldest certainly have said, ‘Where is he that hath turned from error and saved the king's son?’ Barlaam is our brother and fellow-monk. But now for many days past we have not seen his face.” Said Araches, “Show me his abode.” The monk answered, “Had he wished to see you, he would have come forth to meet you. As for us, it is not lawful to make known to you his hermitage.”

Thereupon the governor waxed full of indignation, and, casting a haughty and savage glance upon him, said, “Ye shall die no ordinary death, except ye immediately bring Barlaam before me.” “What,” said the monk, “seest thou in our case that should by its attractions cause us to cling to life, and be afraid of death at thy hands? Whereas we should the rather feel grateful to thee for removing us from life in the close adherence to virtue. For we dread, not a little, the uncertainty of the end, knowing not in what state

death shall overtake us, lest perchance a slip of the inclination, or some spiteful dealing of the devil, may alter the constancy of our choice, and mis-persuade us to think or do contrary to our covenants with God.

Wherefore abandon all hope of gaining the knowledge that ye desire, and shrink not to work your will. We shall neither reveal the dwelling-place of our brother, whom God loveth, although we know it, nor shall we betray any other monasteries unbeknown to ye. We will not endure to escape death by such cowardice. Nay, liefer would we die honourably, and offer unto God, after the sweats of virtue, the lifeblood of courage.”

That man of sin could not brook this boldness of speech, and was moved to the keenest passion against this high and noble spirit, and afflicted the monks with many stripes and tortures. Their courage and nobility won admiration even from that tyrant. But, when after many punishments he failed to persuade them, and none of them consented to discover Barlaam, he took and ordered them to be led to the king, bearing with them the wallet with the relics, and to be beaten and shamefully entreated as they went.

XXIII

After many days Araches brought them to the king, and declared their case. Then he set them before the bitterly incensed king: and he, when he saw them, boiled over with fury and was like to one mad. He ordered them to be beaten without mercy, and, when he saw them cruelly mangled with scourges, could scarcely restrain his madness, and order the tormentors to cease. Then said he unto them, “Why bear ye about these dead men’s bones? If ye carry these bones through affection for those men to whom they belong, this very hour I will set you in their company, that ye may meet your lost friends and be duly grateful to me.” The captain and leader of that godly band, setting at naught the king’s threats, showing no sign of the torment that he had undergone, with free voice and radiant countenance that signified the grace that dwelt in his soul, cried out, “We carry about these clean and holy bones, O king, because we attest in due form our love of those marvellous men to whom they belong: and because we would bring ourselves to remember their wrestlings and lovely conversation, to rouse up ourselves to the like zeal; and because we would catch some vision of the rest and felicity wherein they now live, and thus, as we call them blessed, and provoke one another to emulate them, strive to follow in their footsteps: because moreover, we find thereby that the thought of death, which is right profitable, lendeth wings of zeal to our religious exercises; and lastly, because we derive sanctification from their touch.”

Again said the king, “If the thought of death be profitable, as ye say, why should ye not reach that thought of death by the bones of the bodies that are now your own, and are soon to perish, rather than by the bones of other men which have already perished?”

The monk said, “Five reasons I gave thee, why we carry about these relics; and thou, making answer to one only, art like to be mocking us. But know thou well that the bones of them, that have already departed this life,

bring the thought of death more vividly before us than do the bones of the living. But since thou judgest otherwise, and since the bones of thine own body are to thee a type of death, why dost thou not recollect thy latter end so shortly to come, and set thine house in order, instead of giving up thy soul to all kinds of iniquities, and violently and unmercifully murdering the servants of God and lovers of righteousness, who have done thee no wrong, and seek not to share with thee in present goods, nor are ambitious to rob thee of them?"

Said the king, "I do well to punish you, ye clever misleaders of the folk, because ye deceive all men, counselling them to abstain from the enjoyments of life; and because, instead of the sweets of life and the allures of appetite and pleasure, ye constrain them to choose the rough, filthy and squalid way, and preach that they should render to Jesus the honour due unto the gods. Accordingly, in order that the people may not follow your deceits and leave the land desolate, and, forsaking the gods of their fathers, serve another, I think it just to subject you to punishment and death."

The monk answered, "If thou art eager that all should partake of the good things of life, why dost thou not distribute dainties and riches equally amongst all? And why is it that the common herd are pinched with poverty, while thou addest ever to thy store by seizing for thyself the goods of others? Nay, thou carest not for the weal of the many, but fattenest thine own flesh, to be meat for the worms to feed on. Wherefore also thou hast denied the God of all, and called them gods that are not, the inventors of all wickedness, in order that, by wantonness and wickedness after their example, thou mayest gain the title of imitator of the gods. For, as your gods have done, why should not also the men that follow them do? Great then is the error that thou hast erred, O king. Thou fearest that we should persuade certain of the people to join with us, and revolt from thy hand, and place themselves in that hand that holdeth all things, for thou willest the ministers of thy covetousness to be many, that they may be miserable while thou reapest profit from their toil; just as a man, who keepeth hounds or falcons tamed for hunting, before the hunt may be seen to pet them, but, when they have once seized the quarry, taketh the game with violence out of their mouths. So also thou, willing that there should be many to pay thee tribute and toll from land and water, pretendest to care for their welfare, but in truth bringest on them and above all on thyself eternal ruin; and simply to pile up gold, more worthless than dung or rottenness, thou hast been

deluded into taking darkness for light. But recover thy wits from this earthly sleep: open thy sealed eyes, and behold the glory of God that shineth round about us all; and come at length to thyself. For saith the prophet, 'Take heed, ye unwise among the people, and, O ye fools, understand at last.' Understand thou that there is no God except our God, and no salvation except in him."

But the king said, "Cease this foolish babbling, and anon discover to me Barlaam: else shalt thou taste instruments of torture such as thou hast never tasted before." That noble-minded, greathearted monk, that lover of the heavenly philosophy, was not moved by the king's threats, but stood unflinching, and said, "We are not commanded to fulfil thy hest, O king, but the orders of our Lord and God who teacheth us temperance, that we should be lords over all pleasures and passions, and practise fortitude, so as to endure all toil and all ill-treatment for righteousness' sake. The more perils that thou subjectest us to for the sake of our religion, the more shalt thou be our benefactor. Do therefore as thou wilt: for we shall not consent to do aught outside our duty, nor shall we surrender ourselves to sin. Deem not that it is a slight sin to betray a fellow-combatant and fellow-soldier into thy hands. Nay, but thou shalt not have that scoff to make at us; no, not if thou put us to ten thousand deaths. We be not such cowards as to betray our religion through dread of thy torments, or to disgrace the law divine. So then, if such be thy purpose, make ready every weapon to defend thy claim; for to us to live is Christ, and to die for him is the best gain."

Incensed with anger thereat, the monarch ordered the tongues of these Confessors to be rooted out, and their eyes digged out, and likewise their hands and feet lopped off. Sentence passed, the henchmen and guards surrounded and mutilated them, without pity and without ruth. And they plucked out their tongues from their mouths with prongs, and severed them with brutal severity, and they digged out their eyes with iron claws, and stretched their arms and legs on the rack, and lopped them off. But those blessed, shamefast, noble-hearted men went bravely to torture like guests to a banquet, exhorting one another to meet death for Christ his sake undaunted.

In such divers tortures did these holy monks lay down their lives for the Lord. They were in all seventeen. By common consent, the pious mind is superior to sufferings, as hath been said by one, but not of us, when narrating the martyrdom of the aged priest, and of the seven sons with their

equally brave mother when contending for the law of their fathers: whose bravery and lofty spirit, however, was equalled by these marvellous fathers and citizens and heirs of Hierusalem that is above.

XXIV

After the monks had made this godly end, the king bade Araches, his chief councillor, now that they had failed of their first plan, to look to the second and summon the man Nachor. At dead of night Araches repaired to his cave (he dwelt in the desert practising the arts of divination), and told him of their plans, and returned to the king at daybreak. Again he demanded horsemen, and made as though he went in quest of Barlaam. When he was gone forth, and was walking the desert, a man was seen to issue from a ravine. Araches gave command to his men to pursue him. They took and brought him before their master. When asked who he was, what his religion and what his name, the man declared himself a Christian and gave his name as Barlaam, even as he had been instructed. Araches made great show of joy, apprehended him and returned quickly to the king, and told his tale and produced his man. Then said the king in the hearing of all present, "Art thou the devil's workman, Barlaam?" But he denied it, saying, "I am God's workman, not the devil's. Revile me not; for I am thy debtor to render me much thanks, because I have taught thy son to serve God, and have turned him from error to the true God, and have schooled him in all manner of virtue." Feigning anger, again spake the king, "Though I ought to allow thee never a word, and give thee no room for defence, but rather do thee to death without question, yet such is my humanity that I will bear with thine effrontery until on a set day I try thy cause. If thou be persuaded by me, thou shalt receive pardon: if not, thou shalt die the death." With these words he delivered him to Araches, commanding that he should be most strictly guarded.

On the morrow the king removed thence, and came back to his own palace, and it was blazoned abroad that Barlaam was captured, so that the king's son heard thereof and was exceeding sad at heart, and could in no wise refrain from weeping. With groans and lamentations he importuned

God, and called upon him to succour the aged man. Nor did the good God despise his complaint, for he is loving with them that abide him in the day of trouble, and knoweth them that fear him. Wherefore in a night-vision he made known the whole plot to the young prince, and strengthened and cheered him for the trial of his righteousness. So, when the prince awoke from sleep, he found that his heart, erstwhile so sore and heavy, was now full of joyance, courage and pleasant light. But the king rejoiced at that which he had done and planned, imagining that he was well advised, and showering thanks on Araches. But wickedness lied to itself, to use the words of holy David, and righteousness overcame iniquity, completely overthrowing it, and causing the memorial thereof to perish with sound, as shall be proven by our tale.

After two days the king visited his son's palace. When his son came forth for to meet him, instead of kissing him, as was his wont, the father put on a show of distress and anger, and entered the royal chamber, and there sat down frowning. Then calling to his son, he said, "Child, what is this report that soundeth in mine ears, and weareth away my soul with despondency? Never, I ween, was man more filled with gladness of heart at the birth of a son than was I at thine; and, I trow, never was man so distressed and cruelly treated by child as I have now been by thee. Thou hast dishonoured my grey hairs, and taken away the light of mine eyes, and loosed the strength of my sinews; 'for the thing which I greatly feared concerning thee is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of hath come unto me.' Thou art become a joy to mine enemies, and a laughingstock to mine adversaries. With untutored mind and childish judgement thou hast followed the teaching of the deceivers and esteemed the counsel of the malicious above mine; thou hast forsaken the worship of our gods and become the servant of a strange God. Child, wherefore hast thou done this? I hoped to bring thee up in all safety, and have thee for the staff and support of mine old age, and leave thee, as is most meet, to succeed me in my kingdom, but thou wast not ashamed to play against me the part of a relentless foe. And shouldst thou not rather have listened to me, and followed my injunctions, than have obeyed the idle and foolish pratings of that crafty old knave, who taught thee to choose a sour life instead of a sweet, and abandon the charms of dalliance, to tread the hard and rough road, which the Son of Mary ordereth men to go? Dost thou not fear the displeasure of the most puissant gods, lest they strike thee with lightning, or quell thee with thunderbolt, or overwhelm

thee in the yawning earth, because thou hast rejected and scorned those deities that have so richly blessed us, and adorned our brow with the kingly diadem, and made populous nations to be our servants, that, beyond my hope, in answer to my prayer and supplication, allowed thee to be born, and see the sweet life of day, and hast joined thyself unto the Crucified, duped by the hopes of his servants who tell thee fables of worlds to come, and drivel about the resurrection of dead bodies, and bring in a thousand more absurdities to catch fools? But now, dearest son, if thou hast any regard for me thy father, bid a long farewell to these longwinded follies, and come sacrifice to the gracious gods, and let us propitiate them with hecatombs and drink-offerings, that they may grant thee pardon for thy fall; for they be able and strong to bless and to punish. And wouldst thou have an example of that which I say? Behold us, who by them have been advanced to this honour, repaying them for their kindness by honouring their worshippers and chastising the runagates.”

Now when the king had ended all this idle parleying, gainsaying and slandering of our religion, and belauding and praising of his idolatry, the saintly young prince saw that the matter needed no further to be hid in a corner, but to be lighted and made plain to the eyes of all; and, full of boldness and courage, he said:

“That which I have done, sir, I will not deny. I have fled from darkness and run to the light: I have left error and joined the household of truth: I have deserted the service of devils, and joined the service of Christ, the Son and Word of God the Father, at whose decree the world was brought out of nothing; who, after forming man out of clay, breathed into him the breath of life, and set him to live in a paradise of delight, and, when he had broken his commandment and was become subject unto death, and had fallen into the power of the dread ruler of this world, did not fail him, but wrought diligently to bring him back to his former honour. Wherefore he, the framer of all Creation and maker of our race, became man for our sake, and, coming from a holy Virgin’s womb; on earth conversed with men: for us ungrateful servants did the master endure death, even the death of the Cross, that the tyranny of sin might be destroyed, that the former condemnation might be abolished, that the gates of heaven might be open to us again. Thither he hath exalted our nature, and set it on the throne of glory, and granted to them that love him an everlasting kingdom and joys beyond all that tongue can tell, or ear can hear. He is the mighty and only

potentate, King of kings and Lord of lords, whose might is invincible, and whose lordship is beyond compare, who only is holy and dwelleth in holiness, who with the Father and with the Holy Ghost is glorified; into this faith I have been baptized. And I acknowledge and glorify and worship One God in Three persons, of one substance, and not to be confounded, increate and immortal, eternal, infinite, boundless, without body, without passions, immutable, unchangeable, undefinable, the fountain of goodness, righteousness and everlasting light, maker of all things visible and invisible, containing and sustaining all things, provident for all, ruler and King of all. Without him was there nothing made, nor without his providence can aught subsist. He is the life of all, the support of all, the light of all, being wholly sweetness and insatiable desire, the summit of aspiration. To leave God, then, who is so good, so wise, so mighty, and to serve impure devils, makers of all sinful lusts, and to assign worship to deaf and dumb images, that are not, and never shall be, were not that the extreme of folly and madness? When was there ever heard utterance or language from their lips? When have they given even the smallest answer to their bedesmen? When have they walked, or received any impression of sense? Those of them that stand have never thought of sitting down; and those that sit have never been seen to rise. From an holy man have I learned the ugliness, ill savour and insensibility of these idols, and, moreover, the rottenness and weakness of the devils that operate in them and by them deceive you; and I loathe their wickednesses and, hating them with a perfect hatred, have joined myself to the living and true God, and him will I serve until my latest breath, that my spirit also may return into his hands. When these unspeakable blessings came in my path I rejoiced to be freed from the bondage of evil devils, and to be reclaimed from dire captivity and to be illumined with the light of the countenance of the Lord. But my soul was distressed and divided asunder, that thou, my lord and father, didst not share in my blessings. Yet I feared the stubbornness of thy mind, and kept my grief to myself, not wishing to anger thee; but, without ceasing, I prayed God to draw thee to himself, and call thee back from the long exile that thou hast imposed upon thyself, a runagate alas! from righteousness, and a servant of all sin and wickedness. But sith thou thyself, O my father, hast brought mine affairs to light, hear the sum of my resolve: I will not be false to my covenant with Christ; no, I swear it by him that bought me out of slavery with his own precious blood; even if I must needs die a thousand deaths for his sake, die I will. Knowing

then how matters now stand with me, prithee, no longer trouble thyself in endeavouring to persuade me to change my good confession. For as it were a thankless and never ending task for thee to try to grasp the heavens with thy hand, or to dry up the waters of the sea, so hard were it for thee to change me. Either then now listen to my counsel, and join the household of Christ, and so thou shalt gain blessings past man's understanding, and we shall be fellows with one another by faith, even as by nature; or else, be well assured, I shall depart thy sonship, and serve my God with a clear conscience."

Now when the king heard all these words, he was furiously enraged: and, seized with ungovernable anger, he cried out wrathfully against him, and gnashed his teeth fiercely, like any madman. "And who," said he, "is blameable for all my misfortunes but myself, who have dealt with thee so kindly, and cared for thee as no father before? Hence the perversity and contrariness of thy mind, gathering strength by the licence that I gave thee, hath made thy madness to fall upon mine own pate. Rightly prophesied the astrologers in thy nativity that thou shouldest prove a knave and villain, an impostor and rebellious son. But now, if thou wilt make void my counsel, and cease to be my son, I will become thine enemy, and entreat thee worse than ever man yet entreated his foes."

Again said Ioasaph, "Why, O king, hast thou been kindled to wrath? Art thou grieved that I have gained such bliss? Why, what father was ever seen to be sorrowful in the prosperity of his son? Would not such an one be called an enemy rather than a father? Therefore will I no more call thee my father, but will withdraw from thee, as a man fleeth from a snake, if I know that thou grudgest me my salvation, and with violent hand forcest me to destruction. If thou wilt force me, and play the tyrant, as thou hast threatened, be assured that thou shalt gain nought thereby save to exchange the name of father for that of tyrant and murderer. It were easier for thee to attain to the ways of the eagle, and, like him, cleave the air, than to alter my loyalty to Christ, and that good confession that I have confessed in him. But be wise, O my father, and shake off the rheum and mist from the eyes of thy mind, lift them aloft and look upward to view the light of my God that enlighteneth all around, and be thyself, at last, enlightened with this light most sweet. Why art thou wholly given up to the passions and desires of the flesh, and why is there no looking upward? Know thou that all flesh is grass and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the

flower thereof falleth away; but the word of my Lord, which by the gospel is preached unto all, shall endure forever. Why then dost thou thus madly cling to and embrace that glory, which, like spring flowers, fadeth and perisheth, and to beastly unsavoury wantonness, and to the abominable passions of the belly and the members thereunder, which for a season please the senses of fools, but afterwards make returns more bitter than gall, when the shadows and dreams of this vain life are passed away, and the lovers thereof, and workers of iniquity are imprisoned in the perpetual pain of dark and unquenchable fire, where the worm that sleepeth not gnaweth forever, and where the fire burneth without ceasing and without quenching through endless ages? And with these sinners alas! thou too shalt be imprisoned and grievously tormented, and shalt bitterly rue thy wicked counsels, and bitterly regret thy days that now are, and think upon my words, but there shall be no advantage in repentance; for in death there is no confession and repentance. But the present is the set time for work: the future for reward. Even if the pleasures of the present world were not evanescent and fleeting, but were to endure forever with their owners, not even thus should any man choose them before the gifts of Christ, and the good things that pass man's understanding. Soothly, as the sun surpasseth in radiance and brightness the dead of night, even so, and much more so, doth the happiness promised to those that love God excel in glory and magnificence all earthly kinship and glory; and there is utter need for a man to choose the more excellent before the more worthless. And forasmuch as everything here is fleeting and subject to decay, and passeth and vanisheth as a dream, and as a shadow and vision of sleep; and as one may sooner trust the unstable breezes, or the tracks of a ship passing over the waves, than the prosperity of men, what simplicity, nay, what folly and madness it is to choose the corruptible and perishable, the weak things of no worth, rather than the incorruptible and everlasting, the imperishable and endless, and, by the temporal enjoyment of these things, to forfeit the eternal fruition of the happiness to come! Wilt thou not understand this, my father? Wilt thou not haste past the things which haste pass thee, and attach thyself to that which endureth? Wilt thou not prefer a home land to a foreign land, light to darkness, the spirit to the flesh, eternal life to the shadow of death, the indestructible to the fleeting? Wilt thou not escape from the grievous bondage of the cruel prince of this world, I mean the evil one, the devil, and become the servant of the good, tenderhearted, and all merciful Lord? Wilt thou not break away from

servicing thy many gods, falsely so called, and serve the one, true and living God? Though thou hast sinned against him often times by blaspheming him, and often times by slaying his servants with dread torments, yet, I know well, that if thou turn again, he shall in his kindness receive thee, and no more remember thine offences: because he willeth not the death of a sinner but rather that he may turn and live—he, who came down from the unspeakable heights, to seek us that had gone astray: who endured for us Cross, scourge and death; who bought with his precious blood us who had been sold in bondage under sin. Unto him be glory and praise forever and ever! Amen.”

