The Temptation of St. Anthony

by Gustave Flaubert

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Author: Gustave Flaubert

Illustrator: Odilon Redon

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ST. ANTHONY ***

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THE TEMPTATION OF ST. ANTHONY

BY

GUSTAVE FLAUBERT

TRANSLATED BY

LAFCADIO HEARN

ILLUSTRATIONS by ODILON REDON

(Added especially for this PG e-book.)

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Contents

INTRODUCTION

It was at some period between 1875 and 1876 that Lafcadio Hearn—still a "cub" reporter on a daily paper in Cincinnati—began his translation of Flaubert's "Temptation of St. Anthony." The definitive edition of the work, over which the author had laboured for thirty years, had appeared in 1874.

Hearn was, in his early youth, singularly indifferent to the work of the Englishmen

of the Victorian period. Though he knew the English masterpieces of that epoch, their large, unacademic freedom of manner awakened no echoes in his spirit. His instinctive taste was for the exquisite in style: for "that peculiar kneading, heightening, and recasting" which Matthew Arnold thought necessary for perfection. Neither did the matter, more than the manner of the Victorians appeal to him. The circumstances of his life had at so many points set him out of touch with his fellows that the affectionate mockery of Thackeray's pictures of English society were alien to his interest. The laughing heartiness of Dickens' studies of the man in the street hardly touched him. Browning's poignant analyses of souls were too rudely robust of manner to move him. Before essaying journalism Hearn had served for a while as an assistant in the Public Library, and there he had found and fallen under the spell, of the great Frenchman of the Romantic School of the '30's—that period of rich flowering of the Gallic genius. Gautier's tales of ancient weirdnesses fired his imagination. The penetrating subtleties of his verse woke in the boy the felicitous emotions which the virtuoso knows in handling cameos and enamellings by hands which have long been dust. So, also, Hugo's revivals of the passions and terrors of the mediæval world stirred the young librarian's eager interest. But most of all his spirit leapt to meet the tremendous drama of the "Temptation." He comprehended at once its large significance, its great import, and in his enthusiastic recognition of its value and meaning he set at once about giving it a language understood of the people of his own tongue.

Tunison tells of the little shy, shabby, half-blind boy—the long dull day of police reporting done—labouring at his desk into the small hours, with the flickering gas jet whistling overhead, and his myopic eyes bent close to the papers which he covered with beautiful, almost microscopic characters—escaping thus from the crass, raw world about him to delicately and painstakingly turn into English stories of Cleopatra's cruel, fantastic Egyptian Night's Entertainment. Withdrawing himself to transliterate tales of pallid beautiful vampires draining the veins of ardent boys: of

lovely faded ghosts of great ladies descending from shadowy tapestries to coquette with romantic dreamers; or to find an English voice for the tragedy of the soul of the Alexandrian cenobite.

It was in such dreams and labours that he found refuge from the environment that was so antipathetic to his tastes, and in his immersion in the works of these virtuosos of words, in his passionate search for equivalents of the subtle nuances of their phrases, he developed his own style. A style full of intricate assonances, of a texture close woven and iridescent.

"One of Cleopatra's Night's"—a translation of some of Gautier's tales of glamour—was issued in 1882, but at "The Temptation of St. Anthony" the publishers altogether balked. The manuscript could not achieve even so much as a reading. America had in the '70's just begun to emerge from that state of provincial propriety in which we were accused of clothing even our piano legs in pantelettes. The very name of the work was sufficient to start modest shivers down the spine of all well regulated purveyors of books. It was largely due to the painters' conceptions of the nature of the hermit's trials that the story of Saint Anthony's spiritual struggle aroused instinctive terrors in all truly modest natures. The painters—who so dearly love to display their skill in drawing legs and busts—had been wont to push the poor old saint into the obscure of the background, and fill all the foreground with ladies of obviously the very lightest character, in garments still lighter, if possible. What had reputable American citizens to do with such as these jades? More especially such jades as seen through a French imagination! That Flaubert had brushed aside the gross and jejune conceptions of the painters the publishers would not even take the pains to learn.

It is amusing now to recall the nervous, timid proprieties of those days. At the time Hearn failed to see the laughable side of it. He was then too young and earnest, too passionate and too melancholy to have a sense of its humours.

He had brought his unfinished manuscript from Cincinnati to New Orleans, and had continued to work upon it in strange lodgings in gaunt, old half-ruined Creole houses; at the tables of odd little French cafés, or among the queer dishes in obscure Spanish and Chinese restaurants. He had snatched minutes for it amidst the reading and clipping of exchanges in a newspaper office; had toiled drippingly over it in the liquifying heats of tropic nights; had arisen from the "inexpungable langours" of yellow fever to complete its last astounding pages.

I can remember applauding, with ardent youthful sympathy, his tirades against the stultifying influence of blind puritanism upon American literature. I recall his scornful mocking at the inconsistency which complacently accepted the vulgar seduction, and the theatrical Brocken revels of Faust, while shrinking piously from Flaubert's grim story of the soul of man struggling to answer the riddle of the universe. He had however an almost equal contempt for the author's countrymen, who received with eager interest and pleasure the deliberate analysis—in Madame Bovary—of a woman's degradation and ruin, while they yawned over the amazing history of humanity's tremendous spiritual adventures. Hearn's own sensitiveness shrank in pain from the cold insight which uncovered layer by layer the brutal squalour of a woman's moral disintegration. But he was moved and astounded by the revelation, in St. Anthony, of the tragedy and pathos of man's long search for some body of belief or philosophy by which he could explain to himself the strange great phenomena of life and death, and the inscrutable cruelties of Nature. The young translator was filled with a sort of astonished despair at his inability to make others see the book as he did—not realizing, in his youthful impatience, that the average mind clings to the concrete, and is puzzled and terrified by outlines of thought too large for its range of vision; that the commonplace intelligence cannot "see the wood for the trees," and becomes confused and over-weighted when confronted with the huge outlines of so great a picture as that drawn by Flaubert in his masterpiece.

There were many points of resemblance between Lafcadio Hearn and the grandson

of the French veterinary. A resemblance rather in certain qualities of the spirit than in social conditions and physical endowments. Flaubert, born in 1821, was the son of a surgeon. His father was long connected with the Hôtel Dieu of Rouen, in which the boy was born, and in which he lived until his eighteenth year, when he went to Paris to study law. One of the friends of his early Parisian days describes him as "a young Greek. Tall, supple, and as graceful as an athlete. He was charming, mais un peu farouche. Quite unconscious of his physical and mental gifts; very careless of the impression he produced, and entirely indifferent to formalities. His dress consisted of a red flannel shirt, trousers of heavy blue cloth, and a scarf of the same colour drawn tight about his slender waist. His hat was worn 'any how' and often he abandoned it altogether. When I spoke to him of fame or influence.... he seemed superbly indifferent. He had no desire for glory or gain.... What was lacking in his nature was an interest in les choses extérieures, choses utiles." ...

One who saw him in 1879 found the young Greek athlete—now close upon sixty, and having in the interval created some of the great classics of French literature—"a huge man, a tremendous old man. His long, straggling gray hair was brushed back. His red face was that of a soldier, or a sheik—divided by drooping white moustaches. A trumpet was his voice, and he gesticulated freely ... the colour of his eyes a bit of faded blue sky."

The study of the law did not hold Flaubert long. It was one of those choses extérieures, choses utiles to which he was so profoundly indifferent. Paris bored him. He longed for Rouen, and for his little student chamber. There he had lain upon his bed whole days at a time; apparently as lazy as a lizard; smoking, dreaming; pondering the large, inchoate, formless dreams of youth.

In 1845 his father died, and in the following year he lost his sister Caroline, whom he had passionately loved, and for whom he grieved all his life. He rejoined his mother, and they established themselves at Croisset, near Rouen, upon a small

inherited property. It was an agreeable house, pleasantly situated in sight of the Seine. Flaubert nourished with pleasure a local legend that Pascal had once inhabited the old Croisset homestead, and that the Abbé Prevost had written Manon Lescaut within its walls. Near the house—now gone—he built for himself a pavilion to serve as a study, and in this he spent the greater portion of the following thirty-four years in passionate, unremitting labour.

He made a voyage to Corsica in his youth; one to Brittany, with Maxime du Camp, in 1846; and spent some months in Egypt, Palestine, Turkey, and Greece in 1849. This Oriental experience gave him the most intense pleasure, and was the germ of Salammbo, and of the Temptation of St. Anthony. He never repeated it, though he constantly talked of doing so. He nursed a persistent, but unrealized dream of going as far as Ceylon, whose ancient name, Taprobana, he was never weary of repeating; utterance of its melifluous syllables becoming a positive tic with him. Despite these yearnings he remained at home. Despite his full-blooded physique he would take no more exercise than his terrace afforded, or an occasional swim in the Seine. He smoked incessantly, and for months at a stretch worked fifteen hours out of the twenty-four at his desk. Three hundred volumes might be annotated for a page of facts. He would write twenty pages, and reduce these by exquisite concisions, by fastidious rejections to three; would search for hours for the one word that perfectly conveyed the colour of his thought, and would—as in the case of the Temptation—wait fifteen years for a sense of satisfaction with a manuscript before allowing it to see the light. To Maxime du Camp, who urged him to hasten the completion of his book in order to take advantage of a favourable opportunity, he wrote angrily:

"Tu me parais avoir à mon endroit un tic ou vice rédhibitoire. Il ne m'embête pas; n'aie aucune crainte; mon parti est pris là-dessus depuis long temps. Je te dirai seulement que tous ces mots; se dépêcher, c'est le moment, place prise, se poser, ... sont pour moi un vocabulaire vide de sens...."

In one of his letters he says that on occasion he worked violently for eight hours to achieve one page. He endeavoured never to repeat a word in that page, and tried to force every phrase to respond to a rhythmic law. Guy do Maupassant, his nephew and pupil, says that to ensure this rhythm Flaubert "prenait sa feuille de papier, relevait à la hauteur du regard et, s'appuyant sur un coude, déclaimait, d'une voix mordant et haute. Il écoutait la rythme de sa prose, s'arrêtait comme pour saisir une sonorité fuyant, combinait les tons, éloignait les assonances, disposait les virgules avec conscience, commes les haltes d'un long chemin." ...

Flaubert said himself, "une phrase est viable quand elle correspond à toutes les nécessités de respiration. Je sais qu'elle est bonne lorsqu'elle peut être lu tout haut."

Henry Irving used to say of himself that it was necessary he should work harder than other actors because nature had dowered him with flexibility of neither voice nor feature, and Faguet says that Flaubert was forced to this excessive toil and incessant watchfulness because he did not write well naturally. Nevertheless Flaubert's work did not smell of the lamp. Whatever shape his ideas may have worn at birth when full grown they moved with large classic grace and freedom, simple, sincere, and beautiful in form. François Coppée calls him "the Beethoven of French prose."

So conscientious a workman, so laborious and self-sacrificing an artist had a natural attraction for Lafcadio Hearn, who even in boyhood began to feel his vocation as "a literary monk." The whole tendency of his tastes prepared him to understand the true importance of Flaubert's masterpiece, fitted him especially of all living writers to turn that masterpiece into its true English equivalent. The two men had much in common. Both were proud and timid. Both had a fundamental indifference to choses extérieures, choses utiles. Both were realists of the soul. Actions interested each but slightly; the emotions from which actions sprung very much. To both stupidity was even more antipathetic than wickedness, because each realized that nearly all cruelty and vice have their germ in ignorance and stupidity rather than in innate rascality.

Flaubert declared, with a sort of rage, that "la bêtise entre dans mes pores." He might too have been speaking for Hearn when he said that the grotesque, the strange, and the monstrous had for him an inexplicable charm. "It corresponds," he says, "to the intimate needs of my nature—it does not cause me to laugh, but to dream long dreams." Hearn, however, mixed with this triste interest a quality that Flaubert seemed almost wholly to lack—a great tenderness for all things humble, feeble, ugly and helpless. Both from childhood were curious of poignant sensations, of the sad, the mysterious and the exotic. And for both the tropics had an irresistible fascination. Flaubert says, in one of his letters:

"I carry with me the melancholy of the barbaric races, with their instincts of migration, and their innate distaste of life, which forced them to quit their homes in order to escape from themselves. They loved the sun, all those barbarians who came to die in Italy; they had a frenzied aspiration toward the light, toward the blue skies, toward an ardent existence.... Think that perhaps I will never see China, will never be rocked to sleep by the cadenced footsteps of camels ... will never see the shine of a tiger's eyes in the forest.... You can treat all this as little worthy of pity, but I suffer so much when I think of it ... as of something lamentable and irremediable."

This is the nostalgia for the strange, for the unaccustomed, that all born wanderers know. Fate arranges it for many of them that their lives shall be uneventful, passed in dull, provincial narrowness; but behind these bars the clipped wings of their spirit are always flutteringly spread for flight. They know not what they seek, what desire drives them, but a sense of "the great adventure" unachieved keeps them restless until they die. It is such as these, these voyageurs empassionés, when condemned by fortune to a static existence—who find their outlet in mental wanderings amid the unusual, the grotesque, and the monstrous. Hearn and Flaubert both were at heart nomads, seekers of the unaccustomed; stretching toward immensities of space and time, toward the ghostly, the hidden, the unrealized. Like that wild fantastic Chimera of the "Temptation" each such soul declares "je cherche des parfums nouveaux, des

fleurs plus large, des plaisirs inéprouvés."

Flaubert was but twenty-six when the first suggestion of his masterpiece came to him. For La Tentation de St. Antoine, it is coming to be understood, is his masterpiece; is one of the greatest literary achievements of the French mind. Madame Bovary is more widely famous and popular, but Flaubert himself always deeply resented this preference, and was always astonished at the comparative indifference of the world to the "Temptation." He, too, found it difficult to realize how hardly the average mind is awakened to an interest in the incorporeal; how surely cosmic generalizations escape the grasp of the commonplace intelligence.

Wagner waited a lifetime before the world was dragged reluctantly and resentfully up to a point from which it could discern the superiority of the tremendous finale of the Götterdämmerung to the Christmas-card chorus of angels chanting "Âme chaste et pure" to the beatified Marguerite. The whole prodigious structure of Wagner's dramatic and musical thought might have remained a mere adumbration in the soul of one German had chance not set a mad genius upon the throne of Bavaria. The bourgeoisie would—lacking this royal bullying—have continued to prefer Goethe and Gounod. Flaubert's great work unfortunately failed of such patronage.

It was in 1845 that an old picture by Breughel, seen at Genoa, first inspired Flaubert to attempt the story of St. Anthony. He sought out an engraving of this conception of Peter the Younger (surnamed "Hell-Breughel" for his fondness for such subjects), hung it on his walls at Croisset, and after three years of brooding upon it began, May 24, 1848, La Tentation de St. Antoine. In twelve months he had finished the first draught of the work, which bulked to 540 pages. It was laid aside for "Bovary," and a second version of the "Temptation" was completed in 1856, but this time the manuscript had been reduced to 193 pages, and the "blazing phrases, the jewelled words, the turbulence, the comedy, the mysticism" of the first version had been superseded by a larger, more dramatic conception. In 1872 he made still a new

draught, and by this time it had shrunk to 136 pages. He even then eliminated three chapters, and finally gave to the world in 1874 "this wonderful coloured panorama of philosophy, this Gulliver-like travelling amid the master ideas of the antique and early Christian worlds."

Faguet says, "In its primitive and legendary state the temptation of St. Anthony was nothing more than the story of a recluse tempted by the Devil through the flesh, by all the artifices at the Devil's disposal. In the definite thought of Flaubert the temptation of St. Anthony has become man's soul tempted by all the illusions of human thought and imagination. St. Anthony to the eyes of the first naive hagiologists is a second Adam, seduced by woman, who was inspired by Satan. St. Anthony conceived by Flaubert is a more thoughtful Faust; a Faust incapable of irony, not a Faust who could play with illusions and with himself—secretly persuaded that he could withdraw when he chose to give himself the trouble to do so—rather a Faust who approached, accosted, caressed all possible forms of universal illusions."

Flaubert's studies for the "Temptation" were tremendous. For nearly thirty years he touched and retouched, altered, enlarged, condensed. He kneaded into its substance the knowledge, incessantly sought, of all religions and philosophies; of all the forms man's speculations had taken in his endless endeavours to explain to himself Life and Fate; humanity's untiring, passionate effort to find the meaning of its mysterious origin and purpose, and final destiny. How terrible, how naive, how fantastic, bloody, grovelling, and outrageous were most of the solutions accepted, the gigantic panorama of the book startlingly sets forth. What gory agonies, what mystic exaltations, what dark cruelties, frenzied abandons, and inhuman self denials have marked those puzzled gropings for light and truth are revealed as by lightning flashes in the crowding scenes of the epic. For the Temptation of St. Anthony is an epic. Not a drama of man's actions, as all previous epics have been, but a drama of the soul. All its movement is in the adventure and conflict of the spirit. St. Anthony

remains always in the one place, almost as moveless as a mirror. His vision—clarified of the sensual and the actual by his fastings and macerations—becomes like the surface of an unruffled lake. A lake reflecting the aberrant forms of thoughts that, like clouds, drift between man and the infinite depths of knowledge. Clouds of illusion forever changing, melting, fusing; assuming forms grotesque, monstrous, intolerable; until at last the writhing mists of speculation and ignorance are drunk up by the widening light of wisdom and the fogs and phantasms vanish, leaving his consciousness aware, in poignant ecstasy, of the cloudless deeps of truth. The temptation of the flesh is but a passing episode. An eidolon of Sheba's queen offers him luxury, wealth, voluptuous beauty, power, dainty delights of eye and palate in vain. Man has never found his most dangerous seductions in the appetites. More lamentable disintegration has grown from his attempts to pierce beyond the body's veil. The parched and tortured saint is whirled by vertiginous visions through cycles of man's straining efforts to know why, whence, whither. He assists at the rites of Mithira, the prostrations of serpent-and-devil-worshippers, worshippers of fire, of light, of the Greeks' deified forces of nature; of the northern enthronement of brute force and war. He is swept by the soothing breath of Quietism, plunges into every heresy and philosophy, sees the orgies, the flagellations, the self mutilations, the battles and furies of sects, each convinced that it has found the answer at last to the Great Question, and endeavouring to constrain the rest of humanity to accept the answer. He meets the Sphinx—embodied interrogation—and the Chimera—the simulacrum of the fantasies of the imagination—dashing madly about the stolid querist.

Lucifer—spirit of doubt of all dogmatic solutions—mounts with Anthony into illimitable space. They rise beyond these struggles and furies into the cold uttermost of the universe; among innumerable worlds; worlds yet vaguely forming in the womb of time, newly come to birth, lustily grown to maturity; worlds dying, decaying, crumbling again into atomic dust. Overcome by the intolerable Vast,

Anthony sinks once more to his cell, and Lucifer, who has shown him the macrocosm, opens to him the equal immensity of the microcosm. Makes him see the swarming life that permeates the seas, the earth and atmosphere, the incredible numerousness of the invisible lives that people every drop of water, every grain of sand, every breath of air. The unity of life dawns upon him, and his heart, withered by dubiety, melts into joyousness and peace. As the day dawns in gold he beholds the face of Christ.

Flaubert's Lucifer has no relation to the jejune Devil of man's early conception of material evil, nor does he resemble Goethe's Mephistopheles; embodiment of the Eighteenth Century's spirit of sneering disbeliefs and negation. He is rather our own tempter—Science. He is the spirit of Knowledge: Nature itself calling us to look into the immensities and read just our dogmas by this new and terrible widening of our mental and moral horizons. This last experience of the Saint reproduces the spiritual experiences of the modern man; cast loose from his ancient moorings, and yet finding at last in his new knowledge a truer conception of the brotherhood of all life in all its forms, and seeing still, in the growing light, the benignant eyes of God.

It is not remarkable that Flaubert resented the banality, the dull grossness of the reception of his work, or that Hearn shared his amazement and bitterness. Even yet the world wakes but slowly to the true character of this masterpiece; this epic wrought with so great a care and patience, so instinct with genius, dealing perhaps more profoundly than any other mind has ever done with the Great Adventure of humanity's eternal search for Truth.

ELIZABETH BISLAND.

ARGUMENT

FRAILTY

Sunset in the desert. Enfeebled by prolonged fasting, the hermit finds himself unable to concentrate his mind upon holy things. His thoughts wonder; memories of youth

evoke regrets that his relaxed will can no longer find strength to suppress,—and, remembrance begetting remembrance, his fancy leads him upon dangerous ground. He dreams of his flight from home,—of Ammonaria, his sister's playmate,—of his misery in the waste,—his visit to Alexandria with the blind monk Didymus,—the unholy sights of the luxurious city.

Involuntarily he yields to the nervous dissatisfaction growing upon him. He laments his solitude, his joylessness, his poverty, the obscurity of his life; grace departs from him; hope burns low within his heart. Suddenly revolting against his weakness, he seeks refuge from distraction in the study of the Scriptures.

Vain effort! An invisible hand turns the leaves, placing perilous texts before his eyes. He dreams of the Maccabees slaughtering their enemies, and desires that he might do likewise with the Arians of Alexandria;—he becomes inspired with admiration of King Nebuchadnezzar;—he meditates voluptuously upon the visit of Sheba's queen of Solomon;—discovers a text in the Acts of the Apostles antagonistic to principles of monkish ascetism,—indulges in reveries regarding the riches of Biblical kings and holy men. The Tempter comes to tempt him with evil hallucinations for which the Saint's momentary frailty has paved the way; and with the Evil One come also

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS

Phantom gold is piled up to excite Covetousness; shadowy banquets appear to evoke Gluttony. The scene shifts to aid the temptations of Anger and of Pride....

Anthony finds himself in Alexandria, at the head of a wild army of monks slaughtering the heretics and the pagans, without mercy for age or sex. In fantastic obedience to the course of his fancy while reading the Scriptures a while before, and like an invisible echo of his evil thoughts, the scene changes again. Alexandria is transformed into Constantinople.

Anthony finds himself the honoured of the Emperor. He beholds the vast circus in

all its splendour, the ocean of faces, the tumult of excitement. Simultaneously he beholds his enemies degraded to the condition of slaves, toiling in the stables of Constantine. He feels joy in the degradation of the Fathers of Nicæa. Then all is transformed.

It is no longer the splendour of Constantinople he beholds under the luminosity of a Greek day; but the prodigious palace of Nebuchadnezzar by night. He beholds the orgies, the luxuries, the abominations;—and the spirit of Pride enters triumphantly into him as the spirit of Nebuchadnezzar....

Awaking as from a dream, he finds himself again before his hermitage. A vast caravan approaches, halts; and the Queen of Sheba descends to tempt the Saint with the deadliest of all temptations. Her beauty is enhanced by oriental splendour of adornment; her converse is a song of withcraft. The Saint remains firm.... The Seven Deadly Sins depart from him.

THE HERESIARCHS

But now the tempter assumes a subtler form. Under the guise of a former disciple of Anthony,—Hilarion,—the demon, while pretending to seek instruction, endeavours to poison the mind of Anthony with hatred of the fathers of the church. He repeats all the scandals amassed by ecclesiastical intriguers, all the calumnies created by malice;—he cites texts only to foment doubt, and quotes the evangels only to make confusion. Under the pretext of obtaining mental enlightenment from the wisest of men, he induces Anthony to enter with him into a spectral basilica, wherein are assembled all the Heresiarchs of the third century. The hermit is confounded by the multitude of tenets,—horrified by the blasphemies and abominations of Elkes, Corpocrates, Valentinus, Manes, Cerdo,—disgusted by the perversions of the Paternians, Marcosians, Montanists, Serptians,—bewildered by the apocryphal Gospels of Eve and of Judas, of the Lord, and of Thomas.

And Hilarion grows taller.

THE MARTYRS

Anthony finds himself in the dungeons of a vast amphitheatre, among Christians condemned to the wild beasts. By this hallucination the tempter would prove to the Saint that martyrdom is not always suffered for purest motives. Anthony finds the martyrs possessed by bigotry and insincerity. He sees many compelled to die against their will; many who would forswear their faith could it avail them aught. He beholds heretics die for their heterodoxy more nobly than orthodox believers.

And he finds himself transported to the tombs of the martyrs. He witnesses the meetings of Christian women at the sepulchres. He beholds the touching ceremonies of prayer, change into orgies,—lamentations give place to amorous dalliance.

THE MAGICIANS

Then the Tempter seeks to shake Anthony's faith in the excellence and evidence of miracles. He assumes the form of a Hindoo Brahmin, terminating a life of wondrous holiness by self-cremation;—he appears as Simon Magus and Helen of Tyre,—as Appollonius of Tyans, greatest of all thaumaturgists, who claims superiority to Christ. All the marvels related by Philostratus are embodied in the converse of Apollonius and Damis.

THE GODS

Hilarion reappears taller than ever, growing more gigantic in proportion to the increasing weakness of the Saint. Standing beside Anthony he evokes all the deities of the antique world. They defile before him in a marvellous panorama:—Gods of Egypt and India, Chaldea and Hellas, Babylon and Ultima Thule,—monstrous and multiform, phallic and ithyphallic, fantastic or obscene. Some intoxicate by their beauty; others appall by their foulness. The Buddha recounts the story of his wondrous life; Venus displays the rounded daintiness of her nudity; Isis utters awful soliloquy. Lastly the phantom of Jehovah appears, as the shadow of a god passing away forever.

Suddenly the stature of Hilarion towers to the stars; he assumes the likeness and luminosity of Lucifer; he announces himself as

SCIENCE

And Anthony is lifted upon mighty wings and borne away beyond the world, above the solar system, above the starry arch of the Milky Way. All future discoveries of Astronomy are revealed to him. He is tempted by the revelation of innumerable worlds,—by the refutation of all his previous ideas of the nature of the Universe,—by the enigmas of infinity,—by all the marvels that conflict with faith. Even in the night of immensity the demon renews the temptation of reason: Anthony wavers upon the verge of pantheism.

LUST AND DEATH

Anthony abandoned by the spirit of Science comes to himself in the desert. Then the Tempter returns under a two-fold aspect: as the Spirit of Lust and the Spirit of Destruction. The latter urges him to suicide,—the former to indulgence of sense. They inspire him with strong fancies of palingenesis, of the illusion of death, of the continuity of life. The pantheistic temptation intensified.

THE MONSTERS

Anthony in reveries meditates upon the monstrous symbols painted upon the walls of certain ancient temples. Could he know their meaning he might learn also something of the secret lien between Matter and Thought. Forthwith a phantasmagoria of monsters commence to pass before his eyes:—the Sphinx and the Chimera, the Blemmyes and Astomi, the Cynocephali and all creatures of mythologie creation. He beholds the fabulous beings of Oriental imagining,—the abnormities described by Pliny and Herodotus, the fantasticalities to be later adopted by heraldry,—the grotesqueries of future medieval illumination made animate;—the goblinries and foulnesses of superstitious fancy,—the Witches' Sabbath of abominations.

METAMORPHOSIS

The multitude of monsters melts away; the land changes into an Ocean; the creatures of the briny abysses appear. And the waters in turn also change; seaweeds are transformed to herbs, forests of coral give place to forests of trees, polypous life changes to vegetation. Metals crystallize; frosts effloresce; plants become living things, inanimate matter takes animate form, monads vibrate, the pantheism of nature makes itself manifest. Anthony feels a delirious desire to unite himself with the Spirit of Universal Being....

The vision vanishes. The sun arises. The face of Christ is revealed. The temptation has passed; Anthony kneels in prayer.

L. H.

THE TEMPTATION OF ST. ANTHONY

I

It is in the Thebaid at the summit of a mountain, upon a platform, rounded off into the form of a demilune, and enclosed by huge stones.

The Hermit's cabin appears in the background. It is built of mud and reeds, it is flat-roofed and doorless. A pitcher and a loaf of black bread can be distinguished within also, in the middle of the apartment a large book resting on a wooden stela; while here and there, fragments of basketwork, two or three mats, a basket, and a knife lie upon the ground.

Some ten paces from the hut, there is a long cross planted in the soil; and, at the other end of the platform, an aged and twisted palm tree leans over the abyss; for the sides of the mountain are perpendicular, and the Nile appears to form a lake at the foot of the cliff.

The view to right and left is broken by the barrier of rocks. But on the desert-side, like a vast succession of sandy beaches, immense undulations of an ashen-blonde

color extend one behind the other, rising higher as they recede; and far in the distance, beyond the sands, the Libyan chain forms a chalk-colored wall, lightly shaded by violet mists. On the opposite side the sun is sinking. In the north the sky is of a pearl-gray tint, while at the zenith purple clouds disposed like the tufts of a gigantic mane, lengthen themselves against the blue vault. These streaks of flame take darker tones; the azure spots turn to a nacreous pallor; the shrubs, the pebbles, the earth, all now seem hard as bronze; and throughout space there floats a golden dust so fine as to become confounded with the vibrations of the light.

Saint Anthony, who has a long beard, long hair, and wears a tunic of goatskin, is seated on the ground cross-legged, and is occupied in weaving mats. As soon as the sun disappears, he utters a deep sigh, and, gazing upon the horizon, exclaims:—

"Another day! another day gone! Nevertheless formerly I used not to be so wretched. Before the end of the night I commenced my orisons; then I descended to the river to get water, and remounted the rugged pathway with the skin upon my shoulder, singing hymns on the way. Then I would amuse myself by arranging everything in my hut. I would make my tools; I tried to make all my mats exactly equal in size, and all my baskets light; for then my least actions seemed to me duties in nowise difficult or painful of accomplishment.

"Then at regular hours I ceased working; and when I prayed with my arms extended, I felt as though a fountain of mercy were pouring from the height of heaven into my heart. That fountain is now dried up. Why?"