The king was overwhelmed with astonishment and anger; with astonishment, at his son’s wisdom and unanswerable words; with anger, at the persistence with which he denounced his father’s gods, and mocked and ridiculed the whole tenor of his life. He could not admit the glory of his discourse because of the grossness of the darkness within, but natural affection forbade him to punish his son, or evilly to entreat him, and he utterly despaired of moving him by threats. Fearing then that, if he argued further with him, his son’s boldness and bitter satire of the gods might kindle him to hotter anger, and lead him to do him a mischief, he arose in wrath and withdrew. “Would that thou hadst never been born,” he cried, “nor hadst come to the light of day, destined as thou wert to be such an one, a blasphemer of the gods, and a renegade from thy father’s love and admonition! But thou shalt not alway mock the invincible gods, nor shall their enemies rejoice for long, nor shall these knavish sorceries prevail. For except thou become obedient unto me, and right-minded toward the gods, I will first deliver thee to sundry tortures, and then put thee to the cruellest death, dealing with thee not as with a son, but as with an enemy and rebel.”

XXV

In such wise did the father threaten and wrathfully retire. But the son entered his own bedchamber, and lifted up his eyes to the proper judge of his cause, and cried out of the depth of his heart, “O Lord my God, my sweet hope and unerring promise, the sure refuge of them that are wholly given up to thee, with gracious and kindly eye look upon the contrition of my heart, and leave me not, neither forsake me. But, according to thine unerring pledge, be thou with me, thine unworthy and sorry servant. Thee I acknowledge and confess, the maker and provider of all creation. Therefore do thou thyself enable me to continue in this good confession, until my dying breath: look upon me, and pity me; and stand by and keep me unhurt by any working of Satan. Look upon me, O King: for my heart is enkindled with longing after thee, and is parched as with burning thirst in the desert, desiring thee, the well of immortality. Deliver not to the wild beasts my soul that confesseth thee: forget not the soul of the poor forever; but grant me that am a sinner throughout my length of days to suffer all things for thy name’s sake and in the confession of thee, and to sacrifice my whole self unto thee. For, with thy might working in them, even the feeble shall wax exceeding strong; for thou only art the unconquerable ally and merciful God, whom all creation blesseth, glorified forever and ever. Amen.”

When he had thus prayed, he felt divine comfort stealing over his heart, and, fulfilled with courage, he spent the whole night in prayer. Meanwhile the king communed with Araches, his friend, as touching his son’s matters, and signified to him his son’s sheer audacity and unchangeable resolution. Araches gave counsel that he should, in his dealings with him, show the utmost kindness and courtesy, in the hope, perchance, of alluring him by flattering attentions. The day following, the king came to his son, and sat down, and called him to his side. He embraced and kissed him affectionately, coaxing him gently and tenderly, and said, “O my darling

and well-beloved son, honour thou thy father's grey hairs: listen to my entreaty, and come, do sacrifice to the gods; thus shalt thou win their favour, and receive at their hands length of days, and the enjoyment of all glory and of an undisputed kingdom, and happiness of every sort. Thus shalt thou be well pleasing to me thy father throughout life and be honoured and lauded of all men. It is a great count in the score of praise to be obedient to thy father, especially in a good cause, and to gain the goodwill of the gods. What thinkest thou, my son? Is it that I have willingly declined from the right, and chosen to travel on the wrong road: or that, from ignorance and inexperience of the good, I have given myself to destruction? Well, if thou thinkest that I willingly prefer the evil to the profitable, and choose death before life, thou seemest to me, son, completely to have missed the goal in judging. Dost thou not see to what discomfort and trouble I often expose myself in mine expeditions against my foes, or when I am engaged in divers other business for the public good, not sparing myself even hunger and thirst, if need be, the march on foot, or the couch on the ground? As for riches and money, such is my contempt and scorn thereof, that I have at times ungrudgingly lavished all the stores of my palace, to build mighty temples for the gods, and to adorn them with all manner of splendour, or else to distribute liberal largess to my soldiers. Possessing then, as I also do, this contempt of pleasure and this courage in danger, what zeal would I not have devoted to contemning all else, and winning my salvation, had I only found that the religion of the Galileans were better than mine own? But, if thou condemnest me for ignorance and inexperience of the good, consider how many sleepless nights I have spent, with some problem before me, oftentimes no very important one, giving myself no rest until I had found the clear and most apt solution.

“Seeing then that I reckon that not even the least of these temporal concerns is unworthy of thought until all be fitly completed for the advantage of all and seeing that all (I ween) bear me witness that no man under the sun can search out secrets with more diligence than I, how then could I have considered divine things, that call for worship and serious consideration, unworthy of thought, and not rather have devoted all my zeal and might, all my mind and soul to the investigation thereof, to find out the right and the true? Aye, and I have laboriously sought thereafter. Many nights and days have I spent thus: many wise and learned men have I called to my council; and with many of them that are called Christians have I

conversed. By untiring enquiry and ardent search I have discovered the pathway of truth, witnessed by wise men honoured for their intelligence and wit—that there is none other faith than ours. This is the path that we tread today, worshipping the most puissant gods, and holding fast to that sweet and delightsome life, given by them to all men, fulfilled with all manner of pleasure and gladness of heart, which the leaders and priests of the Galileans have in their folly rejected; so that, in hope of some other uncertain life, they have readily cast away this sweet light, and all those pleasures which the gods have bestowed on us for enjoyment, and all the while know not what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm.

“But thou, dearest son, obey thy father, who, by diligent and honest search, hath found the real good. Lo, I have shown thee that, neither willingly, no, nor by way of ignorance, have I failed of the good, but rather that I have found and laid hold thereon. And I earnestly desire that thou too shouldest not wander as a fool, but shouldest follow me. Have respect then unto thy father. Dost thou not know how lovely a thing it is to obey one’s father, and please him in all ways? Contrariwise, how deadly and cursed a thing it is to provoke a father and despise his commands? As many as have done so, have come to a miserable end. But be not thou, my son, one of their number. Rather do that which is well pleasing to thy sire, and so mayest thou obtain all happiness and inherit my blessing and my kingdom!”

The high-minded and noble youth listened to his father’s windy discourse and foolish opposition, and recognized therein the devices of the crooked serpent, and how standing at his right hand he had prepared a snare for his feet, and was scheming how to overthrow his righteous soul, and hinder him of the prize laid up in store. Therefore the prince set before his eyes the commandment of the Lord, which saith, “I came not to send peace, but strife and a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother,” and so forth; and “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me”; and “Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.” When he had considered these things, and fettered his soul with divine fear, and strengthened it with longing desire and love, right opportunely he remembered the saying of Solomon, “There is a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.” First of all he prayed in silence, and said, “Have mercy of me, Lord God, have mercy of me; for my soul trusteth in thee; and under the shadow of thy wings I shall hope till

wickedness overpass. I shall cry to the highest God; to God that did well to me,” and the rest of the psalm.

Then said Ioasaph to the king, “To honour one’s father, and to obey his commands, and to serve him with good will and affection is taught us by the Lord of us all, who hath implanted in our hearts this natural affection. But, when loving devotion to our parents bringeth our soul into peril, and separateth her from her Maker, then we are commanded, at all costs, to cut it out, and, on no account, to yield to them that would depart us from God, but to hate and avoid them, even if it be our father that issueth the abominable command, or our mother, or our king, or the master of our very life. Wherefore it is impossible for me, out of devotion to my father, to forfeit God. So, prithee, trouble not thyself, nor me: but be persuaded, and let us both serve the true and living God, for the objects of thy present worship are idols, the works of men’s hands, devoid of breath, and deaf, and give nought but destruction and eternal punishment to their worshippers.

“But if this be not thy pleasure, deal with me even as thou wilt: for I am a servant of Christ, and neither flatteries nor torments shall separate me from his love, as I told thee yesterday, swearing it by my Master’s name, and confirming the word with surest oath. But, whereas thou saidest that thou didst neither wilfully do wrong, nor didst fail of the mark through ignorance, but after much laborious enquiry hadst ascertained that it was truly a good thing to worship idols and to be riveted to the pleasures of the passions—that thou art wilfully a wrong doer, I may not say. But this I know full well, and would have thee know, O my father, that thou art surrounded with a dense mist of ignorance, and, walking in darkness that may be felt, seest not even one small glimmer of light. Wherefore thou hast lost the right pathway, and wanderest over terrible cliffs and chasms. Holding darkness for light, and clinging to death as it were life, thou deemest that thou art well advised, and hast reflected to good effect: but it is not so, not so. The objects of thy veneration are not gods but statues of devils, charged with all their filthy power; nor is the life, which thou pronoucest sweet and pleasant, and thinkest to be full of delight and gladness of heart, such in kind: but the same is abominable, according to the word of truth, and to be abhorred. For for a time it sweeteneth and tickleth the gullet, but afterwards it maketh the risings more bitter than gall (as said my teacher), and is sharper than any two-edged sword.

“How shall I describe to thee the evils of this life? I will tell them, and they shall be more in number than the sand. For such life is the fishhook of the devil, baited with beastly pleasure, whereby he deceiveth and draggeth his prey into the depth of hell. Whereas the good things, promised by my Master, which thou callest ‘the hope of some other uncertain life,’ are true and unchangeable; they know no end, and are not subject to decay. There is no language that can declare the greatness of yonder glory and delight, of the joy unspeakable, and the everlasting gladness. As thou thyself seest, we all die; and there is no man that shall live and not see death. But one day we shall all rise again, when our Lord Jesus Christ shall come, the Son of God, in unspeakable glory and dread power, the only King of kings, and Lord of lords; to whom every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. Such terror shall he then inspire that the very powers of heaven shall be shaken: and before him there shall stand in fear thousand thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand of Angels and Archangels, and the whole world shall be full of fear and terror. For one of the Archangels shall sound with the trump of God, and immediately the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and the earth shall be rent, and shall give up the dead bodies of all men that ever were since the first man Adam until that day. And then shall all men that have died since the beginning of the world in the twinkling of an eye stand alive before the judgement seat of the immortal Lord, and every man shall give account of his deeds. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun; they that believed in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and ended this present life in good works. And how can I describe to thee the glory that shall receive them at that day? For though I compare their brightness and beauty to the light of the sun or to the brightest lightning flash, yet should I fail to do justice to their brightness. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, in the kingdom of heaven, in the light which no man can approach unto, in his unspeakable and unending glory.

“Such joys and such bliss shall the righteous obtain, but they that have denied the only true God and not known their Maker and Creator, but have worshipped foul devils, and rendered homage to dumb idols, and loved the pleasures of this vain world, and, like swine, wallowed in the mire of sinful lusts, and made their lives a headquarters for all wickedness, shall stand naked and laid bare, downright ashamed and downcast, pitiable in

appearance and in fact, set forth for a reproach to all creation. All their life in word, deed and thought shall come before their faces. Then, after this bitter disgrace and unbearable reproach, shall they be sentenced to the unquenchable and lightless fire of Gehenna, unto the outer darkness, the gnashing of teeth and the venomous worm. This is their portion, this their lot, in the which they shall dwell together in punishment for endless ages, because they rejected the good things offered them in promise, and, for the sake of the pleasure of sin for a season, made choice of eternal punishment. For these reasons—to obtain that unspeakable bliss, to enjoy that ineffable glory, to equal the Angels in splendour, and to stand with boldness before the good and most sweetest Lord, to escape those bitter and unending punishments and that galling shame—time after time, were it not worth men’s while to sacrifice their riches and bodies, nay, even their very lives? Who is so cowardly, who so foolish, as not to endure a thousand temporal deaths, to escape eternal and everlasting death, and to inherit life, blissful and imperishable, and to shine in the light of the blessed and life-giving Trinity?”

XXVI

When the king heard these words, and saw the steadfastness, and unbuxomness of his son, who yielded neither to flattery, nor persuasion, nor threat, he marvelled indeed at the persuasiveness of his speech and his irrefutable answers, and was convicted by his own conscience secretly assuring him that Ioasaph spake truly and aright. But he was dragged back by his evil habit and passions, which, from long use, had taken firm grip on him, and held him in as with bit and bridle, and suffered him not to behold the light of truth. So he left no stone unturned, as the saying is, and adhered to his old purpose, determining to put into action the plot which he and Araches had between them devised. Said he to his son, "Although, child, thou oughtest in all points simply to give in to my commands, yet, because thou art stubborn and disobedient, and hast thus stiffly opposed me, insisting that thine own opinion should prevail over all, bid we now farewell to vain insistance, and let persuasion be now our policy. And, forasmuch as Barlaam, thy deceiver, is here, my prisoner in iron chains, I will make a great assembly, and summon all our people and your Galileans, to one place; and I will charge heralds to proclaim expressly that none of the Christians shall fear, but that all shall muster without dread; and we will hold debate together. If your side win, then shall ye and your Barlaam gain your desires; but if ye lose, then shall ye with right good will yield yourselves to my commands."

But this truly wise and prudent youth, forewarned, by the heavenly vision sent him, of his father's mischief, replied, "The Lord's will be done! Be it according to thy command! May our good God and Lord himself vouchsafe that we wander not from the right way, for my soul trusteth in him, and he shall be merciful unto me." There and then did the king command all, whether idolaters or Christians, to assemble. Letters were despatched in all quarters: heralds proclaimed it in every village town that no Christian need

fear any secret surprise, but all might come together without fear, as friends and kindred, for the honest and unrestrained enquiry that should be held with their chief and captain, Barlaam. In like manner also he summoned the initiate and the temple-keepers of his idols, and wise men of the Chaldeans and Indians that were in all his kingdom, beside certain augurs, sorcerers and seers, that they might get the better of the Christians.

Then were there gathered together multitudes that held his loathly religion; but of the Christians was there found one only that came to the help of the supposed Barlaam. His name was Barachias. For of the Faithful, some were dead, having fallen victims to the fury of the governors of the cities; and some were hiding in mountains and dens, in dread of the terrors hanging over them; while others had feared the threats of the king, and durst not adventure themselves into the light of day, but were worshippers by night, serving Christ in secret, and in no wise boldly confessing him. So noble-hearted Barachias came alone to the contest, to help and champion the truth.

The king sat down before all on a doom-stool high and exalted, and bade his son sit beside him. He, in reverence and awe of his father, consented not thereto, but sat near him on the ground. There stood the learned in the wisdom which God hath made foolish, whose unwise hearts had gone astray, as saith the Apostle; for, “professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.” These were assembled for to join argument with the king’s son and his fellows, and on them was fulfilled the proverb, “Gazelle against lion.” The one made the Most High his house of defence, and his hope was under the shadow of his wings; while the others trusted in the princes of this world, who are made of none effect, and in the ruler of the darkness of this world, to whom they have subjected themselves miserably and wretchedly.

Now came on Nachor, in the disguise of Barlaam; and the king’s side were like to reach their goal; but, once again, very different was the ordering of the wise providence of God. When all the company was come, thus spake the king to his orators and philosophers, or rather to the deceivers of his people, and fools at heart, “Behold now, there lieth before you a contest, even the mightiest of contests; for one of two things shall befall you. If ye establish our cause, and prove Barlaam and his friends to be in error, ye shall have your fill of glory and honour from us and all the

senate, and shall be crowned with crowns of victory. But if ye be worsted, in all ignominy ye shall pitiably perish, and all your goods shall be given to the people, that your memorial may be clean blotted out from off the earth. Your bodies will I give to be devoured by wild beasts and your children will I deliver to perpetual slavery.”

When the king had thus spoken, his son said, “A righteous doom hast thou judged this day, O king. The Lord establish this thy mind! I too have the same bidding for my teacher.” And, turning round to Nachor, who was supposed to be Barlaam, he said, “Thou knowest, Barlaam, in what splendour and luxury thou foundest me. With many a speech thou persuadedst me to leave my father’s laws and customs, and to serve an unknown God, drawn by the promise of some unspeakable and eternal blessings, to follow thy doctrines and to provoke to anger my father and lord. Now therefore consider that thou art weighed in the balance. If thou overcome in the wrestling, and prove that the doctrines, which thou hast taught me, be true, and show that they, that try a fall with us, be in error, thou shalt be magnified as no man heretofore, and shalt be entitled ‘herald of truth’; and I will abide in thy doctrine and serve Christ, even as thou didst preach, until my dying breath. But if thou be worsted, by foul play or fair, and thus bring shame on me today, speedily will I avenge me of mine injury; with mine own hands will I quickly tear out thy heart and thy tongue, and throw them with the residue of thy carcase to be meat for the dogs, that others may be lessoned by thee not to cozen the sons of kings.”

When Nachor heard these words, he was exceeding sorrowful and downcast, seeing himself falling into the destruction that he had made for other, and being drawn into the net that he had laid privily, and feeling the sword entering into his own soul. So he took counsel with himself, and determined rather to take the side of the king’s son, and make it to prevail, that he might avoid the danger hanging over him, because the prince was doubtless able to requite him, should he be found to provoke him. But this was all the work of divine providence that was wisely establishing our cause by the mouth of our adversaries. For when these idol-priests and Nachor crossed words, like another Barlaam, who, of old in the time of Balak, when purposing to curse Israel, loaded him with manifold blessings, so did Nachor mightily resist these unwise and unlearned wise men.

There sat the king upon his throne, his son beside him, as we have said. There beside him stood these unwise orators who had whetted their tongues

like a sharp sword, to destroy truth, and who (as saith Esay) conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity. There were gathered innumerable multitudes, come to view the contest and see which side should carry off the victory. Then one of the orators, the most eminent of all his fellows, said unto Nachor, “Art thou that Barlaam which hath so shamelessly and audaciously blasphemed our gods, and hath enmeshed our king’s well beloved son in the net of error, and taught him to serve the Crucified?” Nachor answered, “I am he, I am Barlaam, that, as thou sayest, doth set your gods at nought: but the king’s son have I not enmeshed in error; but rather from error have I delivered him, and brought him to the true God.” The orator replied, “When the great and marvellous men, who have discovered all knowledge of wisdom, do call them high and immortal gods, and when all the kings and honourable men upon earth do worship and adore them, how waggest thou tongue against them, and, in brief, how durst thou be so mighty brazen-faced? What is the manner of thy proof that the Crucified is God, and these be none?” Then replied Nachor, disdainingly even to answer the speaker. He beckoned with his hand to the multitude to keep silence, and opening his mouth, like Balaam’s ass, spake that which he had not purposed to say, and thus addressed the king.

XXVII

“By the providence of God, O king, came I into the world; and when I contemplated heaven and earth and sea, the sun and moon, and the other heavenly bodies, I was led to marvel at their fair order. And, when I beheld the world and all that therein is, how it is moved by law, I understood that he who moveth and sustaineth it is God. That which moveth is ever stronger than that which is moved, and that which sustaineth is stronger than that which is sustained. Him therefore I call God, who constructed all things and sustaineth them, without beginning, without end, immortal, without want, above all passions, and failings, such as anger, forgetfulness, ignorance, and the like. By him all things consist. He hath no need of sacrifice, or drink-offering, or of any of the things that we see, but all men have need of him.

“Now that I have said thus much concerning God, according as he hath granted me to speak concerning himself, come we now to the human race, that we may know which of them partake of truth, and which of error. It is manifest to us, O king, that there are three races of men in this world: those that are worshippers of them whom ye call gods, and Jews, and Christians. And again those who serve many gods are divided into three races, Chaldeans, Greeks and Egyptians, for these are to the other nations the leaders and teachers of the service and worship of the gods whose name is legion. Let us therefore see which of these hold the truth, and which error.

“The Chaldeans, which knew not God, went astray after the elements and began to worship the creature rather than their Creator, and they made figures of these creatures and called them likenesses of heaven, and earth and sea, of sun and moon, and of the other elements or luminaries. And they enclose them in temples, and worship them under the title of gods, and guard them in safety lest they be stolen by robbers. They have not understood how that which guardeth is ever greater than that which is guarded, and that the maker is greater than the thing that is made; for, if the

gods be unable to take care of themselves, how can they take care of others? Great then is the error that the Chaldeans have erred in worshipping lifeless and useless images. And I am moved to wonder, O king, how they, who are called philosophers among them, fail to understand that even the very elements are corruptible. But if the elements are corruptible and subject to necessity, how are they gods? And if the elements are not gods, how are the images, created to their honour, gods?

“Come we then, O king, to the elements themselves, that we may prove concerning them, that they are not gods, but corruptible and changeable things, brought out of nonexistence by the command of him who is God indeed, who is incorruptible, and unchangeable, and invisible, but yet himself seeth all things, and, as he willeth, changeth and altereth the same. What then must I say about the elements?

“They, who ween that the Heaven is a god, are in error. For we see it turning and moving by law, and consisting of many parts, whence also it is called Cosmos!⁹ Now a ‘Cosmos’ is the handiwork of some artificer; and that which is wrought by handiwork hath beginning and end. And the firmament is moved by law together with its luminaries. The stars are borne from Sign to Sign, each in his order and place: some rise, while others set: and they run their journey according to fixed seasons, to fulfil summer and winter, as it hath been ordained for them by God, nor do they transgress their proper bounds, according to the inexorable law of nature, in common with the heavenly firmament. Whence it is evident that the heaven is not a god, but only a work of God.

“They again that think that the Earth is a goddess have gone astray. We behold it dishonoured, mastered, defiled and rendered useless by mankind. If it be baked by the sun, it becometh dead, for nothing groweth from a potsherd. And again, if it be soaked overmuch, it rotteth, fruit and all. It is trodden under foot of men and the residue of the beasts: it is polluted with the blood of the murdered, it is digged and made a grave for dead bodies. This being so, Earth can in no wise be a goddess, but only the work of God for the use of men.

“They that think that Water is a god have gone astray. It also hath been made for the use of men. It is under their lordship: it is polluted, and perisheth: it is altered by boiling, by dyeing, by congealment, or by being brought to the cleansing of all defilements. Wherefore Water cannot be a god, but only the work of God.

“They that think that Fire is a god are in error. It too was made for the use of men. It is subject to their lordship, being carried about from place to place, for the seething and roasting of all manner of meats, yea, and for the burning of dead corpses. Moreover, it perisheth in divers ways, when it is quenched by mankind. Wherefore Fire cannot be a god, but only the work of God.

“They that think that the breath of the Winds is a god are in error. This, as is evident, is subject to another, and hath been prepared by God, for the sake of mankind, for the carriage of ships, and the conveyance of victuals, and for other uses of men, it riseth and falleth according to the ordinance of God. Wherefore it is not to be supposed that the breath of the Winds is a god, but only the work of God.

“They that think that the Sun is a god are in error. We see him moving and turning by law, and passing from Sign to Sign, setting and rising, to warm herbs and trees for the use of men, sharing power with the other stars, being much less than the heaven, and falling into eclipse and possessed of no sovranity of his own. Wherefore we may not consider that the Sun is a god, but only the work of God.

“They that think that the Moon is a goddess are in error. We behold her moving and turning by law, and passing from Sign to Sign, setting and rising for the use of men, lesser than the sun, waxing and waning, suffering eclipse. Wherefore we do not consider that the Moon is a goddess, but only the work of God.

“They that think that Man is a god are in error. We see man moving by law, growing up, and waxing old, even against his will. Now he rejoiceth, now he grieveth, requiring meat and drink and raiment. Besides he is passionate, envious, lustful, fickle, and full of failings: and he perisheth in many a way, by the elements, by wild beasts, and by the death that ever awaiteth him. So Man cannot be a god, but only the work of God. Great then is the error that the Chaldeans have erred in following their own lusts; for they worship corruptible elements and dead images, neither do they perceive that they are making gods of these.

“Now come we to the Greeks that we may see whether they have any understanding concerning God. The Greeks, then, professing themselves to be wise, fell into greater folly than the Chaldeans, alleging the existence of many gods, some male, others female, creators of all passions and sins of every kind. Wherefore the Greeks, O king, introduced an absurd, foolish

and ungodly fashion of talk, calling them gods that were not, according to their own evil passions; that, having these gods for advocates of their wickedness, they might commit adultery, theft, murder and all manner of iniquity. For if their gods did so, how should they not themselves do the like? Therefore from these practices of error it came to pass that men suffered frequent wars and slaughters and cruel captivities. But if now we choose to pass in review each one of these gods, what a strange sight shalt thou see!

“First and foremost they introduce the god whom they call Kronos, and to him they sacrifice their own children, to him who had many sons by Rhea, and in a fit of madness ate his own children. And they say that Zeus cut off his privy parts, and cast them into the sea, whence, as fable telleth, was born Aphrodite. So Zeus bound his own father, and cast him into Tartarus. Dost thou mark the delusion and lasciviousness that they allege against their gods? Is it possible then that one who was prisoner and mutilated should be a god? What folly? What man in his senses could admit it?

“Next they introduce Zeus, who, they say, became king of the gods, and would take the shape of animals, that he might defile mortal women. They show him transformed into a bull, for Europa; into gold, for Danae; into a swan, for Leda; into a satyr, for Antiope; and into a thunderbolt, for Semele. Then of these were born many children, Dionysus, Zethus, Amphion, Herakles, Apollo, Artemis, Perseus, Castor, Helen, Polydeukes, Minos, Rhadamanthos, Sarpedon, and the nine daughters whom they call the Muses.

“In like manner they introduce the story of Ganymede. And so befell it, O king, that men imitated all these things, and became adulterers, and defilers of themselves with mankind, and doers of other monstrous deeds, in imitation of their god. How then can an adulterer, one that defileth himself by unnatural lust, a slayer of his father be a god?

“With Zeus also they represent one Hephaestus as a god, and him lame, holding hammer and fire-tongs, and working as a coppersmith for hire. So it appeareth that he is needy. But it is impossible for one who is lame and wanteth men’s aid to be a God.

“After him, they represent as a god Hermes, a lusty fellow, a thief, and a covetous, a sorcerer, bowlegged, and an interpreter of speech. It is impossible for such an one to be a God.

“They also exhibit Asklepius as god, a physician, a maker of medicines, a compounder of plasters for his livelihood (for he is a needy wight), and in the end, they say that he was struck by Zeus with a thunderbolt, because of Tyndareus, son of Lakedaemon, and thus perished. Now if Asklepius, though a god, when struck by a thunderbolt, could not help himself, how can he help others?

“Ares is represented as a warlike god, emulous, and covetous of sheep and other things. But in the end they say he was taken in adultery with Aphrodite by the child Eros and Hephaestus and was bound by them. How then can the covetous, the warrior, the bondman and adulterer be a god?

“Dionysus they show as a god, who leadeth nightly orgies, and teacheth drunkenness, and carrieth off his neighbours’ wives, a madman and an exile, finally slain by the Titans. If then Dionysus was slain and unable to help himself, nay, further was a madman, a drunkard, and vagabond, how could he be a god?

“Herakles, too, is represented as drunken and mad, as slaying his own children, then consuming with fire and thus dying. How then could a drunkard and slayer of his own children, burnt to death by fire, be a god? Or how can he help others who could not help himself?

“Apollo they represent as an emulous god, holding bow and quiver, and, at times, harp and flute, and prophesying to men for pay. Soothly he is needy: but one that is needy and emulous and a minstrel cannot be a god.

“Artemis, his sister, they represent as an huntress, with bow and quiver, ranging the mountains alone, with her hounds, in chase of stag or boar. How can such an one, that is an huntress and a ranger with hounds, be a goddess?

“Of Aphrodite, adulteress though she be, they say that she is herself a goddess. Once she had for leman Ares, once Anchises, once Adonis, whose death she lamenteth, seeking her lost lover. They say that she even descended into Hades to ransom Adonis from Persephone. Didst thou, O king, ever see madness greater than this? They represent this weeping and wailing adulteress as a goddess.

“Adonis they show as an hunter god, violently killed by a boar tusk, and unable to help his own distress. How then shall he take thought for mankind, he the adulterer, the hunter who died a violent death?

“All such tales, and many like them, and many wicked tales more shameful still, have the Greeks introduced, O king, concerning their gods; tales, whereof it is unlawful to speak, or even to have them in

remembrance. Hence men, taking occasion from their gods, wrought all lawlessness, lasciviousness and ungodliness, polluting earth and air with their horrible deeds.

“But the Egyptians, more fatuous and foolish than they, have erred worse than any other nation. They were not satisfied with the idols worshipped by the Chaldeans and Greeks, but further introduced as gods brute beasts of land and water, and herbs and trees, and were defiled in all madness and lasciviousness worse than all people upon earth. From the beginning they worshipped Isis, which had for her brother and husband that Osiris which was slain by his brother Typhon. And for this reason Isis fled with Horus her son to Byblos in Syria, seeking Osiris and bitterly wailing, until Horus was grown up and killed Typhon. Isis then was not able to help her own brother and husband; nor had Osiris, who was slain by Typhon, power to succour himself; nor had Typhon, who killed his brother and was himself destroyed by Horus and Isis, any resource to save himself from death. And yet, although famous for all these misadventures, these be they that were considered gods by the senseless Egyptians.

“The same people, not content therewith, nor with the rest of the idols of the heathen, also introduced brute beasts as gods. Some of them worshipped the sheep, some the goat, and others the calf and the hog; while certain of them worshipped the raven, the kite, the vulture, and the eagle. Others again worshipped the crocodile, and some the cat and dog, the wolf and ape, the dragon and serpent, and others the onion, garlic and thorns, and every other creature. And the poor fools do not perceive, concerning these things, that they have no power at all. Though they see their gods being devoured, burnt and killed by other men, and rotting away, they cannot grasp the fact that they are no gods.

“Great, then, is the error that the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, and the Greeks have erred in introducing such gods as these, and making images thereof, and deifying dumb and senseless idols. I marvel how, when they behold their gods being sawn and chiselled by workmen’s axes, growing old and dissolving through lapse of time, and molten in the pot, they never reflected concerning them that they are no gods. For when these skill not to work their own salvation, how can they take care of mankind? Nay, even the poets and philosophers among the Chaldeans, Greeks and Egyptians, although by their poems and histories they desired to glorify their people’s gods, yet they rather revealed and exposed their shame before all men. If

the body of a man, consisting of many parts, loseth not any of its proper members, but, having an unbroken union with all its members, is in harmony with itself, how in the nature of God shall there be such warfare and discord? For if the nature of the gods were one, then ought not one god to persecute, slay or injure another. But if the gods were persecuted by other gods, and slain and plundered and killed with thunder-stones, then is their nature no longer one, but their wills are divided, and are all mischievous, so that not one among them is God. So it is manifest, O king, that all this history of the nature of the gods is error.

“Furthermore, how do the wise and eloquent among the Greeks fail to perceive that lawgivers themselves are judged by their own laws? For if their laws are just, then are their gods assuredly unjust, in that they have offended against law by murders, sorceries, adulteries, thefts and unnatural crimes. But, if they did well in so doing, then are their laws unjust, seeing that they have been framed in condemnation of the gods. But now the laws are good and just, because they encourage good and forbid evil; whereas the deeds of their gods offend against law. Their gods then are offenders against law; and all that introduce such gods as these are worthy of death and are ungodly. If the stories of the gods be myths, then are the gods mere words: but if the stories be natural, then are they that wrought or endured such things no longer gods: if the stories be allegorical, then are the gods myths and nothing else. Therefore it hath been proven, O king, that all these idols, belonging to many gods, are works of error and destruction. So it is not meet to call those gods that are seen, but cannot see: but it is right to worship as God him who is unseen and is the Maker of all mankind.

“Come we now, O king, to the Jews, that we may see what they also think concerning God. The Jews are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and went once to sojourn in Egypt. From thence God brought them out with a mighty hand and stretched out arm by Moses their lawgiver; and with many miracles and signs made he known unto them his power. But, like the rest, these proved ungrateful and unprofitable, and often worshipped images of the heathen, and killed the prophets and righteous men that were sent unto them. Then, when it pleased the Son of God to come on earth, they did shamefully entreat him and deliver him to Pilate the Roman governor, and condemn him to the Cross, regardless of his benefits and the countless miracles that he had worked amongst them. Wherefore by their own lawlessness they perished. For though to this day they worship

the One Omnipotent God, yet it is not according unto knowledge; for they deny Christ the Son of God, and are like the heathen, although they seem to approach the truth from which they have estranged themselves. So much for the Jews.

“As for the Christians, they trace their line from the Lord Jesus Christ. He is confessed to be the Son of the most high God, who came down from heaven, by the Holy Ghost, for the salvation of mankind, and was born of a pure Virgin, without seed of man, and without defilement, and took flesh, and appeared among men, that he might recall them from the error of worshipping many gods. When he had accomplished his marvellous dispensation, of his own free will by a mighty dispensation he tasted of death upon the Cross. But after three days he came to life again, and ascended into the heavens, the glory of whose coming thou mayest learn, O king, by the reading of the holy Scripture, which the Christians call the Gospel, shouldst thou meet therewith. This Jesus had twelve disciples, who, after his ascent into the heavens, went out into all the kingdoms of the world, telling of his greatness. Even so one of them visited our coasts, preaching the doctrine of truth; whence they who still serve the righteousness of his preaching are called Christians. And these are they who, above all the nations of the earth, have found the truth: for they acknowledge God the Creator and Maker of all things in the only begotten Son, and in the Holy Ghost, and other God than him they worship none. They have the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ himself engraven on their hearts, and these they observe, looking for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. They neither commit adultery nor fornication; nor do they bear false witness, nor covet other men’s goods: they honour father and mother, and love their neighbours: they give right judgement. They do not unto other that which they would not have done unto themselves. They comfort such as wrong them, and make friends of them: they labour to do good to their enemies: they are meek and gentle. They refrain themselves from all unlawful intercourse and all uncleanness. They despise not the widow, and grieve not the orphan. He that hath distributeth liberally to him that hath not. If they see a stranger, they bring him under their roof, and rejoice over him, as it were their own brother: for they call themselves brethren, not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For Christ his sake they are ready to lay down their lives: they keep his commandments faithfully, living righteous and holy lives, as the Lord

commanded them, giving him thanks every hour, for meat and drink and every blessing. Verily, then, this is the way of truth which leadeth its wayfarers unto the eternal kingdom promised by Christ in the life to come.

“And that thou mayest know, O king, that I speak nought of myself,¹⁰ look thou into the writings of the Christians, and thou shalt find that I speak nothing but the truth. Well, therefore, hath thy son understood it, and rightly hath he been taught to serve the living God, and to be saved for the world to come. Great and marvellous are the things spoken and wrought by the Christians, because they speak not the words of men but the words of God. But all other nations are deceived, and deceive themselves. Walking in darkness they stagger one against another like drunken men. This is the end of my speech spoken unto thee, O king, prompted by the truth that is in my mind. Wherefore let thy foolish wiseacres refrain from babbling idly against the Lord; for it is profitable to you to worship God the Creator, and hearken to his incorruptible sayings, in order that ye may escape judgement and punishment, and be found partakers of deathless life.”

XXVIII

When Nachor had fully delivered this oration, the king changed countenance for very anger, but his orators and temple-keepers stood speechless, having nothing but a few weak and rotten shreds of argument in reply. But the king's son rejoiced in spirit and with glad countenance magnified the Lord, who had made a path, where no path was, for them that trusted in him, who by the mouth of a foeman and enemy was establishing the truth; and the leader of error had proved a defender of the right cause.

But the king, although furiously enraged with Nachor, was nevertheless unable to do him any mischief, because of the proclamation already read before all, wherein he urged him to plead without fear in behalf of the Christians. So he himself made answer in many words, and by dark speeches hinted that Nachor should relax his resistance, and be worsted by the argument of the orators. But Nachor the more mightily prevailed, tearing to pieces all their propositions and conclusions and exposing the fallacy of their error. After the debate had been prolonged till well-nigh eventide, the king dismissed the assembly, making as though he would renew the discussion on the morrow.

Then said Ioasaph to the king his father, "As at the beginning, Sir, thou commandedst that the trial should be just, so too crown the end thereof with justice, by doing one or other of these two things. Either allow my teacher to tarry with me tonight, that we may take counsel together as touching those things which we must say unto our adversaries tomorrow: and do thou in turn take thine advisers unto thee, and duly practise yourselves as ye will. Or else deliver thy counsellors to me this night, and take mine to thyself. But if both sides be with thee, mine advocate in tribulation and fear, but thine in joy and refreshment, me thinketh it is not a fair trial, but a tyrannical misuse of power, and a breaking of the covenants." The king, compelled to yield by the gracefulness of this speech took his wise men and

priests to himself, and delivered Nachor to his son, still having hopes of him and thinking fit to keep his agreement.

The king's son, therefore, departed unto his own palace, like a conqueror in the Olympic games, and with him went Nachor. When alone, the prince called him and said, "Think not that I am ignorant of thy tale, for I wot, of a surety, that thou art not saintly Barlaam, but Nachor the astrologer; and I marvel how it seemed thee good to act this play, and to think that thou couldst so dull my sight at midday, that I should mistake a wolf for a sheep. But well sung is the proverb, 'The heart of a fool will conceive folly.' So this your device and counsel was stale and utterly senseless; but the work that thou hast accomplished is full of wisdom. Wherefore, rejoice, Nachor, and be exceeding glad. I render thee many thanks, that thou hast been today advocate of the truth, and hast not polluted thy lips with foul words and crafty simulation, but hast rather cleansed them from many defilements, and thoroughly proven the error of the gods, as they be wrongly called, and hast established the truth of the Christian faith. I have been zealous to bring thee hither with me for two reasons; that the king might not privily seize and punish thee, because thou spakest not after his heart, and next that I might recompense thee for the favour that thou hast done me today. And what is my recompense for thee? To show thee how to turn from the evil and slippery road which thou hast trodden until now, and to journey along the straight and saving pathway which thou hast avoided, not in ignorance, but by wilful wrongdoing, throwing thyself into depths and precipices of iniquity. Understand then, Nachor, man of understanding as thou art, and be thou zealous to gain Christ only, and the life that is hid with him, and despise this fleeting and corruptible world. Thou shalt not live forever, but, being mortal, shalt depart hence ere long, even as all that have been before thee. And woe betide thee, if, with the heavy load of sin on thy shoulders, thou depart thither where there is righteous judgement and recompense for thy works, and cast it not off, while it is easy to rid thyself thereof!"

Pricked at heart by these words, spake Nachor, "Well said! Sir prince, well said! I do know the true and very God, by whom all things were made, and I wot of the judgement to come, having heard thereof from many texts of the Scriptures. But evil habit and the insolence of the ancient supplanter hath blinded the eyes of my heart, and shed a thick darkness over my reason. But now, at thy word, I will cast away the veil of gloom, and run unto the light of the countenance of the Lord. May be, he will have mercy

on me, and will open a door of repentance to his wicked and rebellious servant, even if it seem impossible to me that my sins, which are heavier than the sand, be forgiven; sins, which, wittingly or unwittingly, I have sinned from childhood upwards to this my hoary age.”

When the king’s son heard these words, immediately he arose, and his heart waxed warm, and he began to try to raise Nachor’s courage which was drooping to despair, and to confirm it in the faith of Christ, saying, “Let no doubt about this, Nachor, find place in thy mind. For it is written, God is able of these very stones to raise up children unto Abraham. What meaneth this (as father Barlaam said) except that men beyond hope, stained with all manner of wickedness, can be saved, and become servants of Christ, who, in the exceeding greatness of his love toward mankind, hath opened the gates of heaven to all that turn, barring the way of salvation to none, and receiving with compassion them that repent? Wherefore to all that have entered the vineyard at the first, third, sixth, ninth or eleventh hour there is apportioned equal pay, as saith the holy Gospel: so that even if, until this present time, thou hast waxen old in thy sins, yet if thou draw nigh with a fervent heart, thou shalt gain the same rewards as they who have laboured from their youth upwards.”

With these and many other words did that saintly youth speak of repentance to that aged sinner Nachor, promising him that Christ was merciful, and pledging him forgiveness, and satisfying him that the good God is alway ready to receive the penitent, and with these words, as it were with ointments, did he mollify that ailing soul and give it perfect health. Nachor at once said unto him, “O prince, more noble in soul even than in outward show, well instructed in these marvellous mysteries, mayst thou continue in thy good confession until the end, and may neither time nor tide ever pluck it out of thine heart! For myself, I will depart straightway in search of my salvation, and will by penance pacify that God whom I have angered: for, except thou will it, I shall see the king’s face no more.” Then was the prince exceeding glad, and joyfully heard his saying. And he embraced and kissed him affectionately; and, when he had prayed earnestly to God, he sent him forth from the palace.

So Nachor stepped forth with a contrite heart, and went bounding into the depths of the desert, like as doth an hart, and came to a den belonging to a monk that had attained to the dignity of the priesthood, and was hiding there for fear of the pressing danger. With a right warm heart knelt Nachor

down before him, and washed his feet with his tears, like the harlot of old, and craved holy Baptism. The priest, full of heavenly grace, was passing glad, and did at once begin to instruct him, as the custom is, and after many days, perfected him with baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And Nachor abode with him, always repentant of his sins, and blessing that God who never willeth that any should perish, but receiveth all that turn again unto him, and lovingly accepteth the penitent.