(He walks up and down slowly, within the circuit of the rocks.)

"All blamed me when I left the house. My mother sank to the ground, dying; my sister from afar off made signs to me to return; and the other—wept, Ammonaria, the child whom I used to meet every evening at the cistern, when she took the oxen to drink. She ran after me. Her foot rings glittered in the dust; and her tunic, open at the hips, fluttered loosely in the wind. The aged anchorite who was leading me away

called her vile names. Our two camels galloped forward without respite; and I have seen none of my people since that day.

"At first, I selected for my dwelling place, the tomb of a Pharaoh. But an enchantment circulates through all those subterranean palaces, where the darkness seems to have been thickened by the ancient smoke of the aromatics. From the depths of Sarcophagi, I heard doleful voices arise, and call my name; or else, I suddenly beheld the abominable things painted upon the walls live and move; and I fled away to the shore of the Red Sea, and took refuge in a ruined citadel. There my only companions were the scorpions dragging themselves among the stones, and the eagles continually wheeling above my head, in the blue of heaven. At night I was torn by claws, bitten by beaks; soft wings brushed against me; and frightful demons, shrieking in my ears, flung me upon the ground. Once I was even rescued by the people of a caravan going to Alexandria; and they took me away with them.

"Then I sought to obtain instruction from the good old man Didymus. Although blind, none equalled him in the knowledge of the Scriptures. When the lesson was finished, he used to ask me to give him my arm to lean upon, that we might walk together. Then I would conduct him to the Paneum, whence may be seen the Pharos and the open sea. Then we would return by way of the post, elbowing men of all nations, even Cimmerians clad in the skins of bears and Gymnosophists of the Ganges anointed with cow-dung. But there was always some fighting in the streets—either on account of the Jews refusing to pay taxes, or of seditious people who wished to drive the Romans from the city. Moreover, the city is full of heretics—followers of Manes; Valentinus, Basilides, Arius—all seeking to engross my attention in order to argue with me and to convince me.

"Their discourses often come back to my memory. Vainly do I seek to banish them from my mind. They trouble me!

"I took refuge at Colzin, and there lived a life of such penance that I ceased to fear

God. A few men, desirous of becoming anchorites, gathered about me. I imposed a practical rule of life upon them, hating, as I did, the extravagance of Gnosus and the assertions of the philosophers. Messages were sent to me from all parts, and men came from afar off to visit me.

"Meanwhile the people were torturing the confessors; and the thirst of martyrdom drew me to Alexandria. The persecution had ceased three days before I arrived there!

"While returning thence, I was stopped by a great crowd assembled before the temple of Serapis. They told me it was a last example which the Governor had resolved to make. In the centre of the portico, under the sunlight, a naked woman was fettered to a column, and two soldiers were flogging her with thongs; at every blow her whole body writhed. She turned round, her mouth open; and over the heads of the crowd, through the long hair half hiding her face, I thought that I could recognize Ammonaria....

... through the long hair half hiding her face, I thought that I could recognize Ammonaria ...

"Nevertheless ... this one was taller ... and beautiful ... prodigiously beautiful!"

(He passes his hands over his forehead.)

"No! no! I must not think of it!

"Another time Athanasius summoned me to assist him against the Arians. The contest was limited to invectives and laughter. But since that time he has been calumniated, dispossessed of his see, obliged to fly for safety elsewhere. Where is he now? I do not know! The people give themselves very little trouble to bring me news. All my disciples have abandoned me—Hilarion like the rest.

"He was perhaps fifteen years of age when he first came to me and his intelligence was so remarkable that he asked me questions incessantly. Then he used to listen to me with a pensive air, and whatever I needed he brought it to me without a

murmur—nimbler than a kid, merry enough to make even the patriarchs laugh. He was a son to me."

(The sky is red; the earth completely black. Long drifts of sand follow the course of the gusts of wind, rising like great shrouds and falling again. Suddenly against a bright space in the sky a flock of birds pass, forming a triangular battalion, gleaming like one sheet of metal, of which the edges alone seem to quiver.

Anthony watches them.)

"Ah, how I should like to follow them.

"How often also have I enviously gazed upon those long vessels, whose sails resemble wings—and above all when they were bearing far away those I had received at my hermitage! What pleasant hours we passed!—what out-pourings of feeling! No one ever interested me more than Ammon: he told me of his voyage to Rome, of the Catacombs, the Coliseum, the piety of illustrious women, and a thousand other things!—and it grieved me to part with him! Wherefore my obstinacy in continuing to live such a life as this? I would have done well to remain with the monks of Nitria, inasmuch as they supplicated me to do so. They have cells apart, and nevertheless communicate with each other. On Sundays a trumpet summons them to assemble at the church, where one may see three scourges hanging up, which serve to punish delinquents, robbers, and intruders; for their discipline is severe.

"Nevertheless they are not without some enjoyments. The faithful bring them eggs, fruits, and even instruments with which they can extract thorns from their feet. There are vineyards about Prisperi; those dwelling at Pabena have a raft on which they may journey when they go to seek provisions.

"But I might have served my brethren better as a simple priest. As a priest one may aid the poor, administer the sacraments, and exercise authority over families.

"Furthermore, all laics are not necessarily damned, and it only depended upon my

own choice to become—for example—a grammarian, a philosopher. I would then have had in my chamber a sphere of reeds, and tablets always ready at hand, young men around me, and a wreath of laurel suspended above my door, as a sign.

"But there is too much pride in triumphs such as those. A soldier's life would have been preferable. I was robust and bold: bold enough to fasten the cables of the military machines—to traverse dark forests, or to enter, armed and helmeted, into smoking cities.... Neither was there anything to have prevented me from purchasing with my money the position of publican at the toll-office of some bridge; and travellers would have taught me many strange things, and told me strange stories, the while showing me many curious objects packed up among their baggage....

"The merchants of Alexandria sail upon the river Canopus on holidays, and drink wine in the chalices of lotus-flowers, to a music of tambourines which makes the taverns along the shore tremble! Beyond, trees, made cone-shaped by pruning, protect the quiet farms against the wind of the south. The roof of the lofty house leans upon thin colonettes placed as closely together as the laths of a lattice; and through their interspaces the master, reclining upon his long couch, beholds his plains stretching about him—the hunter among the wheat-fields—the winepress where the vintage is being converted into wine, the oxen treading out the wheat. His children play upon the floor around him; his wife bends down to kiss him."

(Against the grey dimness of the twilight, here and there appear pointed muzzles, with straight, pointed ears and bright eyes. Anthony advances toward them. There is a sound of gravel crumbling down; the animals take flight. It was a troop of jackals.

One still remains, rising upon his hinder legs, with his body half arched and head raised in an attitude full of defiance.)

"How pretty he is! I would like to stroke his back gently!"

(Anthony whistles to coax him to approach. The jackal disappears.)

"Ah! he is off to join the others. What solitude! what weariness!" (Laughing

bitterly.)

"A happy life this indeed!—bending palm-branches in the fire to make shepherds' crooks, fashioning baskets, stitching mats together—and then exchanging these things with the Nomads for bread which breaks one's teeth! Ah! woe, woe is me! will this never end? Surely death were preferable! I can endure it no more! Enough! enough!"

(He stamps his foot upon the ground, and rushes frantically to and fro among the rocks; then pauses, out of breath, bursts into tears, and lies down upon the ground, on his side.

The night is calm; multitudes of stars are palpitating; only the crackling noise made by the tarantulas is audible.

The two arms of the cross make a shadow upon the sand; Anthony, who is weeping, observes it.)

"Am I, then, so weak, O my God! Courage, let me rise from here!"

(He enters his hut, turns over a pile of cinders, finds a live ember, lights his torch and fixes it upon the wooden desk, so as to throw a light upon the great book.)

"Suppose I take the Acts of the Apostles?—yes!—no matter where!"

'And he saw the heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending, as it were a great linen sheet let down by the four corners from heaven to the earth—wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts, and creeping things of the earth and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him: Arise, Peter! Kill and eat!'[1]

"Then the Lord desired that his apostle should eat of all things?... while I...."

(Anthony remains thoughtful, his chin resting against his breast. The rustling of the pages, agitated by the wind, causes him to lift his head again; and he reads:)

'So the Jews made a great slaughter of their enemies with the sword, and killed them, repaying according to what they had prepared to do to them....[2]

"Then, comes the number of people slain by them—seventy-five thousand. They had suffered so much! Moreover, their enemies were the enemies of the true God. And how they must have delighted in avenging themselves thus by the massacre of idolaters! Doubtless the city must have been crammed with the dead! There must have been corpses at the thresholds of the garden gates, upon the stairways, in all the chambers, and piled up so high that the doors could no longer move upon their hinges!... But lo! here I am permitting my mind to dwell upon ideas of murder and of blood!..."

(He opens the book at another place.)

'Then King Nabuchodonosor fell on his face, and worshipped Daniel....'[3]

"Ah! that was just! The Most High exalts his prophets above Kings; yet that monarch spent his life in banqueting, perpetually drunk with pleasure and pride. But God, to punish him, changed him into a beast! He walked upon four feet!"

(Anthony begins to laugh; and in extending his arms, involuntarily disarranges the leaves of the book with the tips of his fingers. His eyes fell upon this phrase:—)

'And Ezechias rejoiced at their coming, and he showed them the house of his aromatical spices, and the gold and the silver, and divers precious odours and ointments, and the house of his vessels, and all that he had in his treasures....'[4]

"I can imagine that spectacle; they must have beheld precious stones, diamonds and darics heaped up to the very roof. One who possesses so vast an accumulation of wealth is no longer like other men. While handling his riches he knows that he controls the total result of innumerable human efforts—as it were the life of nations drained by him and stored up, which he can pour forth at will. It is a commendable precaution on the part of Kings. Even the Wisest of all did not neglect it. His navy brought him elephants' teeth and apes.... Where is that passage?"

(He turns the leaves over rapidly.)

"Ah! here it is:"

'And the Queen of Saba, having heard of the fame of Solomon in the name of the Lord, came to try him with hard questions.'[5]

"How did she hope to tempt him? The Devil indeed sought to tempt Jesus! But Jesus triumphed because he was God; and Solomon, perhaps, owing this knowledge of magic! It is sublime—that science! For the world—as a philosopher once explained it to me, forms a whole, of which all parts mutually influence one another, like the organs of one body. It is science which enables us to know the natural loves and natural repulsions of all things, and to play upon them?... Therefore, it is really possible to modify what appears to be the immutable order of the universe?"

(Then the two shadows formed behind him by the arms of the cross, suddenly lengthen and project themselves before him. They assume the form of two great horns. Anthony cries out:—)

"Help me! O my God!"

Saint Anthony: Help me, O my God!

(The shadows shrink back to their former place.)

"Ah!... it was an illusion ... nothing more. It is needless for me to torment my mind further! I can do nothing!—absolutely nothing."

(He sits down and folds his arms.)

"Nevertheless ... it seems to me that I felt the approach of.... But why should He come? Besides, do I not know all his artifices? I repulsed the monstrous anchorite who laughingly offered me little loaves of warm, fresh bread, the centaur who sought to carry me away upon his croup, and that black child who appeared to me in the midst of the sands, who was very beautiful, and who told me that he was called the Spirit of Lust!"

(Anthony rises and walks rapidly up and down, first to the right, then to the left.)

"It was by my order that this multitude of holy retreats was constructed—full of

monks all wearing sackcloth of camel's hair beneath their garments of goatskin, and numerous enough to form an army. I have cured the sick from afar off; I have cast out demons; I have passed the river in the midst of crocodiles; the Emperor Constantine wrote me throe letters; Balacius, who had spat upon mine, was torn to pieces by his own horses; when I reappeared the people of Alexandria fought for the pleasure of seeing me, and Athanasius himself escorted me on the way back. But what works have I not accomplished Lo! for these thirty years and more I have been dwelling and groaning unceasingly in the desert! Like Eusebius, I have carried thirty-eight pounds of bronze upon my loins; like Macarius, I have exposed my body to the stings of insects; like Pacomus, I have passed fifty-three nights without closing my eyes; and those who are decapitated, tortured with red hot pincers, or burned alive, are perhaps less meritorious than I, seeing that my whole life is but one prolonged martyrdom." (Anthony slackens his pace.)

"Assuredly there is no human being in a condition of such unutterable misery! Charitable hearts are becoming scarcer. I no longer receive aught from any one. My mantle is worn out. I have no sandals—I have not even a porringer!—for I have distributed all I possessed to the poor and to my family, without retaining so much as one obolus. Yet surely I ought to have a little money to obtain the tools indispensable to my work? Oh, not much! a very small sum.... I would be very saving of it....

"The fathers of Nicæa, clad in purple robes, sat like magi, upon thrones ranged along the walls; and they were entertained at a great banquet and overwhelmed with honours, especially Paphnutius, because he is one-eyed and lame, since the persecution of Diocletian! The Emperor kissed his blind eye several times; what foolishness! Besides, there were such infamous men members of that Council! A bishop of Scythia, Theophilus! another of Persia, John! a keeper of beasts, Spiridion! Alexander was too old. Athanasius ought to have shown more gentleness towards the Arians, so as to have obtained concessions from them.

"Yet would they have made any? They would not hear me! The one who spoke against me—a tall young man with a curly beard—uttered the most captious objections to my argument; and while I was seeking words to express my views they all stared at me with their wicked faces, and barked like hyenas. Ah! why cannot I have them all exiled by the Emperor! or rather have them beaten, crushed, and see them suffer! I suffer enough myself."

(He leans against his cabin in a fainting condition.)

"It is because I have fasted too long; my strength is leaving me. If I could eat—only once more—a piece of meat." (He half closes his eyes with languor.)

"Ah! some red flesh—a bunch of grapes to bite into ... curdled milk that trembles on a plate!...

"But what has come upon me? What is the matter with me? I feel my heart enlarging like the sea, when it swells before the storm. An unspeakable feebleness weighs down upon me, and the warm air seems to waft me the perfume of a woman's hair. No woman has approached this place; nevertheless?—"

(He gazes toward the little pathway between the rocks.)

"That is the path by which they come, rocked in their litters by the black arms of the eunuchs. They descend and joining their hands, heavy with rings, kneel down before me. They relate to me all their troubles. The desire of human pleasure tortures them; they would gladly die; they have seen in their dreams God calling to them ... and all the while the hems of their robes fall upon my feet. I repel them from me. 'Ah! no!' they cry, 'not yet! What shall I do?' They gladly accept any penitence I impose on them. They ask for the hardest of all; they beg to share mine and to live with me.

"It is now a long time since I have seen any of them! Perhaps some of them will come! why not? If I could only hear again, all of a sudden, the tinkling of mule-bells among the mountains. It seems to me...."

(Anthony clambers upon a rock at the entrance of the pathway, and leans over,

darting his eyes into the darkness.)

"Yes! over there, far off I see a mass moving, like a band of travellers seeking the way. She is there!... They are making a mistake." (Calling.)

"This way! Come! Come!"

(Echo repeats: Come! Come! he lets his arms fall, stupefied.)

"What shame for me! Alas! poor Anthony."

(And all of a sudden he hears a whisper:—"Poor Anthony"!)

"Who is there? Speak!"

(The wind passing through the intervals between the rocks, makes modulations; and in those confused sonorities he distinguishes Voices, as though the air itself were speaking. They are low, insinuating, hissing.)

The First: "Dost thou desire women?"

The Second: "Great heaps of money, rather!"

The Third: "A glittering sword?" (and)

The Others: "All the people admire thee! Sleep!"

"Thou shalt slay them all, aye, thou shalt slay them!"

(At the same moment objects become transformed. At the edge of the cliff, the old palm tree with its tuft of yellow leaves, changes into the torso of a woman leaning over the abyss, her long hair waving in the wind.

Anthony turns toward his cabin; and the stool supporting the great book whose pages are covered with black letters, seems to him changed into a bush all covered with nightingales.)

"It must be the torch which is making this strange play of light.... Let us put it out!"

(He extinguishes it; the obscurity becomes deeper, the darkness profound.

And suddenly in the air above there appear and disappear successively—first, a

stretch of water; then the figure of a prostitute; the corner of a temple, a soldier; a chariot with two white horses, prancing.

These images appear suddenly, as in flashes—outlined against the background of the night, like scarlet paintings executed upon ebony.

Their motion accelerates. They defile by with vertiginous rapidity. Sometimes again, they pause and gradually pale and melt away; or else float off out of sight, to be immediately succeeded by others.

Anthony closes his eyelids.

They multiply, surround him, besiege him. An unspeakable fear takes possession of him; and he feels nothing more of living sensation, save a burning contraction of the epigastrium. In spite of the tumult in his brain, he is aware of an enormous silence which separates him from the world. He tries to speak;—impossible! He feels as though all the bands of his life were breaking and dissolving;—and, no longer able to resist, Anthony falls prostrate upon his mat.)

[1] Acts X: 11-13—T.

[2] Esther IX: 5—T.

[3] Daniel II: 46.—T.

[4] Kings XX: 13 (Vulg.).—T.

[5] III Kings X: I (Vulg.).—T.

II

(Then a great shadow, subtler than any natural shadow, and festooned by other shadows along its edges, defines itself upon the ground.

It is the Devil, leaning upon the roof of the hut, and bearing beneath his wings—like some gigantic bat suckling its little ones—the Seven Deadly Sins, whose grimacing heads are dimly distinguishable.

With eyes still closed, Anthony yields to the pleasure of inaction; and stretches his

limbs upon the mat.

It seems to him quite soft, and yet softer—so that it becomes as if padded; it rises up; it becomes a bed. The bed becomes a shallop; water laps against its sides.

To right and left rise two long tongues of land, overlooking low cultivated plains, with a sycamore tree here and there. In the distance there is a tinkling of bells, a sound of drums and of singers. It is a party going to Canopus to sleep upon the temple of Serapis, in order to have dreams. Anthony knows this; and impelled by the wind, his boat glides along between the banks. Papyrus-leaves and the red flowers of the nymphæa, larger than the body of a man, bend over him. He is lying at the bottom of the boat; one oar at the stem, drags in the water. From time to time, a lukewarm wind blows; and the slender reeds rub one against the other, and rustle. Then the sobbing of the wavelets becomes indistinct. A heavy drowsiness falls upon him. He dreams that he is a Solitary of Egypt.

Then he awakes with a start.)

"Did I dream? It was all so vivid that I can scarcely believe I was dreaming! My tongue burns. I am thirsty."

(He enters the cabin, and gropes at random in the dark.)

"The ground is wet; can it have been raining? What can this mean! My pitcher is broken into atoms! But the goatskin?" (He finds it.)

"Empty!—completely empty! In order to get down to the river, I should have to walk for at least three hours; and the night is so dark that I could not see my way.

"There is a gnawing in my entrails. Where is the bread!"

(After long searching, he picks up a crust not so large as an egg.)

"What? Have the jackals taken it? Ah! malediction!"

(And he flings the bread upon the ground with fury.

No sooner has the action occurred than a table makes its appearance, covered with

all things that are good to eat.

The byssus cloth, striated like the bandelets of the sphinx, produces of itself luminous undulations. Upon it are enormous quarters of red meats; huge fish; birds cooked in their plumage, and quadrupeds in their skins; fruits with colors and tints almost human in appearance; while fragments of cooling ice, and flagons of violet crystal reflect each other's glittering. Anthony notices in the middle of the table a boar smoking at every pore—with legs doubled up under its belly, and eyes half closed—and the idea of being able to eat so formidable an animal greatly delights him. Then many things appear which he has never seen before—black hashes, jellies, the color of gold, ragouts in which mushrooms float like nenuphars upon ponds, dishes of whipt cream light as clouds.

And the aroma of all this comes to him together with the salt smell of the ocean, the coolness of mountains, the great perfumes of the woods. He dilates his nostrils to their fullest extent; his mouth waters; he thinks to himself that he has enough before him for a year, for ten years, for his whole life!

As he gazes with widely-opened eyes at all these viands, others appear; they accumulate, forming a pyramid crumbling at all its angles. The wines begin to flow over—the fish palpitate—the blood seethes in the dishes—the pulp of the fruit protrudes like amorous lips—and the table rises as high as his breast, up to his very chin at last—now bearing only one plate and a single loaf of bread, placed exactly in front of him.

He extends his hand to seize the loaf. Other loaves immediately present themselves to his grasp.)

"For me!... all these! But ..." (Anthony suddenly draws back.)

"Instead of one which was there, lo! there are many! It must be a miracle, then, the same as our Lord wrought!

"Yet for what purpose?... Ah! all the rest of these things are equally

incomprehensible! Demon, begone from me! depart! begone!"

(He kicks the table from him. It disappears.)

"Nothing more?—no!" (He draws a lung breath.)

"Ah! the temptation was strong! But how well I delivered myself from it!"

(He lifts his head, and at the same time stumbles over some sonorous object.)

"Why! what can that be?" (Anthony stoops down.)

"How! a cup! Some traveller must have lost it here. There is nothing extraordinary...."

(He wets his finger, and rubs.)

"It glitters!—metal! Still, I cannot see very clearly...."

(He lights his torch, and examines the cup.)

"It is silver, ornamented with ovules about the rim, with a medal at the bottom of it."

(He detaches the medal with his nail!)

"It is a piece of money worth about seven or eight drachmas—not more! It matters not! even with that I could easily buy myself a sheepskin."

(A sudden flash of the torch lights up the cup.)

"Impossible! gold? Yes, all gold, solid gold!"

(A still larger piece of money appears at the bottom. Under it he perceives several others.)

"Why, this is a sum ... large enough to purchase three oxen ... and a little field!"

(The cup is now filled with pieces of gold.)

"What! what!... a hundred slaves, soldiers, a host ... enough to buy...."

(The granulations of the rim, detaching themselves form a necklace of pearls.)

"With such a marvel of jewelry as that, one could win even the wife of the Emperor!"

(By a sudden jerk, Anthony makes the necklace slip down over his wrist. He holds the cup in his left hand, and with his right lifts up the torch so as to throw the light upon it. As water streams overflowing from the basin of a fountain, so diamonds, carbuncles, and sapphires, all mingled with broad pieces of gold bearing the effigies of Kings, overflow from the cup in never ceasing streams, to form a glittering hillock upon the sand.)

"What! how! Staters, cycles, dariacs, aryandics; Alexander, Demetrius, the Ptolemies, Cæsar!—yet not one of them all possessed so much! Nothing is now impossible! no more suffering for me! how these gleams dazzle my eyes! Ah! my heart overflows! how delightful it is! yes—yes!—more yet! never could there be enough! Vainly I might continually fling it into the sea, there would always be plenty remaining for me. Why should I lose any of it? I will keep all, and say nothing to any one about it; I will have a chamber hollowed out for me in the rock, and lined with plates of bronze, and I will come here from time to time to feel the gold sinking down under the weight of my heel; I will plunge my arms into it as into sacks of grain! I will rub my face with it, I will lie down upon it!"

(He flings down the torch in order to embrace the glittering heap, and falls flat upon the ground.

He rises to his feet. The place is wholly empty.)

"What have I done!

"Had I died during those moments, I should have gone to hell—to irrevocable damnation."

(He trembles in every limb.)

"Am I, then, accursed? Ah! no; it is my own fault! I allow myself to be caught in every snare! No man could be more imbecile, more infamous! I should like to beat myself, or rather to tear myself out of my own body! I have restrained myself too long. I feel the want of vengeance—the necessity of striking, of killing!—as though

I had a pack of wild beasts within me! Would that I could hew my way with an axe, through the midst of a multitude.... Ah, a poniard!..."

(He perceives his knife, and rushes to seize it. The knife slips from his hand; and Anthony remains leaning against the wall of his hut, with wide-open mouth, motionless, cataleptic.

Everything about him has disappeared.

He thinks himself at Alexandria, upon the Paneum—an artificial mountain in the centre of the city, encircled by a winding stairway.

Before him lies Lake Mareolis; on his right hand is the sea, on his left the country; and immediately beneath him a vast confusion of flat roofs, traversed from north to south and from east to west by two streets which intercross, and which offer throughout their entire length the spectacle of files of porticoes with Corinthian columns. The houses overhanging this double colonnade have windows of stained glass. Some of them support exteriorly enormous wooden cages, into which the fresh air rushes from without.

Monuments of various architecture tower up in close proximity. Egyptian pylons dominate Greek temples. Obelisks appear like lances above battlements of red brick. In the middle of public squares there are figures of Hermes with pointed ears, and of Anubis with the head of a dog. Anthony can distinguish the mosaic pavements of the courtyards, and tapestries suspended from the beams of ceilings.

He beholds at one glance, the two ports (the Great Port and the Eunostus), both round as circuses, and separated by a mole connecting Alexandria with the craggy island upon which the Pharos-tower rises—quadrangular, five hundred cubits high, nine storied, having at its summit a smoking heap of black coals.

Small interior ports open into the larger ones. The mole terminates at each end in a bridge supported upon marble columns planted in the sea. Sailing vessels pass beneath it, while heavy lighters overladen with merchandise, thalamegii[1] inlaid

with ivory, gondolas covered with awnings, triremes, biremes, and all sorts of vessels are moving to and fro, or lie moored at the wharves.

About the Great Port extends an unbroken array of royal construction: the palace of the Ptolomies, the Museum, the Posidium, the Cæsareum, the Timonium where Mark Anthony sought refuge, the Soma which contains the tomb of Alexander; while at the other extremity of the city, beyond the Eunostus, the great glass factories, perfume factories, and papyrus factories may be perceived in a suburban quarter.

Strolling peddlers, porters, ass-drivers run and jostle together. Here and there one observes some priest of Isis wearing a panther skin on his shoulders, a Roman soldier with his bronze helmet, and many negroes. At the thresholds of the shops women pause, artisans ply their trades; and the grinding noise of chariot wheels puts to flight the birds that devour the detritus of the butcher-shops and the morsels of fish left upon the ground.

The general outline of the streets seems like a black network flung upon the white uniformity of the houses. The markets stocked with herbs make green bouquets in the midst of it; the drying-yards of the dyers, blotches of color; the golden ornaments of the temple-pediments, luminous points—all comprised within the oval enclosure of the grey ramparts, under the vault of the blue heaven, beside the motionless sea.

But suddenly the movement of the crowd ceases; all turn their eyes toward the west, whence enormous whirlwinds of dust are seen approaching.

It is the coming of the monks of the Thebaid, all clad in goatskins, armed with cudgels, roaring a canticle of battle and of faith with the refrain:

"Where are they? Where are they?"

Anthony understands that they are coming to kill the Arians.

The streets are suddenly emptied—only flying feet are visible.

The Solitaries are now in the city. Their formidable cudgels, studded with nails, whirl in the air like suns of steel. The crash of things broken in the houses is heard. There are intervals of silence. Then great screams arise.

From one end of the street to the other there is a continual eddy of terrified people.

Many grasp pikes. Sometimes two bands meet, rush into one; and this mass of men slips upon the pavement—fighting, disjointing, knocking down. But the men with the long hair always reappear.

Threads of smoke begin to escape from the corners of edifices! folding doors burst open. Portions of walls crumble down. Architraves fall.

Anthony finds all his enemies again, one after the other. He even recognizes some whom he had altogether forgotten; before killing them he outrages them. He disembowels—he severs throats—he fells as in a slaughter house—he hales old men by the beard, crushes children, smites the wounded. And vengeance is taken upon luxury, those who do not know how to read tear up hooks; others smash and deface the statues, paintings, furniture, caskets,—a thousand dainty things the use of which they do not know, and which simply for that reason exasperates them. At intervals they pause, out of breath, in the work of destruction; then they recommence.

The inhabitants moan in the courtyards where they have sought refuge. The women raise their tearful eyes and lift their naked arms to heaven. In hope of moving the Solitaries they embrace their knees; the men cast them off and fling them down, and the blood gushes to the ceilings, falls back upon the walls like sheets of rain, streams from the trunks of decapitated corpses, fills the aqueducts, forms huge red pools upon the ground.

Anthony is up to his knees in it. He wades in it; he sucks up the blood-spray on his lips; he is thrilled with joy as he feels it upon his limbs, under his hair-tunic which is soaked through with it.

Night comes. The immense uproar dies away.

The Solitaries have disappeared.

Suddenly, upon the outer galleries corresponding to each of the nine stories of the Pharos, Anthony observes thick black lines forming, like lines of crows perching. He hurries thither; and soon finds himself at the summit.

A huge mirror of brass turned toward the open sea, reflects the forms of the vessels in the offing.

Anthony amuses himself by watching them; and while he watches, their number increases.

They are grouped together within a gulf which has the form of a crescent. Upon a promontory in the background, towers a new city of Roman architecture, with cupolas of stone, conical roofs, gleams of pink and blue marbles, and a profusion of brazen ornamentation applied to the volutes of the capitals, to the angles of the cornices, to the summits of the edifices. A cypress-wood overhangs the city. The line of the sea is greener, the air colder. The mountains lining the horizon are capped with snow.

Anthony is trying to find his way, when a man approaches him, and says:

"Come! they are waiting for you."

He traverses a forum, enters a great court, stoops beneath a low door; and he arrives before the facade of the palace, decorated with a group in wax, representing Constantine overcoming a dragon. There is a porphyry basin, from the centre of which rises a golden conch-shell full of nuts. His guide tells him that he may take some of them. He does so. Then he is lost, as it were, in a long succession of apartments.

There are mosaics upon the walls representing generals presenting the Emperor with conquered cities, which they hold out upon the palms of their hands. And there are columns of basalt everywhere, trellis-work in silver filigree, ivory chairs, tapestries embroidered with pearls. The light falls from the vaults above; Anthony still

proceeds. Warm exhalations circulate about him; occasionally he hears the discreet clapping sound of sandals upon the pavement. Posted in the anti-chambers are guards, who resemble automata, holding wands of vermillion upon their shoulders.

And there are columns of basalt everywhere,... The light falls from the vaults above

At last he finds himself in a great hall, with hyacinth-colored curtains at the further end. They part, and display the Emperor seated on a throne, clad in a violet tunic, and wearing red shoes striped with bands of black.

A diadem of pearls surround his head; his locks are arranged symmetrically in rouleaux. He has a straight nose, drooping eyelids, a heavy and cunning physiognomy. At the four corners of the dais stretched above his head are placed four golden doves; and at the foot of the throne are two lions in enamel crouching. The doves begin to sing, the lions to roar. The Emperor rolls his eyes; Anthony advances; and forthwith, without preamble, they commence to converse about recent events. In the cities of Antioch, Ephesus, and Alexandria, the temples have been sacked, and the statues of the gods converted into pots and cooking utensils; the Emperor laughs heartily about it. Anthony reproaches him with his tolerance toward the Novations. But the Emperor becomes vexed. Novations, Arians or Meletians—he is sick of them all! Nevertheless, he admires the episcopate; for inasmuch as the Christians maintain bishops, who depend for their position upon five or six important personages, it is only necessary to gain over the latter, in order to have all the rest on one's side. Therefore he did not fail to furnish them with large sums. But he detests the Fathers of the Council of Nicæa.

"Let us go and see them!"

Anthony follows him.

And they find themselves on a terrace, upon the same floor.

It overlooks a hippodrome thronged with people, and surmounted by porticoes where other spectators are walking to and fro. From the centre of the race-course

rises a narrow platform of hewn stone, supporting a little temple of Mercury, the statue of Constantine, and three serpents of brass twisted into a column; there are three huge wooden eggs at one end, and at the other a group of seven dolphins with their tails in the air.

Behind the imperial pavilion sit the Prefects of the Chambers, the Counts of the Domestics, and the Patricians—in ranks rising by tiers to the first story of a church whose windows are thronged with women. On the right is the tribune of the Blue Faction; on the left, that of the Green; below, a picket of soldiers is stationed; and on a level with the arena is a row of Corinthian arches, forming the entrances to the stables.

The races are about to commence; the horses are drawn up in line. Lofty plumes, fastened between their ears, bend to the wind like saplings; and with every restive bound, they shake their chariots violently, which are shell-shaped, and conducted by charioteers clad in a sort of multi-colored cuirass, having sleeves tight at the wrist and wide in the arms; their legs are bare; their beards, faces and foreheads are shaven after the manner of the Huns.

Anthony is at first deafened by the billowy sound of voices. From the summit of the hippodrome to its lowest tiers, he sees only faces painted with rouge, garments checkered and variegated with many colors, flashing jewelry; and the sand of the arena, all white, gleams like a mirror.

The Emperor entertains him. He confides to him many matters of high importance, many secrets; he confesses the assassination of his son Criopus, and even asks Anthony for advice regarding his health.

Meanwhile Anthony notices some slaves in the rear portion of the stables below. They are the Fathers of Nicæa, ragged and abject. The martyr Paphnutius is brushing the mane of one horse; Theophilus is washing the legs of another; John is painting the hoofs of a third; Alexander is collecting dung in a basket.

Anthony passes through the midst of them. They range themselves on either side respectfully; they beseech his intercession; they kiss his hands. The whole assemblage of spectators hoots at them; and he enjoys the spectacle with immeasurable pleasure. Lo! he is now one of the grandees of the Court—the Emperor's confidant—the prime minister! Constantine places his own diadem upon his brows. Anthony allows it to remain upon his head, thinking this honor quite natural.

And suddenly in the midst of the darkness a vast hall appears, illuminated by golden candelabra.

Candles so lofty that they are half lost in the darkness, stretch away in huge files beyond the lines of banquet-tables, which seem to extend to the horizon, where through a luminous haze loom superpositions of stairways, suites of arcades, colossi, towers, and beyond all a vague border of palace walls, above which rise the crests of cedars, making yet blacker masses of blackness against the darkness.

The guests, crowned with violet wreaths, recline upon very low couches and are leaning upon their elbows. Along the whole length of this double line of couches, wine is being poured out from amphoræ, and at the further end, all alone, coiffed with the tiara and blazing with carbuncles, King Nebuchadnezzar eats and drinks.

On his right and left, two bands of priests in pointed caps are swinging censers. On the pavement below crawl the captive kings whose hands and feet have been cut off; from time to time he flings them bones to gnaw. Further off sit his brothers, with bandages across their eyes, being all blind.

From the depths of the ergastula arise moans of ceaseless pain. Sweet slow sounds of a hydraulic organ alternate with choruses of song; and one feels that all about the palace without extends an immeasurable city—an ocean of human life whose waves break against the walls. The slaves run hither and thither carrying dishes. Women walk between the ranks of guests, offering drinks to all; the baskets groan under

their burthen of loaves; and a dromedary, laden with perforated water-skins: passes and repasses through the hall, sprinkling and cooling the pavement with vervain.

Lion tamers are leading tamed lions about. Dancing girls—their hair confined in nets—balance themselves and turn upon their hands, emitting fire through their nostrils; negro boatmen are juggling; naked children pelt each other with pellets of snow, which burst against the bright silverware. There is an awful clamor as of a tempest; and a huge cloud hangs over the banquet—so numerous are the meats and breaths. Sometimes a flake of fire torn from the great flambeaux by the wind, traverses the night like a shooting star.

The king wipes the perfumes from his face with his arm. He eats from the sacred vessels—then breaks them; and secretly reckons up the number of his fleets, his armies, and his subjects. By and by, for a new caprice, he will burn his palace with all its guests. He dreams of rebuilding the tower of Babel, and dethroning God.

Anthony, from afar off, reads all these thoughts upon his brow. They penetrate his own brain, and he becomes Nebuchadnezzar. Immediately he is cloyed with orgiastic excesses, sated with fury of extermination; and a great desire comes upon him to wallow in vileness. For the degradation of that which terrifies men is an outrage inflicted upon their minds—it affords yet one more way to stupefy them; and as nothing is viler than a brute, Anthony goes upon the table on all fours, and bellows like a bull.

He feels a sudden pain in his hand—a pebble has accidentally wounded him—and he finds himself once more in front of his cabin.

The circle of the rocks is empty. The stars are glowing in the sky. All is hushed.)

"Again have I allowed myself to be deceived! Why these things? They come from the rebellion of the flesh. Ah! wretch!"

(He rushes into his cabin, and seizes a bunch of thongs, with metallic hooks attached to their ends, strips himself to the waist and, lifting his eyes to heaven exclaims:)

"Accept my penance, O my God: disdain it not for its feebleness. Render it sharp, prolonged, excessive! It is time, indeed!—to the work!"

(He gives himself a vigorous lash—and shrieks.)

"No! no!—without mercy it must be."

(He recommences.)

"Oh! oh! oh! each lash tears my skin, rends my limbs! It burns me horribly!"

"Nay!—it is not so very terrible after all!—one becomes accustomed to it. It even seems to me...."

(Anthony pauses.)

"Continue, coward! continue! Good! good!—upon the arms, on the back, on the breast, on the belly—everywhere! Hiss, ye thongs! bite me! tear me! I would that my blood could spurt to the stars!—let my bones crack!—let my tendons be laid bare! O for pincers, racks, and melted lead! The martyrs have endured far worse; have they not, Ammonaria?"

(The shadow of the Devil's horns reappears.)

"I might have been bound to the column opposite to thine,—face to face—under thy eyes—answering thy shrieks by my sighs; and our pangs might have been interblended, our souls intermingled."

(He lashes himself with fury.)

"What! what! again. Take that!—But how strange a titillation thrills me! What punishment! what pleasure! I feel as though receiving invisible kisses; the very marrow of my bones seems to melt. I die...."

And he sees before him three cavaliers, mounted upon onagers, clad in robes of green—each holding a lily in his hand, and all resembling each other in feature.

Anthony turns round, and beholds three other cavaliers exactly similar, riding upon similar onagers, and preserving the same attitude.

He draws back. Then all the onagers advance one pace at the same time, and rub their noses against him, trying to bite his garment. Voices shout:—

"Here! here! this way!"

And between the clefts of the mountain, appear standards,—camels' heads with halters of red silk—mules laden with baggage, and women covered with yellow veils, bestriding piebald horses.

The panting beasts lie down; the slaves rush to the bales and packages, motley-striped carpets are unrolled; precious glimmering things are laid upon the ground.

A white elephant, caparisoned with a golden net, trots forward, shaking the tuft of ostrich plumes attached to his head-band.

Upon his back, perched on cushions of blue wool, with her legs crossed, her eyes half closed, her comely head sleepily nodding, is a woman so splendidly clad that she radiates light about her. The crowd falls prostrate; the elephant bends his knees; and

The Queen of Sheba

letting herself glide down from his shoulder upon the carpets spread to receive her, approaches Saint Anthony.

Her robe of gold brocade, regularly divided by furbelows of pearls, of jet, and of sapphires, sheaths her figure closely with its tight-fitting bodice, set off by colored designs representing the twelve signs of the Zodiac. She wears very high pattens—one of which is black, and sprinkled with silver stars, with a moon crescent; the other, which is white, is sprinkled with a spray of gold, with a golden sun in the middle.

Her wide sleeves, decorated with emeralds and bird-plumes, leave exposed her little round bare arms, clasped at the wrist by ebony bracelets; and her hands, loaded with

precious rings, are terminated by nails so sharply pointed that the ends of her fingers seem almost like needles.

A chain of dead gold, passing under her chin, is caught up on either side of her face, and spirally coiled about her coiffure, whence, redescending, it grazes her shoulders and is attached upon her bosom to a diamond scorpion, which protrudes a jewelled tongue between her breasts. Two immense blond pearls depend heavily from her ears. The borders of her eyelids are painted black. There is a natural brown spot upon her left cheek; and she opens her mouth in breathing, as if her corset inconvenienced her.

She shakes, as she approaches, a green parasol with an ivory handle, and silver-gilt bells attached to its rim; twelve little woolly-haired negro-boys support the long train of her robe, whereof an ape holds the extremity, which it raises up from time to time. She exclaims:

"Ah! handsome hermit! handsome hermit!—my heart swoons!

"By dint of stamping upon the ground with impatience, callosities have formed upon my heel, and I have broken one of my nails. I sent out shepherds, who remained upon the mountain tops, shading their eyes with their hands—and hunters who shouted thy name in all the forests—and spies who travelled along the highways, asking every passer-by:

"'Hast thou seen him?'

"By night I wept, with my face turned to the wall. And at last my tears made two little holes in the mosaic, like two pools of water among the rocks;—for I love thee!—oh! how I love thee!"

(She takes him by the beard.)

"Laugh now, handsome hermit! laugh! I am very joyous, very gay: thou shalt soon see! I play the lyre; I dance like a bee; and I know a host of merry tales to tell, each more diverting than the other.

"Thou canst not even imagine how mighty a journey we have made. See! the onagers upon which the green couriers rode are dead with fatigue!"

(The onagers are lying motionless upon the ground.)

"For three long moons they never ceased to gallop on with the same equal pace, holdings flints between their teeth to cut the wind, their tails ever streaming out behind them, their sinews perpetually strained to the uttermost, always galloping, galloping. Never can others be found like them. They were bequeathed me by my paternal grand-father, the Emperor Saharil, son of Iakhschab, son of Iaarab, son of Kastan. Ah! if they were still alive, we should harness them to a litter that they might bear us back speedily to the palace! But ... what ails thee?—of what art thou dreaming?"

(She stares at him, examines him closely.)

"Ah, when thou shalt be my husband, I will robe thee, I will perfume thee, I will depilate thee."

(Anthony remains motionless, more rigid than a stake, more pallid than a corpse.)

"Thou hast a sad look—is it because of leaving thy hermitage? Yet I have left everything for thee—even King Solomon, who, nevertheless, possesses much wisdom, twenty thousand chariots of war, and a beautiful beard. I have brought thee my wedding gifts. Choose!"

(She walks to and fro among the ranks of slaves and the piles of precious goods.)

"Here is Genezareth balm, incense from Cape Gardefui, labdanum, cinnamon, and silphium—good to mingle with sauces. In that bale are Assyrian embroideries, ivory from the Ganges, purple from Elissa; and that box of snow contains a skin of chalybon, the wine, which is reserved for the Kings of Assyria, and which is drunk from the horn of a unicorn. Here are necklaces, brooches, nets for the hair, parasols, gold powder from Baasa, cassiteria from Tartessus, blue wood from Pandio, white furs from Issidonia, carbuncles from the Island Palæsimondus, and toothpicks made

of the bristles of the tachas—that lost animal which is found under the earth. These cushions come from Emath, and these mantle-fringes from Palmyra. On this Babylonian carpet there is.... But come hither! come! come!"

(She pulls Saint Anthony by the sleeve. He resists. She continues:)

"This thin tissue which crackles under the finger with a sound as of sparks, is the famous yellow cloth which the merchants of Bactria bring us. I will have robes made of it for thee, which thou shalt wear in the house. Unfasten the hooks of that sycamore box, and hand me also the little ivory casket tied to my elephant's shoulder."

(They take something round out of a box—something covered with a cloth—and also bring a little ivory casket covered with carving.)

"Dost thou desire the buckler of Dgian-ben-Dgian, who built the pyramids?—behold it!—It is formed of seven dragon-skins laid one over the other, tanned in the bile of parricides, and fastened together by adamantine screws. Upon one side are represented all the wars that have taken place since the invention of weapons; and upon the other, all the wars that will take place until the end of the world. The lightning itself rebounds from it like a ball of cork. I am going to place it upon thy arm; and thou wilt carry it during the chase.

"But if thou didst only know what I have in this little box of mine! Turn it over and over again! try to open it! No one could ever succeed in doing that. Kiss me! and I will tell thee how to open it."

(She takes Saint Anthony by both cheeks. He pushes her away at arms' length.)

"It was one night that King Solomon lost his head. At last we concluded a bargain. He arose, and stealing out on tiptoe...."

(She suddenly executes a pirouette.)

"Ah, ah! comely hermit, thou shalt not know it! thou shalt not know!"

(She shakes her parasol, making all its little bells tinkle.)

"And I possess many other strange things—oh! yes! I have treasures concealed in winding galleries where one would lose one's way, as in a forest. I have summer-palaces constructed in trellis-work of reeds, and winter-palaces all built of black marble. In the midst of lakes vast as seas, I have islands round as pieces of silver, and all covered with mother-of-pearl,—islands whose shores make music to the lapping of tepid waves upon the sand. The slaves of my kitchens catch birds in my aviaries, and fish in my fishponds. I have engravers continually seated at their benches to hollow out my likeness in hard jewel-stones, and panting molders forever casting statues of me, and perfumers incessantly mingling the sap of rare plants with vinegar, or preparing cosmetic pastes. I have female dressmakers cutting out patterns in richest material, goldsmiths cutting and mounting jewels of price, and careful painters pouring upon my palace wainscoting boiling resins, which they subsequently cool with fans. I have enough female attendants to form a harem, eunuchs enough to make an army. I have armies likewise; I have nations! In the vestibule of my palace I keep a guard of dwarfs—all bearing ivory trumpets at their backs." (Anthony sighs.)

"I have teams of trained gazelles; I have elephant quadrigæ; I have hundreds of pairs of camels, and mares whose manes are so long that their hoofs become entangled therein when they gallop, and herds of cattle with horns so broad that when they go forth to graze the woods have to be hewn down before them. I have giraffes wandering in my gardens; they stretch their heads over the edge of my roof, when I take the air after dinner.

"Seated in a shell drawn over the waters by dolphins, I travel through the grottoes, listening lo the dropping of the water from the stalactites. I go down to the land of diamonds, where my friends the magicians allow me to choose the finest: then I reascend to earth and return to my home."

(She utters a sharp whistle; and a great bird, descending from the sky, alights upon her hair, from which it makes the blue powder fall.

Its orange-colored plumage seems formed of metallic scales. Its little head, crested with a silver tuft, has a human face.

It has four wings, the feet of a vulture, and an immense peacock's tail which it spreads open like a fan.

It seizes the Queen's parasol in its beak, reels a moment ere obtaining its balance; then it erects all its plumes, and remains motionless.)

"Thanks! my beautiful Simorg-Anka!—thou didst tell me where the loving one was hiding! Thanks! thanks! my heart's messenger!

"He flies swiftly as Desire! He circles the world in his flight. At eve he returns; he perches at the foot of my couch and tells me all he has seen—the seas that have passed far beneath him with all their fishes and ships, the great void deserts he has contemplated from the heights of the sky, the harvests that were bowing in the valleys, and the plants that were growing upon the walls of cities abandoned."

(She wrings her hands, languorously.)

"Oh! if thou wast willing! if thou wast willing!... I have a pavilion on a promontory in the middle of an isthmus dividing two oceans. It is all wain-scoted with sheets of glass, and floored with tortoise shell, and open to the four winds of heaven. From its height I watch my fleets come in, and my nations toiling up the mountain-slopes with burthens upon their shoulders. There would we sleep upon downs softer than clouds; we would drink cool draughts from fruit-shells, and we would gaze at the sun through emeralds! Come!" ...

(Anthony draws back. She approaches him again, and exclaims in a tone of vexation:—)

"How? neither the rich, nor the coquettish, nor the amorous woman can charm thee:

is it so? None but a lascivious woman, with a hoarse voice and lusty person, with fire-colored hair and superabundant flesh? Dost thou prefer a body cold as the skin of a serpent, or rather great dark eyes deeper than the mystic caverns?—behold them, my eyes!—look into them!"

(Anthony, in spite of him, gazes into her eyes.)

"All the women thou hast ever met—from the leman of the cross-roads, singing under the light of her lantern, even to the patrician lady scattering rose-petals abroad from her litter,—all the forms thou hast ever obtained glimpses of—all the imaginations of thy desire thou hast only to ask for them! I am not a woman: I am a world! My cloak has only to fall in order that thou mayest discover a succession of mysteries." (Anthony's teeth chatter.)

"Place but thy finger upon my shoulder: it will be as though a stream of fire shot through all thy veins. The possession of the least part of me will fill thee with a joy more vehement than the conquest of an Empire could give thee! Approach thy lips: there is a sweetness in my kisses as of a fruit dissolving within thy heart. Ah! how thou wilt lose thyself beneath my long hair, inhale the perfume of my bosom, madden thyself with the beauty of my limbs: and thus, consumed by the fire of my eyes, clasped within my arms as in a whirlwind...."

there is a sweetness in my kisses as of a fruit dissolving within thy heart ...

(Anthony makes the sign of the cross.)

"Thou disdainest me! farewell!"

(She departs, weeping; then, suddenly turning round:—)

"Art quite sure?—so beautiful a woman...."

(She laughs, and the ape that bears her train, lifts it up.)

"Thou wilt regret it, my comely hermit! thou wilt yet weep! thou wilt again feel weary of thy life; but I care not a whit! La! la! la!—oh! oh! oh!"

(She takes her departure, hopping upon one foot and covering her face with her hands.

All the slaves file off before Saint Anthony—the horses, the dromedaries, the elephant, the female attendants, the mules (which have been reloaded), the negro boys, the ape, the green couriers each holding his broken lily in his hand; and the Queen of Sheba departs, uttering a convulsive hiccough at intervals, which might be taken either for a sound of hysterical sobbing, or the half-suppressed laughter of mockery.)

[1] Thalamegii—pleasure-boats having apartments.

III

(When she has disappeared in the distance, Anthony observes a child seated upon the threshold of his cabin.)

"It is one of the Queen's servants, no doubt," (he thinks).

(This child is small like a dwarf, and nevertheless squat of build, like one of the Cabiri; deformed withal, and wretched of aspect. His prodigiously large head is covered with white hair; and he shivers under a shabby tunic, all the while clutching a roll of papyrus. The light of the moon passing through a cloud falls upon him.)

Anthony

(watches him from a distance, and is afraid of him.) "Who art thou?"

The Child (replies). "Thy ancient disciple, Hilarion."

Anthony. "Thou liest! Hilarion hath been dwelling in Palestine for many long years."

Hilarion. "I have returned! It is really I!"

Anthony (draws near and examines him closely). "Yet his face was radiant as the dawn, candid, joyous. This face is the face of one gloomy and old."

Hilarion. "Long and arduous labor hath wearied me!"

Anthony. "The voice is also different. It hath an icy tone."

Hilarion. "Because I have nourished me with bitter things!"

Anthony. "And those white hairs?"

Hilarion. "I have endured many woes!"

Anthony (aside). "Could it be possible?"

Hilarion. "I was not so far from thee as thou doest imagine. The hermit Paul visited thee this year, during the month of Schebar. It is just twenty days since the Nomads brought thee bread. Thou didst tell a sailor, the day before yesterday, to send thee three bodkins."

Anthony. "He knows all!"

Hilarion. "Know further more that I have never left thee. But there are long periods during which thou hast no knowledge of my presence."

Anthony. "How can that be? Yet it is true that my head is so much troubled—this night especially."

Hilarion. "All the Capital Sins came hither. But their wretched snares can avail nothing against such a Saint as thou."

Anthony. "Oh! no!—no! I fall at every moment! Why am I not of those whose souls are ever intrepid, whose minds are always firm,—for example, the great Athanasius?"

Hilarion. "He was illegally ordained by seven bishops."

Anthony. "What matter if his virtue...."

Hilarion. "Go to!—a most vainglorious and cruel man, forever involved in intrigues, and exiled at last as a monopolist."[1]

Anthony. "Calumny!"

Hilarion. "Thou wilt not deny that he sought to corrupt Eustates, the treasurer of

largesses?"

Anthony. "It is affirmed, I acknowledge."

Hilarion. "Through vengeance he burned down the house of Arsenius."

Anthony. "Alas!"

Hilarion. "At the council of Nicæa he said in speaking of Jesus: 'The man of the Lord.'"

Anthony. "Ah! that is a blasphemy!"

Hilarion. "So limited in understanding, moreover, that he confesses he comprehends nothing of the nature of the "Word!"

Anthony (smiling with gratification). "In sooth his intelligence is not ... very lofty."

Hilarion. "Hypocrite! burying thyself in solitude only in order the more fully to abandon thyself to the indulgence of thy envious desires! What if thou dost deprive thyself of meats, of wine, of warmth, of bath, of slaves, or honours?—dost thou not permit thy imagination to offer thee banquets, perfumes, women, and the applause of multitudes? Thy chastity is but a more subtle form of corruption, and thy contempt of this world is but the impotence of thy hatred against it! Either this it is that makes such as thyself so lugubrious, or else 'tis doubt. The possession of truth giveth joy. Was Jesus sad? Did he not travel in the company of friends, repose beneath the shade of olive trees, enter the house of the publican, drink many cups of wine, pardon the sinning woman, and assuage all sorrows? Thou!—thou hast no pity save for thine own misery! It is like a remorse that gnaws thee, a savage madness that impels thee to repel the caress of a dog or to frown upon the smile of a child."

Anthony (bursting into tears). "Enough! enough! thou dost wound my heart deeply."

Hilarion. "Shake the vermin from thy rags! Rise up from thy filth! Thy God is not a Moloch who demands human flesh in sacrifice!"

Anthony. "Yet suffering is blessed. The cherubim stoop to receive the blood of

confessors."

Hilarion. "Admire, then, the Montanists!—they surpass all others."

Anthony. "But it is the truth of the doctrine which makes the martyrdom."

Hilarion. "How can martyrdom prove the excellence of the doctrine, inasmuch as it bears equal witness for error?"

Hilarion. "Silence!—thou viper!"

Anthony. "Perhaps martyrdom is not so difficult as thou dost imagine! The exhortations of friends, the pleasure of insulting the people, the oath one has taken, a certain dizzy excitement, a thousand circumstances all aid the resolution of the martyrs...."

(Anthony turns his back upon Hilarion, and moves away from him. Hilarion follows him.)

" ... Moreover this manner of dying often brings about great disorders. Dionysius, Cyprian and Gregory fled from it. Peter of Alexandria has condemned it; and the council of Elvira...."

Anthony (stops his ears). "I will listen to thee no longer!"

Hilarion (raising his voice). "Lo! thou fallest again into the habitual sin, which is sloth! Ignorance is the foam of pride. One says, forsoth:—'My conviction is formed! wherefore argue further?'—and one despises the doctors, the philosophers, tradition itself, and even the text of the law whereof one is ignorant! Dost thou imagine that thou dost hold all wisdom in the hollow of thy hand?"

Anthony. "I hear him still! His loud words fill my brain."

Hilarion. "The efforts of others to comprehend God are mightier than all thy mortifications to move Him. We obtain merit only by our thirst for truth. Religion alone cannot explain all things; and the solution of problems ignored by thee can render faith still more invulnerable and noble. Therefore, for our salvation we must

communicate with our brethren—otherwise the Church, the assembly of the faithful, would be a meaningless word—and we must listen to all reasoning, despising nothing, nor any person. The magician Balaam, the poet Aeschylus, and the Sybil of Cumæ—all foretold the Saviour. Dionysius, the Alexandrian, received from heaven the command to read all books. Saint Clement orders us to cultivate Greek letters. Hennas was converted by the illusion of a woman he had loved...."

Anthony. "What an aspect of authority! It seems to me thou art growing taller...."

(And, in very truth, the stature of Hilarion is gradually increasing; and Anthony shuts his eyes, that he may not see him.)

Hilarion. "Reassure thyself, good Hermit. Let us seat ourselves there, upon that great stone, as we used to do in other years, when, at the first dawn of day, I was wont to salute thee with the appellation, 'Clear star of morning'—and thou wouldst therewith commence to instruct me. Yet my instruction is not yet completed. The moon gives us light enough. I am prepared to hear thy words."

(He has drawn a calamus from his girdle, and seating himself cross-legged upon the ground, with the papyrus roll still in his hand, he lifts his face toward Saint Anthony, who sits near him, with head bowed down.

After a moment of silence Hilarion continues:—)

"Is not the word of God confirmed for us by miracles? Nevertheless the magicians of Pharaoh performed miracles; other imposters can perform them; one may be thereby deceived. What then is a miracle? An event which seems to us outside of nature. But do we indeed know all of Nature's powers; and because a common occurrence causes us no astonishment, does it therefore follow that we understand it."

Anthony. "It matters little! We must believe the Scriptures!"

Hilarion. "Saint Paul, Origen, and many others did not understand the Scriptures in a literal sense: yet if Holy Writ be explained by allegories it becomes the portion of a small number, and the evidence of the truth disappears. What must we do?"

Anthony. "We must rely upon the Church!"

Hilarion. "Then the Scriptures are useless?"

Anthony. "No! no! although I acknowledge that in the Old Testament there are some ... some obscurities. But the New shines with purest light."

Hilarion. "Nevertheless, the Angel of the annunciation, in Matthew, appears to Joseph; while, in Luke, he appears to Mary. The anointing of Jesus by a woman takes place, according to the first Gospel, at the commencement of his public life; and, according to the other three, a few days before his death. The drink offered to him on the cross, is, in Matthew, vinegar mixed with gall; in Mark, it is wine and myrrh. According to Luke and Matthew, the apostles should take with them neither money nor scrip for their journey—not even sandals nor staff; in Mark, on the contrary, Jesus bids them take nothing with them, except sandals and a staff. I am thereby bewildered!"

Anthony (in amazement). "Aye, indeed!... in fact...."

Hilarion. "At the contact of the woman who had an issue of blood, Jesus turned and said, 'Who hath touched my garments?' He did not know, then, who had touched him? That contradicts the omniscience of Jesus! If the tomb was watched by guards, the women need have felt no anxiety about finding help to roll away the stone from the tomb. Therefore there were no guards, or the holy women were not there. At Emmaus, he eats with his disciples and makes them feel his wounds. It is a human body, a material and ponderable object; and nevertheless it passes through walls! Is that possible?"

Anthony. "It would require much time to answer thee properly!"

Hilarion. "Why did he receive the Holy Spirit, being himself Son of the Holy Spirit? What need had he of baptism if he was the Word? How could the Devil have tempted him, inasmuch as he was God? Have these thoughts never occurred to thee?"

Anthony. "Yes!... often! Sometimes torpid, sometimes furious—they remain forever in my conscience. I crush them; they rise again, they stifle me; and sometimes I think that I am accursed."

Hilarion. "Then it is needless for thee to serve God?"

Anthony. "I shall always need to adore Him."

(After a long silence Hilarion continues:)

"But aside from dogma, all researches are allowed us. Dost thou desire to know the hierarchy of the Angels, the virtue of the Numbers, the reason of germs and of metamorphoses?"

Anthony. "Yes! yes! my thought struggles wildly to escape from its prison. It seems to me that by exerting all my force I might succeed. Sometimes, for an instant, brief as a lightning flash, I even feel myself as thought uplifted,—then I fall back again!"

Hilarion. "The secret thou wouldst obtain is guarded by sages. They dwell in a distant land; they are seated beneath giant trees; they are robed in white; they are calm as Gods! A warm air gives them sufficient nourishment. All about them, leopards tread upon grassy turf. The murmuring of fountains and the neighing of unicorns mingle with their voices. Thou shalt hear them; and the face of the Unknown shall be unveiled!"

Anthony (sighing). "The way is long; and I am old."

Hilarion. "Oh! oh! wise men are not rare! there are some even very nigh thee!—here! Let us enter!"

[1] Gibbon, a sincere admirer of Athanasius, gives a curious history of these charges, and expresses his disbelief in their truth. The story regarding the design to intercept the corn-fleet of Alexandria is referred to in the use of the word "monopolist."

IV

(And Anthony beholds before him a vast basilica.

The light gushes from the further end, marvellous as a multi-colored sun. It illuminates the innumerable heads of the crowd that fills the nave, and that eddies about the columns toward the side-aisles—where can be perceived, in wooden compartments, altars, beds, little chains of blue stones linked together, and constellations painted upon the walls.