Now on the morrow when the king heard what had befallen Nachor, he despaired of the hopes that he once had in him: and, seeing those wise and foolish orators of his mightily discomfited, he was at his wits' end. Then he visited with terrible outrage and dishonour, scourging some severely with whips of oxhide, besmearing their eyes with soot, and casting them away from his presence. He himself began to condemn the impotence of the gods falsely so called, although as yet he refused to look fully at the light of Christ, for the dense cloud of darkness, that enveloped him, still bound the eyes of his heart. Howbeit he no longer honoured his temple-keepers, nor would he keep feasts, nor make drink offerings to his idols, but his mind was tossed between two opinions. On the one hand, he poured scorn on the impotence of his gods; on the other, he dreaded the strictness of the profession of the Gospel, and was hardly to be torn from his evil ways, being completely in slavery to the pleasures of the body, and like a captive drawn towards sinful lusts, and being drunken, as saith Esay, but not with wine, and led as it were with the bridle of evil habit.

While the king was thus wrestling with two opinions, his noble and truly royal-hearted son dwelt at peace in his palace, proving to all men by his deeds the nobility, order and steadfastness of his nature. Theatres, horse-races, riding to hounds, and all the vain pleasures of youth, the baits that take foolish souls, were reckoned by him as nothing worth. But he hung wholly on the commands of Christ for whom he yearned, his heart being wounded with love divine. For him he longed, who alone is to be longed for, who is all sweetness and desire and aspiration insatiable.

Now, when he came to think upon his teacher Barlaam, and as in a mirror saw his life, his soul was enchanted with love, and he much occupied himself a-thinking how he might see him; and ever carrying his sayings in his heart, he was like the tree in the Psalms planted by the river side, unceasingly watered, and bringing forth unto the Lord his fruits in due season. Many were the souls that he delivered from the snares of the devil,

and brought safely unto Christ; for many resorted unto him, and profited by his wholesome words. And not a few left the way of error, and ran toward the word of salvation; while others bade a long farewell to the concerns of the world, and came to the wrestling-school of the monastic life. He himself spent his time in prayers and fastings, and would often offer up this prayer, "O Lord, my Lord and King, in whom I have trusted, to whom I have fled and been delivered from my error, render thou due recompense to Barlaam thy servant, because when I was in error he pointed thee to me, who art the way of truth and life. Forbid me not to behold once more that angel in bodily shape, of whom the world is not worthy, but grant me in his company to finish the residue of my life, that, treading in the footsteps of his conversation, I may be well-pleasing to thee my God and Lord."

XXIX

Now about the same time there was in that city a public assembly in honour of the false gods, and the king must needs be present at the feast, and grace it with lavish sacrifices. But the temple-keepers, seeing that he was careless and lukewarm with regard to their worship, feared that he might neglect to be present in their temple, and that they might lose the royal largess, and the rest of their revenues. So they arose, and withdrew to a cavern situate in the depth of the desert, where dwelt a man who busied himself with magical arts, and was a fervent champion of the error of idolatry: Theudas was his name. Him the king honoured exceedingly, and counted him his friend and teacher, because, he said, it was by the guidance of his prophecies that his kingdom ever prospered. So these idol-priests, that were no priests, came to him, and appealed to him for help, and made known to him the evil opinion of their gods which was growing on their king, and all that the king's son had done, and all the eloquent discourse that Nachor had held against them. And they said, "Except thou come thyself to our succour, gone is all hope! and lost is all the reverence of the gods. Thou only art left to be our comfort in this misfortune, and upon thee we fix our hopes."

So forth marched Theudas, in company with his Satanic host; and he armed himself against the truth, invoking many of his evil spirits, who knew how to lend ready aid for evil ends, and whom he always used for his ministers; and with these allies he came to the king.

When his arrival had been announced to the king, and he had entered in, with a palm-staff in his hand and a sheepskin girt about his loins, the king arose from his throne, and met and welcomed him; and, fetching a seat, he made him to sit down beside him. Then spake Theudas unto the king, "O king, live forever under the shelter of the favour of the most puissant gods! I have heard that thou hast foughten a mighty fight with the Galileans, and hast been crowned with right glorious diadems of victory. Wherefore I am

come, that we may celebrate together a feast of thanksgiving, and sacrifice to the immortal gods young men in the bloom of youth and well-favoured damsels, and eke offer them an hecatomb of bullocks and herds of beasts, that we may have them from henceforth for our allies invincible, making plain our path of life before us.”

Hereto the king made answer, “We have not conquered, aged sir, we have not conquered: nay, rather have we been defeated in open fight. They that were for us turned suddenly against us. They found our host a wild, half-drunken, feeble folk, and utterly overthrew it. But now, if there be with thee any power and strength to help our fallen religion and set it up again, declare it.”

Theudas replied in this wise, “Dread not, O king, the oppositions and vain babblings of the Galileans: for of what worth against reasonable and sensible men are the arguments that they use? These methinks shall be more easily overthrown than a leaf shaken with the wind. They shall not endure to face me, far less join argument, or come to propositions and oppositions with me. But, in order that the coming contest and all our wishes may prosper, and that our matters may run smoothly with the stream, adorn thou with thy presence this public festival, and gird on for thy strong sword the favour of the gods, and well befall thee!”

When the mighty in wickedness had thus boasted himself and thought of mischief all the day long (let David bear his part in our chorus), and when, as saith Esay,ⁱⁱ he had given his neighbour a drink of turbid dregs, by the help of the evil spirits his comrades he made the king utterly to forget the thoughts that inclined him to salvation, and caused him again to cleave to his wonted ways. Then the king despatched letters hither and thither, that all men should gather together to this loathsome assembly. Then mightest thou have seen multitudes streaming in, and bringing with them sheep and oxen and divers kinds of beasts.

So when all were assembled, the king arose, with that deceiver Theudas, and proceeded to the temple, bringing one hundred and twenty bullocks and many animals for sacrifice. And they celebrated their accursed feast till the city resounded with the cry of the brute beasts and the very air was polluted with the reek of sacrifice. This done, when the spirits of wickedness had greatly vaunted them over Theudas’ victory, and when the temple-keepers had rendered him thanks, the king went up again unto his palace, and said unto Theudas, “Behold now, as thou badest us, we have spared no pains

over the splendour of this gathering and the lavishness of the sacrifice. Now, therefore, it is time for thee to fulfil thy promises, and to deliver from the error of the Christians my son that hath rebelled against our religion, and to reconcile him to our gracious gods. For, though I have left no device and deed untried, yet have I found no remedy for the mischief, but I perceive that his will is stronger than all. When I have dealt gently and kindly with him, I have found that he payeth me no regard whatsoever. When I have treated him harshly and severely, I have seen him driven the quicker to desperation. To thy wisdom for the future I leave the care of this calamity that hath befallen me. If then I be delivered from this trouble by thy means, and once more behold my son worshipping my gods with me, and enjoying the gratification of this life of pleasure, and this royal estate, I will set up unto thee a golden statue, and make thee to receive divine honours from all men for all time to come.”

Hereupon Theudas, bowing an attentive ear to the evil one, and learning from him the secret of his evil and deadly counsel, became himself the devil’s tongue and mouthpiece, and spake unto the king, “If thou wilt get the better of thy son, and make his opposition vain, I have discovered a plan, which he shall in no wise be able to resist, but his hard and obdurate mind shall melt quicker than wax before the hottest fire.” The king, seeing this foolish fellow swelling with empty pride, immediately grew merry and joyful, hoping that the unbridled and boastful tongue would get the mastery of that divinely instructed and philosophic soul. “And what is the plan?” he asked. Then began Theudas to weave his web. He made his villainy sharp as any razor and did cunningly prepare his drugs. Now behold this malicious device and suggestion of the evil one. “Remove, O king,” said he, “all thy son’s waiting men and servants far from him, and order that comely damsels, of exceeding beauty, and bedizened to be the more winsome, be continually with him and minister to him, and be his companions day and night. For myself, I will send him one of the spirits told off for such duties, and I will thus kindle all the more fiercely the coals of sensual desire. After that he hath once only had intercourse with but one of these women, if all go not as thou wilt, then disdain me forever, as unprofitable, and worthy not of honour but of dire punishment. For there is nothing like the sight of women to allure and enchant the minds of men. Listen to a story that beareth witness to my word.”

XXX

“A certain king was grieved and exceeding sad at heart, because that he had no male issue, deeming this no small misfortune. While he was in this condition, there was born to him a son, and the king’s soul was filled with joy thereat. Then they that were learned amongst his physicians told him that, if for the first twelve years the boy saw the sun or fire, he should entirely lose his sight, for this was proved by the condition of his eyes. Hearing this, the king, they say, caused a little house, full of dark chambers, to be hewn out of the rock, and therein enclosed his child together with the men that nursed him, and, until the twelve years were past, never suffered him to see the least ray of light. After the fulfilment of the twelve years, the king brought forth from his little house his son that had never seen a single object, and ordered his waiting men to show the boy everything after his kind; men in one place, women in another; elsewhere gold and silver; in another place, pearls and precious stones, fine and ornamental vestments, splendid chariots with horses from the royal stables, with golden bridles and purple caparisons, mounted by armed soldiers; also droves of oxen and flocks of sheep. In brief, row after row, they showed the boy everything. Now, as he asked what each of these was called, the king’s esquires and guards made known unto him each by name: but, when he desired to learn what women were called, the king’s spearman, they say, wittily replied that they were called, ‘Devils that deceive men.’ But the boy’s heart was smitten with the love of these above all the rest. So, when they had gone round everywhere and brought him again unto the king, the king asked, which of all these sights had pleased him most. ‘What,’ answered the boy, ‘but the Devils that deceive men? Nothing that I have seen today hath fired my heart with such love as these.’ The king was astonished at the saying of the boy, to think how masterful a thing the love of women is. Therefore think not to subdue thy son in any other way than this.”

The king heard this tale gladly; and there were brought before him some chosen damsels, young and exceeding beautiful. These he bedizened with dazzling ornaments and trained in all winsome ways: and then he turned out of the palace all his son's squires and serving men, and set these women in their stead. These flocked around the prince, embraced him, and provoked him to filthy wantonness, by their walk and talk inviting him to dalliance. Besides these, he had no man at whom to look, or with whom to converse or break his fast, for these damsels were his all. Thus did the king. But Theudas went home to his evil den, and, dipping into his books that had virtue to work such magic, he called up one of his wicked spirits and sent him forth, for to battle with the soldier of the army of Christ. But the wretch little knew what laughter he should create against himself, and to what shame he should be put, with the whole devilish troop under him. So the evil spirit, taking to him other spirits more wicked than himself, entered the bedchamber of this noble youth, and attacked him by kindling right furiously the furnace of his flesh. The evil one plied the bellows from within, while the damsels, fair of face, but uncomely of soul, supplied the evil fuel from without.

But Ioasaph's pure soul was disturbed to feel the touch of evil, and to see the warlike host of strange thoughts that was charging down upon him. And he sought to find deliverance from this great mischief, and to present himself pure unto Christ, and not defile in the mire of sinful lust that holy apparel, wherein the grace of holy Baptism had clothed him. Immediately he set love against love, the divine against the lascivious; and he called to remembrance the beauty and unspeakable glory of Christ, the immortal bridegroom of virgin souls, and of that bride chamber and marriage, from whence they that have stained their wedding-garment are piteously cast out, bound hand and foot, into outer darkness. When he had thought thereon, and shed bitter tears, he smote upon his breast, driving out evil thoughts, as good-for-nothing drones from the hive. When he rose, and spread out his hands unto heaven, with fervent tears and groans calling upon God to help him, and he said, "Lord Almighty, who alone art powerful and merciful, the hope of the hopeless, and the help of the helpless, remember me thine unprofitable servant at this hour, and look upon me with a gracious countenance, and deliver my soul from the sword of the devil, and my darling from the paw of the dog: suffer me not to fall into the hands of mine enemies, and let not them that hate me triumph over me. Leave me not to be

destroyed in iniquities, and to dishonour my body which I swore to present unto thee chaste. For for thee I yearn; thee I worship, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, now and forevermore, and world without end.” When he had added the Amen, he felt heavenly comfort stealing over him from above, and the evil thoughts withdrew, and he continued in prayer until early morn. Being ware of the devices of the crafty foe, he began more and more to afflict his body by abstinence from meat and drink, and by other severities, standing in prayer all the night long, and reminding himself of his covenants made with God, and picturing in his mind the glory of the righteous yonder, and recounting to himself the full terrors of the Gehenna wherewith the wicked are threatened; all this, that the enemy might not find his soul lying fallow and untilled, and thus easily sow therein the seeds of evil thoughts, and befoul the cleanness of his mind. So, when the enemy was in great straits on every side, and altogether in despair of taking this noble youth, like a cunning knave, he proceeded to another more subtle device, he that is forever wicked, and never stinteth to contrive mischief and hurt. For he made furious endeavour to carry out the orders that Theudas had given him, and once more prepared his drugs, and on this wise.

The devil entered into the heart of one of the young damsels. Of all she was the most seemly, a king’s daughter, carried away captive from her own country, given to king Abenner as a great prize, and sent by him, being of ripe beauty, to his own son, for to cause him to slip or to trip. Of her the deceiver took possession, and whispered in her ear suggestions that plainly showed the wisdom and understanding of her mind; for the evil one easily pursueth all devices that make for wickedness. Then the evil spirit attacked the king’s son on the right hand, and gave him a potion to make him love the maiden, by reason—so he pretended—of her prudence and discretion and of her nobility and royal blood that yet had not saved her from banishment and loss of glory. Moreover the devil secretly sowed in Ioasaph’s heart thoughts that he might recover her from idolatry, and make her a Christian.

But these were all stratagems of the wily serpent. For the king’s son, being in this frame of mind, could see in himself no unclean thought or passionate affection for the damsel, but only sympathy and pity for her misfortune, and the ruin of her soul, and knew not that this matter was a device of the devil; for verily he is darkness, and feigneth to be light. So he

began to commune with the damsel, and talk with her over the oracles of the knowledge of God, and said, “Lady, be thou acquainted with the ever-living God, and perish not in the error of these idols; but know thy Lord, and the Maker of all this world, and thou shalt be happy, the bride of the immortal bridegroom.” While he exhorted her with many suchlike words, immediately the evil spirit whispered to the girl that she should spread under his feet the nets of deceit to drag his blessed soul into the pit of lust, as he once did to our first parent by means of Eve, thus miserably banishing him, alas! from Paradise and God, and making him to become subject to death in lieu of bliss and everlasting life.

When the damsel heard Ioasaph’s words fulfilled with all wisdom, being without understanding, she understood them not, but made answer thus, becoming the tongue and mouthpiece of the evil one: “If, sir, thou takest thought for my salvation, and desirest to bring me to thy God, and to save my poor soul, do thou also thyself grant me one request, and straightway I will bid goodbye to my fathers’ gods, and join thy God, serving him until my last breath; and thou shalt receive recompense for my salvation, and for my turning to God-ward.”

“Lady, and what is thy request?” said he. But she, setting her whole self, figure, look and voice in a fashion to charm him, answered, “Be thou joined with me in the bonds of wedlock, and I will joyfully follow out thy behests.”

“In vain, O Lady,” said he, “hast thou made this hard request. For though I earnestly care for thy salvation, and long to heave thee from the depth of perdition, yet to pollute my body through unclean union is grievous for me, and utterly impossible.”

She, seeking to make the way straight and smooth for him, cried, “Why dost thou, who are so wise, talk thus? Wherefore speakest thou of it as of defilement and shameful intercourse? I am not unacquainted with the Christian books: nay, I have met with many volumes in mine own country, and have heard the discourses of many Christians. What, is it not written in one of your books, ‘Marriage is honourable, and the bed undefiled’? and, ‘It is better to marry than to burn’? and again, ‘What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder’? Do not your Scriptures teach that all the righteous men of old, patriarchs and prophets, were wedded? Is it not written that the mighty Peter, whom ye call Prince of the Apostles, was a married man?

Who, then, hath persuaded thee to call this defilement? Methink, sir, thou strayest utterly away from the truth of your doctrines.”

“Yea, Lady,” said he, “all this is even as thou sayest. It is permitted to all who will to live in wedlock, but not to them that have once made promise to Christ to be virgins. For myself, ever since I was cleansed in the laver of Holy Baptism from the sins of my youth and ignorance, I have resolved to present myself pure to Christ, and how shall I dare break my covenants with God?”

Again quoth the damsel, “Let this also be thy pleasure, as thou wilt. But fulfil me one other small and trivial desire of mine, if thou art in very truth minded for to save my soul. Keep company with me this one night only, and grant me to revel in thy beauty, and do thou in turn take thy fill of my comeliness. And I give thee my word, that, with daybreak, I will become a Christian, and forsake all the worship of my gods. Not only shalt thou be pardoned for this dealing, but thou shalt receive recompense from thy God because of my salvation, for thy Scripture saith, ‘There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.’ If, therefore, there is joy in heaven over the conversion of a sinner, shall not great recompense be due to the causer of that conversion? Yea, so it is: and dispute it not. Did not even the Apostles, the leaders of your religion, do many a thing by dispensation, at times transgressing a commandment on account of a greater one? Is not Paul said to have circumcised Timothy on account of a greater dispensation? And yet circumcision hath been reckoned by Christians as unlawful, but yet he did not decline so to do. And many other such things shalt thou find in thy Scriptures. If then in very sooth, as thou sayest, thou seekest to save my soul, fulfil me this my small desire. And although I seek to be joined with thee in the full estate of matrimony, yet, sith this is contrary to thy mind, I will never constrain thee again, but will do everything that liketh thee. For the rest, do not thou utterly abhor me; but hearken to me for the nonce, and thou shalt deliver me from superstitious error, and thou shalt do whatever seemeth thee good hereafter all the days of thy life.”

Thus spake she; for indeed she had, for her adviser, one to whom she lent a privy ear, and the pirate was well versed in Scripture, being verily the creator and teacher of iniquity. Thus then she spake with fawning words entangling him, right and left, around with her toils and meshes, and she began to shake the citadel of his soul, and to slacken his tension of purpose, and to soften the temper of his mind. Then the sower of these evil tares, and

enemy of the righteous, when he saw the young man's heart wavering, was full of joy, and straightway called to the evil spirits that were with him, crying, "Look you how yond damsel hasteth to bring to pass all that we were unable to accomplish! Hither! fall we now furiously upon him: for we shall find none other season so favourable to perform the will of him that sent us." Thus spake this crafty spirit to his hounds: and straightway they leapt on that soldier of Christ, disquieting all the powers of his soul, inspiring him with vehement love for the damsel, and kindling within him the fiercest fire of lust.

When Ioasaph saw that he was greatly inflamed, and was being led captive into sin, and perceived that his thoughts about the salvation of the damsel and her conversion to God had been set like bait on hook to hide the deed which she purposed, and were troubling him with the suggestion of the enemy, that, for the salvation of a soul, it was not sin for once to lie with a woman, then in the agony of his soul he drew a deep and lamentable groan, and nerved himself to pray, and, with streams of tears running down his cheeks, he cried aloud to him that is able to save them that trust in him, saying, "On thee, O Lord, have I set my trust: let me not be confounded forever; neither let mine enemies triumph over me, that hold by thy right hand. But stand thou by me at this hour, and according to thy will make straight my path, that thy glorious and dreadful name may be glorified in me thy servant, because thou art blessed forever. Amen."

Now when he had prayed in tears for many hours, and often bent the knee, he sunk down upon the pavement. After he had slumbered awhile, he saw himself carried off by certain dread men, and passing through places which he had never heretofore beheld. He stood in a mighty plain, all abloom with fresh and fragrant flowers, where he descried all manner of plants of divers colours, charged with strange and marvellous fruits, pleasant to the eye and inviting to the touch. The leaves of the trees rustled clearly in a gentle breeze, and, as they shook, sent forth a gracious perfume that cloyed not the sense. Thrones were set there, fashioned of the purest gold and costly stones, throwing out never so bright a lustre, and radiant settles among wondrous couches too beautiful to be described. And beside them there were running waters exceeding clear, and delightful to the eye. When these dread men had led him through this great and wondrous plain, they brought him to a city that glistened with light unspeakable, whose walls were of dazzling gold, with high uprear'd parapets, built of gems such as

man hath never seen. Ah! who could describe the beauty and brightness of that city? Light, ever shooting from above, filled all her streets with bright rays; and winged squadrons, each of them itself a light, dwelt in this city, making such melody as mortal ear ne'er heard. And Ioasaph heard a voice crying, "This is the rest of the righteous: this the gladness of them that have pleased the Lord." When these dread men had carried him out from thence, they spake of taking him back to earth. But he, that had lost his heart to that scene of joyance and heartsease, exclaimed, "Reave me not, reave me not, I pray you, of this unspeakable joy, but grant me also to dwell in one corner of this mighty city." But they said, "It is impossible for thee to be there now; but, with much toil and sweat, thou shalt come hither, if thou constrain thyself."