In the midst of the throng there are groups which remain motionless. Men standing upon stools harangue with fingers uplifted; others are praying, with arms outstretched in form of a cross; others are lying prostrate upon the pavement, or singing hymns, or drinking wine; others of the faithful, seated about a table, celebrate their agape;[1] martyrs are unbandaging their limbs in order to show their wounds; and aged men, leaning upon staffs, recount their voyages.

There are some from the country of the Germans, from Thrace also, and from the Gauls, from Scythia and from the Indies, with snow upon their beards, feathers in their hair; thorns in the fringe of their garments; the sandals of some are black with dust, their skins are burnt by the sun. There is a vast confusion of costumes, mantles of purple and robes of linen, embroidered dalmaticas, hair shirts, sailors' caps, bishops' mitres. Their eyes fulgurate strangely. They have the look of executioners, or the look of eunuchs.

Hilarion advances into their midst. All salute him. Anthony, shrinking closer to his shoulder, observes them. He remarks the presence of a great many women. Some of these are attired like men, and have their hair cut short. Anthony feels afraid of them.)

Hilarion. "Those are Christian women who have converted their husbands. Besides, the women were always upon the side of Jesus, even the idolatrous ones, for example, Procula, the wife of Pilate, and Poppæa, the concubine of Nero. Do not tremble!—come on."

(And others are continually arriving.

They seem to multiply, to double themselves by self-division, light as shadows—all the while making an immense clamour, in which yells of rage, cries of love, canticles and objurgations intermingle.)

Anthony (in a low voice). "What do they desire?"

Hilarion. "The Lord said: 'I have yet many things to say to you.... '[2] They possess the knowledge of those things."

(And he pushes Anthony forward to a golden throne approached by five steps, whereon—surrounded by ninety-five disciples, all very thin and pale, and anointed with oil—sits the prophet Manes. He is beautiful as an archangel, immobile as a statue; he is clad in an Indian robe; carbuncles gleam in his plaited hair; at his left hand lies a book of painted images; his right reposes upon a globe. The images represent the creatures that erst slumbered in Chaos. Anthony bends forward to look upon them. Then——)

Manes

(makes his globe revolve; and regulating the tone of his words by a lyre which gives forth crystalline sounds, exclaims:—)

"The celestial earth is at the superior extremity; the terrestrial earth at the inferior extremity. It is sustained by two angels—the Angel Splenditeneus, and Omophorus, whose faces are six.

"At the summit of the highest heaven reigns the impassible Divinity; below, face to face, are the Son of God and the Prince of Darkness.

"When the darkness had advanced even to his kingdom, God evolved from his own essence a virtue which produced the first man; and he environed him with the five elements. But the demons of darkness stole from him a part; and that part is the soul.

"There is but one soul, universally diffused, even as the waters of a river divided

into many branches. It is this universal soul that sighs in the wind—that shrieks in the marble under the teeth of the saw—that roars in the voice of the sea—that weeps tears of milk when the leaves of the fig tree are torn off.

"The souls that leave this world emigrate to the stars, which are themselves animated beings."

Anthony (bursts into a laugh). "Ah! ah! what an absurd imagination!"

A Man (having no beard, and of a most austere aspect). "Wherefore absurd?"

(Anthony is about to reply when Hilarion tells him in a low voice that the questioner is none other than the tremendous Origen himself; and:—)

Manes (continues). "But first they remain awhile in the Moon, where they are purified. Then they rise into the sun."

Anthony (slowly). "I do not know of anything ... which prevents us ... from believing it."

Manes. "The proper aim of every creature is the deliverance of the ray of celestial light imprisoned within matter. It finds easier escape through the medium of perfumes, spices, the aroma of warmed wine, the light things which resemble thoughts. But the acts of life retain it within its prison. The murderer shall be born again in the form of a celephus; he that kills an animal shall become that animal; if thou plantest a vine, thou shalt be thyself bound within its boughs. Food absorbs the celestial light.... Therefore abstain! fast!"

Hilarion. "Thou seest, they are temperate!"

Manes. "There is much of it in meats, less of it in herbs. Moreover the Pure Ones, by means of their great merits, despoil vegetation of this luminous essence; and, thus liberated, it reascends to its source. But through generation, animals keep it imprisoned within the flesh! Therefore, avoid women!"

Hilarion. "Admire their continence."

Manes. "Or rather contrive that they shall not create.....[3]

Anthony. "Oh—abomination!"

Hilarion. "What signifies the hierarchy of turpitudes? The Church has, forsooth, made marriage a sacrament!"

Saturninus (in Syrian costume). "He teaches a most dismal system of the universe!... The Father, desiring to punish the angels who had revolted, ordered them to create the world. Christ came, in order that the God of the Jews, who was one of those angels...."

Anthony. "He an angel! the Creator!"

Cerdo. "Did he not seek to kill Moses, to deceive his own prophets, to seduce nations?—did he not sow falsehood and idolatry broadcast?"

Marcion. "Certainly, the Creator is not the true God!"

Saint Clement of Alexandria. "Matter is eternal!"

Bardesanes (in the costume of the Babylonian magi). "It was formed by the Seven Planetary Spirits."

The Hermians. "Souls were made by the angels."

The Priscillianists. "It was the Devil who made the world."

Anthony (rushing back from the circle). "Horror!"

Hilarion (supporting him). "Thou despairest too hastily!—thou dost misapprehend their doctrine! Here is one who received his teaching directly from Theodas, the friend of St. Paul. Hearken to him."

(And at a sign from Hilarion

Valentinus

appears in a tunic of cloth of silver; his skull is pointed at its summit; his voice has a wheezing sound.)

"The world is the work of a God in delirium!"

Anthony (bending his head down). "The work of a God in delirium!..."

(After a long silence): "How can that be?"

Valentine. "The most perfect of beings, and of the Æons, the Abyss; dwelt in the womb of the Deep together with Thought. By their union was begotten Intelligence, to whom Truth was given as a companion.

"Intelligence and Truth engendered the Word and Life, who in their turn begat Man and the Church; and that doth make eight Æons!"

(He counts upon his fingers.)

"The Word and Truth also produced ten other Æons—which is to say, five couples. Man and the Church had begotten twelve more—among these the Paraclete and Faith, Hope and Charity, Perfection and Wisdom—Sophia.

"The union of these thirty Æons constitutes the Pleroma, or Universality of God. Thus, even as the echo of a passing voice, as the effluvia of a perfume evaporating, as the fires of the setting sun, the Powers that emanated from the Principle, forever continue to grow weaker.

"But Sophia, desirous to know the Father, darted from the Pleroma; and the Word then made another couple, Christ and the Holy Ghost, who reunited all the Æons; and all together formed Jesus, the flower of the Pleroma.

"But the effort of Sophia to flee away had left in the void an image of her—an evil substance, Acharamoth.[4] The Saviour took pity upon her, freed her from all passion; and from the smile of Acharamoth redeemed, light was born; her tears formed the waters; by her sorrow was dark matter begotten.

"Of Acharamoth was born the Demiurgos,—the fabricator of worlds, the creator of the heaven and of the Devil. He dwells far below the Pleroma—so far that he cannot behold it—so that he deems himself to be the true God, and repeats by the mouths of

his prophets—'There is no other God but I.' Then he made man, and instilled into his soul the immaterial Seed which was the Church—a reflection of the other Church established in the Pleroma.

"One day Acharamoth shall reach the highest region and unite herself with the Saviour; the fire that is hidden in the world shall annihilate all matter, and shall even devour itself and men, becoming pure spirits, shall espouse the angels!"

Origen. "Then shall the Demon be over-thrown and the reign of God commence!"

(Anthony expresses a cry, and forthwith)

Basilides (taking him by the elbow, exclaims:—)

"The Supreme Being with all the infinite emanations is called Abraxas; and the Saviour with all his virtues, Kaulakau—otherwise, line-upon-line, rectitude upon rectitude.

"The power of Kaulakau is obtained by the aid of certain words, which are inscribed upon this chalcedony to help the memory."

(And he points to a little stone suspended at his neck, upon which stone fantastic characters are graven.)

"Then thou wilt be transported into the Invisible and placed above all law; thou shalt contemn all things—even virtue!

"We, the Pure, must flee from pain, after the example of Kaulakau."

Anthony. "What! and the cross?"

The Elkhesaites (in robes of hyacinth answers him). "The woe and the degradation, the condemnation and oppression of my fathers[5] are blotted out, through the mission which has come.

"One may deny the inferior Christ, the man—Jesus; but the other Christ must be adored—whose personality was evolved under the brooding of the Dove's wings.

"Honor marriage; the Holy Spirit is feminine!"

(Hilarion has disappeared; and Anthony, carried along by the crowd, arrives in the presence of—)

The Carpocratians

(reclining with women upon scarlet cushions.)

"Before entering into the Only thou shalt pass through a series of conditions and of actions. To free thyself from the powers of darkness, thou must at once accomplish their works. The husband shall say to the wife: 'Have charity for thy brother'—and she will kiss thee."

The Nicolaitans

(gathered about a mass of smoking meats:)

"This is a portion of the meat offered to idols;—partake of it! Apostasy is permissible when the heart is pure. Gorge thy flesh with all that it demands. Seek to exterminate it by dint of debauchery! Prounikos, the Mother of Heaven, wallowed in ignominies."

The Marcosians

(wearing rings of gold, and glistening with precious balm and unguents:)

"Enter among us that thou mayst unite thyself to the Spirit! Enter among us that thou mayst quaff the draught of immortality!"

(And one of them shows him, behind a tapestry-hanging, the body of a man terminated by the head of an ass. This represents Sabaoth, father of the Devil. He spits upon the image in token of detestation.

Another shows him a very low bed, strewn with flowers, exclaiming:)

"The spiritual marriage is about to be consummated."

(A third, who holds a cup of glass, utters an invocation;—blood suddenly appears in the cup:)

"Ah! behold it! behold it!—the blood of Christ!"

(Anthony withdraws, but finds himself be-spattered by water splashed from a cistern.)

The Helvidians

(are flinging themselves into it head foremost, muttering:—)

"The man regenerated by baptism is impeccable!"

(Then he passes by a great fire at which the Adamites are warming themselves—all completely naked in imitation of the purity of Paradise; and he stumbles over)

The Messalines

(wallowing upon the pavement, half-slumbering, stupid:)

"Oh! crush us if thou wilt! we shall not move! Work is crime; all occupation is evil."

(Behind these, the abject)

Paternians

(—men, women, and children lying pell mell upon a heap of filth, lift their hideous faces, wine-besmeared, and they cry aloud:)

"The inferior parts of the body, which were created by the Devil, belong to him! Let us eat, drink, and sin!"

Ætius. "Crimes are necessities beneath the notice of God!"

(But suddenly—)

A Man (—clad in a Carthaginian mantle, bounds into their midst, brandishing a scourge of thongs in his hand; and strikes violently and indiscriminately at all in his path:)

"Ah! imposters! simonists, heretics and demons!—vermin of the schools!—dregs of hell! Marcion, there, is a sailor of Sinopus excommunicated for incest;—Carpocrates was banished for being a magician; Ætius stole his concubine; Nicholas prostituted his wife; and this Manes, who calls himself the Buddha, and whose real name is

Cubricus, was flayed alive with the point of a reed, so that his skin even now hangs at the gates of Ctesiphon!"

Anthony (recognizing Tertullian, rushes to join him): "Master! help! help!"

Tertullian (continuing):

"Break the images! veil the virgins! Pray, fast, weep and mortify yourselves! No philosophy! no books! After Jesus, science is useless!"

(All have fled away; and Anthony beholds, in lieu of Tertullian, a woman seated upon a bench of stone.

She sobs; leaning her head against a column; her hair is loose; her body, weakened by grief, is clad in a long brown simar. Then they find themselves face to face and alone, far from the crowd; and a silence, an extraordinary stillness falls—as in the woods when the winds are lulled, and the leaves of the trees suddenly cease to whisper.

This woman is still very beautiful, although faded, and pale as a sepulcher. They look at one another; and their eyes send to each other waves, as it were, of thoughts, bearing drift of a thousand ancient things, confused, mysterious. At last—)

Priscilla (speaks:)

"I was in the last chamber of the baths; and the rumbling sounds of the street caused a sleep to fall upon me.

"Suddenly I heard a clamour of voices. Men were shouting—'It is a magician!—it is the Devil!' And the crowd stopped before our house, in front of the Temple Æsculapius. I drew myself up with my hands to the little window.

"Upon the peristyle of the temple, there stood a man who wore about his neck a collar of iron. He took burning coals out of a chafing-dish, and with them drew lines across his breast, the while crying out—'Jesus! Jesus!' The people shouted—'This is not lawful! let us stone him!' But he continued. Oh! those were unheard of

marvels—things which transported men who beheld them! Flowers broad as suns circled before my eyes, and I heard in the spaces above me the vibrations of a golden harp. Day died. My hands loosened their grasp of the window-bars; my body fell back, and when he had led me away to his house...."

Anthony. "But of whom art thou speaking?"

Priscilla. "Why, of Montanus!"

Anthony. "Montanus is dead!"

Priscilla. "It is not true!"

A Voice. "No: Montanus is not dead!"

(Anthony turns; and sees upon the bench near him, on the opposite side, another woman sitting; she is fair, and even paler than the other; there are swellings under her eyes, as though she had wept a long time. She speaks without being questioned:)

Maximilla. "We were returning from Tarsus by way of the mountains, when, at a turn in the road, we saw a man under a fig tree.

"He cried from afar off: 'Stop! stop!' and rushed toward us, uttering words of abuse. The slaves ran up; he burst into a loud laugh. The horses reared; the molossi all barked.

"He stood before us. The sweat streamed from his forehead; his mantle napped in the wind.

"And calling us each by our names, he reproached us with the vanity of our work, the infamy of our bodies; and he shook his fist at the dromedaries because of the silver bells hanging below their mouths.

"His fury now filled my very entrails with fear and yet there was a strange pleasure in it which fascinated me, intoxicated me!

"First the slaves came. 'Master,' they said, 'our animals are weary.' Then the women said, 'We are frightened,' and the slaves departed. Then the children began to

weep,—'We are hungry.' And as the women were not answered, they disappeared also from our view.

"He still spoke. I felt some one near me. It was my husband; but I listened only to the other. My husband crawled to me upon his knees among the stones, and cried—'Dost thou abandon me,' and I replied: 'Yes! go thy way!' that I might accompany Montanus."

Anthony. "A eunuch!"

Priscilla. "Ah! does that astound thee, vulgar soul! Yet Magdalen, Johanna, Martha and Susannah did not share the couch of the Saviour. Souls may know the delirium of embrace better than bodies. That he might keep Eustolia with impunity, the bishop Leontius mutilated himself—loving his love more than his virility. And then, it was no fault of mine. Sotas could not cure me; a spirit constrained me. It is cruel, nevertheless! But what matter? I am the last of the prophetesses; and after me the end of the world shall come."

Maximilla. "He showered his gifts upon me. Moreover, no one loves him as I, nor is any other so well beloved by him!"

Priscilla. "Thou liest! I am the most beloved!"

Maximilla. "No: it is I!"

(They fight. Between their shoulders suddenly appears the head of a negro.)

Montanus (clad in a black mantle, clasped by two cross-bones):

"Peace, my doves! Incapable of terrestrial happiness, we have obtained the celestial plentitude of our union. After the age of the Father, the age of the Son; and I inaugurate the third, which is that of the Paraclete. His light descended upon me during those forty nights when the heavenly Jerusalem appeared shining in the firmament, above my house at Pepuzza.

"Ah, how ye cry out with anguish when the thongs of the scourge lacerate! how your

suffering bodies submit to the ardor of my spiritual discipline! how ye languish with irrealizable longing! So strong has that desire become that it has enabled you to behold the invisible world; and ye can now perceive souls even with the eyes of the body!"

Anthony. (Makes a gesture of astonishment.)

Tertullian (who appears again, standing beside Montanus):

"Without doubt; for the soul has a body, and that which is bodiless has no existence."

Montanus. "In order to render it yet more subtle, I have instituted many mortifications, three Lents a year, and prayers to be uttered nightly by the mind only, keeping the mouth closed, lest breathing might tarnish thought. It is necessary to abstain from second marriages, or rather from all marriage! The Angels themselves have sinned with women!"

The Archontics (wearing cilices of hair):

"The Saviour said: 'I come to destroy the work of the Woman!'"

The Tatianites (wearing cilices of reed):

"She is the tree of evil. Our bodies are but garments of skin."

(And continuing to advance along the same side, Anthony meets:—)

The Valesians (extended upon the ground, with red wounds below their bellies, and blood saturating their tunics. They offer him a knife.)

"Do as Origen did and as we have done! Is it the pain that thou fearest, coward? Is it the love of thy flesh that restrains thee, hypocrite?"

(And while he watches them writhing upon their backs, in a pool of blood—)

The Cainites (wearing knotted vipers as fillets about their hair, pass by, vociferating in his ear):—

"Glory to Cain! Glory to Sodom! Glory be to Judas!

"Cain made the race of the strong; Sodom terrified the earth by her punishment, and it was by Judas that God saved the world! Yes! by Judas: without him there would have been no death and no redemption!"

(They disappear beneath the horde of the—)

Circumcelliones (all clad in the skins of wolves, crowned with thorns, and armed with maces of iron).

"Crush the fruit! befoul the spring! drown the child! Pillage the rich who are happy—who cat their fill! Beat the poor who envy the ass his saddle-cloth, the dog his meal, the bird his nest,—and who is wretched at knowing that others are not as miserable as himself.

"We, the Saints, poison, burn, massacre, that we may hasten the end of the world.

"Salvation may be obtained through martyrdom only. We give ourselves martyrdom. We tear the skin from our heads with pincers; we expose our members to the plough; we cast ourselves into the mouths of furnaces!

"Out upon baptism! out upon the Eucharist! out upon marriage! universal damnation!"

(Then throughout all the basilica there is a redoubling of fury.

The Audians shoot arrows against the Devil; the Collyridians throw blue cloths toward the roof; the Ascites prostrate themselves before a waterskin; the Marcionites baptise a dead man with oil. A woman, standing near Appelles, exhibits a round loaf within a bottle, in order the better to explain her idea. Another, standing in the midst of an assembly of Sampseans distributes, as a sacrament, the dust of her own sandals. Upon the rose-strewn bed of the Marcosians, two lovers embrace. The Circumcellionites slaughter one another; the Valesians utter the death-rattle; Bardesanes sings; Carpocras dances; Maximilla and Priscilla moan; and the false prophetess of Cappadocia, completely naked, leaning upon a lion, and brandishing three torches, shrieks the Terrible Invocation.

The columns of the temple sway to and fro like the trunks of trees in a tempest; the amulets suspended about the necks of the Heresiarchs seem to cross each other in lines of fire; the constellations in the chapels palpitate; and the walls recoil with the ebb and flow of the crowd, in which each head is a wave that leaps and roars.

Nevertheless, from the midst of the clamor arises the sound of a song, in which the name of Jesus is often repeated, accompanied by bursts of laughter.

The singers belong to the rabble of the people; they all keep time to the song by clapping their hands. In their midst stands—)

Artus (in a deacon's vestments):

"The fools who declaim against me pretend to explain the absurd; and in order to confound them utterly, I have composed ditties so droll that they are learned by heart in all the mills, in the taverns and along the ports.

"No! a thousand times no!—the Son is not coeternal with the Father, nor of the same substance! Otherwise he would not have said: 'Father, remove this chalice from me! Why dost thou call me good? God alone is good! I go to my God, to your God!'—and many other things testifying to his character of creature. The fact is further demonstrated for us by all his names:—lamb, shepherd, fountain, wisdom, son-of-man, prophet; the way, the corner-stone!"

Sabelliusés. "I hold that both are identical."

Arius. "The Council of Antioch has decided the contrary."

Anthony. "Then what is the Word?... What was Jesus?"

The Valentinians. "He was the husband of Acharamoth repentant!"

The Sethianians. "He was Shem, the son of Noah!"

The Theodotians. "He was Melchisedech!"

The Merinthians. "He was only a man!"

The Apollinarists. "He assumed the appearance of one! He simulated the Passion!"

Marcel of Ancyra. "He was a development of the Father!"

Pope Calixtus. "Father and Son are but two modes of one God's manifestation!"

Methodius. "He was first in Adam, then in man!"

Cerinthus. "And He will rise again!"

Valentinus. "Impossible—his body being celestial!"

Paul of Samosata. "He became God only from the time of his baptism!"

Hermogenes. "He dwells in the sun!"

(And all the Heresiarchs form a circle about Anthony, who weeps, covering his face with his hands.)

A Jew (with a red beard, and spots of leprosy upon his shin, approaches close to Anthony, and, with a hideous sneer, exclaims):

"His soul was the soul of Esau! He suffered from the Bellephorentian sickness. Was not his mother, the seller of perfumes, seduced by a Roman soldier, one Pantherus?..... [6]

Anthony (suddenly raising his head, looks at them a moment in silence; then advancing boldly upon them, exclaims):

"Doctors, magicians, bishops, and deacons, men and phantoms, away from me! begone! Ye are all lies!"

The Heresiarchs. "We have martyrs more martyrs than thine, prayers that are more difficult, outbursts of love more sublime, ecstasies as prolonged as thine are."

Anthony. "But ye have no revelation! no proofs!"

(They all at once brandish in the air their rolls of papyrus, tablets of wood, scrolls of leather, rolls of woven stuff bearing inscriptions; and elbowing; and pushing each other, they all shout to Anthony.)

The Cerinthians. "Behold the Gospel of the Hebrews!"

The Marcionites. "Behold the Gospel of the Lord!"

The Marcosians. "The Gospel of Eve!"

The Eucratites. "The Gospel of Thomas!"

The Cainites. "The Gospel of Judas!"

Basilides. "The Treatise upon the Destiny of the Soul!"

Manes. "The Prophecy of Barkouf!"

(Anthony struggles, breaks from them, escapes them; and in a shadowy corner perceives—)

The Aged Ebionites

(withered as mummies, their eyes dull and dim, their eyebrows white as frost.

In tremulous voices they exclaim:—)

"We have known him, we have seen him! We knew the Carpenter's Son! We were then the same age as he; we dwelt in the same street. He used to amuse himself by modelling little birds of mud; aided his father at his work without fear of the sharp tools, or selected for his mother the skeins of dyed wool. Then he made a voyage to Egypt, from whence he brought back wondrous secrets. We were at Jericho when he came to find the Eater of Locusts. They talked together in a low voice, so that no one could hear what was said. But it was from that time that his name began to be noised abroad in Galilee, and that men began to relate many fables regarding him."

(They reiterate, tremulously:)

"We knew him! we others, we knew him!"

Anthony. "Ah, speak on, speak! What was his face like?"

Tertullian. "His face was wild and repulsive; forasmuch as he had burthened himself with all the crimes, all the woes, all the deformities of mankind."

Anthony. "Oh! no, no! I imagine, on the contrary, that his entire person must have

been glorious with a beauty greater than the beauty of man!"

Eusebius of Cæsarea. "There is indeed, at Paneades, propped up against the walls of a crumbling edifice surrounded by a wilderness of weeds and creeping plants, a certain statue of stone which, some say, was erected by the Woman healed of the issue of blood. But time has gnawed the face of the statue, and the rains have worn the inscription away."

(A woman steps forward from the group of the Carpocratians.)

Marcellina. "I was once a deaconess at Rome, in a little church, where I used to exhibit to the faithful, the silver images, of Saint Paul, Homer, Pythagoras and Jesus Christ.

"I have only kept that of Jesus."

(She half opens her mantle.)

"Dost thou desire it?"

A Voice. "He reappears himself when we call upon him! It is the hour!—come!"

(And Anthony feels a brutal hand seize him by the arm, and drag him away.

He mounts a stairway in complete darkness; and after having ascended many steps, he finds himself before a door.

Then the one who is leading him—(is it Hilarion?—he does not know)—whispers in the ear of another: "The Lord is about to come!"—and they are admitted into a chamber, with a very low ceiling, and without furniture.

The first object which attracts his attention is a long blood-colored chrysalis, with a human head surrounded by rays, and the word Knouphus inscribed all around it in Greek characters. It is placed upon the shaft of a column, which is in turn supported by a broad pedestal. Hanging upon the walls of the chamber are medallions of polished iron representing the heads of various animals:—the head of an ox, the head of a lion, the head of an eagle, the head of a dog, and the head of an

ass—again!

... a long blood-colored chrysalis

Earthen lamps, suspended below these images, create a vacillating light. Through a hole in the wall, Anthony can see the moon shining far off upon the waves; he can even hear the feeble regular sound of lapping water; together with the heavy thud occasionally caused by the bumping of a ship's hull against the stones of the mole.

There are men crouching down, with their faces hidden by their mantles. From time to time they utter sounds resembling a smothered bark. There are women also, sleeping with their foreheads resting upon their arms, and their arms supported by their knees; they are so hidden by their garments as to resemble heaps of cloth piled up at intervals against the wall. Near them are half naked children, whose persons swarm with vermin. They watch with idiotic stare the burning of the lamps; and nothing is done: all are waiting for something.

They talk in undertones about family matters, or recommend to each other various remedies for their ailments. Some of them must embark at earliest daylight; the persecution is becoming too terrible to be endured. Nevertheless, the pagans are easily enough deceived:—"The fools imagine that we are really adoring Knouphus!"

But one of the brethren, feeling himself suddenly inspired, takes his place before the column, where a basket has already been placed, filled with fennel and aristolochia. On the top of the basket is placed a loaf.)

The Inspired Brother

(unrolling a placard covered with designs representing cylinders blending with and fitting into one another, commences to pray:)

"The ray of the Word descended upon the darknesses; and there arose a mighty cry, like unto the voice of Light."

All (swaying their bodies in unison, respond):

"Kyrie eleison!"

The Inspired Brother. "Then was Man created by the infamous God of Israel, aided by those who are these (pointing to the medallions)—Astophaios, Oraios, Sabaoth, Adonai, Eloi, Iao!

"And Man, hideous, feeble, formless and thoughtless, lay upon the slime of the earth."

All (in plaintive accents):

"Kyrie eleison!"

The Inspired Brother. "But Sophia, compassionating him, vivified him with a spark of her own soul.

"Then God, beholding Man so beautiful, waxed wroth; and imprisoned him within His own kingdom, forbidding him to touch the Tree of Knowledge.

"Again did the other succor him. She sent to him the Serpent, who, by many long subterfuges, made him disobey that law of hate.

"And Man, having tasted knowledge, understood celestial things."

All (raising their voices):

"Kyrie Eleison!"

The Inspired Brother. "But Iabdalaoth through vengeance cast down man into the world of matter, and the Serpent with him."

All (in a very low tone):

"Kyrie Eleison!"

(Then all hold their peace, and there is silence.

The odors of the port mingle with the smoke of the lamps in the warm air. The lamp-wicks crepitate; their flames are about to go out, long mosquitoes flit in rapid circlings about them. And Anthony groans in an agony of anguish, as with the

feeling that a monstrosity is floating about him, as with the fear of a crime that is about to be accomplished.

But—)

The Inspired Brother (stamping his heel upon the floor, snapping his fingers, tossing his head wildly, suddenly chants to a furious rhythm, with accompaniment of cymbals and a shrill flute:—)

"Come! come! come!—issue from thy cavern!

"O swift one, who runneth without feet, captor who seizeth without hand!

"Sinuous as the rivers, orbicular as the sun, black, with spots of gold, like the firmament star-besprinkled! Like unto the intertwinings of the vine, and the circumvolutions of entrails!

"Unengendered! eater of earth! immortally young! unfailing perspicacious! honored at Epidaurus! Kindly to man! thou who didst heal King Ptolemy, and the warriors, of Moses, and Glaucus, son of Minos!

"Come! come! come!—issue from thy cavern!"

All (repeat):

"Come! come! come!—issue from thy cavern!"

(Nevertheless, nothing yet appears.)

"Why? What aileth him?"

(And they concert together, devise means.

An old man presents a clod of turf as an offering. Then something upheaves within the basket. The mass of verdure shakes; the flowers fall, and the head of a python appears.

... the flowers fall and the head of a python appears

It passes slowly around the edge of the loaf, like a circle moving around an

immovable disk;—then it unfolds itself, lengthens out; it is enormous and of great weight. Lest it should touch the floor, the men uphold it against their breasts, the women support it upon their heads, the children hold it up at arms' length; and its tail, issuing through the hole in the wall, stretches away indefinitely to the bottom of the sea. Its coils double; they fill the chamber; they enclose Anthony.)

The Faithful (press their mouths against its skin, snatch from one another the loaf which it has bitten, and cry aloud:—)

"It is thou! it is thou!

"First raised up by Moses, broken by Ezechias, re-established by the Messiah. He drank thee in the waters of baptism; but thou didst leave him in the Garden of Olives; and then indeed he felt his own weakness!

"Writhing about the arms of the cross, and above his head, while casting thy slime upon the crown of thorns, thou didst behold him die! For thou art not Jesus, thou!—thou art the Word! thou art the Christ!"

(Anthony faints with horror, and falls prostrate in front of his hut upon the splinters of wood, where the torch that had slipped from his hand, is burning low.

The shock arouses him. Opening his eyes again, he perceives the Nile, brightly undulating under the moon, like a vast serpent winding over the sands; so that the hallucination returns upon him again; he has not left the company of the Ophites; they surround him, call him; he sees them carrying baggage, descending to the port. He embarks along with them.

An inappreciable time elapses.

Then the vaults of a prison environ him. Iron bars in front of him make black lines against a background of blue; and in the darkness beside him people are praying and weeping surrounded by others who exhort and console.

... and in the darkness beside him people are praying

Without, there is a murmur like the deep humming of a vast crowd, and there is splendour as of a summer's day.

Shrill voices announce watermelons for sale, iced drinks, and cushions of woven grass to sit upon. From time to time there are bursts of applause. He hears the sound of footsteps above his head.

Suddenly a long roar is heard, mighty and cavernous as the roar of water in an aqueduct.

And he sees, directly opposite, behind the bars of another compartment across the arena a lion walking to and fro, then a line of sandals, bare legs, and purple fringes. Beyond are the vast circling wreaths of people, in symmetrical tiers, enlarging as they rise, from the lowest which hems in the arena to the uppermost above which masts rise to sustain a hyacinth-colored awning, suspended in air by ropes. Stairways radiating toward the centre, divide these huge circles of stone at regular intervals. The benches disappear under a host of spectators—knights, senators, soldiers, plebeians, vestals, and courtesans—in woollen hoods, in silken maniples, in fallow-colored tunics; together with aigrettes of precious stones, plumes of feathers, the fasces of lictors; and all this swarming multitude deafens and stupefies Anthony with its shoutings, its tumultuous fury, as of an enormous boiling vat. In the middle of the arena, a vase of incense smokes upon an altar.

Anthony thus knows that the people with him are Christians condemned to be thrown to the wild beasts. The men wear the red mantle of the pontiffs of Saturn; the women, the bandellettes of Ceres. Their friends divide among themselves shreds of their garments, and rings. To obtain access to the prison, they say, costs a great deal of money. But what matter! They will remain until it is all over.

Anthony notices among these consolers, a certain bald-headed man, in a black tunic: Anthony has seen that face somewhere before. The consoler discourses to them concerning the nothingness of this world, and the felicity of the Elect. Anthony feels

within him a transport of celestial love; he longs for the opportunity to lay down his life for the Saviour—not knowing as yet whether he himself is to be numbered among the martyrs.

But all—except a certain Phrygian, with long hair, who stands with his arms uplifted—have a look of woe. One old man is sobbing upon a bench; a youth standing close by, with drooping head, abandons himself to a reverie of sorrow.

The Old Man had refused to pay the customary contribution before the statue of Minerva, erected at the angle of the cross-roads; and he gazes at his companions with a look that signifies:—)

"Ye ought to have succored me! Communities can sometimes so arrange matters as to insure their being left in peace. Some among ye also procured those letters which falsely allege that one has sacrificed to idols."

(He asks aloud:—)

"Was it not Petrus of Alexandria who laid down the rule concerning what should be done by those who have yielded to torture?"

(Then, to himself:—)

"Ah! how cruel this at my age! My infirmities make me so weak! Nevertheless, I might easily have lived until the coming winter, or longer!"

(The memory of his little garden makes him sad, and he gazes toward the altar.)

The Young Man (who disturbed the festival of Apollo by violence and blows, murmurs:—)

"Yet it would have been easy for me to have fled to the mountains!"

(One of the brothers answers:—)

"But the soldiers would have captured thee!"

The Young Man. "Oh! I would have done as Cyprian did—I would have returned, and the second time I would surely have had more force!"

(Then he thinks of the innumerable days that he might have lived, of all the joys that he might have known, but will never know; and he gazes toward the altar.

But—)

The Man in the Black Tunic (rushes to his side.)

"What scandal! What! Thou! a victim of God's own choice! And all these women here who are looking at thee! Nay, think what thou art doing! Moreover, remember that God sometimes vouchsafes to perform a miracle. Pionius numbed and made powerless the hands of his executioners; the blood of Polycarp extinguished the fire of the stake."

(Then he turns to the Old Man:—)

"Father, father! it behooves thee to edify us by thy death! By longer delaying it, thou wouldst doubtless commit some evil action that would lose thee the fruit of all thy good works. Remember, also, that the power of God is infinite; and it may come to pass that all the people will be converted by thy example."

(And in the great den opposite, the lions stride back and forth, ceaselessly, with a rapid continuous motion. The largest suddenly looks at Anthony and roars, and a vapour issues from his jaws.

The women are huddled against the men.)

The Consoler (goes from one to the other.)

"What would ye say, what wouldst thou say if thou wert to be burned with red-hot irons, if thou wert to be torn asunder by horses, if thou hadst been condemned to have thy body smeared with honey, and thus exposed to be devoured by flies! As it is, thou wilt only suffer the death of a hunter surprised by a beast in the woods."

(Anthony would prefer all those things to death by the fangs of the horrible wild beasts; he fancies already that he feels their teeth and their claws, that he hears his bones cracking between their jaws.

A keeper enters the dungeon; the martyrs tremble.

Only one remains impassable, the Phrygian, who prays standing apart from the rest. He has burned three temples; and he advances with arms uplifted, mouth open, face turned toward heaven, seeing nothing around him, like a somnambulist.)

The Consoler (shouts). "Back! back! lest the spirit of Montanus might come upon you."

All (recoil from the Phrygian, and vociferate)

"Damnation to the Montanist!"

(They insult him, spit upon him, excite each other to beat him.

The rearing lions bite each other's manes;)

The People "To the beasts with them, to the beasts."

The Martyrs burst into sobs, and embrace each other passionately. A cup of narcotic wine is offered them. It is passed from hand to hand, quickly.

Another keeper, standing at the door of the den, awaits the signal. The den opens; a lion comes out.

He crosses the arena with great oblique strides. Other lions follow in file after him; then a bear, three panthers, and some leopards. They scatter through the arena like a flock in a meadow.

The crack of a whip resounds. The Christians stagger forward; and their brethren push them, that it may be over the sooner.

Anthony closes his eyes.

He opens them again. But darkness envelopes him.

Soon the darkness brightens; and he beholds an arid plain, mamillated with knolls, such as might be seen about abandoned quarries.

... and he beholds an arid plain, mamillated with knolls

Here and there a tuft of shrubbery rises among the slabs of stone, level with the soil; and there are white figures, vaguer than clouds, bending over the slabs.

Others approach, softly, silently. Eyes gleam through the slits of long veils. By the easy indifference of their walk, and the perfumes exhaled from their garments, Anthony knows they are patrician women. There are men also, but of inferior condition; for their faces are at once simple-looking and coarse.

(One of the Women, taking a long breath:)

"Ah! how good the cool air of night is, among the sepulchers! I am so weary of the softness of beds, the turmoil of days, the heavy heat of the sun!"

(Her maid-servant takes from a canvas bag, a torch which she ignites. The faithful light other torches by it, and plant them upon the tombs.)

A Woman (panting).

"I am here at last! Oh how wearisome to be the wife of an idolator!"

Another. "These visits to the prisons, interviews with our brethren, are all matters of suspicion to our husbands! And we must even hide ourselves in order to make the sign of the cross; they would take it for a magical conjuration!"

Another. "With my husband it was a quarrel every day. I would not submit myself to his brutal exactions; therefore he has had me prosecuted as a Christian."

Another. "Do you remember Lucius, that young man who was so beautiful, who was dragged like Hector, with his heels attached to a chariot, from the Esquiline Gate to the mountains of Tibur?—and how his blood spattered the bushes on either side of the road? I gathered up the drops of his blood. Behold it!"

(She drags a black sponge from her bosom, covers it with kisses, and flings herself down upon the slabs, crying aloud:—)

She drags a black sponge from her bosom, covers it with kisses ...

"Ah! my friend! my friend!"

A Man. "It is just three years to-day since Domitilla died. They stoned her at the further end of the Grove of Proserpine. I gathered her bones, which shone like glowworms in the grass. The earth how covers them."

(He casts himself down upon a tomb.)

"O my betrothed! my betrothed!"

(And all the others scattered over the plain:—)

"O my sister! O my brother! O my daughter! O my mother!"

(Some kneel, covering their faces with their hands; others lie down upon the ground with their arms extended; and the sobs they smother shake their breasts with such violence as though their hearts were breaking with grief. Sometimes they look up to heaven, exclaiming:—)

"Have mercy upon her soul, O my God! She languishes in the sojourn of Shades; vouchsafe to admit her to thy Resurrection, that she may enjoy Thy Light!"

(Or, with eyes fixed upon the gravestones, they murmur to the dead:—)

"Be at peace, beloved! and suffer not! I have brought thee wine and meats!"

A Widow. "Here is pultis, made by my own hands, as he used to like it, with plenty of eggs and a double measure of flour! We are going to eat it together as in other days, are we not?"

(She lifts a little piece to her lips, and suddenly bursts into an extravagant and frenzied laugh.

The others also nibble a little bit as she does and drink a mouthful of wine.

They recount to each other the stories of their martyrs; grief becomes exalted! libations redouble. Their tear-swimming eyes are fixed upon each other's faces. They stammer with intoxication and grief; gradually hands touch hands, lips join themselves to lips, and they seek each other upon the tombs, between the cups and the torches.

The sky begins to whiten. The fog makes damp their garments; and, without appearing even to know one another, they depart by different ways and seek their homes.

The sun shines; the weeds and the grass have grown higher; the face of the plain is changed.

And Anthony, looking between tall bamboos, sees distinctly a forest of columns, of bluish-grey color. These are tree-trunks, all originating from one vast trunk. From each branch of the colossal tree descend other branches which may bury themselves in the soil; and the aspect of all these horizontal and perpendicular lines, indefinitely multiplied, would closely resemble a monstrous timber-work, were it not that they have small figs[7] growing upon them here and there, and a blackish foliage, like that of the sycamore.

He perceives in the forkings of their branches, hanging bunches of yellow flowers, violet flowers also, and ferns that resemble the plumes of splendid birds.

Under the lowest branches the horns of a bubalus gleam at intervals, and the bright eyes of antelopes are visible; there are hosts of parrots; there are butterflies flittering hither and thither; lizards lazily drag themselves up or down; flies buzz and hum; and in the midst of the silence, a sound is audible as of the palpitation of a deep and mighty life.

Seated upon a sort of pyre at the entrance of the wood is a strange being—a man—besmeared with cow-dung, completely naked, more withered than a mummy; his articulations form knots at the termination of bones that resemble sticks. He has bunches of shells suspended from his ears; his face is very long, and his nose like a vulture's beak. His left arm remains motionlessly erect in air, anchylosed, rigid as a stake; and he has been seated here so long that birds have made themselves a nest in his long hair.

At the four corners of his wooden pyre flame four fires. The sun is directly in front

of him. He gazes steadily at it with widely-opened eyes; and, then without looking at Anthony, asks him:—)

"Brahmin from the shores of the Nile, what hast thou to say regarding these things?"

(Flames suddenly burst out on all sides of him, through the intervals between the logs of the pyre; and—)

The Gymnosophist (continues).

"Lo! I have buried myself in solitude, like the rhinoceros. I dwelt in the tree behind me."

I have buried myself in solitude, like the rhinoceros. I dwelt in the tree behind me

(The vast fig-tree, indeed, shows in one of its groves, a natural excavation about the size of a man.)

"And I nourished me with flowers and fruits, observing the precepts so rigidly that not even a dog ever beheld me eat.

"Inasmuch as existence originates from corruption, corruption from desire, desire from sensation, sensation from contact, I have ever avoided all action, all contact, and perpetually—motionless as the stela of a tomb, exhaling my breath from my two nostrils, fixing my eyes upon my nose, and contemplating the ether in my mind, the world in my members, the moon in my heart—I dreamed of the essence of the great Soul whence continually escape the principles of life, even as sparks escape from fire.

"Thus at last I found the supreme Soul in all beings, and all beings in the supreme Soul; and I have been able to make mine own soul all my senses.

"I receive knowledge directly from heaven, like the bird Tchataka, who quenches his thirst from falling rain only.

"Even by so much as things are known to me, things no longer exist.

"For me now there is no more hope, no more anguish, there is neither happiness nor

virtue, nor day nor night, nor Thou nor I—absolutely nothing!

"My awful austerities have made me superior to the Powers. A single contraction of my thought would suffice to kill a hundred sons of kings, to dethrone gods, to overturn the world."

(He utters all these things in a monotonous voice.

The surrounding leaves shrivel up. Fleeing rats rush over the ground.

He slowly turns his eyes downward toward the rising flames, and then continues:—)

"I have loathed Form, I have loathed Perception, I have loathed even Knowledge itself, for the thought does not survive the transitory fact which caused it; and mind, like all else, is only an illusion.

"All that is engendered will perish; all that is dead must live again; the beings that have even now disappeared shall sojourn again in wombs as yet unformed, and shall again return to earth to serve in woe other creatures.

"But inasmuch as I have rolled through the revolution of an indefinite multitude of existences, under the envelopes of gods, of men, and of animals, I renounce further wanderings; I will endure this weariness no more! I abandon the filthy hostelry of this body of mine, built with flesh, reddened with blood, covered with a hideous skin, full of uncleanliness; and, for my recompense, I go at last to slumber in the deepest deeps of the Absolute—in Annihilation."

(The flames rise to his chest, then envelope him. His head rises through them as through a hole in the wall. His cavernous eyes still remain icicle open, gazing.)

Anthony (rises).

(The torch, which had fallen to the ground, has ignited the splinters of wood; and the flames have singed his beard.

With a loud cry, Anthony tramples the fire out; and, when nothing remains but ashes, he exclaims:—)

"Where can Hilarion be? He was here a moment ago. I saw him!

"What! No; it is impossible; I must have been mistaken!

"Yet why?... Perhaps my cabin, these stones, this sand, have no real existence. I am becoming mad! Let me be calm! Where was I? What was it that happened?

"Ah! the gymnosophist!... Such a death is frequent among the sages of India. Kalanos burned himself before Alexander; another did likewise in the time of Augustus. What hatred of life men must have to do thus! Unless, indeed, they are impelled by pride alone?... Yet in any event they have the intrepidity of martyrs.... As for the latter, I can now well believe what has been told me regarding the debauchery they cause.

"And before that? Yes: I remember now! the host of the Heresiarchs! What outcries! What eyes! Yet why so much rebellion of the flesh, so much dissoluteness, so many aberrations of the intellect.

"They claim, nevertheless, to seek God through all those ways! What right have I to curse them—I, who stumble so often in mine own path? I was perhaps about to learn more of them at the moment when they disappeared. Too rapid was the whirl; I had no time to answer. Now I feel as though there were more space, more light in my understanding. I am calm. I even feel myself able to.... What is this? I thought I had put out the fire!"

(A flame flits among the rocks; and soon there comes the sound of a voice—broken, convulsed as by sobs—from afar off, among the mountains.)

"Can it be the cry of a hyena, or the lamentation of some traveler that has lost his way?"

(Anthony listens. The flame draws nearer.

And he beholds a weeping woman approach, leaning upon the shoulder of a white-bearded man.

She is covered with a purple robe in rags. He is bareheaded like lier, wears a tunic of the same color, and carries in his hands a brazen vase, whence arises a thin blue flame.

Anthony feels a fear come upon him, and wishes to know who this woman may be.)

The Stranger Simon. "It is a young girl, a poor child that I lead about with me everywhere."

(He uplifts the brazen vase.

Anthony contemplates the girl, by the light of its vacillating flame.

There are marks of bites upon her face, traces of blows upon her arms; her dishevelled hair entangles itself in the rents of her rags; her eyes appear to be insensible to light.)

Simon. "Sometimes she remains thus for a long, long time without speaking; then all at once she revives, and discourses of marvellous things."

Anthony. "In truth?"

Simon. "Ennoia; Ennoia! Ennoia!—tell us what thou hast to say!"

(She rolls her eyes like one awaking from a dream, slowly passes her fingers over her brows, and in a mournful voice, speaks:—)

Helena[8] (Ennoia).

Helena - Ennoia

"I remember a distant land, of the color of emerald. Only one tree grows there.

(Anthony starts).

"Upon each of its tiers of broad-extending arms, a pair of Spirits dwell in air. All about them the branches intercross, like the veins of a body; and they watch the eternal Life circulating, from the roots deep plunging into darkness even to the leafy summit that rises higher than the sun. I, dwelling upon the second branch, illuminated the nights of Summer with my face."

Anthony, (tapping his own forehead:—)

"Ah! ah! I comprehend! her head!..."

Simon (placing his finger to his lips:—)

"Hush!"

Helena. "The sail remained well filled by the wind; the keel cleft the foam. He said to me: 'What though I afflict my country, though I lose my kingdom! Thou wilt belong to me, in my house!'

"How sweet was the lofty chamber of his palace! Lying upon the ivory bed, he caressed my long hair, singing amorously the while.

"Even at the close of the day I beheld the two camps, the watchfires being lighted, Ulysses at the entrance of his tent, armed Achilles driving a chariot along the sea-beach."

Anthony. "Why! she is utterly mad! How came this to pass?..."

Simon. "Hush! hush!"

Helena. "They anointed me with unguents, and sold me to the people that I might amuse them.

"One evening I was standing with the sistrum in my hand, making music for some Greek sailors who were dancing. The rain was falling upon the roof of the tavern like a cataract, and the cups of warm wine were smoking.

"A man suddenly entered, although the door was not opened to let him pass."

Simon. "It was I! I found thee again!

"Behold her, Anthony, she whom they call Sigeh, Ennoia, Barbelo, Prounikos! The Spirits governing the world were jealous of her; and they imprisoned her within the body of a woman.

"She was that Helen of Troy, whose memory was cursed by the poet Stesichorus. She was Lucretia, the patrician woman violated by a king. She was Delilah, by

whom Samson's locks were shorn.... She has loved adultery, idolatry, lying and foolishness. She has prostituted herself to all nations. She has sung at the angles of all cross-roads. She has kissed the faces of all men.

"At Tyre, she, the Syrian, was the mistress of robbers. She caroused with them during the nights; and she concealed assassins amidst the vermin of her tepid bed."

Anthony. "Ah! what is this to me?..."

Simon (with a furious look:—)

"I tell thee that I have redeemed her, and re-established her in her former splendor; insomuch that Caius Cæsar Caligula became enamoured of her, desiring to sleep with the Moon!"

Anthony. "What then?..."

Simon. "Why this, that she herself is the Moon! Has not Pope Clement written how she was imprisoned in a tower? Three hundred persons surrounded the tower to watch it; and the moon was seen at each of the loop-holes at the same time, although there is not more than one moon in the world, nor more than one Ennoia!"

Anthony. "Yes ... it seems to me that I remember...."

(He falls into a reverie.)

Simon. "Innocent as the Christ who died for men, so did she devote herself for women. For the impotence of Jehovah is proven by the transgression of Adama, and we must shake off the yoke of the old law, which is antipathetic to the order of things.[9]

"I have preached the revival in Ephraim and in Issachar by the torrent of Bizor, beyond the Lake of Houleh, in the valley of Maggedo, further than the mountains, at Bostra and at Damascus. Let all come to me who are covered with wine, who are covered with filth, who are covered with blood! and I shall take away their uncleanliness with the Holy Spirit, called Minerva by the Greeks. She is Minerva!

she is the Holy Spirit! I am Jupiter, Apollo, the Christ, the Paraclete, the great might of God, incarnated in the person of Simon!"

Anthony. "Ah! it is thou!... so it is thou! But I know thy crimes!

"Thou wast born at Gittoi near Samaria, Dositheas, thy first master, drove thee from him. Thou didst execrate Saint Paul because he converted one of thy wives; and, vanquished by Saint Peter, in thy rage and terror thou didst cast into the waves the bag which contained thy artifices!"

Simon. "Dost thou desire them?"

(Anthony looks at him, and an interior voice whispers hi his heart:—"Why not?")

Simon (continues).

"He who knows the forces of Nature and the essence of Spirits must be able to perform miracles. It has been the dream of all sages; it is the desire which even now gnaws thee!—confess it!"

"In the sight of the multitude of the Romans, I flew in the air so high that none could behold me move. Nero ordered that I should be decapitated; but it was the head of a sheep which fell upon the ground in lieu of mine. At last they buried me alive; but I rose again upon the third day. The proof is that thou dost behold me before thee!"

(He presents his hands to Anthony to smell. They have the stench of corpse-flesh. Anthony recoils with loathing.)

"I can make serpents of bronze writhe; I can make marble statues laugh; I can make dogs speak. I will show thee vast quantities of gold; I will reestablish kings; thou shalt see nations prostrate themselves in adoration before me! I can walk upon the clouds and upon the waves, I can pass through mountains, I can make myself appear as a youth, as an old man, as a tiger, or as an ant; I can assume thy features; I can give thee mine; I can make the thunder follow after me. Dost hear it?"

(The thunder rumbles; flashes of lightning succeed.)

"It is the voice of the Most High; for 'the Lord thy God is a fire;' and all creations are accomplished by sparks from the fire-centre of all things.

Thou shalt even now receive the baptism of it—that second baptism announced by Jesus, which fell upon the apostles on a day of tempest when the windows were open!"

(And stirring up the flame with his hand, slowly, as though preparing to sprinkle Anthony with it, he continues:—)

"Mother of mercies, thou who discoverest all secrets, in order that we may find rest in the eighth mansion...."

Anthony (cries out:—)

"Oh! that I had only some holy water!..."

(The flame goes out, producing much smoke.

Ennoia and Simon have disappeared.

An exceedingly cold, opaque and fœtid mist fills the atmosphere.)

Anthony (groping with his hands like a blind man:—)

"Where am I?... I fear lest I fall into the abyss! And the cross, surely, is too far from me. Ah! what a night! what a terrible night!"

(The mist is parted by a gust of wind; and Anthony sees two men covered with long white tunics.

The first is of lofty stature, with a gentle face, and a grave mien. His blond hair, parted like that of Christ, falls upon his shoulders. He has cast aside a wand that he had been holding in his hand; his companion takes it up, making a reverence after the fashion of the Orientals.

The latter is small of stature, thick set, flat-nosed; his neck and shoulders expresses good natured simplicity.

Both are barefooted, bareheaded, and dusty, like persons who have made a long

journey.)

Anthony (starting up:—)

"What do ye seek? Speak!... Begone from here!"

Damis (who is a little man).

"Nay! nay! be not angered, good hermit. As for that I seek, I know not myself what it is! Here is the Master!"

(He sits down. The other stranger remains standing. Silence.)

Anthony (asks).

"Then ye come?..."

Damis. "Oh! from afar off—very far off!"

Anthony. "And ye go?..."

Damis (pointing to the other)

"Whithersoever he shall desire!"

Anthony. "But who may he be?"

Damis. "Look well upon him!"

Anthony (aside).

"He looks like a saint! If I could only dare...."

(The mist is all gone. The night is very clear. The moon shines.)

Damis. "Of what art thou dreaming, that thou dost not speak?"

Anthony. "I was thinking.... Oh! nothing!"

Damis (approaches Apollonius, and walks all round him several times, bending himself as he walks, never raising his head:—)

"Master, here is a Galilean hermit who desires to know the beginnings of wisdom."

Apollonius. "Let him approach!" (Anthony hesitates.)

Damis. "Approach!"

Apollonius (in a voice of thunder:—)

"Approach! Thou wouldst know who I am, what I have done, and what I think,—is it not so, child?"

Anthony. "Always supposing that these things can contribute to the salvation of my soul."

Apollonius. "Rejoice! I am about to inform thee of them!"

Damis (in an undertone, to Anthony:—)

"Is it possible? He must surely have at the first glance discerned in thee extraordinary aptitude for philosophy. I shall also strive to profit by his instruction."

Apollonius. "First of all, I shall tell thee of the long course which I have followed in order to obtain the doctrine; and if thou canst discover in all my life one evil action, thou shalt bid me pause, for he who hath erred in his actions may well give scandal by his words."

Damis (to Anthony).

"How just a man? Is he not?"

Anthony. "Indeed I believe him to be sincere."

Apollonius. "Upon the night of my birth, my mother imagined that she was gathering flowers by the shore of a great lake. A flash of lightning appeared; and she brought me into the world to the music of the voices of swans singing to her in her dream.

"Until I had reached the age of fifteen I was plunged thrice a day into the fountain, Asbadeus, whose waters make perjurers hydropical; and my body was rubbed with the leaves of the onyza, that I might be chaste.

"A Palmyrian princess came one evening to seek me, offering me treasures that she knew to be in the tombs. A hierodule of the temple of Diana, slew herself in despair

with the sacrificial knife; and the governor of Cilicia, finding all his promises of no avail, cried out in the presence of my family that he would cause my death; but it was he that died only three days after, assassinated by the Romans."

Damis (nudging Anthony with his elbow).

"Eh? did I not tell thee? What a man!"

Apollonius. "For the space of four successive years I maintained the unbroken silence of the Pythagoreans. The most sudden and unexpected pain never extorted a sigh from me; and when I used to enter the theatre, all drew away from me, as from a phantom."

Damis. "Wouldst thou have done so much?—thou?"

Apollonius. "After the period of my trial had been accomplished, I undertook to instruct the priests regarding the tradition they had lost."

Anthony. "What tradition?"

Damis. "Interrupt him not! Be silent!"

Apollonius. "I have conversed with the Samaneans of the Ganges, with the astrologers of Chaldea, with the magi of Babylon, with the Gaulish Druids, with the priests of the negroes! I have ascended the fourteen Olympii; I have sounded the Scythian lakes; I have measured the breadth of the Desert!"

Damis. "It is all true! I was with him the while!"

Apollonius. "But first I had visited the Hyrcanian Sea; I made the tour of it; and descending by way of the country of the Baraomati, where Bucephalus is buried, I approached the city of Nineveh. At the gates of the city, a man drew near me...."

Damis. "I—even I, good master! I loved thee from the first. Thou wert gentler than a girl and more beautiful than a god!"

Apollonius (without hearing him).

"He asked me to accompany him, that he might serve as interpreter."

Damis. "But thou didst reply that all languages were familiar to thee, and that thou couldst divine all thoughts. Then I kissed the hem of thy mantle, and proceeded to walk behind thee."

Apollonius. "After Ctesiphon, we entered upon the territory of Babylon."

Damis. "And the Satrap cried aloud on beholding a man so pale."

Anthony (aside).

"What signifies this?..."

Apollonius. "The king received me standing, near a throne of silver, in a hall constellated with stars; from the cupola hung suspended by invisible threads four great birds of gold, with wings extended."

Anthony (dreamily).

"Can there be such things in the world?"

Damis. "Ah! that is a city! that Babylon! everybody there is rich! The houses, which are painted blue, have doors of bronze, and flights of steps descending to the river."

(Drawing lines upon the ground, with his stick:)

"Like that, seest thou? And then there are temples, there are squares, there are baths, there are aqueducts! The palaces are roofed with red brass; and the interior ... ah! if thou only knewest!"

Apollonius. "Upon the north wall rises a tower which supports a second, a third, a fourth, a fifth, and there are also three others! The eighth is a chapel containing a bed. No one enters it save the woman chosen by the priests for the God Belus. I was lodged there by order of the King of Babylon."

Damis. "As for me, they hardly deigned to give me any attention! So I walked through the streets all by myself. I informed myself regarding the customs of the people; I visited the workshops; I examined the great machines that carry water to the gardens. But I soon wearied of being separated from the Master."

Apollonius. "At last we left Babylon; and as we travelled by the light of the moon, we suddenly beheld an Empusa."

Damis. "Aye, indeed! She leaped upon her iron hoof; she brayed like an ass; she galloped among the rocks. He shouted imprecations at her; she disappeared."

Anthony (aside).

"What can be their motive?"

Apollonius. "At Taxilla, the capital of five thousand fortresses, Phraortes, King of the Ganges, showed us his guard of black men, whose stature was five cubits, and under a pavilion of green brocade in his gardens, an enormous elephant, which the queens amused themselves by perfuming. It was the elephant of Porus which had taken flight after the death of Alexander."

Damis. "And which had been found again in a forest."

Anthony. "Their speech is superabundant, like that of drunken men!"

Apollonius. "Phraortes seated us at his own table."

Damis. "How strange a country that was! During their drinking carousels, the lords used to amuse-themselves by shooting arrows under the feet of a dancing child. But I do not approve...."

Apollonius. "When I was ready to depart, the king gave me a parasol, and he said to me: 'I have a stud of white camels upon the Indus. When thou shalt have no further use for them, blow in their ears. They will come back.'

"We descended along the river, marching at night by the light of the fire-flies, which glimmered among the bamboos. The slave whistled an air to drive away the serpents; and our camels bent down in passing below the branches of the trees, as if passing under low gates.

"One day a black child, who held a golden caduceus in his hand, conducted us to the College of the Sages. Iarchas, their chief, spoke to me of my ancestors, told me of all

my thoughts, of all my actions, of all my existences. In former time he had been the River Indus; and he reminded me that I had once been a boatman upon the Nile, in the time of King Sesostris."

Damis. "As for me, they told me nothing; so that I know not who or what I have been."

Anthony. "They have a vague look, like shadows!"

Apollonius. "Upon the shores of the sea we met with the milk-gorged Cynocephali, who were returning from their expedition to the Island Taprobana. The tepid waves rolled blond pearls to our feet. The amber crackled beneath our steps. Whale-skeletons were whitening in the crevasses of the cliffs. At last the land became narrow as a sandal; and after casting drops of ocean water toward the sun, we turned to the right to return.

"So we returned through the Region of Aromatics, by way of the country of the Gangarides, the promontory of Comaria, the country of the Sachalites, of the Adramites and of the Homerites; then, across the Cassanian mountains, the Red Sea, and the Island Topazos, we penetrated into Ethiopia through the country of the Pygmies."

Anthony (to himself).

"How vast the world is!"

Damis. "And after we had returned home, we found that all those whom we used to know, were dead."

(Anthony lowers his head. Silence.)

Apollonius (continues).

"Then men began to talk of me the world over.

"The plague was ravaging Ephesus; I made them stone an old mendicant there."

Damis. "And forthwith the plague departed."