Thus spake they; and again they crossed that mighty plain, and bare him to regions of darkness and utter woe, where sorrow matched the brightness which he had seen above. There was darkness without a ray of light, and utter gloom, and the whole place was full of tribulation and trouble. There blazed a glowing furnace of fire, and there crept the worm of torment. Revengeful powers were set over the furnace, and there were some that were burning piteously in the fire, and a voice was heard, saying, "This is the place of sinners; this the punishment for them that have defiled themselves by foul practices." Hereupon Ioasaph was carried thence by his guides; and, when he came to himself, immediately he trembled from head to foot, and, like a river, his eyes dropped tears, and all the comeliness of that wanton damsel and her fellows was grown more loathsome to him than filth and rottenness. And as he mused in his heart on the memory of the visions, in longing for the good and in terror of the evil, he lay on his bed utterly unable to arise.

Then was the king informed of his son's sickness; and he came and asked what ailed him. And Ioasaph told him his vision, and said, "Wherefore hast thou laid a net for my feet, and bowed down my soul? If the Lord had not helped me, my soul had well nigh dwelt in hell. But how loving is God unto Israel, even unto such as are of a true heart! He hath delivered me that am lowly from the midst of the dogs. For I was sore troubled and I fell on sleep: but God my Saviour from on high hath visited me, and showed me what joy they lose that provoke him and to what punishments they subject themselves. And now, O my father, since thou hast stopped thine ears not to hear the voice that will charm thee to good, at least forbid me not to walk

the straight road. For this I desire, this I long for, to forsake all, and reach that place, where Barlaam the servant of Christ hath his dwelling, and with him to finish what remaineth of my life. But if thou keep me back by force, thou shalt quickly see me die of grief and despair, and thou shalt be no more called father, nor have me to thy son.”

XXXI

Again therefore the king was seized with despondency, and again he was like to abjure his whole way of life; and with strange thoughts he went again unto his own palace. But the evil spirits, that had been sent out by Theudas for to attack the young saint, returned to him, and, lovers of leasing though they were, confessed their shameful defeat, for they bare visible tokens of their defeat, upon their evil countenance. Said Theudas, “And be ye so weak and puny that ye cannot get the better of one young stripling?” Then did the evil spirits, constrained, to their sorrow, by the might of God, bring to light the truth, saying, “We cannot abide even the sight of the might of Christ, and the symbol of his Passion, which they call the Cross. For, when that sign is made, immediately all we, the princes of the air, and the rulers of the darkness of the world, are utterly routed and discomfited, even before the sign is completed. When we first fell upon this youth, we vexed him sore; but when he called on Christ for help, and armed him with the sign of the Cross, he routed us in angry wise, and stablished himself in safety. So incontinent we found a weapon, wherewith our chief did once confront the first-made man and prevailed against him. And verily we should have made this young man’s hope vain; but again Christ was called on for help, and he consumed us in the fire of his wrath from above, and put us to flight. We have determined to approach the prince no more.” Thus, then, did the evil spirits plainly make known unto Theudas all that was come to pass.

But the king, perplexed on every side, again summoned Theudas, and said, “Most wisest of men, all that seemed good to thee have we fulfilled, but have found no help therein. But now, if thou hast any device left, we will make trial thereof. Peradventure I shall find some escape from this evil.”

Then did Theudas ask for a meeting with his son; and on the morrow the king took him and went forth to visit the prince. The king sat down and provoked debate, upbraiding and chiding him for his disobedience and stubbornness of mind. When Ioasaph again maintained his ease, and loudly declared that he valued nothing so much as the love of Christ, Theudas came forward and said, “Wherefore, Ioasaph, dost thou despise our immortal gods, that thou hast departed from their worship, and, thus incensing thy father the king, art become hateful to all the people? Dost thou not owe thy life to the gods? And did they not present thee to the king in answer to his prayer, thus redeeming him from the bondage of childlessness?” While this Theudas, waxen old in wickedness, was putting forth these many vain arguments and useless propositions, and weaving words about the preaching of the Gospel, desiring to turn it into mockery, and magnify idolatry, Ioasaph, the son of the heavenly king, and citizen of that city which the Lord hath builded and not man, waited a while and then said unto him,

“Give ear, thou abyss of error, blacker than the darkness that may be felt, thou seed of Babylon, child of the building of the tower of Chalané, whereby the world was confounded, foolish and pitiable dotard, whose sins outweigh the iniquity of the five cities that were destroyed by fire and brimstone. Why wouldest thou mock at the preaching of salvation, whereby darkness hath been made light, the wanderers have found the way, they that were lost in dire captivity have been recalled. Tell me whether is better? To worship God Almighty, with the only-begotten Son and the Holy Ghost, God increate and immortal, the beginning and wellspring of good, whose power is beyond compare, and his glory incomprehensible, before whom stand thousand thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand of Angels and heavenly hosts, and heaven and earth are full of his glory, by whom all things were brought into being out of nothing, by whom everything is upheld and sustained and ordered by his providence; or to serve deadly devils and lifeless idols, whose glory and boast is in adultery and the corrupting of boys, and other works of iniquity that have been recorded concerning your gods in the books of your superstition? Have ye no modesty, ye miserable men, fuel for unquenchable fire, true copy of the Chaldean race, have ye no shame to worship dead images, the works of men’s hands? Ye have carved stone and graven wood and called it God. Next ye take the best bullock out of your folds, or (may be) some other of

your fairest beasts, and in your folly make sacrifice to your dead divinity. Your sacrifice is of more value than your idol; for the image was fashioned by man, but the beast was created by God. How much wiser is the unreasonable beast than thou the reasonable man? For it knoweth the hand that feedeth it, but thou knowest not that God by whom thou wast created out of nothing, by whom thou livest, and art preserved; and thou callest God that which thou sawest, but now, smitten by steel, and burnt and moulded in the fire, and beaten with hammers, which thou hast covered around with silver and gold, and raised from the ground, and set on high. Then, falling upon the earth, thou liest baser than the base stone, worshipping not God but thine own dead and lifeless handiwork. Or rather, the idol hath no right to be called even dead, for how can that have died which never lived? Thou shouldest invent some new name worthy of such madness. Thy stone god is broken asunder; thy potsherd god shattered; thy brazen god rusteth; thy gold or silver god is melted down. Aye, and thy gods are sold, some for a paltry, others for a great price. Not their divinity but their material giveth them value. But who buyeth God? Who offereth God for sale? And how is that god that cannot move called God? Seest thou not that the god that standeth cannot sit, and the god that sitteth cannot stand?

“Be ashamed, thou fool, and lay thine hand upon thy mouth, thou victim of folly, that commendest such things as these. Estranged from the truth, thou hast been led astray by false images, fashioning statues and attaching to the works of thine own hands the name of God. O wretched man, return to thy senses, and learn that thou art older than the god made by thee. This is downright madness. Being a man, thou hast persuaded thyself that thou canst make God. How can this be? Thou makest not God, but the likeness of a man, or of some beast, sans tongue, sans throat, sans brains, sans inwards, so that it is the similitude neither of a man, nor of a beast, but only a thing of no use and sheer vanity. Why therefore flatterest thou things that cannot feel? Why sittest thou at the feet of things that cannot move and help thee? But for the skill of the mason, or timber-wright, or hammer-smith, thou hadst not had a god. Had there been no warders nigh at hand, thou hadst lost thy god. He, to whom many a populous city of fools prayeth as God to guard it, the same hath suite of guards at hand to save him from being stolen. And if he be of silver or gold, he is carefully guarded; but if of stone or clay or any other less costly ware, he guardeth himself, for with you, no doubt, a god of clay is stronger than one of gold.

“Do we not, then, well to laugh you to scorn, or rather to weep over you, as men blind and without understanding? Your deeds are deeds of madness and not of piety. Your man of war maketh to himself an image after the similitude of a warrior, and calleth it Ares. And the lecher, making a symbol of his own soul, deifieth his vice and calleth it Aphrodite. Another, in honour of his own love of wine, fashioneth an idol which he calleth Dionysus. Likewise lovers of all other evil things set up idols of their own lusts; for they name their lusts their gods. And therefore, before their altars, there are lascivious dances, and strains of lewd songs and mad revelries. Who could recount in order their abominable doings? Who could endure to defile his lips by the repeating of their filthy communications? But these are manifest to all, even if we hold our peace. These be thine objects of worship, O Theudas, who art more senseless than thine idols. Before these thou biddest me fall down and worship. This verily is the counsel of thine iniquity and senseless mind. But thou thyself shalt be like unto them, and all such as put their trust in them.

“As for me, I will serve my God, and to him will I wholly sacrifice myself, to God, the Creator and protector of all things through our Lord Jesus Christ, my hope, by whom we have access unto the Father of lights, in the Holy Ghost: by whom we have been redeemed from bitter slavery by his blood. For if he had not humbled himself so far as to take the form of a servant, we had not received the adoption of sons. But he humbled himself for our sake, not considering the Godhead a thing to be grasped, but he remained that which he was, and took on himself that which he was not, and conversed with men, and mounted the Cross in his flesh, and was laid in the sepulchre by the space of three days; he descended into hell, and brought out from thence them whom the fierce prince of this world held prisoners, sold into bondage by sin. What harm then befell him thereby that thou thinkest to make mock of him? Seest thou not yonder sun, into how many a barren and filthy place he darteth his rays? Upon how many a stinking corpse doth he cast his eye? Hath he therefore any stain of reproach? Doth he not dry and shrivel up filth and rottenness, and give light to dark places, himself the while unharmed and incapable of receiving any defilement? And what of fire? Doth it not take iron, which is black and cold in itself, and work it into white heat and harden it? Doth it receive any of the properties of the iron? When the iron is smitten and beaten with hammers is the fire any the worse, or doth it in any way suffer harm?

“If, then, these created and corruptible things take no hurt from contact with things commoner than themselves, with what reason dost thou, O foolish and stony-hearted man, presume to mock at me for saying that the Son, the Word of God, never departing from the Father’s glory, but remaining the same God, for the salvation of men hath taken upon him the flesh of man, to the end that he may make men partakers of his divine and intelligent nature and may lead our substance out of the nether parts of hell, and honour it with heavenly glory; to the end that by taking of our flesh he may ensnare and defeat the ruler of the darkness of this world, and free our race from his tyranny. Wherefore, I tell thee, without suffering he met the suffering of the Cross, presenting therein his two natures. For, as man, he was crucified; but, as God, he darkened the sun, shook the earth, and raised from their graves many bodies that had fallen asleep. Again, as man, he died; but, as God, after that he had harried hell, he rose again. Wherefore also the prophet cried, Hell is in bitterness at having met thee below: for it was put to bitter derision, supposing that it had received a mere man, but finding God, and being made suddenly empty and led captive. Therefore, as God, he rose again, and ascended into heaven, from whence he was never parted. And our nature, so worthless and senseless beyond everything, so graceless and dishonoured, hath he made higher than all things, and established it upon a throne of honour, with immortal honour shining round. What harm therefore came to God, the Word, that thou blasphemest without a blush? Go to! Better were it to make this confession, and to worship such a God, who is good and a lover of mankind, who commandeth righteousness, enjoineth continency, ordaineth chastity, teacheth mercy, giveth faith, preacheth peace; who is called and is himself the very truth, the very love, the very goodness. Him were it not better to worship than thy gods of many evil passions, of shameful names and shameful lives? Woe unto you that are more stony-hearted than the stones, and more senseless than the senseless, sons of perdition, inheritors of darkness! But blessed am I, and all Christian folk, having a good God and a lover of mankind! They that serve him, though, for a season in this life they endure evil, yet shall they reap the immortal harvest of recompense in the kingdom of unending and divine felicity.”

XXXII

Theudas said unto him, “Behold, it is evident that our religion was instituted by many mighty wise men, and interpreters, marvellous in virtue and learning; and all the kings and rulers of the earth have received it as good and sure in every point. But that of the Galileans was preached by some country peasants, poor and common men, a mere handful, not exceeding twelve in number. How then should one prefer the preaching of these few obscure countrymen to the ordinance of the many that are mighty and brilliantly wise? What is the proof that your teachers be right and the others wrong?”

Again the king’s son made answer, “Belike, Theudas, thou art the ass of the proverb, that heard but heeded not the harp; or rather the adder that stoppeth her ears, that she may not hear the voice of the charmers. Well, therefore, spake the prophet concerning thee, If the Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots, then mayest thou also do good, that hast been taught to do evil. Thou fool and blind, why doth not the force of truth bring thee to thy senses? The very fact that your foul idols are commended by many men of marvellous wisdom, and established by kings, while the Gospel is preached by a few men of no mark, showeth the might of our religion and the weakness and deadliness of your wicked doctrines. Because your side, despite its having wise advocates and mighty champions, is dying down, and waxing weak, whilst our religion, though possessed of no human help, shineth from afar brighter than the sun, and hath won the fullness of the world. If it had been set up by orators and philosophers, and had had kings for its succour, thou that art evil wouldst have found occasion to declare that it was wholly of human power. But now, seeing, as thou dost, that the holy Gospel, though composed but by common fishermen, and persecuted by every tyrant, hath after this won the whole world—for its sound hath gone out into all lands, and its words into the ends of the

world—what canst thou say but that it is a divine and unconquerable power establishing its own cause for the salvation of mankind? But what proof seekest thou, O fool, that thy prophets are liars and ours true, better than the truths I have told thee? Except thy cause had been vain talk and falsehood, it could not, possessing such human support as it did, have suffered loss and decline. For he saith, ‘I have seen the ungodly in great power, and exalted like the cedars of Libanus: and I went by and lo, he was gone: and I sought him but his place could nowhere be found.’

“Concerning you, the defenders of idolatry, were these words spoken by the prophet. For a very, very little while and your place shall not be found: but, like as the smoke vanisheth, and like as wax melteth in face of the fire, so shall ye fail. But, as touching the divine wisdom of the Gospel, thus saith the Lord, ‘Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.’ And again the Psalmist saith, ‘Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou endurest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed, but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail!’ And those divine preachers of the coming of Christ, those wise fishers of the world, whose nets drew all men from the depths of deceit, whom thou, in thy vileness and bondage to sin, dost vilify, did by signs and wonders and manifold powers shine as the sun in the world, giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, motion to the lame, and life to the dead. Their shadows alone healed all the ailments of men. The devils, whom ye dread as gods, they not only cast forth from men’s bodies, but even drave out of the world itself by the sign of the cross, whereby they destroyed all sorcery, and rendered witchcraft powerless. And these men, by curing every disease of man by the power of Christ, and renewing all creation, are rightly admired as preachers of truth by all men of sound mind. But what hast thou thyself to say of thy wise men and orators, whose wisdom God hath made foolish, the advocates of the devil? What worthy memorial have they bequeathed to the world? Tell me. And what canst thou tell of them but unreason and shamefulness, and vain craft that with glosing words concealeth the mire of their unsavoury worship?

“Moreover such of your poets as have been able to soar a little above this great madness have said, with more truth, that they, which are called gods, were men; and because certain of them had been rulers of regions and cities, and others had done something of no great account in their lifetime,

men were so deceived as to call them gods. It standeth on record that the man Seruch¹² was the first to bring in the use of images. For it is said that in the old times he honoured those who had achieved some memorable deed of courage, friendship, or any other such virtue with statues and pillars. But after generations forgot the intention of their ancestors: and, whereas it was only for remembrance sake that they had set up statues and pillars to the doers of noble deeds, now they were, little by little, led astray through the working of the prince of evil, the devil, and treated as immortal gods men of like passions and corruptible as themselves and further devised sacrifices and drink-offerings for them—the devils, thou mayest know, taking up their abode in these images and diverting to themselves these honours and sacrifices. Accordingly these devils persuade men, who refuse to have God in their knowledge, to consider them as gods for two reasons: first, that they may be glorified by this title (for they are puffed up with arrogance, and delight to be honoured as gods) next, that they may drag their poor dupes into the unquenchable fire prepared for themselves. Hence they teach men all iniquity and filthiness, seeing that they have once subjected themselves to their deceit. So when men had arrived at this pinnacle of evil, they, being darkened, set up every man an idol of his own vice and his own lust, and call it a god. They were abominable in their error, more abominable in the absurdity of the objects that they chose to worship, until the Lord came, and of his tender mercy redeemed us that trust in him from this wicked and deadly error, and taught men the true knowledge of God. For there is no salvation except in him, and there is none other God, neither in heaven, nor in earth, except him only, the Maker of all, who moveth all things by the word of his power: for he saith, ‘By the word of the Lord were the heavens made steadfast, and all the power of them by the breath of his mouth,’ and, ‘All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made.’”

When Theudas had heard these sayings, and seen that the word was full of divine wisdom, like one thunderstruck, he was smitten dumb. Now late in time, and with difficulty, came he to understand his own misery, for the word of salvation had touched the darkened vision of his heart, and there fell upon him deep remorse for his past sins. He renounced the error of his idols, and ran towards the light of godliness, and from henceforth departed from his miserable life, and made himself as bitter an enemy of vile affections and sorceries as he before had pledged himself their devoted

friend, For at this season he stood up in the midst of the assembly,¹³ and cried with a loud voice, saying, “Verily, O king, the Spirit of God dwelleth in thy son. Verily, we are defeated, and have no further apology, and have no strength to face the words that he hath uttered. Mighty therefore, in sooth, is the God of the Christians: mighty is their faith: mighty are their mysteries.”

Then he turned him round toward the king’s son and said, “Tell me now, thou man, whose soul is enlightened, will Christ accept me, if I forsake my evil deeds and turn to him?” “Yea,” said that preacher of truth; “Yea, he receiveth thee and all that turn to him. And he not only receiveth thee, but he goeth out to meet thee returning out of the way of iniquity, as though it were a son returning from a far country. And he falleth on his neck and kisseth him, and he strippeth him of the shameful robe of sin, and putteth on him a cloak of brightest glory, making mystic gladness for the powers on high, keeping feast for the return of the lost sheep. The Lord himself saith, ‘There is exceeding great joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth’: and again, ‘I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.’ And he saith also by the Prophet, ‘As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner, and the ungodly, but that he should turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil way. And why will ye die, O house of Israel?’ For the wickedness of the wicked shall not hurt him in the day that he turneth from his wickedness, if he do righteousness and walk in the statutes of life, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of his sins which he hath committed shall be remembered against him. Because he hath done the decree of righteousness, he shall live thereby. And again he crieth by the mouth of another prophet, ‘Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil: learn to do well. Come now, and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow; though they be red like crimson, I will make them white as wool.’ Such therefore being the promises made by God to them that turn to him, tarry not, O thou man, nor make delay: but draw nigh to Christ, our loving God, and be enlightened, and thy face shall not be ashamed. For as soon as thou goest down into the laver of Holy Baptism, all the defilement of the old man, and all the burden of thy many sins, is buried in the water, and passeth into nothingness, and thou comest up from thence a new man, pure from all pollution, with no spot or wrinkle of sin upon thee; and thenceforward it is in thy power ever to keep for

thyself the purity that thou gainest hereby through the tender mercy of our God.”

When Theudas had been thus instructed, he went out immediately and gat him to his evil den, and took his magical books, and, because they were the beginnings of all evil, and the storehouses of devilish mysteries, burnt them with fire. And he betook himself to the cave of that same holy man, to whom Nachor also had resorted, and told him that which had befallen him, casting dust upon his head, and groaning deeply, and watering himself with his tears, and telling the aged man the full tale of his loathly deeds. He, well skilled in the saving of a soul and the snatching it from the jaw of the wily serpent, charmed away his sorrow with words of salvation, and pledged him forgiveness and promised him a merciful Judge. Then, after he had instructed and charged him to fast many days, he cleansed him in Holy Baptism. And all the days of his life Theudas heartily repented him of his misdeeds, with tears and sighs seeking the favour of God.

XXXIII

As for the king, when things fortun'd thus, he was completely bewildered, and plainly showed his sore vexation and tumult of soul. So again he called all his senators together, and considered what means were still his to deal with his son. Many men put forward many counsels, but that Araches, of whom we have spoken, the most famous in his office, and first of his councillors, spake unto the king, saying, "What was there to be done with thy son, O king, that we have not done, to induce him to follow our doctrines and serve our gods? But, as I perceive, we aim at the impossible. By nature, or, it may be, by chance, he is contentious and implacable. Now, if it be thy purpose to deliver him to torture and punishment, thou shalt do contrary to nature, and be no more called a father; and thou shalt lose thy son, willing, as he is, to lay down his life for Christ his sake. This, then, alone remaineth: to divide thy kingdom with him, and entrust him with the dominion of that part which falleth to his lot; and if the course of events, and the care of the business of life, draw him to embrace our aim and way, then the thing shall be according to our purpose; for habits, firmly established in the soul, are difficult to obliterate, and yield quicker to persuasion than to violence. But if he shall continue in the Christian religion, yet shall it be some solace to thee in thy distress, that thou hast not lost thy son." Thus spake Araches, and all bare witness that they welcomed his proposal. Therefore also the king agreed that this matter should thus be settled.

So at daybreak he called his son, and said unto him, "This is now my latest word with thee, my son. Unless thou be obedient thereto, and in this way heal my heart, know thou well, that I shall no longer spare thee." When his son enquired the meaning of his word, he said, "Since, after all my labours, I find thee in all points unyielding to the persuasion of my words, come now; I will divide with thee my kingdom, and make thee king over

the half-part thereof; and thou shalt be free, from now, to go whatsoever way thou wilt without fear.” He, though his saintly soul perceived that the king was casting yet another snare to trip his purpose, resolved to obey, in order that he might escape his hands, and take the journey that he desired. So he answered and said, “I have indeed been longing to go in quest of that man of God that pointed out to me the way of salvation, and, bidding farewell to everything, to pass the rest of my life in his company. But, father, since thou sufferest me not to fulfil my heart’s desire, I will obey thee herein: for where there is no clear danger of perdition and estrangement from God, it is right to obey one’s father.”

The king was filled with exceeding great joy, and divided all the country under his sovranity into two parts, and appointed his son king, and adorned him with the diadem, and arrayed him in all the splendour of kingship, and sent him forth with a magnificent bodyguard into the kingdom set apart for him. And he bade his rulers and governors and satraps, everyone that would, to depart together with his son the king. And he set apart a mighty and populous city for his kingdom, and gave him everything that befitted a king. Thus then did Ioasaph receive the power of kingship; and when he had reached that city, where royal state had been prepared for him, on every tower of his city he set up the sign of his Lord’s passion, the venerable Cross of Christ. And in person he besieged the idolatrous temples and altars, and razed them to the ground, and uncovered their foundations, leaving no trace of their ungodliness.

And in the middle of the city he upreared for Christ, his Lord, a temple mighty and passing fair, and he bade the people there often to resort thither, and offer their worship to God by the veneration of the Cross, himself standing in the midst in the presence of all, and earnestly giving himself unto prayer. And as many as were under his hand he admonished and exhorted, and did everything to tear them away from superstitious error, and to unite them to Christ; and he pointed out the deceits of idolatry, and proclaimed the preaching of the Gospel, and recounted the things concerning the condescension of God, the Word, and preached the marvels of his coming, and made known his sufferings on the Cross whereby we were saved, and the power of his Resurrection, and his Ascension into heaven. Moreover he declared the terrible day of his dreadful second coming, and the bliss laid up for the righteous, and the punishments awaiting sinners. All these truths he expounded with kindly mien and gentle

words. For he was not minded to be revered and feared for the grandeur of his power and kingly magnificence, but rather for his humility and meekness. Hereby also he more easily drew all men unto himself, being verily marvellous in his acts, and equitable and modest in spirit. Wherefore his power, being strongly reinforced by his gentleness and equity, caused all men to yield themselves to his words.

What wonder, then, if, in a little while, all his subjects, in city or country, were so well initiated into his inspired teachings, that they renounced the errors of their many gods, and broke away from idolatrous drink-offerings and abominations, and were joined to the true faith and were created anew by his doctrine, and added to the household of Christ? And all, who for fear of Ioasaph's father had been shut up in mountains and dens, priests and monks, and some few bishops, came forth from their hiding places and resorted to him gladly. He himself would meet and receive with honour those who had fallen upon such tribulation and distress, for Christ his sake, and bring them to his own palace, washing their feet, and cleansing their matted hair, and ministering to them in every way. Then he dedicated his newly built church, and therein appointed for chief-priest one of the bishops that had suffered much, and had lost his own see, on account of his faith in Christ, an holy man, and learned in the canons of the Church, whose heart was fulfilled with heavenly zeal. And forthwith, when he had made ready a rude font,¹⁴ he bade baptize them that were turning to Christ. And so they were baptized, first the rulers and the men in authority; next, the soldiers on service and the rest of the multitude. And they that were baptized not only received health in their souls, but indeed as many as were afflicted with bodily ailments and imperfections cast off all their trouble, and came up from the holy font pure in soul, and sound in body, reaping an harvest of health for soul and body alike.

Wherefore also from all quarters multitudes flocked to King Ioasaph, desirous to be instructed by him in godliness. And all idolatrous images were utterly demolished, and all their wealth and temple treasure was taken from them, and in their stead holy courts were built for God. For these King Ioasaph dedicated the riches and costly vestments and treasures of the idolatrous temples, thereby making this worthless and superfluous material fit for service, and profitable. And the foul fiends that dwelt in their altars and temples were rigorously chased away and put to flight; and these, in the hearing of many, loudly lamented the misfortune that had overtaken them.

And all the region round about was freed from their dark deceit, and illuminated with the light of the blameless Christian faith.

And, soothly, the king was a good example to all; and he inflamed and kindled the hearts of many to be of the same mind with himself. For such is the nature of authority. Its subjects alway conform to its likeness, and are wont to love the same objects, and to practise the pursuits which they perceive to be pleasing to their governor. Hence, God helping, religion grew and increased amongst them. The king was wholly dependent on the commandments of Christ and on his love, being a steward of the word of grace, and pilot to the souls of many, bringing them to safe anchorage in the haven of God. For he knew that this, afore all things, is the work of a king, to teach men to fear God and keep righteousness. Thus did he, training himself to be king over his own passions, and, like a good pilot, keeping a firm hold of the helm of good government for his subjects. For this is the end of good kingship, to be king and lord over pleasure—which end also he achieved. Of the nobility of his ancestors, or the royal splendour around him, he was in no wise proud, knowing that we all have one common forefather, made of clay, and that, whether rich or poor, we are all of the same moulding. He ever abased his soul in deepest humility, and thought on the blessedness of the world to come, and considered himself a stranger and pilgrim in this world, but realised that that was his real treasure which he should win after his departure hence. Now, since all went well with him, and since he had delivered all the people from their ancient and ancestral error, and made them servants of him who redeemed us from evil servitude by his own precious blood, he turned his thoughts to his next task, the virtue of almsgiving. Temperance and righteousness he had already attained; he wore on his brow the crown of temperance, and wrapped about him the purple of righteousness. He called to mind the uncertainty of earthly riches, how they resemble the running of river waters. Therefore made he haste to lay up his treasure where neither “moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal.” So he began to distribute all his money to the poor, sparing naught thereof. He knew that the possessor of great authority is bound to imitate the giver of that authority, according to his ability; and herein he shall best imitate God, if he hold nothing in higher honour than mercy. Before all gold and precious stone he stored up for himself the treasure of almsgiving; treasure, which here gladdeneth the heart by the hope of enjoyment to come, and there delighteth it with the

taste of the hoped-for bliss. After this he searched the prisons, and sought out the captives in mines, or debtors in the grip of their creditors; and by generous largesses to all he proved a father to all, orphans, and widows, and beggars, a loving and good father, for he deemed that by bestowing blessings on these he won a blessing for himself. Being endowed with spiritual riches, and, in sooth, a perfect king, he gave liberally to all that were in need, for he hoped to receive infinitely more, when the time should come for the recompense of his works.

Now, in little while, the fame of Ioasaph was blazoned abroad; and led, as it were by the scent of sweet ointment, all men flocked to him daily, casting off their poverty of soul and body: and his name was on every man's lips. It was not fear and oppression that drew the people to him, but desire and heartfelt love, which by God's blessing and the king's fair life had been planted in their hearts. Then, too, did his father's subjects begin to come to him, and, laying aside all error, received the Gospel of truth. And the house of Ioasaph grew and waxed strong, but the house of Abenner waned and grew weak, even as the Book of the Kings declareth concerning David and Saul.

XXXIV

When king Abenner saw this, though late and loth, he came to his senses, and renounced his false gods with all their impotence and vain deceit. Again he called an assembly of his chief counsellors, and brought to light the thoughts of his heart. As they confirmed his words (for the dayspring from on high had visited them, the Saviour who had heard the prayer of his servant Ioasaph), it pleased the king to signify the same to his son. Therefore on the morrow he wrote a letter to Ioasaph, running thus:

“King Abenner to his well-beloved son Ioasaph, greeting.
Dearest son, many thoughts have been stealing into my soul, and rule it with a rod of iron. I see our state vanishing, like as smoke vanisheth, but thy religion shining brighter than the sun; and I have come to my senses, and know that the words which thou hast ever spoken unto me are true, and that a thick cloud of sin and wickedness did then cover us, so that we were unable to discern the truth, and recognize the Creator of all. Nay, but we shut our eyes, and would not behold the light which thou didst enkindle more brightly for us. Much evil did we do unto thee, and many of the Christians, alas! did we destroy; who, strengthened by the power that aided them, finally triumphed over our cruelty. But now we have removed that dense mist from our eyes, and see some small ray of truth, and there cometh on us repentance of our misdeeds. But a new cloud of despair would overshadow it; despair at the multitude of mine offences, because I am now abominable and unacceptable to Christ, being a rebel and a foeman unto him. What, then, sayest thou, dearest son, hereto? Make known to

me thine answer, and teach me that am thy father what I should do, and lead me to the knowledge of my true weal.”

When Ioasaph had received this letter, and read the words therein, his soul was filled with mingled joy and amazement. Forthwith he entered his closet, and falling on his face before the image of his Master, watered the ground with his tears, giving thanks to his Lord and confessing him, and tuning lips of exultation to sing an hymn of praise, saying:

“I will magnify thee, O God, my King, and I will praise thy name forever and ever. Great art thou O Lord, and marvellous-worthy to be praised, and of thy greatness there is no end. Who can express thy noble acts, or show forth all thy praise, who hast turned the hard rock into a standing water and the flint-stone into a springing well? For behold this my father’s flinty and more than granite heart is at thy will melted as wax; because thou art able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. I thank thee, Lord, thou lover of men, and God of pity, that thou hast been, and art, long-suffering towards our offences, and hast suffered us until now to go unpunished. Long have we deserved to be cast away from thy face, and made a byword on earth, as were the sinful inhabitors of the five cities, consumed with fire and brimstone; but thy marvellous long-suffering hath dealt graciously with us. I give thanks unto thee, vile and unworthy though I be, and insufficient of myself to glorify thy greatness. And, by thine infinite compassions, I pray thee, Lord Jesu Christ, Son and Word of the invisible Father, who madest all things by thy word, and sustainest them by thy will; who hast delivered us thine unworthy servants from the bondage of the archfiend our foe: thou that wast stretched upon the Rood, and didst bind the strong man, and award everlasting freedom to them that lay bound in his fetters: do thou now also stretch forth thine invisible and almighty hand, and, at the last, free thy servant my father from that cruel bondage of the devil. Show him full clearly that thou art the ever living true God, and only King, eternal and immortal. Behold, O Lord, with favourable and kindly eye, the contrition of my heart; and, according to thine unerring promise, be with me that acknowledge and confess thee the Maker and protector of all creation. Let there be a well of water within me springing up, and let utterance be given unto me that I may open my mouth, and a mind well fixed in thee, the chief cornerstone, that I, thine unprofitable servant, may be enabled to preach to my father, as is right, the mystery of thine Incarnation, and by thy power

deliver him from the vain deceit of wicked devils, and bring him unto thee his God and Lord, who willest not the death of us sinners, but waitest for us to return and repent, because thou art glorified forever and ever. Amen.”

When he had thus prayed, and received fullness of assurance that he should not miscarry in his desire, he took courage by the tender mercy of Christ, and arose thence, with his royal bodyguard, and arrived at his father’s palace. When it was told unto his father, “Thy son is come,” he went forth straightway for to meet him, and embraced and kissed him lovingly, and made exceeding great joy, and held a general feast in honour of the coming of his son. And afterward, they two were closeted together.

But how tell of all that the son spake with his father, and of all the wisdom of his speech? And what was that speech but the words put into his mouth by the Holy Ghost, by whom the fishermen enclosed the whole world in their nets for Christ and the unlearned are found wiser than the wise. This Holy Spirit’s grace and wisdom taught Ioasaph to speak with the king his father, enlightening him with the light of knowledge. Before now he had bestowed much labour to drag his father from superstitious error, leaving nothing unsaid and nothing undone to win him over, but he seemed to be twanging on a broken string, and speaking to deaf ears. But when the Lord looked upon the lowliness of his servant Ioasaph, and, in answer to his prayer, opened the closed gates of his father’s heart (for it is said, he will fulfil the desire of them that fear him, and will hear their cry), then the king easily understood the things that were spoken; so that, when a convenient season came, through the grace of Christ, this son triumphed over those evil spirits that had lorded it over the soul of his father, and clean freed him from their error, and made the word of salvation clearly known unto him, and joined him to the living God on high.

Ioasaph took up his tale from the beginning, and expounded to his father great and marvellous things which he knew not, which he had never heard with the ears of his heart; and he told him many weighty sayings concerning God, and showed him righteousness: to wit that there is no other God in heaven above, nor in the earth beneath, except the one God, revealed in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And he made known unto him many mysteries of divine knowledge; and amongst them he told him the history of creation, visible and invisible, how the Creator brought everything out of nothing, and how he formed man after his own image and likeness and endowed him with power of free will, and gave him Paradise to his

enjoyment, charging him only to abstain from one thing, the tree of knowledge; and how, when man had broken his commandment, he banished him out of Paradise; and how man, fallen from union with God, stumbled into these manifold errors, becoming the slave of sins, and subject unto death through the tyranny of the devil, who, having once taken men captive, hath made them utterly forget their Lord and God, and hath persuaded them to serve him instead, by the abominable worshipping of idols. So our Maker, moved with compassion, through the goodwill of the Father, and the cooperation of the Holy Ghost, was pleased, for our sakes, to be born of an holy Virgin, Mary, the mother of God, and he, that cannot suffer, was acquainted with sufferings. On the third day he rose again from the dead, and redeemed us from our first penalty, and restored to us our first glory. When he ascended into the heavens, from whence he had descended, he raised us up together with him; and thence, we believe that he shall come again, to raise up his own handiwork; and he will recompense every man according to his works. Moreover Ioasaph instructed his father concerning the kingdom of heaven that awaiteth them that are worthy thereof, and the joy unspeakable. Thereto he added the torment in store for the wicked, the unquenchable fire, the outer darkness, the undying worm and whatsoever other punishment the servants of sin have laid up in store for themselves.

All these things set he forth in many words, which bore witness that the grace of the Spirit was dwelling richly within him. Then he described the uncharted sea of the love of God towards mankind, and how he is ready to accept the repentance of them that turn to him; and how there is no sin too great for his tender mercy, if we will but repent. And when he had confirmed these truths by many an example, and testimony of Scripture, he made an end of speaking.

XXXV

King Abenner was pricked to the heart by this inspired wisdom and with loud voice and fervent heart confessed Christ his Saviour, and forthwith forsook all superstitious error. He venerated the sign of the life-giving Cross in the sight of all and, in the hearing of all, proclaimed our Lord Jesus Christ to be God. By telling in full the tale of his former ungodliness, and of his own cruelty and bloodthirstiness toward the Christians, he proved himself a great power for religion. So here was proved in fact, the saying of Paul; that where sin abounded, there did grace much more abound.

While then the learned Ioasaph was speaking of God, and of piety towards him, to the dukes and satraps and all the people there assembled, and was as it were with a tongue of fire piping unto them a goodly ode, the grace of the Holy Spirit descended upon them, and moved them to give glory to God, so that all the multitude cried aloud with one voice, "Great is the God of the Christians, and there is none other God but our Lord Jesus Christ, who, together with the Father and Holy Ghost, is glorified."

Waxen full of heavenly zeal, King Abenner made a sturdy assault on the idols, wrought of silver and gold, that were within his palace, and tore them down to the ground. Then he brake them into small pieces, and distributed them to the poor, thus making that which had been useless useful. Furthermore he and his son besieged the idols' temples and altars and levelled them even to the ground, and in their stead, and to the honour of God, built holy courts. And not only in the city but throughout all the country also, thus did they in their zeal. And the evil spirits that dwelt in those altars were driven forth with shrieks, and cried out in terror at the invincible power of our God. And all the region round about, and the greater part of the neighbour nations, were led, as by the hand, to the true Faith. Then came the holy Bishop, of whom we have spoken, and King Abenner was instructed, and made perfect with Holy Baptism, in the name

of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And Ioasaph received him as he came up from the Holy Font, in this strange way appearing as the begetter of his own father, and proving the spiritual father to him that begat him in the flesh: for he was the son of his heavenly Father, and verily divine fruit of that divine Branch, which saith, "I am the vine, ye are the branches."

Thus King Abenner, being born again of water and of the spirit, rejoiced with joy unspeakable, and with him all the city and the region round about received Holy Baptism, and they that were before darkness now became children of light. And every disease, and every assault of evil spirits was driven far from the believers, and all were sane and sound in body and in soul. And many other miracles were wrought for the confirmation of the Faith. Churches too were built, and the bishops, that had been hiding for fear, discovered themselves, and received again their own churches, whilst others were chosen from the priests and monks, to shepherd the flock of Christ. But King Abenner, having thus forsaken his former disgraceful life, and repented of his evil deeds, handed over to his son the rule of all his kingdom. He himself dwelt in solitude, continually casting dust on his head, and groaning for very heaviness, and watering his face with his tears, being alone, communing with him who is everywhere present and imploring him to forgive his sins. And he abased himself to such a depth of contrition and humility, that he refused to name the name of God with his own lips, and was scarce brought by his son's admonitions to make so bold. Thus the king passed through the good change and entered the road that leadeth to virtue, so that his righteousness now surpassed his former sins of ignorance. For four years did he live thus in repentance and tears and virtuous acts, and then fell into the sickness whereof he died. But when the end drew nigh, he began to fear and to be dismayed, calling to remembrance the evil that he had wrought. But with comfortable words Ioasaph sought to ease the distress that had fallen on him, saying, "Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my father, and why art thou so disquieted within thee? Set thy hope on God, and give him thanks, who is the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain in the sea afar, who crieth by the mouth of his prophet, 'Wash you, make you clean: put away from before mine eyes the wickedness of your souls; learn to do well'; and 'Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow; though they be red like crimson, I will make them as wool.' Fear not, therefore, O my father, neither be of

doubtful mind: for the sins of them that turn to God prevail not against his infinite goodness. For these, however many, are subject to measure and number: but measure and number cannot limit his goodness. It is impossible then for that which is subject to measure to exceed the unmeasurable.”

With such comfortable words did Ioasaph cheer his soul, and bring him to a good courage. Then his father stretched out his hands, and gave him thanks and prayed for him, blessing the day whereon Ioasaph was born, and said “Dearest child, yet not child of me, but of mine heavenly Father, with what gratitude can I repay thee? With what words of blessings may I bless thee? What thanks shall I offer God for thee? I was lost, and was found through thee: I was dead in sin and am alive again: an enemy, and rebel against God, and am reconciled with him. What reward therefore shall I give thee for all these benefits? God is he that shall make the due recompense.” Thus saying, he pressed many kisses on his beloved son; then, when he had prayed, and said, “Into thy hands, O God, thou lover of men, do I commit my spirit,” he committed his soul unto the Lord in penitence and peace.

Now, when Ioasaph had honoured with his tears his father that was dead, and had reverently cared for his body, he buried him in a sepulchre wherein devout men lay; not indeed clad in royal raiment, but robed in the garment of penitence. Standing on the sepulchre, and lifting up his hands to heaven, the tears streaming in floods from his eyes, he cried aloud unto God saying,

“O God, I thank thee, King of glory, alone mighty and immortal, that thou hast not despised my petition, and hast not held thy peace at my tears, but hast been pleased to turn this thy servant, my father, from the way of wickedness, and to draw him to thyself, the Saviour of all, departing him from the deceitfulness of idolatry, and granting him to acknowledge thee, who art the very God and lover of souls. And now, O my Lord and God, whose ocean of goodness is uncharted, set him in that place where much grass is, in a place of refreshment, where shineth the light of thy countenance. Remember not his old offences; but, according to the multitude of thy mercies, blot out the handwriting of his sins, and destroy the tablets of his debts, and set him at peace with thy Saints whom he slew with fire and sword. Charge them not to be bitter against him. For all things are possible with thee, the Lord of all, save only to withhold pity from them that turn not unto thee; this is impossible. For thy pity is poured out upon all

men, and thou savest them that call upon thee, Lord Jesu Christ, because glory becometh thee forever and ever. Amen.”