Anthony. "What! Does he drive away pestilence?"

Apollonius. "At Cnidos, I cured the man that had become enamored of Venus."

Damis. "Aye! a fool who had even vowed to espouse her! To love a woman is at least comprehensible; but to love a statue—what madness! The Master placed his hand upon the young man's heart; and the fire of that love was at once extinguished."

Anthony. "How! does he also cast out devils?"

Apollonius. "At Tarentum they were carrying the dead body of a young girl to the funeral pyre."

Damis. "The Master touched her lips; and she arose and called her mother."

Anthony. "What! he raises the dead!"

Apollonius. "I predicted to Vespasian his accession to power."

Anthony. "What! he foretells the future!"

Damis. "At Corinth there was a ..."

Apollonius. "It was when I was at table with him, at the waters of Baia ..."

Anthony. "Excuse me, strangers—it is very late ..."

Damis. "At Corinth there was a young man called Menippus ..."

Anthony. "No! no!—go ye away!"

Apollonius. "A dog came in, bearing a severed hand in his mouth."

Damis. "One evening, in one of the suburbs, he met a woman."

Anthony. "Do ye not hear me? Begone!"

Apollonius. "He wandered in a bewildered way around the couches ..."

Anthony. "Enough!"

Apollonius. "They sought to drive him out."

Damis. "So Menippus went with her to her house; they loved one another."

Apollonius. "And gently beating the mosaic pavement with his tail, he laid the severed hand upon the knees of Flavius."

Damis. "But next morning, during the lessons in the school, Menippus was pale."

Anthony (starting up in anger).

"Still continuing! Ah! then let them continue till they be weary, inasmuch as there is no ..."

Damis. "The Master said to him: 'O beautiful youth, thou dost caress a serpent; by a serpent thou art caressed! And when shall be the nuptials?' We all went to the wedding."

Anthony. "Assuredly I am doing wrong, to hearken to such a story!"

Damis. "Servants were hurrying to and fro in the vestibule; doors were opening; nevertheless there was no sound made either by the fall of the footsteps nor the closing of the doors. The Master placed himself beside Menippus. And the bride forthwith became angered against the philosophers. But the vessels of gold, the cupbearers, the cooks, the panthers disappeared; the roof receded and vanished into air; the walls crumbled down; and Apollonius stood alone with the woman at his feet, all in tears. She was a vampire who satisfied the beautiful young men in order to devour their flesh, for nothing is more desirable for such phantoms than the blood of amorous youths."

Apollonius. "If thou shouldst desire to learn the art ..."

Anthony. "I do not wish to learn anything!"

Apollonius. "The same evening that we arrived at the gates of Rome ..."

Anthony. "Oh! yes!—speak to me rather of the City of Popes!"

Apollonius. "A drunken man accosted us, who was singing in a low voice. The song was an epithalamium of Nero; and he had the power to cause the death of whosoever should hear it with indifference. In a box upon his shoulders he carried a string taken

from the Emperor's cithara. I shrugged my shoulders. He flung mud in our faces. Then I unfastened my girdle and placed it in this hand."

Damis. "In sooth, thou wert most imprudent!"

Apollonius. "During the night the Emperor summoned me to his house. He was playing at osselets with Sporus, supporting his left arm upon a table of agate. He turned and, knitting his brows, demanded: 'How comes it that thou dost not fear me?' 'Because,' I replied, 'the God who made thee terrible, also made me intrepid."

Anthony (to himself).

"There is something inexplicable that terrifies me!"

(Silence.)

Damis (breaking the silence with his shrill voice).

"Moreover, all Asia can tell thee ..."

Anthony (starting up).

"I am ill! let me be!"

Damis. "But listen! At Ephesus, he beheld them killing Domitian, who was at Rome."

Anthony (with a forced laugh). "Is it possible?"

Damis. "Yes: at the theatre at noon-day, the fourteenth of the Kalenda of October, he suddenly cried out: 'Cæsar is being murdered!' and from time to time he would continue to ejaculate: 'He rolls upon the pavement ... Oh! how he struggles ... He rises ... He tries to flee ... The doors are fastened ... Ah! it is all over! He is dead!' And in fact Titus Flavius Domitianus was assassinated upon that very day, as thou knowest."

Anthony. "Without the aid of the Devil ... certainly ..."

Apollonius. "He had purposed putting me to death, that same Domitian! Damis had taken flight according to my order, and I remained alone in my prison."

Damis. "A terrible hardihood on thy part, it must be confessed!"

Apollonius. "About the fifth hour, the soldiers led me before the tribunal. I had my harangue all ready hidden beneath my mantle."

Damis. "We others were then upon the shores of Puteoli, we believed thee dead; we were all weeping, when all of a sudden about the sixth hour, thou didst suddenly appear before us, exclaiming: 'It is I.'"

Anthony (to himself). "Even as He...!"

Damis (in a very loud voice). "Precisely!"

Anthony. "Oh! no! ye lie! is it not so?—ye lie!"

Apollonius. "He descended from heaven. I rise thither, by the power of my virtue that has lifted me up even to the height of the Principle of all things!"

Damis. "Thyana, his natal city, has established in his honor a temple and a priesthood!"

Apollonius (draws near Anthony, and shouts in his ear:—)

"It is because I know all gods, all rites, all prayers, all oracles! I have penetrated into the cave of Trophonius, son of Apollo! I have kneaded for Syracusan women the cakes which they carry to the mountains. I have endured the eighty tests of Mithra! I have pressed to my heart the serpent of Sabasius! I have received the scarf of Kabiri! I have laved Cybele in the waters of the Campanian gulfs! and I have passed three moons in the caverns of Samothracia!"

Damis (with a stupid laugh).

"Ah! ah! ah! at the mysteries of the good Goddess!"

Apollonius. "And now we recommence our pilgrimage.

"We go to the North to the land of Swans and of snows. Upon the vast white plains, the blind hippopodes break with the tips of their feet the ultramarine plant."

Damis. "Hasten! it is already dawn. The cock has crowed, the horse has neighed, the

sail is hoisted!"

Anthony. "The cock has not crowed! I hear the locusts in the sands, and I see the moon still in her place."

Apollonius. "We go to the South, beyond the mountains and the mighty waters, to seek in perfumes the secret source of love. Thou shalt inhale the odor of myrrhodion which makes the weak die. Thou shalt bathe thy body in the lake of Rose-oil which is in the Island Junonia. Thou shalt see slumbering upon primroses that Lizard which awakes every hundred years when the carbuncle upon its forehead, arriving at maturity, falls to the ground. The stars palpitate like eyes; the cascades sing like the melody of lyres; strange intoxication is exhaled by blossoming flowers; thy mind shall grow vaster in that air; and thy heart shall change even as thy face."

Damis. "Master! it is time! The wind has risen, the swallows awaken, the myrtle leaves are blown away."

Apollonius. "Yes! let us go!"

Anthony. "Nay! I remain here!"

Apollonius. "Shall I tell thee where grows the plant Balis, that resurrects the dead?"

Damis "Nay; ask him rather for the audrodamas which attracts silver, iron and brass!"

Anthony. "Oh! how I suffer! how I suffer!"

Damis. "Thou shalt comprehend the voices of all living creatures, the roarings, the cooings!"

Apollonius. "I shall enable thee to ride upon unicorns and upon dragons, upon hippocentaurs and dolphins!"

Anthony (weeping). "Oh ... oh!... oh!"

Apollonius. "Thou shalt know the demons that dwell in the caverns, the demons that mutter in the woods, the demons that move in the waves, the demons that push the

clouds!"

Damis. "Tighten thy girdle, fasten thy sandals!"

Apollonius. "I shall explain to thee the reason of divine forms—why Apollo stands, why Jupiter is seated, why Venus is black, at Corinth, square-shaped at Athens, conical at Paphos."

Anthony (clasping his hands).

"Let them begone! let them begone!"

Apollonius. "In thy presence I will tear down the panoplies of the Gods; we shall force open the sanctuaries, I will enable thee to violate the Pythoness!"

Anthony. "Help! O my God!"

(He rushes to the cross.)

Apollonius. "What is thy desire? What is thy dream? Thou needst only devote the moment of time necessary to think of it ..."

Anthony. "Jesus! Jesus! Help me!"

Apollonius. "Dost thou wish me to make him appear, thy Jesus?"

Anthony. "What? How!"

Apollonius. "It shall be He!—no other! He will cast off his crown, and we shall converse face to face!"

Damis (in an undertone).

"Say thou dost indeed wish it! say thou dost desire it!"

(Anthony kneeling before the cross, murmurs prayers. Damis walks around him, with wheedling gestures.)

"Nay, nay! good hermit. Be not horrified! These are only exaggerated forms of speech, borrowed from the Orientals. That need in no way ..."

Apollonius. "Let him alone, Damis!

"He believes, like a brute, in the reality of things. The terror which he entertains of the Gods prevents him from comprehending them; and he debases his own God to the level of a jealous king!

"But thou, my son, do not leave me!"

(He moves to the edge of the cliff, walking backward, passes beyond the verge of the precipice, and remains suspended in air.)

"Above all forms, further than the ends of the earth, beyond the heavens themselves, lies the world of Idea, replete with the splendor of the Word! With one bound we shall traverse the impending spaces, and thou shalt behold in all his infinity, the Eternal, the Absolute, the Being! Come! give me thy hand! Let us rise."

(Side by side, both rise up through the air, slowly. Anthony, clinging to the cross, watches them rise. They disappear.)

[1] Agape.—Love-feast of the primitive Christians.

[2] John XVI: 12.—T.

[3] See note at end.

[4] Masheim gives Achamoth. I prefer to remain faithful to the orthography given by Flaubert.

[5] The French text gives mes pères not nos pères. Elxai, or Elkhai, who established his sect in the reign of Trajan, was a Jew.

[6] See note.

[7] The banyan is a fig-tree—the Ficus indicus.—Trans.

[8] Readers may remember Longfellow's exquisite poem "Helena of Tyre."

[9] See the second part of "Faust," and Kundry in "Parsifal."

V.

Anthony (walking to and fro, slowly).

"That one, indeed, seems in himself equal to all the powers of Hell!

"Nebuchadnezzar did not so much dazzle me with his splendours;—the Queen of Sheba herself charmed me less deeply.

"His manner of speaking of the gods compels one to feel a desire to know them.

"I remember having beheld hundreds of them at one time, in the island of Elephantius, in the time of Diocletian. The emperor had ceded to the Nomads a great tract of country, upon the condition that they should guard the frontiers; and the treaty was concluded in the name of the 'Powers Invisible.' For the gods of each people were unknown unto the other people.

"The Barbarians had brought theirs with them. They occupied the sand-hills bordering the river. We saw them supporting their idols in their arms, like great paralytic children;—others, paddling through the cataracts upon trunks of palm tree, displayed from afar off the amulets hung about their necks, the tattooings upon their breasts; and these things were not more sinful than the religion of the Greeks, the Asiatics, and the Romans!

"When I was dwelling in the temple of Heliopolis I would often consider the things I beheld upon the walls:—vultures bearing sceptres, crocodiles playing upon lyres, faces of men with the bodies of serpents, cow-headed women prostrating themselves before ithyphallic gods:—and their supernatural forms attracted my thoughts to other worlds. I longed to know that which drew the gaze of all those calm and mysterious eyes.

"If matter can exert such power, it must surely contain a spirit. The souls of the Gods are attached to their images ...

"Those possessing the beauty of forms might seduce. But the others ... those of loathsome or terrible aspect ... how can men believe in them?..."

(And he beholds passing over the surface of the ground,—leaves, stones, shells, branches of trees,—then a variety of hydropical dwarfs: these are gods. He bursts

into a laugh. He hears another laugh behind him;—and Hilarion appears, in the garb of a hermit, far taller than before, colossal.)

Anthony (who feels no surprise at seeing him).

"How stupid one must be to worship such things!"

Hilarion. "Aye!—exceedingly stupid!"

(Then idols of all nations and of all epochs—of wood, of metal, of granite, of feathers, of skins sewn together,—pass before them.

The most ancient of all anterior to the Deluge are hidden under masses of seaweed hanging down over them like manes. Some that are too long for their bases, crack in all their joints, and break their own backs in walking. Others have rents torn in their bellies through which sand trickles out.

Anthony and Hilarion are prodigiously amused. They hold their sides for laughter. Then appear sheep-headed idols. They totter upon their bandy-legs, half-open their eye-lids, and stutter like the dumb, "Ba! ba! ba!"

The more that the idols commence to resemble the human forms, the more they irritate Anthony. He strikes them with his fist, kicks them, attacks them with fury. They become frightful,—with lofty plumes, eyes like balls, fingers terminated by claws, the jaws of sharks.

And before these gods men are slaughtered upon altars of stone; others are brayed alive in huge mortars, crushed under chariots, nailed upon trees. There is one all of red-hot iron with the horns of a bull, who devours children.)

Anthony. "Horror!"

Hilarion. "But the gods always demand tortures—and suffering. Even thine desired ..."

Anthony (weeping). "Ah! say no more!—do not speak to me!"

(The space girdled by the rocks suddenly changes into a valley. A herd of cattle are

feeding upon the short grass.

The herdman who leads them, observes a cloud;—and in a sharp voice, shouts out words of command, as if to heaven.)

Hilarion. "Because he needs rain, he seeks by certain chants to compel the King of heaven to open the fecund cloud."

Anthony (laughing).

"Verily, such pride is the extreme of foolishness!"

Hilarion. "Why dost thou utter exorcisms?"

(The valley changes into a sea of milk, motionless and infinite. In its midst floats a long cradle formed by the coils of a serpent, whose many curving heads shade, like a dais, the god slumbering upon its body.

He is beardless, young, more beautiful than a girl, and covered with diaphanous veils. The pearls of his tiara gleam softly like moons; a chaplet of stars is entwined many times about his breast, and with one hand beneath his head, he slumbers with the look of one who dreams after wine.

A woman crouching at his feet, awaits the moment of his awaking.)

Hilarion. "Such is the primordial duality of the Brahmans,—the Absolute being inexpressible by any form."

(From the navel of the god has grown the stem of a lotus flower; it blossoms, and within its chalice appears another god with three faces.)

Anthony. "How strange an invention!"

Hilarion. "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are but one and the same Person!"

(The three faces separate; and three great gods appear.

The first, who is pink, bites the end of his great toe.

The second, who is blue, uplifts his four arms.

The third, who is green, wears a necklace of human skulls.

Before them instantly arise three goddesses—one is enveloped in a net; another offers a cup; the third brandishes a bow.

... instantly arise three goddesses

And these gods, these goddesses, decuple themselves, multiply. Arms grow from their shoulders; at the end of these arms hands appear bearing standards, axes, bucklers, swords, parasols and drums. Fountains gush from their heads, plants grow from their nostrils.

Riding upon birds rocked in palanquins, enthroned upon seats of gold, standing in ivory niches,—they dream, voyage, command, drink wine, respire the breath of flowers. Dancing girls whirl in the dance; giants pursue monsters; at the entrances of grottoes solitaries meditate. Eyes cannot be distinguished from stars; nor clouds from banderolles; peacocks quench their thirst at rivers of gold dust; the embroidery of pavilions seems to blend with the spots of leopards; coloured rays intercross in the blue air, together with flying arrows, and swinging censers.

And all this develops like a lofty frieze, resting its base upon the rocks, and rising to the sky.)

Anthony (dazzled by the sight).

"How vast is their number! What do they seek?"

Hilarion. "The god who rubs his abdomen with his elephant-trunk, is the solar Deity, the inspiring spirit of wisdom.

"That other whose six heads are crowned with towers, and whose fourteen arms wield javelins,—is the prince of armies,—the Fire-Consumer.

"The old man riding the crocodile washes the soul of the dead upon the shore. They will be tormented by that black woman with the putrid teeth, who is the Ruler of Hell.

"That chariot drawn by red mares, driven by one who has no legs, bears the master of the sun through heaven's azure. The moon-god accompanies him, in a litter drawn by three gazelles.

"Kneeling upon the back of a parrot, the Goddess of Beauty presents to Love, her son, her rounded breast. Behold her now, further off, leaping for joy in the meadows. Look! Look! Coiffed with dazzling mitre, she trips lightly over the ears of growing wheat, over the waves; she rises in air, extending her power over all elements.

"And among these gods are the Genii of the winds, of the planets, of the months, of the days,—a hundred thousand others;—multiple are their aspects, rapid their transformations. Behold, there is one who changes from a fish into a tortoise: he assumes the form of a boar, the shape of a dwarf."

Anthony. "Wherefore?"

Hilarion. "That he may preserve the equilibrium of the universe, and combat the works of evil. But life exhausts itself; forms wear away; and they must achieve progression in their metamorphoses."

(All upon a sudden appears a Naked Man seated in the midst of the sand, with legs crossed.)

(A large halo vibrates, suspended in air behind him. The little ringlets of his black hair in which blueish tints shift symmetrically surround a protuberance upon the summit of his skull. His arms, which are very long, hang down against his sides. His two hands rest flat upon his thighs, with the palms open. The soles of his feet are like the faces of two blazing suns; and he remains completely motionless—before Anthony and Hilarion—with all the gods around him, rising in tiers above the rocks, as if upon the benches of some vast circus. His lips, half-open; and he speaks in a deep voice):

"I am the Master of great charities, the succor of all creatures; and not less to the

profane than to believers, do I expound the law.

"That I might deliver the world, I resolved to be born among men. The gods wept when I departed from them.

"I sought me first a woman worthy to give me birth: a woman of warrior race, the wife of a king, exceedingly good, excessively beautiful, with body firm as adamant;—and at time of the full moon, without the auxiliation of any male, I entered her womb.

"I issued from it by the right side. Stars stopped in their courses."

Hilarion (murmurs between his teeth).

"And seeing the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy!"[1]

(Anthony watches more attentively.)

The Buddha[2] (continuing).

"From the furthest recesses of the Himalayas, a holy man one hundred years of age, hurried to see me."

Hilarion. "A man named Simeon ... who should not see death, before he had seen the Christ of the Lord."[3]

The Buddha. "I was led unto the schools; and it was found that I knew more than the teachers."

Hilarion. "... In the midst of the doctors ... and all that heard him were astonished at his wisdom!"[4]

(Anthony makes a sign to Hilarion to be silent.)

The Buddha. "Continually did I meditate in the gardens. The shadows of the trees turned with the turning of the sun; but the shadow of that which sheltered me turned not.

"None could equal me in the knowledge of the Scriptures, the enumeration of atoms, the conduct of elephants, the working of wax, astronomy, poetry, pugilism, all the

exercises and all the arts!

"In accordance with custom, I took to myself a wife; and I passed the days in my kingly palace;—clad in pearls, under a rain of perfumes, refreshed by the fans of thirty thousand women,—watching my peoples from the height of my terraces adorned with fringes of resonant bells.

"But the sight of the miseries of the world turned me away from pleasure. I fled.

"I begged my way upon the high roads, clad myself in rags gathered within the sepulchres;—and, hearing of a most learned hermit, I chose to become his slave. I guarded his gate! I washed his feet.

"Thus I annihilated all sensation, all joy, all languor.

"Then, concentrating my thoughts within vaster meditation, I learned to know the essence of things, the illusion of forms.

"Soon I exhausted the science of the Brahmans. They are gnawed by covetousness and desire under their outward aspect of austerity; they daub themselves with filth, they live upon thorns,—hoping to arrive at happiness by the path of death!"

Hilarion.... "Pharisees, hypocrites, whited sepulchres, generation of vipers!"

The Buddha. "I also accomplished wondrous things,—eating but one grain of rice each day (and the grains of rice in those times were no larger than at present)—my hair fell off; my body became black; my eyes receding within their sockets, seemed even as stars beheld at the bottom of a well.

"During six years I kept myself motionless, exposed to the flies, the lions and the serpents; and the great summer suns, the torrential rains, lightnings and snows, hails and tempests,—all of these I endured without even the shelter of my lifted hand.

"The travellers who passed by, believing me dead, cast clods of earth upon me!

"Only the temptation of the Devil remained!

"I summoned him.

"His sons came,—hideous, scale-covered, nauseous as charnel-houses,—shrieking, hissing, bellowing; interclashing their panoplies, rattling together the bones of dead men. Some belched flame through their nostrils; some made darkness about me with their wings; some wore chaplets of severed fingers; some drank serpent-venom from the hollows of their hands;—they were swine-headed; they were rhinoceros-headed or toad-headed; they assumed all forms that inspire loathing or affright."

Anthony (to himself).

"I also endured all that in other days!"

The Buddha. "Then did he send me his daughters—beautiful with daintily painted faces, and wearing girdles of gold. Their teeth were whiter than the jasmine-flower; their thighs round as the trunk of an elephant. Some extended their arms and yawned, that they might so display the dimples of their elbows; some winked their eyes; some laughed; some half-opened their garments. There were blushing virgins, matrons replete with dignity, queens who came with great trains of baggage and of slaves."

Anthony (aside). "Ah! he too ..."

The Buddha. "Having vanquished the Demon, I nourished myself for twelve years with perfumes only;—and as I had acquired the five virtues, the five faculties, the ten forces, the eighteen substances, and had entered into the four spheres of the invisible world, Intelligence became mine! I became the Buddha."

Intelligence became mine! I became the Buddha.

(All the gods bow themselves down. Those having several heads, bend them all simultaneously. He lifts his mighty hand aloft, and resumes:)

"That I might effect the deliverance of beings, I have made hundreds of thousands of sacrifices! To the poor I gave robes of silk, beds, chariots, houses, heaps of gold and of diamonds. I gave my hands to the one-handed, my legs to the lame, my eyes to the blind;—even my head I severed for the sake of the decapitated. In the day that I

was King, I gave away provinces;—when I was a Brahman I despised no one. When I was a solitary, I spake kindly words to the robber who slew me. When I was a tiger I allowed myself to die of hunger.

"And having, in this last existence, preached the law, nothing now remains for me to do. The great period is accomplished! Men, animals, the gods, the bamboos, the oceans, the mountains, the sand-grains of the Ganges, together with the myriad myriads of the stars,—all shall die;—and until the time of the new births, a flame shall dance upon the wrecks of worlds destroyed!"

(Then a great dizziness comes upon the gods. They stagger, fall into convulsions, and vomit forth their existences. Their crowns burst apart; their banners fly away. They tear off their attributes, their sexes, fling over their shoulders the cups from which they quaffed immortality, strangle themselves with their serpents, vanish in smoke;—and when all have disappeared ...)

Hilarion (solemnly exclaims):

"Thou hast even now beheld the belief of many hundreds of millions of men."

(Anthony is prostrate upon the ground, covering his face with his hands. Hilarion, with his back turned to the cross, stands near him and watches him.

A considerable time elapses.

Then a singular being appears—having the head of a man upon the body of a fish. He approaches through the air, upright, beating the sand from time to time with his tail; and the patriarchal aspect of his face by contrast with his puny little arms, causes Anthony to laugh.)

Oannes (in a plaintive voice):

"Respect me! I am the contemporary of beginnings.

"I dwelt in that formless world where hermaphroditic creatures slumbered, under the weight of an opaque atmosphere, in the deeps of dark waters—when fingers, fins,

and wings were blended, and eyes without heads were floating like mollusks, among human-headed bulls, and dog-footed serpents.

... and eyes without heads were floating like mollusks

"Above the whole of these beings, Omoroca, bent like a hoop, extended her woman-body. But Belus cleft her in two halves; with one he made the earth; with the other, heaven;—and the two equal worlds do mutually contemplate each other.

"I, the first consciousness of Chaos, arose from the abyss that I might harden matter, and give a law unto forms:—also I taught men to fish and to sow: I gave them knowledge of writing, and of the history of the gods.

I, the first consciousness of Chaos, arose from the abyss that I might harden matter, and give a law unto forms

"Since then I have dwelt in the deep pools left by the Deluge. But the desert grows vaster about them; the winds cast sand into them; the sun devours them;—and I die upon my couch of slime, gazing at the stars through the water. Thither I return!"

(He leaps and disappears in the Nile.)

Hilarion. "That is an ancient God of the Chaldæans!"

Anthony (ironically). "What, then, were those of Babylon?"

Hilarion. "Thou canst behold them!"

(And they find themselves upon the platform of a lofty quadrangular tower dominating six other towers, which, narrowing as they rise, form one monstrous pyramid. Far below a great black mass is visible—the city, doubtless—extending over the plains. The air is cold; the sky darkly blue; multitudes of stars palpitate above.

In the midst of the platform rises a column of white stone. Priests in linen robes pass and repass around it, so as to describe by their evolutions a moving circle; and with faces uplifted, they gaze upon the stars. ...)

Hilarion. (pointing out several of these stars to Anthony):

"There are thirty principal stars. Fifteen look upon the upper side of the earth; fifteen below. At regular intervals one shoots from the upper regions to those below; while another abandons the inferior deeps to rise to sublime altitudes ...

"Of the seven planets, two are beneficent; two evil; three ambiguous:—all things in the world depend upon the influence of these eternal fires. According to their position or movement presages may be drawn;—and here thou dost tread the most venerable place upon earth. Here Pythagoras and Zoroaster have met;—here for twelve thousand years these men have observed the skies that they might better learn to know the gods."

Anthony. "The stars are not gods."

Hilarion. "Aye, they say the stars are gods; for all things about us pass away;—the heavens only remain immutable as eternity."

Anthony. "Yet there is a master!"

Hilarion (pointing to the column):

"He! Belus!—the first ray, the Sun, the Male! The Other, whom he fecundates, is beneath him!"

(Anthony beholds a garden, illuminated by lamps: He finds himself in the midst of the crowd, in an avenue of cypress-trees. To right and left are little pathways leading to huts constructed within a wood of pomegranate trees, and enclosed by treillages of bamboo.

Most of the men wear pointed caps, and garments bedizened like the plumage of a peacock. But there are also people from the North clad in bearskins, nomads wearing mantles of brown wool, pallid Gangarides with long earrings;—and there seems to be as much confusion of rank as there is confusion of nations; for sailors and stone-cutters elbow the princes who wear tiaras blazing with carbuncles and

who carry long canes with carven knobs. All proceed upon their way with dilated nostrils, absorbed by the same desire.

From time to time, they draw aside to make way for some long covered wagon drawn by oxen, or some ass jolting upon his back a woman bundled up in thick veils, who finally disappears in the direction of the cabins.

Anthony feels afraid; he half-resolves to turn back. But an unutterable curiosity takes possession of him, and draws him on.

At the foot of the cypress-trees there are ranks of women squatting upon deerskins, all wearing in lieu of diadem, a plaited fillet of ropes. Some, magnificently attired, loudly call upon the passers-by. Others, more timid, seek to veil their faces with their arms, while some matron standing behind them, their mother doubtless, exhorts them. Others, their heads veiled with a black shawl, and their bodies entirely nude, seem from afar off to be statues of flesh. As soon as a man has thrown some money upon their knees, they arise.

And the sound of kisses is heard under the foliage,—sometimes a great sharp cry.)

Hilarion. "These are the virgins of Babylon, who prostitute themselves to the goddess."

Anthony. "What goddess?"

Hilarion. "Behold her!"

(And he shows him at the further end of the avenue, upon the threshold of an illuminated grotto, a block of stone representing a woman.)

Anthony. "Ignominy!—how abominable to give a sex to God!"

Hilarion. "Thou thyself dost figure him in thy mind as a living person!"

(Anthony again finds himself in darkness.

He beholds in the air a luminous circle, poised upon horizontal wings. This ring of light, girdles like a loose belt, the waist of a little man wearing a mitre upon his head

and carrying a wreath in his hand. The lower part of his figure is completely concealed by immense feathers outspreading about him like a petticoat.

It is—Ormuzd—the God of the Persians. He hovers in the air above, crying aloud:)

"I fear! I can see his monstrous jaws! I did vanquish thee, O Ahriman! But again thou dost war against me.

"First revolting against me, thou didst destroy the eldest of creatures, Kaiomortz, the Man-Bull. Then didst thou seduce the first human couple, Meschia and Meschiané; and thou didst fill all hearts with darkness, thou didst urge thy battalions against heaven!

"I also had mine own, the people of the stars; and from the height of my throne I contemplated the marshalling of the astral hosts.

"Mithra, my son, dwelt in heavens inaccessible. There he received souls, from thence did he send them forth; and he arose each morning to pour forth the abundance of his riches.

"The earth reflected the splendour of the firmament. Fire blazed upon the crests of the mountains,—symbolizing that other fire of which I had created all creatures. And that the holy flame might not be polluted, the bodies of the dead were not burned; the beaks of birds carried them aloft toward heaven.

"I gave to men the laws regulating pastures, labour, the choice of wood for the sacrifices, the form of cups, the words to be uttered in hours of sleeplessness;—and my priests unceasingly offered up prayers, so that worship might be as the eternity of God in its endlessness. Men purified themselves with water; loaves were offered upon the altars, sins were confessed aloud.

"Homa[5] gave himself to men to be drank, that they might have his strength communicated to them while the Genii of heaven were combating the demons, the children of Iran were pursuing the serpents. The King, whom an innumerable host of courtiers served upon their knees, represented me in his person, and wore my

coiffure. His gardens had the magnificence of a heaven upon earth; and his tomb represented him in the act of slaying a monster,—emblem of Good destroying Evil.

"For it was destined that I should one day definitely conquer Ahriman, by the aid of Time-without-limits.

"But the interval between us disappears;—the deep night rises! To me! ye Amschaspands, ye Izeds, ye Ferouers! Succor me, Mithra! seize thy sword! And thou, Kaosyac, who shall return for the universal deliverance, defend me! What!—none to aid! Ah! I die! Thou art the victor, Ahriman!"

(Hilarion, standing behind Anthony, restrains a cry of joy;—and Ormuzd is swallowed up in the darkness.)