Such were the prayers and intercessions that he made unto God, by the space of seven full days, never leaving the grave, and never thinking of meat or drink, and taking no refreshment of sleep: but he watered the ground with his tears, and continued praying and moaning unceasingly. But, on the eighth day, he went back to his palace and distributed amongst the poor all his wealth and riches, so that not one person was left in want.

XXXVI

In a few days, after he had ended this ministry, and emptied all his coffers, in order that the burden of his money might not hinder him from entering in at the narrow gate, on the fortieth day after his father's decease, and in remembrance of him, he called together all his officers, and those who wore soldiers' attire, and of the citizens not a few. Sitting in the front, according to custom, in the audience of all he said, "Lo, as ye see, Abenner, my father the king, hath died like any beggar. Neither wealth nor kingly glory, nor I his loving son, nor any of his kith and kindred, has availed to help him, or to save him from the sentence without reprieve. But he is gone to yonder judgement seat, to give account of his life in this world, carrying with him no advocate whatsoever, except his deeds, good or bad. And the same law is ordained by nature for every man born of woman, and there is no escape. Now, therefore, hearken unto me, friends and brethren, people and holy heritage of the Lord, whom Christ our God hath purchased with his own precious blood, and delivered from the ancient error, and bondage of the adversary. Ye yourselves know my manner of life among you; that ever since I knew Christ, and was counted worthy to become his servant, I have hated all things, and loved him only, and how this was my desire, to escape from the tempest and vain tumult of the world, and commune alone with him, and in undisturbed peace of soul serve my God and Master. But my father's opposition held me back, and the command that biddeth us to honour our fathers. So, by the grace and help of God, I have not laboured in vain, nor spent these days for naught, I have brought my father nigh to Christ, and have taught you all to know the one true God, the Lord of all; and yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me, which rescued me also from superstitious error, and from the worship of idols, and freed you, O my people, from cruel captivity. So now it is high time to fulfil the service that I promised to God; high time to depart thitherward, where he

himself shall lead me, where I may perform my vows which I made unto him. Now, therefore, look you out a man whom ye will, to be your leader and king; for by this time ye have been conformed to the will of the Lord, and of his commandments nothing hath been hidden from you. Walk ye therein; turn not aside, neither to the right hand, nor to the left, and the God of peace be with you all!”

When all that company and the common people heard thereof, anon there arose a clamour, an uproar, and a mighty cry and confusion, all weeping like orphans and bewailing their loss. Lamenting bitterly, they protested with oaths and with tears, that they would never let him go, but would restrain him and not suffer in any wise his departure. While the common people, and they in authority, were thus crying aloud, the king broke in, and beckoned with his hand to the multitude and charged them to keep silence. He declared that he gave in to their instancy, and dismissed them still grieving, and bearing on their cheeks the signs of sorrow. And Ioasaph did thus. There was one of the senators first in favour with Ioasaph, a man honoured for his godliness and dignity, Barachias by name, who, as hath been already told, when Nachor, feigning to be Barlaam, was disputing with the philosophers, alone was ready to stand by Nachor and fight for him, for his heart was fired with heavenly love. Him the king took apart, and spake gently with him, and earnestly besought him to receive the kingdom, and, in the fear of God, to shepherd his people; in order that he himself might take the journey that he desired.

But Barachias would put aside and reject his offer, saying, “O king, how wrongful is thy judgement, and thy word contrary to divine command! If thou hast learned to love thy neighbour as thyself, with what right art thou eager to shift the burden off thy back and lay it upon mine? If it be good to be king, keep the good to thy self: but, if it be a stone of stumbling and rock of offence to thy soul, why put it in my pathway and seek to trip me up?” When Ioasaph perceived that he spake thus, and that his purpose was fixed, he ceased from communing with him. And now, at about the dead of night, he wrote his people a letter, full of much wisdom, expounding to them all godliness; telling them what they should think concerning God, what life, what hymns and what thanksgiving they should offer unto him. Next, he charged them to receive none other than Barachias to be ruler of the kingdom. Then left he in his bedchamber the roll containing his letter, and, unobserved of all, went forth from his palace. But he might not win through

undetected, for, early on the morrow, the tidings, that he was departed, anon made commotion and mourning among the people, and, in much haste, forth went every man for to seek him; they being minded by all means to cut off his flight. And their zeal was not spent in vain; for, when they had occupied all the highways, and encompassed all the mountains, and surrounded the pathless ravines, they discovered him in a watercourse, his hands uplifted to heaven, saying the prayer proper of the Sixth Hour.

When they beheld him, they surrounded him, and besought him with tears, upbraiding him for departing from them. "But," said he, "why labour ye in vain? No longer hope to have me to your king." Yet gave he way to their much opposition, and turned again to his palace. And, when he had assembled all the folk, he signified his will. Then with oath he confirmed his word, that he would dwell with them not one day more. "For," said he, "I have fulfilled my ministry toward you, and have omitted naught, neither have I kept back anything that was profitable unto you, in failing to show or teach you, testifying to all the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and pointing out the paths of repentance. And now behold I go the road that I have long time desired, and all ye shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, as saith the holy Apostle, that I am pure from the blood of you all, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

When they heard this, and perceived the steadfastness of his purpose, that nothing could hinder him from his resolve, they wept like orphans over their bereavement, but could in no wise over-persuade him. Then did the king take that Barachias, of whom we have already spoken, saying, "This is he, brethren, whom I appoint to be your king." And though Barachias stoutly resisted, yet he established him, unwilling and reluctant, upon the royal throne, and placed the diadem on his head, and gave the kingly ring into his hand. Then he stood facing the east and made prayer for King Barachias, that his faith toward God might be preserved unwavering, and that he might keep without faltering the path of Christ's commandments. Therewith he prayed for the clergy and all the flock, asking of God succour for them and salvation, and all that might fitly be asked for their welfare.

Thus he prayed, and then turning said unto Barachias, "Behold, brother, I charge thee, as the Apostle once adjured his people, 'Take heed unto thyself, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made thee king, to feed the Lord's people, whom he hath purchased with his own blood.' And even as thou wast before me in the knowledge of God, and

didst serve him with a pure conscience, so now also show the more zeal in pleasing him. For, as thou hast received of God a mighty sovereignty, thou owest him the greater repayment. Render therefore to thy Benefactor the debt of thanksgiving, by the keeping of his holy commandments and by turning aside from every path whose end is destruction. For it is with kingdoms as with ships. If one of the sailors blunder it bringeth but small damage to the crew. But if the steersman err, he causeth the whole ship to perish. Even so it is with sovranty: if a subject err, he harmeth himself more than the state. But if the king err, he causeth injury to the whole realm. Therefore, as one that shall render strict account, if thou neglect aught of thy duty, guard thyself with all diligence in that which is good. Hate all pleasure that draweth into sin: for, saith the Apostle, 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.' Consider the wheel of men's affairs, how it runneth round and round, turning and whirling them now up, now down: and amid all its sudden changes, keep thou unchanged a pious mind. To change with every change of affairs betokeneth an unstable heart. But be thou steadfast, wholly established upon that which is good. Be not lifted and vainly puffed up because of temporal honour; but, with purified reason, understand the nothingness of thine own nature, and the span-length and swift flight of life here, and death the yoke-fellow of the flesh. If thou consider these things, thou shalt not be cast into the pit of arrogance, but shalt fear God, the true and heavenly King, and verily thou shalt be blessed. For he saith, 'Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in his ways,' and 'Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord: he shall have great delight in his commandments.' And which commandments above all shouldest thou observe? 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy,' and 'Be ye merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful.' For the fulfilment of this commandment, above all, is required of them that are in high authority. And, soothly, the holder of great authority ought to imitate the giver of that authority to the best of his ability. And herein shall he best imitate God, by considering that nothing is to be preferred before showing mercy. Nay, further, nothing so surely draweth the subject to loyalty toward his Sovereign as the grace of charity bestowed on such as need it. For the service that cometh from fear is flattery in disguise, with the pretence of respect cozening them that pay heed to it; and the unwilling subject rebelleth when he findeth occasion. Whereas he that is held by the ties of loyalty is steadfast in his obedience to

the ruling power. Wherefore be thou easy of access to all and open thine ears unto the poor, that thou mayest find the ear of God open unto thee. For as we are to our fellow-servants, such shall we find our Master to us-ward. And, like as we do hear others, so shall we be heard ourselves: and, as we see, so shall we be seen by the divine all-seeing eye. Therefore pay we first mercy for mercy, that we may obtain like for like.

“But hear yet another commandment, the fellow of the former; ‘Forgive, and it shall be forgiven unto you;’ and ‘If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly father forgive you your trespasses.’ Wherefore bear no malice against them that offend against thee; but, when thou askest forgiveness of thy sins, forgive thyself also them that injure thee, because forgiveness is repaid by forgiveness, and by making peace with our fellow-servants we are ourselves delivered from the wrath of our Master. Again, a lack of compassion towards them that trespass against us maketh our own trespasses unpardonable, even as thou hast heard what befell the man that owed ten thousand talents, how, through his want of pity on his fellow-servant, he was again required to pay all that mighty debt. So we must take good heed lest a like fate betide us. But let us forgive every debt, and cast all anger out of our hearts, in order that our many debts, too, may be forgiven. Beside this, and before all things, keep thou that good thing which is committed to thy trust, the holy Word of faith wherein thou hast been taught and instructed. And let no tare of heresy grow up amongst you, but preserve the heavenly seed pure and sincere, that it may yield a manifold harvest to the master, when he cometh to demand account of our lives, and to reward us according to our deeds, when the righteous shall shine forth as the sun, but darkness and everlasting shame shall cover the sinners. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”

And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, as it is written, and prayed again in tears. And he turned him round, and kissed Barachias, whom he had chosen to their king, and all the officers. Then came a scene fit, belike, to make one weep. They all crowded around him, as though his presence meant life to them, and his departure would reave them of their very souls; and what piteous pleading, what extravagance of grief did they omit? They kissed him; they hung about him; they were beside themselves for anguish of heart. “Woe is us,” cried they, “for this grievous calamity!”

They called him, Master, Father, Saviour, Benefactor. “Through thee,” said they, “we learned to know God, and were redeemed from error, and found rest from every ill. What remaineth us after thou art gone? What evils shall not befall us?” Thus saying, they smote upon their breasts, and bewailed the misfortune that had overtaken them. But he with words of comfort hushed their sobs, and promised to be with them still in the spirit though he might no longer abide with them in the body. And when he had thus spoken, in the sight of all he went forth from the palace. And immediately all the people followed him. They despaired of his return; they ran from the city, as from a sight that they could no longer endure. But when they were outside the city, Ioasaph addressed them with sharp words, and chode with them harshly; and so they were parted from him, and unwillingly went home, often turning round to look on him, and stumbling on their road. And some of the hotter spirits also followed afar off weeping, until the shades of night parted them one from another.

XXXVII

Thus this noble man went forth from his palace rejoicing, as when after long exile a man returneth with joy to his own country. Outwardly he wore the robes that he was wont to wear, but beneath was the hair-shirt which Barlaam had given him. That night he halted at a poor man's cabin, and stripped himself of his outer raiment, which, as his last alms, he bestowed upon his poor host, and thus by the prayers of that poor man, as well as of so many others, he made God his ally, and put on his grace and help as a garment of salvation; and, clad in a coat of gladness, thus went he off to his hermit-life, carrying with him neither bread, nor water, nor any necessary food, with no garment upon him save the aforesaid rough shirt. For his heart was wounded with a marvellous longing and divine love for Christ the immortal King; he was beside himself with longing, mad for God, possessed by love of him; "For love," he saith, "is strong as fire." So drunken was he with this heavenly love, so parched with thirst, according to him that saith, "Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God. My soul is athirst for the mighty and living God"; or, as the soul that is sick of love crieth in the Song of Songs, "Thou hast ravished us, ravished us with the desire of thee"; and, "Let me see thy countenance, and let me hear thy voice, for thy voice is a sweet voice, and thy countenance is comely."

It was the desire for this unspeakable comeliness of Christ that fired the hearts of the Apostolic Choir and of the Martyr folk to despise the things that are seen, and all this temporal life, and the rather to choose ten thousand forms of death and torture, being enamoured of his heavenly beauty, and bearing in mind the charm that the divine Word used for to win our love. Such was the fire that was kindled in the soul of this fair youth also, noble in body, but most noble and kingly in soul, that led him to despise all earthly things alike, to trample on all bodily pleasures, and to

contemn riches and glory and the praise of men, to lay aside diadem and purple, as of less worth than cobwebs, and to surrender himself to all the hard and irksome toils of the ascetic life, crying, "O my Christ, my soul is fixed upon thee, and thy right hand hath upholden me."

Thus, without looking back, he passed into the depth of the desert; and, laying aside, like a heavy burden and clog, the stress of transitory things, he rejoiced in the Spirit, and looked steadfastly on Christ, whom he longed for, and cried aloud to him, as though he were there present to hear his voice, saying, "Lord, let mine eyes never again see the good things of this present world. Never, from this moment, let my soul be excited by these present vanities, but fill mine eyes with spiritual tears; direct my goings in thy way, and show me thy servant Barlaam. Show me him that was the means of my salvation, that I may learn of him the exact rule of this lonely and austere life, and may not be tripped up through ignorance of the wiles of the enemy. Grant me, O Lord, to discover the way whereby to attain unto thee, for my soul is sick of love for thee, and I am athirst for thee, the well of salvation."

These were the thoughts of his heart continually, and he communed with God, being made one with him by prayer and sublime meditation. And thus eagerly he pursued the road, hoping to arrive at the place where Barlaam dwelt. His meat was the herbs that grow in the desert; for he carried nothing with him, as I have already said, save his own bones, and the ragged garment that was around him.

But whilst he found some food, though scanty and insufficient, from the herbs, of water he was quite destitute in that waterless and dry desert. And so at noontide, as he held on his way under the fierce blaze of the sun, he was parched with thirst in the hot drought of that desert place, and he suffered the extreme of anguish. But desire of Christ conquered nature, and the thirst wherewith he thirsted for God bedewed the heat of thirst for water.

Now the devil, being envious and full of hate for that which is beautiful, unable to endure the sight of such steadfastness of purpose, and glowing love towards God, raised up against Ioasaph many temptations in the wilderness. He called to his remembrance his kingly glory, and his magnificent bodyguard, his friends, kinsfolk and companions, and how the lives of all had depended on his life, and he minded him of the other solaces of life. Then he would confront him with the hardness of virtue, and the many sweats that she requireth, with the weakness of his flesh, with his lack of practice in such rigours, the long years to come, this present distress from

thirst, his want of any comfort, and the unendingness of his toils. In a word, he raised a great dust-cloud of reasonings in his mind, exactly, I ween, as it hath been recorded of the mighty Antony.

But, when the enemy saw himself too weak to shake that purpose (for Ioasaph set Christ before his mind, and glowed with love of him, and was well strengthened by hope, and steadfast in faith, and recked nothing of the devil and his suggestions), then was the adversary ashamed of having fallen in the first assault. So he came by another road (for many are his paths of wickedness), and endeavoured to overthrow and terrify Ioasaph by means of divers apparitions. Sometimes he appeared to him in black, and such indeed he is: sometimes with a drawn sword he leapt upon him, and threatened to strike, unless he speedily turned back. At other times he assumed the shapes of all manner of beasts, roaring and making a terrible din and bellowing; or again he became a dragon, adder, or basilisk. But that fair and right noble athlete kept his soul in quietness, for he had made the Most High his refuge: and, being sober in mind, he laughed the evil one to scorn, and said, "I know thee, deceiver, who thou art, which stiffest up this trouble for me; which from the beginning didst devise mischief against mankind, and art ever wicked, and never stintest to do hurt. How becoming and right proper is thy habit, that thou shouldest take the shape of beasts and of creeping things, and thus display thy bestial and crooked nature, and thy venomous and hurtful purpose! Wherefore, wretch, attempt the impossible? For ever since I discovered that these be the contrivances and bugbears of thy malice, I have now no more anxiety concerning thee. The Lord is on my side, and I shall see my desire upon mine enemies. I shall go upon the adder and basilisk, the which thou dost resemble; thee, the lion and dragon I shall tread under my feet; for I am strengthened with the might of Christ. Let mine enemies be ashamed and turned backward: let them be driven and put to shame suddenly."

Thus speaking, and girding on that invincible weapon, the sign of the Cross, he made vain the devil's shows. For straightway all the beasts and creeping things disappeared, like as the smoke vanisheth, and like as wax melteth at the fire. And he, strong in the might of Christ, went on his way rejoicing and giving thanks unto the Lord. But there dwelt in that desert many divers beasts, and all kinds of serpents, and dragon-shaped monsters, and these met him, not now as apparitions but in sober sooth, so that his path was beset by fear and toil. But he overcame both, for love, as saith the

scripture, cast out fear, and longing made toil light. Thus he wrestled with many sundry misfortunes and hardships until, after many days, he arrived at that desert of the land of Senaar, wherein Barlaam dwelt. There also he found water and quenched the burning of his thirst.

XXXVIII

Now two full years spent Ioasaph wandering about the ocean of that desert, without finding Barlaam; for here also God was proving the steadfastness of his purpose, and the nobility of his soul. He lived thus in the open air, scorched with heat or frozen with cold, and, as one in search of precious treasure, continually looking everywhere for his treasured friend, the aged Barlaam. Frequent were the temptations and assaults of the evil spirits that he encountered, and many the hardships that he endured through the lack of herbs that he needed for meat, because the desert, being dry, yielded even these in but scant supply. But, being kindled by love of her Master, this adamant and indomitable soul bore these annoyances more easily than other men bear their pleasures. Wherefore he failed not of the succour that is from above, but, many as were the sorrows and toils that he endured, comfort came to him from Christ, and, asleep or awake, refreshed his soul. By the space of those two years Ioasaph went about continually, seeking him for whom he yearned, and rivers of waters ran from his eyes, as he implored God, crying aloud and saying, "Show me, O Lord, show me the man that was the means of my knowledge of thee, and the cause of my many blessings. Because of the multitude of mine offences, deprive me not of this good thing; but grant me to see him, and fight with him the ascetic fight."

By the grace of God, he found a cave, by following footsteps that led thither. There he met a monk pursuing a hermit life. Him he embraced and saluted tenderly. He asked where to find Barlaam's dwelling, and told him his own tale, laying all bare. Of him then he learned the abode of the man whom he sought, and thither went foot-hot, as when a cunning hunter happeneth on the tracks of his game. And when he had met with certain signs, pointed out to him by this other old hermit, he went on rejoicing, strong in hope, like a child hoping after long absence to see his father. For

when divine love hath broken into a soul, it proveth hotter and stronger than the natural.

So he stood before the door of the cave, and knocked, saying “*Benedicite, father, benedicite!*” When Barlaam heard his voice, he came forth from the cave, and by the spirit knew him, who by outward appearance could not easily be known, because of the marvellous change and alteration that had changed and altered his face from its former bloom of youth; for Ioasaph was black with the sun’s heat, and overgrown with hair, and his cheeks were fallen in, and his eyes deep sunken, and his eyelids seared with floods of tears, and much distress of hunger. And Ioasaph recognised his spiritual father, for his features were, for the more part, the same. So the old man stood, and, facing the East, offered up to God a prayer of thanksgiving; and, after the prayer, when they had said the Amen, they embraced and kissed each other affectionately, taking their full fill of long deferred desire.

But, when they had done with embracing and greeting, they sat them down and conversed. Barlaam began, saying, “Welcome art thou, son well beloved son of God, and inheritor of the heavenly kingdom through Jesus Christ our Lord, whom thou lovest, whom thou rightly desirest above the things that are temporal and corruptible! Like a prudent and wise merchant, thou hast sold all, and bought the pearl that is beyond price, and hast found the treasure that cannot be stolen, hidden in the field of the commandments of the Lord; thou hast parted with all, and spared naught of the things that so soon pass away, that thou mightest purchase that field for thyself. The Lord give thee the eternal for the temporal, the things that are incorruptible and wax not old for the corruptible!