(Then appears:)

The Great Diana of Ephesus

(black with enamelled eyes, her elbows pressed to her side, her forearms extended, with hands open.

Lions crawl upon her shoulders; fruits, flowers, and stars intercross upon her bosom; further down three rows of breasts appear; and from her belly to her feet she is covered with a tightly fitting sheath from which bulls, stags, griffins, and bees, seem about to spring, their bodies half-protruding from it. She is illuminated by the white light emanating from a disk of silver, round as the full moon, placed behind her head.)

"Where is my temple? Where are my Amazons?

"What is this I feel?—I, the Incorruptible!—a strange faintness comes upon me!"...

(Her flowers wither, her over-ripe fruits become detached and fall. The lions and the bulls hang their heads; the deer foam at the mouth, with a slimy foam, as though exhausted; the buzzing bees die upon the ground.

She presses her breasts, one after the other. All are empty! But under a desperate

effort her sheath bursts. She seizes it by the bottom, like the skirt of a robe, throws her animals, her fruits, her flowers, into it,—then withdraws into the darkness.

And afar off there are voices, murmuring, growling, roaring, bellowing, belling. The density of the night is augmented by breaths. Drops of warm rain fall.)

Anthony. "How sweet the odour of the palm trees, the trembling of leaves, the transparency of springs! I feel the desire to lie flat upon the Earth that I might feel her against my heart; and my life would be reinvigorated by her eternal youth!"

(He hears the sound of castanets and of cymbals; and men appear, clad in white tunics with red stripes,—leading through the midst of a rustic crowd an ass, richly harnessed, its tail decorated with knots of ribbons, and its hoofs painted.

A box, covered with a saddle-cloth[6] of yellow material shakes to and fro upon its back, between two baskets,—one receives the offerings contributed,—eggs, grapes, pears, cheeses, fowls, little coins; and the other basket is full of roses, which the leaders of the ass pluck to pieces as they walk before the animal, shedding the leaves upon the ground.

They wear earrings and large mantles; their locks are plaited, their cheeks painted, olive-wreaths are fastened upon their foreheads by medallions bearing figurines;—all wear poniards in their belts, and brandish ebony-handled whips, having three thongs to which osselets are attached.[7]

Those who form the rear of the procession, place upon the soil,—so as to remain upright as a candelabrum,—a tall pine, which burns at its summit, and shades under its lower branches a lamb.

The ass halts. The saddle-cloth is removed. Underneath appears a second covering of black felt. Then one of the men in white tunics begins to dance, rattling his crotali;—another, kneeling before the box, beats a tambourine and—)

The Oldest of the Band, begins:—

"Here is the Good Goddess, the Idæan of the mountains, the Great Mother of Syria! Come ye hither, good people all!

Here is the Good Goddess, the Idæan of the mountains

"She gives joy to men, she heals the sick; she sends inheritances; she satisfies the hunger of love!

"We bear her through the land, rain or shine, in fair weather, or in foul.

"Oft times we lie in the open air, and our table is not always well served. Robbers dwell in the woods. Wild beasts rush from their caverns. Slippery paths border the precipices. Behold her! behold her!"

(They lift off the covering; and a box is seen, inlaid with little pebbles.)

"Loftier than the cedars, she looks down from the blue ether. Vaster than the wind she encircles the world. Her breath is exhaled by the nostrils of tigers; the rumbling of her voice is heard beneath the volcanoes; her wrath is the tempest; the pallor of her face has whitened the moon. She ripens the harvest; by her the tree-bark swells with sap; she makes the beard to grow. Give her something; for she hates the avaricious!"

(The box opens; and under a little pavilion of blue silk appears a small image of Cybele—glittering with spangles, crowned with towers, and seated in a chariot of red stone, drawn by two lions, with uplifted paws.

The crowd presses forward to see.)

THE ARCHIGALLUS (continues):

"She loves the sound of resounding tympanums, the echo of dancing feet, the howling of wolves, the sonorous mountains and the deep gorges, the flower of the almond tree, the pomegranate and the green fig, the whirling dance, the snoring flute, the sugary sap, the salty tear,—blood! To thee, to thee!—Mother of the mountains!"

(They scourge themselves with their whips; and their chests resound with the blows;—the skins of the tambourines vibrate almost to bursting. They seize their knives; they gash their arms.)

"She is sorrowful; let us be sorrowful! Thereby your sins will be remitted. Blood purifies all—fling its red drops abroad like blossoms! She, the Great Mother, demands the blood of another creature—of a pure being!"

(The Archigallus raises his knife above the head of a lamb.)

Anthony (seized with horror):

"Do not slay the lamb!"

(There is a gush of purple blood. The priest sprinkles the crowd with it; and all—including Anthony and Hilarion—standing around the burning tree, silently watch the last palpitations of the victim.

A Woman comes forth from the midst of the priests; she resembles exactly the image within the little box.

She pauses, perceiving before her a Young Man wearing a Phrygian cap. His thighs are covered with a pair of narrow trousers, with lozenge-shaped openings here and there at regular intervals, closed by bow knots of coloured material. He stands in an attitude of languor, resting his elbow against a branch of the tree, holding a flute in his hand.)

Cybele (flinging her arms about his waist).

"I have traversed all regions of the earth to join thee—and famine ravaged the fields Thou hast deceived me! It matters not! I love thee! Warm my body in thine embrace! Let us be united!"

Atys. "The springtime will never again return, O eternal Mother! Despite my love, it is no longer possible for me to penetrate thy essence! Would that I might cover myself with a painted robe like thine! I envy thy breasts, swelling with milk, the

length of thy tresses, thy vast flanks that have borne and brought forth all creatures! Why am I not thou?—Why am I not a woman?—No, never! depart from me! My virility fills me with horror!"

(With a sharp stone he dismembers himself, and runs furiously from her ...

The priests imitate the god; the faithful do even as the priests. Men and women exchange garments, embrace;—and the tumult of bleeding flesh passes away, while the sound of voices remaining, becomes even more strident,—like the shrieking of mourners, like the voices heard at funerals.

... A huge catafalque, hung with purple, supports upon its summit an ebony bed, surrounded by torches and baskets of silver filagree, in which are verdant leaves of lettuce, mallow and fennel. Upon the steps of the construction, from summit to base, sit women all clad in black, with loosened girdles and bare feet, holding in their hands with a melancholy air, great bouquets of flowers.

At each corner of the estrade urns of alabaster, filled with myrrh, slowly send up their smoke.

Upon the bed can be perceived the corpse of a man. Blood flows from his thigh. One of his arms hangs down lifelessly;—and a dog licks his finger nails and howls.

The row of torches placed closely together, prevents his face from being seen; and Anthony feels a strange anguish within him. He fears lest he should recognize some one.

The sobs of the women cease—and after an interval of silence,)

All (psalmody together):

"Fair! fair!—all fair he is! Thou hast slept enough!—lift thy head!—arise!

"Inhale the perfume of our flowers—narcissus—blossoms and anemones, gathered in thine own gardens to please thee. Arouse thee! thou dost make us fear for thee!

"Speak to us! What dost thou desire? Wilt thou drink wine?—wilt thou lie in our

beds?—dost wish to eat the honeycakes which have the form of little birds?

"Let us press his lips,—kiss his breast! Now!—now!—dost thou not feel our ring-laden fingers passing over thy body?—and our lips that seek thy mouth?—and our tresses that sweep thy thighs? O faint God, deaf to our prayers!"

(They cry aloud, and rend their faces with their nails; then all rush,—and the howling of the dog continues in the silence.)

"Alas! alas! Woe!—the black blood trickles over his snowy flesh! See! his knees writhe!—his sides sink in! The bloom of his face hath dampened the purple. He is dead, dead! O weep for him! Lament for him!"

(In long procession they ascend to lay between the torches the offerings of their several tresses, that seem from afar off like serpents, black or blond;—and the catafalque is lowered gently to the level of, a grotto,—the opening of a shadowy sepulchre that yawns behind it.

Then—)

A Woman (bends over the corpse. Her long hair, uncut, envelopes her from head to feet. She sheds tears so abundantly that her grief cannot be as that of the others, but more than human—infinite!

Anthony dreams of the Mother of Jesus. She speaks:—)

"Thou didst emerge from the Orient, and didst take me, all trembling with the dew, into thy arms, O Sun! Doves fluttered upon the azure of thy mantle; our kisses evoked low breezes among the foliage; and I abandoned myself wholly to thy love, delighting in the pleasure of my weakness.

"Alas! alas—Why didst thou depart, to run upon the mountains! A boar did wound thee at the time of the autumnal equinox!

"Thou art dead; and the fountains weep,—the trees bend down. The wind of winter whistles through the naked brushwood.

"My eyes are about to close, seeing that darkness covers them! Now thou dwellest in the underworld near the mightiest of my rivals.

"O Persephone, all that is beautiful descends to thee, never to return!"

(Even while she speaks, her companions lift the dead, to place him within the sepulchre. He remains in their hands! It was only a waxen corpse.

Wherefore Anthony feels something resembling relief.

All vanish;—and the hut, the rocks, and the cross reappear.

But upon the other side of the Nile, Anthony beholds a Woman, standing in the midst of the desert.

She retains in her hand the lower part of a long black veil that hides all her face; supporting with her left arm a little child to whom she is giving suck. A great ape crouches down in the sand beside her.

She uplifts her head toward heaven; and in spite of the great distance, her voice is distinctly heard:)

Isis. "O Neith, Beginning of all things! Ammon, Lord of Eternity; Pthah, demiurgos; Thoth, his intelligence; gods of the Amenthi, particular triads of the Nomes,—falcons in the azure of heaven, sphinxes before the temples, ibises perched between the horns of oxen, planets, constellations, shore, murmurs of the wind, gleams of the light,—tell me where I may find Osiris.

"I have sought him in all the canals and all the lakes—aye, further yet, even to Phœnician Byblos. Anubis, with ears pricked up, leaped about me, and yelped, and thrust his muzzle searchingly into the tufts of the tamarinds.

"Thanks, good Cynocephalos—thanks to thee!"

(She gives the ape two or three friendly little taps upon the head.)

"Hideous Typhon, the red-haired slew him, tore him in pieces! We have found all his members. But I have not that which rendered me fecund!"

(She utters wild lamentations.)

Anthony (is filled with fury. He casts stones at her, reviles her.)

"Begone! thou shameless one!—Begone!"

Hilarion. "Nay! respect her! Her religion was the faith of thy fathers!—thou didst wear her amulets when thou wert a child in the cradle!"

Isis. "In the summers of long ago, the inundation drove the impure beasts into the desert. The dykes were opened, the boats dashed against each other; the panting earth drank the river with the intoxication of joy. Then, O God, with the horns of the bull, thou didst lie upon my breast, and then was heard, the lowings of the Eternal Cow!

"The seasons of sowing and reaping, of threshing and of vintage, followed each other in regular order with the years. In the eternal purity of the nights, broad stars beamed and glowed. The days were bathed in never-varying splendour. Like a royal couple the Sun and the Moon appeared simultaneously, at either end of the horizon.

"Then did we both reign above a sublimer world, twin-monarchs, wedded within, the womb of eternity—he bearing a concupha-headed sceptre; I, the sceptre that is tipped with a lotus-flower; both of us erect with hands joined; and the crumblings of empires affected not our attitude.

"Egypt extended, below us, monumental and awful, long-shaped like the corridor of a temple; with obelisks on the right, pyramids on the left, and its labyrinth in the midst. And everywhere were avenues of monsters, forests of columns, massive pylons flanking gates summit-crowned with the mysterious globe—the globe of the world, between two wings.

"The animals of her Zodiac also existed in her pasture lands; and filled her mysterious writing with their forms and colours. Divided into twelve regions as the year is divided into-twelve months—each month, each day also having its own god—she reproduced the immutable order of heaven. And man even in dying

changed not his face; but saturated with perfumes, invulnerable to decay, he lay down to sleep for three thousand years in another and silent Egypt.

"And that Egypt, vaster than the Egypt of the living, extended beneath the earth.

"Thither one descended by dark stairways leading into halls where were represented the joys of the good, the tortures of the wicked, all that passes in the third and invisible world. Ranged along the wall the dead in their painted coffins awaited their turn; and the soul, exempted from migrations, continued its heavy slumber until the awakening into a new life.

"Nevertheless, Osiris sometimes came to see me. And by his ghost I became the mother of Harpocrates."

(She contemplates the child.)

"Aye! it is he. Those are his eyes; those are his locks, plaited into ram horns! Thou shalt recommence his works. We shall bloom again like the lotus. I am still the Great Isis!—none has yet lifted my veil! My fruit is the Sun!

I am still the Great Isis!—none has yet lifted my veil! My fruit is the Sun!

"Sim of Springtime, clouds now obscure thy face! The breath of Typhon devours the pyramids. But a little while ago I beheld the Sphinx flee away. He was galloping like a jackal.

"I look for my priests,—my priests clad in mantles of linen, with their great harps, and bearing a mysterious bark, adorned with silver pateras. There are no more festivals upon the lakes!—no more illuminations in my delta!—no more cups of milk at Philæ! Apis has long ceased to reappear.

"Egypt! Egypt! thy great motionless gods have their shoulders already whitened by the dung of birds; and the wind that passes over the desert rolls with it and the ashes of thy dead!—Anubis, guardian of ghosts, abandon me not!"

(The Cynocephalos has vanished. She shakes her child.)

"But ... what ails thee ... thy hands are cold, thy head droops!"

(Harpocrates expires. Then she cries aloud with a cry so piercing, funereal, heart-rending, that Anthony answers it with another cry, extending his arms as to support her.

She is no longer there. He lowers his face, overwhelmed by shame.

All that he has seen becomes confused within his mind. It is like the bewilderment of travel, the illness of drunkenness. He wishes to hate; but a vague and vast pity fills his heart. He begins to weep, and weeps abundantly.)

Hilarion. "What makes thee sorrowful?"

Anthony (after having long sought within himself for a reply):

"I think of all the souls that have been lost through these false gods!"

Hilarion. "Dost thou not think that they ... sometimes ... bear much resemblance to the True?"

Anthony. "That is but a device of the Devil to seduce the faithful more easily. He attacks the strong through the mind, the weak through the flesh."

Hilarion. "But luxury, in its greatest fury, has all the disinterestedness of penitence. The frenzied love of the body accelerates the destruction thereof,—and proclaims the extent of the impossible by the exposition of the body's weakness."

Anthony. "What signifies that to me! My heart sickens with disgust of these beautiful bestial gods, forever busied with carnages and incests!"

Hilarion. "Yet recollect all those things in the Scripture which scandalize thee because thou art unable to comprehend them! So also may these Gods conceal under their sinful forms some mighty truth. There are more of them yet to be seen. Look around!"

Anthony. "No, no!—it is dangerous!"

Hilarion. "But a little while ago thou didst desire to know them! Is it because thy

faith might vacillate in the presence of lies? What fearest thou?"

(The rocks fronting Anthony have become as a mountain. A line of clouds obscures the mountain half way between summit and base; and above the clouds appears another mountain, enormous, all green, unequally hollowed by valleys nestling in its slopes, and supporting at its summit, in the midst of laurel-groves a palace of bronze, roofed with tiles of gold, and supported by columns having capitals of ivory.

In the centre of the peristyle Jupiter,—colossal, with torso nude,—holds Victory in one hand, his thunderbolts in the other; and his eagle, perched between his feet, rears its head.

Juno, seated near him, rolls her large eyes, beneath a diadem whence her wind-blown veil escapes like a vapour.

Behind them, Minerva, standing upon a pedestal, leans on her spear. The skin of the Gorgon covers her breast, and a linen peplos falls in regular folds to the nails of her toes. Her glaucous eyes, which gleam beneath her vizor, gaze afar off, attentively.

On the right of the palace, the aged Neptune bestrides a dolphin beating with its fins a vast azure expanse which may be sea or sky, for the perspective of the Ocean seems a continuation of the blue ether: the two elements are interblended.

On the other side weird Pluto in night-black mantle, crowned with diamond tiara and bearing a sceptre of ebony, sits in the midst of an islet surrounded by the circumvolutions of the Styx;—and this river of shadow empties itself into the darknesses, which form a vast black gulf below the cliff,—a bottomless abyss!

Mars, clad in brass, brandishes as in wrath his broad shield and his sword.

Hercules, leaning upon his club, gazes at him from below.

Apollo, his face ablaze with light, grasps with outstretched right arm the reins of four white horses urged to a gallop; and Ceres in her ox-drawn chariot advances toward him with a sickle in her hand.

Behind her comes Bacchus, riding in a very low chariot, gently drawn by lynxes. Plump and beardless, with vine leaves garlanding his brow, he passes by holding in his hand an overflowing cup of wine. Silenus riding beside him reels upon his ass. Pan of the pointed ears, blows upon his syrinx; the Mimalonæides beat drums; the Mænads strew flowers; the Bacchantes turn in the dance with heads thrown back and hair dishevelled.

Diana, with tunic tucked up, issues from the wood together with her nymphs.

At the further end of a cavern, Vulcan among his Cabiri, hammers the heated iron; here and there the aged Rivers leaning recumbent upon green rocks pour water from their urns; the Muses stand singing in the valleys.

The Hours, all of equal stature, link hands; and Mercury poses obliquely upon a rainbow, with his caduceus, winged sandals, and winged petasus.

But at the summit of the stairway of the Gods,—among clouds soft as down, from whose turning volutes a rain of roses falls,—Venus Anadyomene stands gazing at herself in a mirror:—her eyes move languorously beneath their slumbrous lids.

She has masses of rich blond hair rolling down over her shoulders; her breasts are small; her waist is slender; her hips curve out like the sweeping curves of a lyre; her thighs are perfectly rounded; there are dimples about her knees; her feet are delicate: a butterfly hovers near her mouth. The splendour of her body makes a nacreous-tinted halo of bright light about her; while all the rest of Olympus is bathed in a pink dawn, rising gradually to the heights of the blue sky.)

Anthony. "Ah! my heart swells! A joy never known before thrills me to the depths of my soul! How beautiful, how beautiful it is!"

Hilarion. "They leaned from the heights of cloud to direct the way of swords; one used to meet them upon the high roads; men had them in their houses—and this familiarity divinized life.

"Life's aim was only to be free and beautiful. Nobility of attitude was facilitated by

the looseness of garments. The voice of the orator, trained by the sea, rolled its sonorous waves against the porticoes of marble. The ephebus, anointed with oil, wrestled all naked in the full light of the sun. The holiest of actions was to expose perfection of forms to all.

"And these men respected wives, aged men, suppliants.

"Behind the temple of Hercules there was an altar erected to Pity.

"Victims were immolated with flowers wreathed about the fingers of the sacrificer. Even memory was exempted from thoughts of the rottenness of death. Nothing remained but a little pile of ashes. And the Soul, mingling with the boundless ether, rose up to God."

(Bending to whisper in Anthony's ear:—)

"And they still live! The Emperor Constantine adores Apollo. Thou wilt find the Trinity in Samothracian mysteries,—baptism in the religion of Isis,—redemption in the faith of Mithra,—a martyrdom of a God in the festivals of Bacchus. Prosperpine is the Virgin!... Aristæus is Jesus!"

Anthony (remains awhile with downcast eyes, as if in deep thought; then suddenly repeats aloud the Symbol of Jerusalem, as he remembers it, uttering a long sigh between each phrase):—

"I believe in one only God, the Father,—and in one only Lord, Jesus Christ,—the first born son of God, who was incarnated and made man,—who was crucified, and buried,—who ascended into Heaven,—who will come to judge the living and the dead,—of whose Kingdom there shall be no end;—and in one Holy Spirit,—and in one baptism of repentance,—and in one Holy Catholic Church,—and in the resurrection of the flesh,—and in the life everlasting!"

(Immediately the cross becomes loftier and loftier; it pierces the clouds, and casts its shadow upon the heaven of the gods.

All grow pale;—Olympus shudders.

And at its base Anthony beholds vast bodies enchained, sustaining the rocks upon their shoulders,—giant figures half buried in the deeps of caverns. These are the Titans, the Giants, the Hecatonchires, the Cyclops.)

A Voice

(rises, indistinct and awful, like the far roar of leaves, like the voice of forests in time of tempest, like the mighty moaning of the wind among the precipices):

"We knew these things!—we knew them! There must come an end even for the Gods! Uranus was mutilated by Saturn,—Saturn by Jupiter. And Jupiter himself shall be annihilated. Each in his turn;—it is Destiny!"

(And little by little they sink into the mountain, and disappear.

Meanwhile the golden tiles of the palace rise and fly away.)

Jupiter (has descended from his throne. At his feet the thunderbolts lie, smoking like burning coals about to expire;—and the great eagle bends its neck to pick up its falling feathers):

"Then I am no longer the master of all things,—most holy, most mighty, god of the phatrias and Greek peoples,—ancestor of all the Kings,—Agamemnon of heaven.

"Eagle of apotheoses, what wind from Erebus has wafted thee to me? or, fleeing from the Campus Martins, dost thou bear me the soul of the last of the Emperors?

"I no longer desire to receive those of men. Let the Earth keep them; and let them move upon the level of its baseness. Their hearts are now the hearts of slaves;—they forget injuries, forget their ancestors, forget their oaths,—and everywhere the folly of crowds, the mediocrity of individuals, the hideousness of races, hold sway!"

(He pants with such violence that his sides seem ready to burst asunder; he clenches his hands. Weeping, Hebe offers him a cup. He seizes it.)

"No, no! So long as there shall be a brain enclosing a thought, in whatsoever part of

the world;—so long as there shall exist a mind hating disorder, creating Law,—so long will the spirit of Jupiter live!"

(But the cup is empty. He turns its edge down over his thumbnail.)

"Not one drop left! When the ambrosia fails, the Immortals must indeed depart!"

(The cup drops from his hands; and he leans against a column, feeling himself about to die.)

Juno. "Thou shouldst not have had so many amours! Eagle, bull, swan, rain of gold, cloud and flame, thou didst assume all forms,—dissipate thy light in all elements,—lose thy hair upon all beds! This time the divorce is irrevocable; and our domination, our very existence, dissolved."

(She passes away in air.)

Minerva (has no longer her spear; and the ravens nesting among the sculptures of the friezes, wheel about her, peeking at her helmet.)

"Let me see whether my vessels cleave the bright sea, returning to my three ports,—let me discover why the fields are deserted, and learn what the daughters of Athens are now doing.

"In the month of Hecatombeon my whole people came to worship me, under the guidance of their magistrates and priests. Then, all in white robes and wearing chitons of gold, they advanced the long line of virgins bearing cups, baskets, parasols; then the three hundred sacrificial oxen, and the old men having green boughs, the soldiers with clashing of armour, the ephebi singing hymns, flute players, lyre players, rhapsodists, dancing women;—and lastly attached to the mast of a trireme mounted upon wheel, my great veil embroidered by virgins who had been nourished in a particular way for a whole year. And when it had been displayed in all the streets, in all the squares, and before the temples, in the midst of the ever-chanting procession, it was borne step by step up the hill of the Acropolis, grazed the Propylæa, and entered the Parthenon....

"But a strange feebleness comes upon me,—me the Industrious One! What! what! not one idea comes to me! Lo! I am trembling more than a woman!"

(She turns, beholds a ruin behind her, utters a cry, and stricken by a fallen fragment, falls backward upon the ground.)

Hercules (has flung away his lion-skin; and with feet firmly braced, back arched, teeth clenched, he exhausts himself in immeasurable efforts to bear up the mass of crumbling Olympus.)

"I vanquished the Cercopes, the Amazons, and the Centaurs. Many were the kings I slew. I broke the horn of the great river, Achelous. I cut the mountains asunder; I freed nations from slavery; and I peopled lands that were desolate. I travelled through the countries of Gaul; I traversed the deserts where thirst prevails. I defended the gods from their enemies; and I freed myself from Omphale. But the weight of Olympus is too great for me. My arms grow feebler:—I die!"

(He is crushed beneath the ruins.)

Pluto. "It is thy fault, Amphytrionad;—wherefore didst thou descend into my empire?

"The vulture that gnaws the entrails of Tityus lifted its head;—the lips of Tantalus were moistened;—the wheel of Ixion stopped.

"Meanwhile the Kæres extended their claws to snatch back the escaping ghosts; the Furies tore the serpents of their locks; and Cerberus fettered by thee with a chain, sounded the death rattle in his throat, and foamed at all his three mouths.

"Thou didst leave the gate ajar; others have come. The daylight of men has entered into Tartarus!"

(He sinks into the darkness.)

Neptune. "My trident can no longer call up the tempests. The monsters that terrified of old, lie rotting at the bottom of the sea.

"Amphitrite whose white feet tripped lightly over the foam, the green Nereids seen afar off in the horizon, the scaly Sirens who stopped the passing vessels to tell stories, and the ancient Tritons mightily blowing upon their shells, all have passed away. All is desolate and dead; the gaiety of the great Sea is no more!"

(He vanishes beneath the azure.)

Diana (clad in black and surrounded by her dogs, which have been changed into wolves).

"The freedom of the deep forests once intoxicated me; the odours of the wild beasts and the exhalations of the marshes made me as one drank with joy. But the women whose maternity I protected, now bring dead children into the world. The moon trembles with the incantations of witches. Desires of violence, of immensity, seize me, fill me! I wish to drink poisons,—to lose myself in vapours, in dreams...!"

(And a passing cloud carries her away.)

Mars (unhelmed and covered with blood).

"At first I fought alone;—singlehanded I would provoke a whole army by my insults,—caring nothing for countries or nations, demanding battle for the pleasure of carnage alone.

"Afterward I had comrades. They marched to the sound of flutes, in good order, with equal step, respiring above their bucklers, with plumes loftily nodding, lances oblique. Then on rushed to battle with mighty eagle cries. War was joyous as a banquet. Three hundred men strove against all Asia.

"But the Barbarians are returning;—by myriads they come, by millions! Ah! since numbers, and engines, and cunning are stronger than valour, it were better that I die the death of the brave!"

(He kills himself.)

Vulcan (sponging the sweat from his limbs):

"The world is growing cold. The source of heat must be nourished, the volcanoes and rivers of flowing metal underground. Strike harder!—with full swing of the arms,—with might and main!"

(The Cabiri wound themselves with their hammers, blind themselves with sparks, and groping, lose themselves in the darkness.)

Ceres (standing in her chariot, impelled by wheels having wings at their hubs):

"Stop! Stop! Ah! it was with good reason that the exclusion of strangers, atheists, Epicureans, and Christians was commended! Now the mystery of the basket has been unveiled; the sanctuary profaned: all is lost!"

(She descends a precipitous slope—shrieking, despairing, tearing her hair.)

"Ah! lies, lies! Daira has not been restored to me. The voice of brass calls me to the dead. This is another Tartarus, whence there is no return! Horror!"

(The abyss engulfs her.)

Bacchus (with a frenzied laugh).

"What matters it? The Archon's wife is my spouse! The law itself reels in drunkenness! To me the new song, the multiplied forms!

"The fire by which my mother was devoured, flows in my veins! Let it burn yet more fiercely, even though I perish!

"Male and female, complaisant to all, I abandon myself to you, Bacchantes! I abandon myself to you, Bacchanalians!—and the vine shall twine herself about the tree-trunks! Howl! dance! writhe! Loosen the tiger and the slave!—rend flesh with ferocious bitings!"

(And Pan, Silenus, the Bacchantes, the Mimalonæides, and the Mænads,—with their serpents, torches, sable masks,—cast flowers at each other ... shake their tympanums, strike their thyrsi, pelt each other with shells, devour grapes, strangle a goat, and tear Bacchus asunder.)

Apollo (furiously whipping his coursers, while his blanching locks are falling from his head):

"I have left far behind me stony Delos, so pure that all now there seems dead; and I must strive to reach Delphi ere its inspiring vapour be wholly lost. The mules browse in its laurel groves. The Pythoness has wandered away, and cannot be found.

"By a stronger concentration of my power, I will obtain sublime hymns, eternal monuments; and all matter will be penetrated by the vibrations of my cithara!"

(He strikes the strings of the instrument. They burst, lashing his face with their broken ends. He flings the cithara away; and furiously whipping his quadriga, cries):

"No! enough of forms!—Further, higher!—to the very summit!—to the realm of pure thought!"

(But the horses back, rear, dash the chariot to pieces. Entangled by the harness, caught by the fragments of the broken pole, he falls head foremost into the abyss.

... he falls head foremost into the abyss

The sky is darkened.)

Venus (blue with cold, shivering):

"Once with my girdle I made all the horizon of Hellas.

"Her fields glowed with the roses of my cheeks; her shores were outlined after the fashion of my lips; and her mountains, whiter than my doves, palpitated beneath the hands of the statuaries. My spirit's manifestation was found in the ordinances of the festivals, in the arrangement of coiffures, in the dialogues of philosophers, in the constitution of republics. But I have doted too much upon men! It is Love that has dishonoured me!"

(She casts herself back weeping):

"This world is abominable;—there is no air for me to breathe!

"O Mercury, inventor of the lyre, conductor of souls, take me away!"

(She places one finger upon her lips, and describing an immense parabola, falls into the abyss.

Nothing is now visible. The darkness is complete.

Only, that from the eyes of Hilarion escape two flashes, two rays of lurid light.)

Anthony (begins at last to notice his immense stature):

"Already several times, while thou wert speaking, it seemed to me thou wert growing taller; and it was no illusion! How? Explain to me ... Thy aspect terrifies me!"

(Footsteps are heard approaching.)

"What is that?"

Hilarion (extending his arm):

"Look!"

(Then, under a pale beam of moonlight, Anthony distinguishes an interminable caravan defiling over the summit of the rocks;—and each voyager, one after the other, falls from the cliff into the gulf below.