“But tell me, dearly beloved, how thou camest hither? How did thy matters speed after my departure? And hath thy father learned to know God, or is he still carried away with his former foolishness, still under the bondage of devilish deceits?”

Thus questioned Barlaam, and Ioasaph answered, telling him piece by piece all that had befallen him since he went away; and in how many ways the Lord had prospered him, until they were come together again.

The old man listened with pleasure and amazement, and with hot tears said, “Glory to thee, our God, that ever standest by and succourest them that love thee! Glory to thee, O Christ, King of all and God all-good, that it was thy pleasure that the seed, which I sowed in the heart of Ioasaph, thy servant, should thus bring forth fruit an hundredfold worthy of the

husbandman and Master of our souls! Glory to thee, good Paraclete, the all-holy Spirit, because thou didst vouchsafe unto this man to partake of that grace which thou gavest thine holy Apostles, and by his hand hast delivered multitudes of people from superstitious error, and enlightened them with the true knowledge of God!”

Thus was God blessed by both, and thus were they conversing and rejoicing in the grace of God until evenfall. Then stood they up for to pray and to perform the sacred services. Then also remembered they that it was mealtime, and Barlaam spread his lavish table, laden with spiritual dainties, but with little to attract the palate of sense. These were uncooked worts, and a few dates, planted and tended by Barlaam’s own hands, such as are found in the same desert, and wild herbs. So they gave thanks and partook of the victuals set before them, and drank water from the neighbour springing well, and again gave thanks to God, who openeth his hand and filleth all things living. Then they arose again, and, when they had ended their Night Hours, after prayer, they joined in spiritual converse again, discoursing wholesome words, and full of heavenly wisdom, all the night long until daybreak bade them once more remember the hour of prayer.

So Ioasaph abode with Barlaam for some many years, pursuing this marvellous and more than human life, dwelling with him as with a father and tutor, in all obedience and lowliness, exercising himself in every kind of virtue, and learning well from practice how to wrestle with the invisible spirits of evil. From that time forward he mortified all his sinful passions, and made the will of the flesh as subject to the spirit as slave is to his master. He was altogether forgetful of comforts or repose, and tyrannized over sleep as over a wicked servant. And, in brief, such was his practice of the religious life, that Barlaam, who had spent many years therein, marvelled at him, and failed to equal the earnestness of his life. For he took only so much of that coarse and cheerless food as would keep him alive; else had he died afore his time, and forfeited the reward of his well-doing. He subdued himself to watchings, as though he were without flesh and body. In prayer and mental exercise his work was unceasing, and all the time of his life was spent in spiritual and heavenly contemplation, so that not an hour, nor even a single moment was wasted, from the day that he came to dwell in the desert. For this is the end of monastic life, never to be found idle in spiritual employment: and well herein did this noble and active runner of the heavenly race order his way. And he kept his ardour

unquenched from beginning to end, ever ascending in his heart, and going from strength to strength, and continually adding desire to desire, and zeal to zeal, until he arrived at the bliss that he had hoped and longed for.

XXXIX

Thus did Barlaam and Ioasaph dwell together, rivals in the good rivalry, apart from all anxious care and all the turmoils of life, possessing their minds undisturbed and clear of all confusion. After their many labours after godliness, one day Barlaam called to him his spiritual son, whom he had begotten through the Gospel, and opened his mouth to discourse of spiritual things, saying, “Long ago, dearly beloved Ioasaph, was it destined that thou shouldest dwell in this wilderness; and, in answer to my prayer for thee, Christ promised me that I should see it before the ending of my life. I have seen my desire: I have seen thee severed from the world and the concerns of the world, united to Christ, thy mind never wavering, and come to the measure of the perfection of his fullness. Now therefore as the time of my departure is at the door, and seeing that my desire, that hath grown with my growth and aged with my years, to be forever with Christ, is even now being fulfilled, thou must bury my body in the earth and restore dust to dust, but thyself abide for the time to come in this place, holding fast to thy spiritual life, and making remembrance of me, poor as I am. For I fear lest perchance the darksome army of fiends may stand in the way of my soul, by reason of the multitude of mine ignorances.

“So do thou, my son, think no scorn of the laboriousness of thy religious life, neither dread the length of the time, nor the tricks of devils. But, strong in the grace of Christ, confidently laugh at the weakness of these thy foes; and, as for the hardness of thy toils, and the long duration of the time, be as one that daily expecteth his departure hence, and as if the same day were the beginning and the end of thy religious life. Thus, always forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, according to the exhortation of the holy Apostle, who saith, ‘Let us not faint; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is

renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.’

“Ponder thou over these things, beloved: quit thee like a man; yea, be strong; and, as a good soldier, do thy diligence to please him who hath called thee to be a soldier. And, even if the evil one stir in thee thoughts of neglecting duty, and thou art minded to slacken the string of thy purpose, fear not his devices, but remember the Lord’s command, which saith, ‘In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.’ Wherefore, rejoice in the Lord always; for he hath chosen and separated thee out of the world, and set thee, as it were before his countenance. The Master, who hath called thee with a holy calling, is always near. Be careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let thy requests be made known unto God. For he himself hath said, ‘I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.’ So, by the hardness of thy life, and by scorn of its rigours, win such thoughts as these, and rejoice, remembering our Lord God, for he saith, ‘I remembered God and was glad.’

“But when the adversary, seeking another fashion of war, proposeth high and arrogant thoughts, and suggesteth the glory of the kingdom of this world, which thou hast forsaken, and all its lures, hold out, as a shield before thee, the saving word that saith, ‘When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, “We are unprofitable servants, for we have done that which was our duty to do.”’ And, indeed, which of us is able to repay the debt that we owe our Master, for that he, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich, and, being without suffering, yet suffered, that we might be delivered from suffering? What thanks hath the servant if he suffer like as his Master? But we fall far short of his sufferings. Meditate upon these things, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep thy heart and thoughts in Christ Jesus.”

When blessed Barlaam had so said, Ioasaph’s tears knew no measure, but, like water from the brimming fountain, bedewed him and the ground whereon he sat. He mourned over the parting, and earnestly implored that

he might be his companion on his last journey, and might remain no longer in this world after Barlaam's decease, saying, "Wherefore, father, seekest thou only thine own, and not thy neighbour's welfare? How fulfillest thou perfect love in this, according to him that said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' in departing thyself to rest and life, and leaving me to tribulation and distress? And, before I have been well exercised in the conflicts of the religious life, before I have learned the wily attacks of the enemy, why expose me to fight singlehanded against their marshalled host? And for what purpose but to see me overthrown by their mischievous machinations, and to see me die, alas! the true spiritual and eternal death? That is the fate which must befall inexperienced and cowardly monks. But, I beseech thee, pray the Lord to take me also together with thee from life. Yea, by the very hope that thou hast of receiving the reward of thy labour, pray that, after thy departure, I may not live one day more in the world, nor wander into the ocean depths of this desert."

While Ioasaph spake thus in tears, the old man checked him gently and calmly, saying, "Son, we ought not to resist the judgements of God, which are beyond our reach. For though I have oftentimes prayed concerning this matter, and constrained the Master, that cannot be constrained, not to part us one from the other, yet have I been taught by his goodness that it is not expedient for thee now to lay aside the burden of the flesh: but thou must remain behind in the practice of virtue, until the crown, which thou art weaving, be more glorious. As yet, thou hast not striven enough after the recompense in store for thee, but must toil yet a little longer, that thou mayest joyfully enter into the joy of thy Lord. For myself, I am, as I reckon, well-nigh an hundred winters old, and have now spent seventy and five years in this desert place. But for thee, even if thy days be not so far lengthened as mine, yet must thou approach thereto, as the Lord ordereth, that thou mayest prove no unworthy match for them that have borne the burden and heat of the day. Therefore, beloved, gladly accept the decrees of God. What God hath ordered, who, of men, can scatter? Endure, then, under the protection of his grace.

"But be thou ever sober against thoughts other than these; and, like a right precious treasure, keep safely from robbers thy purity of heart, stepping up day by day to higher work and contemplation, that that may be fulfilled in thee, which the Saviour promised to his friends, when he said,

‘If any man love me, he will keep my word: and my father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.’”

With these words, and many others, full worthy of that sanctified soul and inspired tongue, did the old man comfort Ioasaph’s anguished soul. Then he sent him unto certain brethren, which abode a long way off, for to fetch the things fitting for the Holy Sacrifice. And Ioasaph girded up his loins, and with all speed fulfilled his errand: for he dreaded lest peradventure, in his absence, Barlaam might pay the debt of nature, and, yielding up the ghost to God, might inflict on him the loss of missing his departing words and utterances, his last orisons and blessings.

So when Ioasaph had manfully finished his long journey, and had brought the things required for the Holy Sacrifice, saintly Barlaam offered up to God the unbloody Sacrifice. When he had communicated himself, and also given to Ioasaph of the undefiled Mysteries of Christ, he rejoiced in the Spirit. And when they had taken together of their ordinary food, Barlaam again fed Ioasaph’s soul with edifying words, saying, “Well-beloved son, no longer in this world shall we share one common hearth and board; for now I go my last journey, even the way of my fathers. Needs must thou, therefore, prove thy loving affection for me by thy keeping of God’s commandments, and by thy continuance in this place even to the end, living as thou hast learned and been instructed, and alway remembering my poor and slothful soul. Rejoice, therefore, with great joy, and make merry with the gladness that is in Christ, because thou hast exchanged the earthly and corruptible for the eternal and incorruptible; and because there draweth nigh the reward of thy works, and thy rewarder is already at hand, who shall come to see the vineyard which thou hast dressed, and shall richly pay thee the wages of thine husbandry. ‘Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation,’ as proclaimed by Paul the divine, ‘For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we endure, we shall also reign with him in his eternal and everlasting kingdom, being illuminated with the light unapproachable, and guerdoned with the effulgence of the blessed and life-giving Trinity.’”

Thus until eventide and all night long did Barlaam converse with Ioasaph, who wept tears that could not be stayed, and could not bear the parting. But just as day began to dawn, Barlaam ended his discourse, lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, and offered his thanks to God, thus saying, “O Lord, my God, who art everywhere present, and fillest all things, I thank thee, for that thou hast looked upon my lowliness, and hast granted me to

fulfil the course of this mine earthly pilgrimage in thy true Faith, and in the way of thy commandments. And now, thou lover of good, all-merciful Master, receive me into thine everlasting habitations; and remember not all the sins that I have committed against thee, in knowledge or in ignorance. Defend also this thy faithful servant, before whom thou hast granted to me, thine unprofitable servant, to stand. Deliver him from all vanity, and all despiteful treatment of the adversary, and set him clear of the many-meshed nets which the wicked one spreadeth abroad for to trip all them that would full fain be saved. Destroy, Almighty Lord, all the might of the deceiver from before the face of thy servant, and grant him authority to trample on the baneful head of the enemy of our souls. Send down from on high the grace of thy Holy Spirit; and strengthen him against the invisible hosts, that he may receive at thy hands the crown of victory, and that in him thy name may be glorified, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for to thee belongeth glory and praise forever and ever. Amen.”

Thus prayed he, and in fatherly wise embraced Ioasaph, and saluted him with an holy kiss. Then he sealed himself with the sign of the Cross, and gathered up his feet, and, with exceeding great joy, as at the homecoming of friends, departed on that blessed journey, to receive his reward yonder, an old man and full of days in the Spirit.

XL

Then did Ioasaph embrace the good father, with all the devotion and sorrow that can be told, and washed his corpse with his tears. Then he wrapped it in the hair-shirt, which Barlaam had given him in his palace; and over him he recited the proper psalms, chanting all the day long, and throughout the night, and watering the venerable body of the Saint with his tears. On the morrow, he made a grave hard by the cave, and thither reverently bore the sacred body, and there, like a good and honourable son, laid his spiritual father in his sepulchre. And then, the fire of grief kindling all the hotter within his soul, he set himself to pray the more earnestly, saying:

“O Lord my God, hearken unto my voice, when I cry unto thee. Have mercy upon me, and hear me, for I seek thee with all my heart. My soul hath sought for thee: O hide not thy face from me, and turn not away in anger from thy servant. Be thou my helper; cast me not utterly away, and forsake me not, O God my Saviour, because my father and mother forsake me; but do thou, O Lord, take me up. Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in the right way because of mine enemies. Deliver me not over unto the souls of them that afflict me; for I have been cast upon thee ever since I was born; thou art my God even from my mother’s womb. O go not from me, because, except thee, there is none to help me. For lo, I set the hope of my soul upon the ocean of thy mercies. Be thou the pilot of my soul, thou that steerest all creation with the unspeakable forethought of thy wisdom; and show thou me the way that I should walk in; and, as thou art a good God and a lover of men, save me by the prayers and intercessions of Barlaam thy servant, for thou art my God, and thee I glorify, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.”

Thus prayed he, and sat him down nigh the sepulchre, a-weeping. And as he sat, he fell asleep, and saw those dread men, whom he had seen before, coming to him, and carrying him away to the great and marvellous plain,

and bringing him to that glorious and exceeding bright city. When he had passed within the gate, there met him others, gloriously apparelled with much light, having in their hands crowns radiant with unspeakable beauty, such as mortal eye hath never seen. And, when Ioasaph enquired, "Whose are these exceeding bright crowns of glory, which I see?" "Thine," said they, "is the one, prepared for thee, because of the many souls which thou hast saved, and now made still more beautiful because of the religious life that thou ledest, if thou continue therein bravely until the end. And this other crown is thine also; but it must thou give unto thy father, who, by thy means, turned from his evil way unto the Lord, and was truly penitent." But Ioasaph was as one sore vexed, and said, "How is it possible that, for his repentance alone, my father should receive reward equal to mine, that have laboured so much?" Thus spake he, and straightway thought that he saw Barlaam, as it were, chiding him and saying, "These are my words, Ioasaph, which I once spake unto thee, saying, 'When thou waxest passing rich, thou wilt not be glad to distribute,' and thou understoodest not my saying. But now, why art thou displeased at thy father's equality with thee in honour, and art not rather glad at heart that thine orisons in his behalf have been heard?" Then Ioasaph said unto him, as he was ever wont to say, "Pardon! father, pardon! But show me where thou dwellest?" Barlaam answered, "In this mighty and exceeding fair city. It is my lot to dwell in the midmost street of the city, a street that flasheth with light supernal." Again Ioasaph thought he asked Barlaam to bring him to his own habitation, and, in friendly wise, to show him the sights thereof. But Barlaam said that his time was not yet come to win those habitations, while he was under the burden of the flesh. "But," said he, "if thou persevere bravely, even as I charged thee, in a little while thou shalt come hither, and gain the same habitations, and obtain the same joy and glory, and be my companion forever." Hereupon Ioasaph awoke out of sleep, but his soul was still full of that light and ineffable glory; and greatly wondering, he raised to his Lord a song of thanksgiving.

And he continued to the end, verily leading on earth the life of an angel, and after the death of his aged friend using himself to severer austerity. Twenty and five years old was he when he left his earthly kingdom, and adopted the monastic life; and thirty and five years in this vast desert did he, like one dis-fleshed, endure rigours above the endurance of man, but not before he had delivered the souls of many men from the soul-devouring

dragon, and presented them to God, saved for aye; winning herewith the Apostolic grace. In will he had proved a martyr, and had with boldness confessed Christ before kings and tyrants, and had proved himself the mighty-voiced preacher of his greatness, and had overthrown many spirits of wickedness in the desert, and had overcome all in the strength of Christ. Partaking richly of the gift of grace from above, he kept his mind's eye purified from every earthborn cloud, and looked forward to the things that are to come, as though they were already come. Christ was his recompense for all: Christ was his desire: Christ he ever saw as present with him: Christ and his fair beauty everywhere met his sight, according to the saying of the prophet, "I have set God always before me; for he is on my right hand, therefore I shall not fall." And again, "My soul cleaveth to thee; thy right hand hath upholden me." For verily Ioasaph's soul clave to Christ, being knit to him in indissoluble union. From this marvellous work he never swerved, never altered the rule of his ascetic life, from beginning to end, but maintained his zeal from his youth even until old age; or rather, he daily advanced higher in virtue, and daily gained purer power of vision.

Thus did Ioasaph spend his days, and render unto him that called him labour worthy of his calling, having crucified the world to himself, and himself unto the world, and, at the last, departed in peace unto the God of peace, and passed to that Master whom he had alway longed for. There he appeared in the immediate presence of the Lord, and was crowned with the crown of glory already prepared for him: there it is granted to him to behold Christ, to be with Christ, to rejoice forever in the fair beauty of Christ, into whose hands he commended his spirit, when he departed to walk in the land of the living, where is the song of them that feast, the dwelling-place of them that rejoice.

As for his venerable body, it befell thus; about the very hour of Ioasaph's death, there came by divine revelation, from one of the neighbouring cells, a certain holy man. It was the same that once pointed out to Ioasaph his way to Barlaam. This man honoured the corpse with sacred hymns, and shed tears, the token of affection, over him, and performed all the last Christian rites, and laid him in the sepulchre of his father Barlaam; for it was only meet that their bodies should rest side by side, since their souls were to dwell through eternity together.

In obedience to the strict command of a dread Angel that appeared to him in a dream, this hermit, who had performed the last rites, journeyed to the

kingdom of India, and, entering in to King Barachias, made known unto him all that had befallen Barlaam, and this blessed Ioasaph. Barachias, making no delay, set forth with a mighty host, and arrived at the cave, and beheld their sepulchre, and wept bitterly over it, and raised the gravestone. There he descried Barlaam and Ioasaph lying, as they had been in life. Their bodies had not lost their former hue, but were whole and uncorrupt, together with their garments. These, the consecrated tabernacles of two holy souls, that sent forth full sweet savour, and showed naught distressful, were placed by King Barachias in costly tombs and conveyed by him into his own country.

Now when the people heard tell of that which had come to pass, there assembled a countless multitude out of all the cities and regions round about, to venerate and view the bodies of these Saints. Thereupon, sooth to say, they chanted the sacred hymns over them, and vied one with another to light lamps lavishly, and rightly and fitly, might one say, in honour of these children and inheritors of light. And with splendour and much solemnity they laid their bodies in the Church which Ioasaph had built from the very foundation. And many miracles and cures, during the translation and deposition of their relics, as also in later times, did the Lord work by his holy servants. And King Barachias and all the people beheld the mighty virtues that were shown by them; and many of the nations round about, that were sick of unbelief and ignorance of God, believed through the miracles that were wrought at their sepulchre. And all they that saw and heard of the Angelic life of Ioasaph, and of his love of God from his childhood upward, marvelled, and in all things glorified God that alway worketh together with them that love him, and granteth them exceeding great reward.

Here endeth this history, which I have written, to the best of my ability, even as I heard it from the truthful lips of worthy men who delivered it unto me. And may God grant that all we that read or hear this edifying story may obtain the heritage of such as have pleased the Lord, by the prayers and intercessions of blessed Barlaam and Ioasaph, of whom this story telleth, in Christ Jesu our Lord; to whom belongeth worship, might, majesty and glory, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and forevermore, world without end. Amen.

ENDNOTES

1. For *Apology of Aristides* see [here](#). ↵
2. See [here](#). ↵
3. For details see Max Müller, *Contemp. Review* (July, 1870). ↵
4. Cp. [here](#): ἵνα γινῶς, ὃ βασιλεῦ, ὅτι οὐκ ἀπ' ἑμαντοῦ ταῦτα λέγω, ταῖς Γραφαῖς ἐγκύβας τῶν Χριστιανῶν εὐρήσεις οὐδὲν ἕξωθεν τῆς ἀληθείας με λέγειν. ↵
5. I.e. The Lord gathers. ↵
6. Simon Magus (?). ↵
7. The Latin *pallium*. παλλίον, or πάλλιον, is used by Eriphanius and others. See E. A. Sophocles' *Greek Lexicon*. ↵
8. Greg. Naz. Orat. xl. 45. οὐκ ἔτι μὲν σάρκα, οὐκ ἀσώματον δέ, οἷς αὐτὸς οἶδε λόγοις, θεοειδεστέρου σώματος, κ.τ.λ. ↵
9. A play on the Greek word *Kosmos* which means: (1) An orderly arrangement, (2) Universe . ↵
10. It was the *Apology of Aristides*, written circa AD 125. See the Introduction. ↵
11. It should be Habakkuk. ↵
12. Serug, Gen. 11:20; Luke 3:35. ↵
13. This reference to an assembly suggests a variant version of this episode for above ([see here](#)) Theudas is closeted with Ioasaph and the king. ↵
14. Strictly a swimming-bath. Then, in Ecclesiastical Greek, a Font. ↵



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