First comes the three great gods of Samothrace,—Axieros, Axiokeros, Axiokersa,—united together as in a fascia, purple-masked, all with hands uplifted.

Æsculapius advances with a melancholy air, not even perceiving Samos and Telesphorus, who question him with gestures of anguish. Elean Sosipolis, of python-form, rolls his coils toward the abyss. Dosipoena, becomes dizzy, leaps in of her own accord. Britomartis, shrieking with fear, clutches fast the meshes of her net. The Centaurs come at a wild gallop, and roll pell-mell into the black gulf.

Behind them, all limping, advance the bands of the mourning Nymphs. Those of the meadows are covered with dust; those of the woods moan and bleed; wounded by the axes of the woodcutters.

The Gelludes, the Strygii, the Empusæ, all the infernal goddesses, form one pyramid

of blended fangs, vipers, and torches;—and seated upon a vulture-skin at its summit, Eurynome, blue as the flies that corrupt meat, devours her own arms.

Then in one great whirl simultaneously disappear the bloody Orthia, Hymina of Orchomenus, the Laphria of the Patræns, Aphia of Agina, Bendis of Thrace, Stymphalia with thighs like a bird's. Triopas, in lieu of three eyes, has now but three empty orbits. Erichthonius, his legs paralysed, crawls upon his hands like a cripple.)

Hilarion. "What a pleasure, is it not!—to see them all in the abjection of their death-agony! Climb up here beside me, on this rock; and thou shalt be even as Xerxes, reviewing his army.

"Beyond there, very far, dost thou behold that fair-bearded giant, who even now lets fall his sword crimsoned with blood?—that is the Scythian Zalmoxis between two planets,—Artimpasa, Venus, and Orsiloche, the Moon.

"Still further away, now emerging from pallid clouds, are the gods whom the Cimmerians adore, even beyond Thule.

"Their huge halls were warm, and by the gleam of swords that tapestried the vault, they drank their hydromel from horns of ivory. They ate the liver of the whale in dishes of brass wrought by the hammers of demons; or, betimes, they listened to captive sorcerers whose fingers played upon harps of stone.

"They are feeble! They are cold! The snow makes heavy their bearskins; and their feet show through the rents in their sandals.

"They weep for the vast fields upon whose grassy knolls they were wont to draw breath in pauses of battle; they weep for the long ships whose prows forced a way through the mountains of ice;—and the skates wherewith they followed the orb of the poles, upbearing at the length of their mighty arms all the firmament that turned with them."

(A gust of frosty wind carries them off. Anthony turns his eyes another way. And he perceives—outlined in black against a red background—certain strange personages,

with chinbands and gauntlets, who throw balls at one another, leap over each other's heads, make grimaces, dance a frenzied dance.)

Hilarion. "Those are the divinities of Etruria, the innumerable Æsars.

"There is Tages, by whom augury was invented. With one hand he seeks to augment the divisions of the sky; with the other he supports himself upon the earth: let him sink therein!

"Nortia gazes at the wall into which she drave nails to mark the number of the passing years. Its whole surface is now covered; and the period is accomplished.

"Like two travellers overtaken by a storm, Kastur and Pulutuk, trembling, seek to shelter themselves beneath the same mantle."

Anthony (closes his eyes):

"Enough! Enough!"

(But with a mighty noise of wings, all the Victories of the Capitol pass through the air,—hiding their faces with their hands, dropping the trophies hanging upon their arms.

Janus,—lord of crepuscules,—flees upon a black ram; and one of his two faces is already putrified; the other slumbers with fatigue.

Summanus, the headless god of the dark heavens, presses against his heart an odd cake shaped like a wheel.

Vesta, beneath a ruined cupola, tries to relight her extinguished lamp.

Bellona gashes her cheeks,—without being able to make that blood flow by which her devotees were purified.)

Anthony. "Mercy!—they weary me!"

Hilarion. "Before, they amused thee!"

(And he shows him in a grove of bean-trees, A Woman, naked ..... and a black man, holding in each hand a torch.[8])

"It is the goddess of Aricia, with the demon Virbius. Her sacerdote, the King of the grove, had to be an assassin;[9] and the fugitive slaves, the despoilers of corpses, the brigands of the Via Salaria, the cripples of the Pons Sublicius, all the human vermin of the Suburra worshipped no deities so fervently.

"In the time of Marcus Antonius the patrician women preferred Libitina."

(And he shows him under the shadow of cypresses and rose-trees, Another Woman, clad in gauze. Around her lie spades, litters, black hangings, all the paraphernalia of funerals. She smiles. Her diamonds shine afar off through spiders' webs. The Larvæ, like skeletons, show their bones through the branches; and the Lemures, who are phantoms, extend their bat-like wings.

At the end of a field lies the god Terminus, uprooted, and covered with ordures.

In the centre of a furrow, the great corpse of Vertumnus is being devoured by red dogs.

The rustic deities all depart, weeping:—Sartor, Sarrator, Vervactor, Collina, Vallona, Hostilinus—all wearing little hooded mantles, and carrying either a hoe, a pitchfork, a hurdle, or a boar-spear.)

Hilarion. "Their spirits made prosperous the villa,—with its dovecots, its parks of dormice, its poultry-yards protected by nets, its warm stables fragrant with odours of cedar.

"Also they protected all the wretched population who dragged the irons upon their legs over the flinty ways of the Sabine country,—those who called the swine together by sound of horn,—those who were wont to gather the bunches at the very summits of the elms,—those who drove the asses, laden with manure, over the winding bypaths. The panting labourer, leaning over the handle of his plough, prayed them to give strength to his arms; and under the shade of the lindens, beside calabashes filled with milk, the cow-herds were wont, in turn, to sound their praises upon flutes of reed."

Anthony (sighs.)

(And in the centre of a chamber, upon a lofty estrade, an ivory bed is visible, surrounded by persons bearing torches of pine.)

"Those are the deities of marriage. They await the coming of the bride.

"Domiduca should lead her in,—Virgo unfasten her girdle,—Subigo place her in the bed,—and Præma open her arms, and whisper sweet words into her ear.

"But she will not come!—and they dismiss the others:—Nona and Decima who watch by sick-beds; the three Nixii who preside over child-birth; the two nurses, Educa and Potina; and Carna, guardian of the cradle, whose bouquet of hawthorne keeps evil dreams from the child.

"Afterwards, Ossipago should strengthen his knees;—Barbatus give him his first beard; Stimula inspire his first desires; Volupia grant him his first enjoyment; Fabulimus should have taught him to speak, Numera to count, Camœna to sing, Consus to reflect."

(This chamber is empty; and there remains only the centenarian Nænia beside the bed,—muttering to herself the dirge she was wont to howl at the funerals of aged men.

But her voice is soon drowned by sharp cries. These are uttered by—

The Lares Domestici, crouching at the further end of the atrium, clad in dog-skins, with flowers wreathed about their bodies,—pressing their clenched hands against their cheeks, and weeping as loudly as they can.)

"Where is the portion of food we received at each repast, the kindly care of the maid-servant, the smile of the matron, the merriment of the little boys playing at knuckle-bones on the mosaic pavement of the court-yard? When grown up, they used to hang about our necks their bullæ of gold or leather!

"What happiness it was, when on the evening of a triumph, the master, entering,

turned his humid eyes upon us! He would recount his combats; and the little house would be prouder than a palace; sacred as a temple!

"How sweet were the family repasts, above all on the morrow of the Feralia! Tenderness for the dead appeased all discords; all kissed each other, while drinking to the glories of the past, and the hopes of the future.

"But the ancestors, of painted wax, locked up behind us, are slowly becoming covered with mold. The new races, visiting their own deceptions upon us, have shattered our jaws; our wooden bodies are disappearing piece-meal under the teeth of rats."

(And the innumerable gods, watching over doors, kitchens, cellars, baths, disperse in every direction—under the form of enormous ants running over the pavement, or great butterflies soaring away.

Then a roll of thunder is heard.)

A Voice:

"I was the God of Armies, the Lord, the Lord God! I pitched the tents of Jacob on the hills; and in the midst of the sands I nourished my chosen people in their flight.

"It was I who consumed the city of Sodom with fire! It was I who overwhelmed the world with the waters of the Deluge! It was I that drowned Pharaoh, with all the princes, sons of Kings,—making the sea to swallow up his chariots of war, and his charioteers!

"I, the Jealous God, held all other gods in abomination. I brayed the impure in my anger; the mighty I cast down; and swiftly the desolation of my wrath ran to the right and to the left, like a dromedary loosened in a field of maize.

"I chose the humble to deliver Israel. Angels, flame-winged, spake to them from out the bushes.

"Perfumed with spikenard, with cinnamon and myrrh, clad in transparent robes, and

shod with high-heeled sandals,—women of valiant heart went forth to slay captains. The passing wind carried my prophets with it.

"My law I graved upon tables of stone. Within that law my people were enclosed, as within a strong citadel. They were my people. I was their God! The land was mine; the men also belonged to me, together with their every thought, and all their works, and the tools they wrought with, and their prosperity.

"My ark reposed within a triple sanctuary,—surrounded by curtains of purple and lighted candelabra. I had a whole tribe to serve me as servants, swinging censers; and the high-priest, robed in robes of hyacinth, wore upon his breast precious stones disposed in symmetrical order.

"Woe! Woe! the Holy of Holies is open, the veil is rent, the perfumes of the holocaust are dissipated by all the winds of heaven! The jackal whines in the sepulchres; my temple is destroyed; my people dispersed!

"The priests have been strangled with the girdles of their robes. The women languish in captivity; the holy vessels have all been melted!"

(The voice, becoming more distant):

"I was the God of Armies; the Lord, the Lord God!"

(An enormous silence follows,—and deepest night.)

Anthony. "All have passed away!"

Some One (replies):

"I remain!"

(And Hilarion stands before him—but transfigured wholly,—beautiful as an archangel, luminous as a sun, and so lofty that in order to behold his face—

Anthony

is compelled to throw back his head, to look up as though gazing as a star):

"Who art thou?"

Hilarion. "My kingdom is vast as the universe; and my desire knows no limits. I go on forever,—freeing minds, weighing worlds,—without hatred, without fear, without pity, without love, and without God. Men call me Science!"

Anthony (recoiling from him):

"Say, rather, that thou art ... the Devil!"

Hilarion (fixing his eyes upon him:)

"Wouldst thou behold him?"

Anthony (cannot detach his eyes from that mighty gaze:—the curiosity of the Devil comes upon him. His terror augments; yet his wish grows even to boundlessness):

"Yet if I should see him ... if I were to see him!"

(Then in a sudden spasm of wrath):

"The horror that I have of him will free me from his presence forever!... Yes!"

(A cloven foot appears. Anthony regrets his wish.

But the Devil flings him upon his horns and bears him away.)

[1] Matthew II: 10—T.

[2] "Buddha, or more correctly, the Buddha, for Buddha is an appellative meaning Enlightened."—Max Müller (Chips, Vol. I., 206).

[3] Luke II: 25-26.—T.

[4] Ibid II: 46-47.—T.

[5] Or, Haoma, also Hom, the sacred plant, whose fermented juice occupied an important place in the practical rites of Iran. Supposed to be the same plant known in botany as Sarcostemma viminalis. Deified in Iranian worship, like the sacred drink Soma in the Vedic hymns. The Soma was the fermented extract of the Asclepias acida or Sarcostemma ritalis. See Marius Fontane, "L'Inde Védique," "Les Iraniens."—Trans.

[6] Apuleius says, "a silken mantle."—Trans.

[7] Apuleius says, "strung with knuckle-bones of sheep."—Trans.

[8] This scene, like certain paintings in the Naples museum, is all suited for public exhibition.—Trans.

[9] Readers will recollect the lines in Macaulay's Lays of Ancient Rome:

"Beneath Aricia's trees, Those trees in whose dim shadow A ghastly priest doth reign, The priest who slew the slayer, And must himself be slain."

VI

(He flies beneath him, outstretched like a swimmer; his vast-spreading wings, wholly concealing him, seem like one huge cloud.)

Anthony. "Whither do I go? But a little while ago I beheld in a glimpse the form of the Accurst. Nay!—'tis a cloud that upbears me! Perhaps I am dead, and am ascending to God....

"How freely I respire. The immaculate air seems to vivify my soul. No sense of weight!—no more suffering.

"Far below me the lightning breaks,—the horizon broadens, widens,—the rivers cross each other. That blond-bright spot is the desert; that pool of water the ocean!

"And other oceans appear!—vast regions of which I knew nothing! There are the countries of the blacks, which seem to smoke like brasiers!—then is the zone of snows always made dim by fog! Would I might behold those mountains where the sun, each evening, sinks to rest!"

The Devil. "The sun never sinks to rest; the sun never rests!"

(Anthony is not surprised at this voice. It seems to him an echo of his own thought—a response made by his own memory.

Meanwhile the earth gradually assumes the shape of a ball; and he beholds it in the midst of the azure, turning upon its poles, and revolving with the sun.)

The Devil. "So it does not form the centre of the universe! Pride of man! humiliate thyself!"

Anthony. "Now I can scarcely distinguish it. It mingles confusedly with other glowing worlds. The firmament itself is but one tissue of stars."

(And they still rise.)

"No sound!—not even the hoarse cry of eagles! Nothing? I listen for the harmony of the spheres."

The Devil. "Thou wilt not hear them! Nor wilt thou behold the antichtonus of Plato,—or the central furnace of Philolaüs,—or the spheres of Aristotle, or the seven heavens of the Jews, with the great waters above the vault of crystal!"

Anthony. "Yet from below the vault seemed solid as a wall!—on the contrary I penetrate it, I lose myself in it!"

(And he beholds the moon,—like a rounded fragment of ice filled with motionless light.)

The Devil. "Formerly it was the sojourn of souls! Even the good Pythagoras adorned it with magnificent flowers, populated it with birds!"

Anthony. "I can see only desolate plains there, with extinct craters yawning under a black sky!

"Let us go towards those milder-beaming stars, that we may contemplate the angels who uphold them at arms' length, like torches!"

The Devil (bears him into the midst of the stars):

"They attract at the same time that they repel each other. The action of each one results from that of others, and contributes thereunto,—without the aid of any auxiliary, by the force of a law, the virtue of order alone!"

Anthony. "Yes!... yes! My intelligence grasps the great truth! It is a joy greater than all tender pleasures! Breathless I find myself with astonishment at the enormity of

God!"

The Devil. "Even as the firmament ever rises as thou dost ascend, so with the expansion of thy thought will He become greater to thee; and after this discovery of the universe thou wilt feel thy joy augment with the broadening and deepening of the infinite."

Anthony. "Ah! higher!—higher still!—- forever higher!"

(Then the stars multiply, scintillate. The Milky Way develops in the zenith like a monstrous belt, with holes at intervals; through these rents in its brightness stretches of prolonged darkness are visible. There are rains of stars, long trains of golden dust, luminous vapours that float and dissolve.

At times a comet suddenly passes by; then the tranquillity of innumerable lights recommences.

Anthony, with outstretched arms, supports himself upon the Devil's horns, and thus occupies all the space between them.

He remembers with disdain the ignorance of other days, the mediocrity of his dreams. And now those luminous globes he was wont to gaze upon from below, are close to him. He distinguishes the intercrossing of the lines of their orbits, the complexity of their courses. He beholds them coming from afar,—and, like stones suspended in a sling, describe their circles, form their hyperbolas.

He perceives, all within the field of his vision at once, the Southern Cross and the Great Bear, the Lynx and the Centaur, the nebula of Dorado, the six suns in the constellation of Orion, Jupiter with his four satellites, and the triple ring of the monstrous Saturn!—all the planets, all the stars that men will discover in the future. He fills his eyes with their light; he over-burthens his mind with calculation of their distances: then, bowing his head, he murmurs):

"What is the purpose of all that?"

The Devil. "There is no purpose. How could God have a purpose? What experience could have instructed him?—what reflection determined him?

Anthony: What is the purpose of all that? The Devil: There is no purpose.

"Before the beginning he could not have acted;—and now his action would be useless."

Anthony. "Yet he created the world, at one time, by his word only."

The Devil. "But the beings that people the earth come upon it successively. So also, in heaven, new stars arise—different effects of varying causes."

Anthony. "The varying of causes is the will of God!"

The Devil. "But to admit several acts of will in God is to admit various causes, and therefore to deny his unity.

"His will is inseparable from his essence. He can have but one will, having but one essence; and inasmuch as he externally exists, he acts eternally.

"Contemplate the sun! From its surface leap vast jets of flame, casting forth sparks that disperse beyond to become worlds here-after;—and further than the last, far beyond those deeps where thou seest only night, whirl other suns,—and behind them others again, and beyond those yet others ... without end!"

Anthony. "Enough! Enough! I fear!—I will fall into the abyss!"

The Devil (pauses, and rocks Anthony gently in the midst of space).

"Nothingness is—not—there is no void! Everywhere and forever bodies move upon the immovable deeps of space! Were there boundaries to space, it would not be space, but a body only: it is limitless!"

Anthony (stupefied by wonder):

"Limitless!"

The Devil. "Ascend skyward forever and forever,—yet thou wilt not attain the summit. Descend below the earth for billions of billions of centuries: never wilt thou

reach the bottom. For there is no summit, there is no bottom; there is no Above, no Below—nor height, nor depth as signified by the terms of human utterance. And Space itself is comprised in God, who is not a portion thereof of such or such a size,—but is Immensity itself!"

Anthony (slowly):

"Matter..., then,... must be a part of God?"

The Devil. "Why not? Canst thou know the end of God?"

Anthony. "Nay: on the contrary, I prostrate, I crush myself beneath his mightiness!"

The Devil. "And yet thou dost pretend to move him! Thou dost speak to him,—thou dost even adorn him with virtues,—with goodness, justice, mercy,—in lieu of recognising that all perfections are his!

"To conceive aught beyond him is to conceive God above God, the Being above the Being. For He is the only being, the only substance.

"If the Substance could be divided, it would not be the Substance, it would lose its nature: God could not exist. He is therefore indivisible as infinite;—and if he had a body, he would be composed of parts, he would not be One—he would not be infinite. Therefore he is not a Person!"

Anthony. "What? my prayers, my sobs, my groans, the sufferings of my flesh, the transports of my love,—have all these things gone out to a lie,—to emptiness, unavailingly—like the cry of a bird, like a whirl of dead leaves?"

(Weeping):

"Oh, no!—there is Some One above all things,—a great Soul, a Lord, a Father whom my heart adores and who must love me!"

The Devil. "Thou dost desire that God were not God;—for did he feel love, or anger, or pity,—he would abandon his perfection for a greater or a lesser perfection. He can stoop to no sentiment, nor be contained in any form."

Anthony. "One day, nevertheless, I shall see him!"

The Devil. "With the blessed, is it not?—when the finite shall enjoy the infinite in some restricted place, containing the Absolute!"

Anthony. "Matters not!—there must be a paradise for the good, as there is a hell for the wicked."

The Devil. "Can the desire of thy mind create the law of the universe? Without doubt evil is indifferent to God,—forasmuch as the Earth is covered with it!

"Is it through impotence that he endures it, or through cruelty that he maintains it?

"Dost thou fancy that he is eternally readjusting the world, like an imperfect machine?—that he is forever watching the movements of all beings, from the flight of a butterfly to the thought of a man?

"If he have created the universe, his providence is superfluous. If Providence exists, then creation is defective.

"But evil and good concern only thee—even like night and day, pleasure and pain, death and birth, which are relative only to one corner of space, to a special centre, to a particular interest. Since the Infinite is permanent, the Infinite is;—and that is all."

(The Devil's wings have been gradually expanding: now they cover all space.)

Anthony (now perceives nothing: a great faintness comes upon him):

"A hideous cold freezes me, even to the depths of my soul! This is beyond the extreme of pain! It is like a death that is deeper than death! I roll in the immensity of darkness; and the darkness itself enters within me. My consciousness bursts beneath this dilation of nothingness!"

The Devil. "Yet the knowledge of things comes to thee only through the medium of thy mind. Even as a concave mirror, it deforms the objects it reflects; and thou hast no means whatever of verifying their exactitude."

"Never canst thou know the universe in all its vastness; consequently it will never be

possible for thee to obtain an idea of its cause, to have a just notion of God, nor even to say that the universe is infinite,—for thou must first be able to know what the Infinite is!"

"May not Form be, perhaps, an error of thy senses,—Substance a figment of thy imagination?"

"Unless, indeed, that the world being a perpetual flux[1] of things, appearance, on the contrary, be wholly true; illusion the only reality."

"But art thou sure thou dost see?—art thou even sure thou dost live? Perhaps nothing exists!"

(The Devil has seized Anthony, and, holding him at arms' length, glares at him with mouth yawning as though to devour him):

"Adore me, then!—and curse the phantom thou callest God!"

(Anthony lifts his eyes with a last effort of hope.

The Devil abandons him.)

[1] The original text seems to me slightly obscure. The idea of the universe being a perpetual ebb and flow of shapes, is that of forms passing away to reappear like waves, is that of the Nidana-Sutris: "Individuality is only a form ... Everything is only a flux of aggregates, interminably uniting and disuniting," as Barth observes in his "Religions of India."—Trans.

VII

Anthony (finds himself lying upon his back, at the verge of the cliff.

The sky commences to blanch.)

"Is it the glow of dawn, or only an effect of moonlight?"

(He tries to rise, falls back,—his teeth chattering):

"I feel such a helplessness of weakness, as though all my bones were broken!

"Why?

"Ah! the Devil!—I remember!—he even repeated to me all that I learned from the aged Didymus respecting the opinions of Xenophanes, Heraclitus, of Melissus, of Anaxagoras,—concerning the infinite, the creation, the impossibility of knowing anything!

"And yet I believed that I could unite myself to God!"

(Laughing bitterly):

"Ah! madness! madness! Is the fault mine? Prayer has become intolerable to me! My heart is dry as a rock! Once, it was wont to overflow with love!...

"The sand used to smoke of mornings like the odourous dust of a censer;—at sunset flowers of fire used to bloom upon the cross; and in the middle of the night, it often seemed as though all beings and all things, lying under the same awful silence, were adoring the Lord with me. O charms of prayer, felicities of ecstasy, gifts of heaven,—what have become of you?

"I remember a voyage I made with Ammon in search of a solitary place suited for the establishment of a monastery. It was the last evening; we hastened our steps, walked side by side, murmuring hymns, without conversing. As the sun sank, the shadows of our bodies lengthened like two obelisks, continually growing taller, and moving before us. Here and there we planted crosses, made with fragments of our sticks, to mark the site of a future cell. Night was tardy in her coming; and waves of darkness overspread the earth, even while a vast rose-coloured light still glowed in heaven.

"When I was a child, I used to amuse myself by building hermitages with pebbles. My mother sitting beside me would watch me so attentively!

"Will she not have cursed me for having abandoned her?—will she not have plucked out her white hair by handfuls in the despair of her grief? And her corpse remains lying on the floor of the hut, under the roof of reeds, between the crumbling walls.

Through an orifice a hyena, snuffing, thrusts his head, advances his mouth ... horror! horror!"

(Sobbing):

"No: Ammonaria will not have abandoned her! Where is she now,—Ammonaria?

"Perhaps at the further end of a bathroom, she removes her garments one after the other: first the mantle, then the girdle, then the first tunic, the second lighter tunic, all her necklaces,—and the vapour of cinnamon envelops her naked limbs. At last she lies down upon the tepid mosaic. Her long hair spreading below the curve of her hips, seems like a sable fleece; and the oppressiveness of the heated air causes her to pant; her waist arched, her breasts standing out ... What! my flesh rebels again! Even in the midst of grief am I tortured by concupiscence. To be subjected thus unto two tortures at once is beyond endurance! I can no longer bear myself!"

(He leans over, and gazes into the abyss.)

"The man who should fall would be killed. Nothing easier: it were only necessary to roll over upon my left side:—only one movement—one!"

(Then suddenly appears—An Aged Woman. Anthony starts to his feet in affright. It seems to him that he beholds his mother arisen.

But this woman is far older, and prodigiously thin.

A shroud, knotted about her head, hangs down, together with her white hair, so as to cover her legs, slender as crutches. The brilliancy of her ivory-coloured teeth make her earthy skin darker still. The orbits of her eyes are full of shadow; and far back within them two flames vacillate, like the lamps of sepulchres.

She exclaims):

"Advance! What hinders thee?"

Anthony (stammering):

"I fear ... to commit a sin!"

She (replies):

"But King Saul killed himself! Razias, a just man, killed himself! Saint Pelagia of Antioch killed herself! Dommina of Aleppo and her two daughters—all three saints—killed themselves: and remember also how many confessors delivered themselves up to the executioner in their impatient longing for death! That they might enjoy death more speedily, the virgins of Miletus strangled themselves with their girdles. At Syracuse the philosopher Hegesias preached so eloquently upon death that men deserted the lupanars to go hang themselves in the fields. The patricians of Borne sought for death as a new form of debauch."

Anthony. "Aye! the love of death is strong; and many a anchorite has succumbed to it."

The Old Woman. "To do that which will make thee equal unto God—think! He created thee: thou wilt destroy his work—thou! and by thy courage,—of thy own free will! The enjoyment that Erostratus knew was not greater than this. And moreover thy body has so long mocked thy soul that it is full time thou shouldst take vengeance upon it. Thou wilt not suffer. It will soon be over. Of what art thou afraid?—a wide, black hole! Perhaps it is a void!"

The Old Woman: Of what art thou afraid?—a wide, black hole! Perhaps it is a void!

(Anthony hearkens without replying; and upon the other side appears—

Another Woman—young and marvellously beautiful. At first he takes her to be Ammonaria. But she is taller, blond as honey, very plump, with paint upon her cheeks and roses upon her head. Her long robe, weighty with spangles, gleams with metallic lustre;—her fleshy lips are sanguinolent; and her somewhat heavy eyelids are so drowned with languor that one would almost take her to be blind.

She murmurs):

"Nay, live! enjoy! Solomon counsels joy! Follow the guiding of thy heart and the desire of thine eyes!"

Anthony. "What joy is there for me? My heart is weary; my eyes are dim!"

She (answers):

"Seek the suburb of Racotis; push open a door that is painted blue;—and when thou shalt be in the atrium where a fountain jet murmurs unceasingly, a woman will present herself before thee—in peplos of white silk striped with gold; her hair is unloosed, her laugh like the clatter of crotali. She is skilful. In her caress thou wilt taste the pride of initiation and the appeasement of desire.

"Hast ever pressed to thy bosom a virgin who loved thee? Dost remember the surrenders of her modesty,—the passing away of her remorse in a sweet flow of tears?

"Thou canst even now imagine thyself walking with her—canst thou not?—in the wood by the light of the moon? At each pressure of your joined hands, a sweet shuddering passes through you both,—looking closely into each other your eyes seem to outpour into one another something like immaterial fluid;—and thy heart fills: it bursts: it is a suave whirl of eddying passion, an overflowing of intoxication...."

The Old Woman. "One need not possess joys in order to taste their bitterness! Even to view them from afar off begets loathing of them. Thou must be fatigued by the monotony of the same actions, the length of the days, the hideousness of the world, the stupidity of the sun?"

Anthony. "Aye, indeed!—I loathe all that he shines upon."

The Young Woman. "Hermit! hermit! thou wilt find diamonds among the flints, fountains beneath the sand, a delectation in all the hazards thou dost despise; and there are even upon earth places of such beauty that the sight of them would make thee desire to press the whole world against thy heart with love!"

The Old Woman. "Each evening that thou liest down upon the earth to slumber, thou dost hope that it may soon lie upon thee and cover thee."

The Young Woman. "Yet thou dost believe in the resurrection of the flesh—which is but the translation of life into eternity!"

(Even as she speaks, the Old Woman becomes still more fleshless; and above her skull, from which the white hair has disappeared, a bat circles in the air.

The Young Woman has become fatter. Her robe gleams with shifting colours; her nostrils palpitate, her eyes roll softly.)

The Former (opening her arms, exclaiming):

"Come to me!—I am Consolation, repose, oblivion, eternal calm!"

The Other.

"I am the sleep-giver, life, happiness inexhaustible!"

(Anthony turns to fee from them. Each lays a hand on his shoulder.

The Shroud parts, exposes the Skeleton of Death.

The robe splits asunder, and leaves the whole body of Lust exposed:—her waist is slender; her long and undulating hair flutters in the wind.

Anthony stands motionless between the two, considering them):

Death (says to him):

"What matters it, whether now or at another time! Thou art mine,—like suns, nations, cities, kings, mountain-snows, and the grasses of the fields. I fly higher than the hawks of heaven. I run more swiftly than the gazelle; I overtake even Hope; I vanquished the Son of God!"

Lust. "Resist not! I am the Omnipotent! The forests re-echo with my sighs; the waters tremble with my agitations. Virtue, courage, piety, dissolve in the perfume of my mouth. Man I accompany in every step that he makes; and even from the threshold of the tomb he turns to me!"

Death. "I will find for thee that which thou hast vainly sought for, by the gleam of torches, upon the faces of the dead,—or among those awful sands that are formed of

human remains, where thou wast wont to wander beyond the Pyramids. From time to time, the fragment of a skull rolled under thy sandal. Thou didst take up the dust: thou didst let it trickle through thy fingers; and thy thought, blending with it, sank into nothingness."

Lust. "My gulf is deeper! Marbles have inspired loves. Men rush to conjunctures that terrify. Fetters are riveted that the fettered curse. Whence the bewitchment of courtesans, the extravagance of dreams, the immensity of my sadness?"

Death. "Mine irony depasseth all others! There are convulsions of delight at the funerals of kings, at the extermination of a whole people; and war is made with music, with plumes, with harness of gold,—with vast display of ceremony that my due of homage may be greater!"

Death: Mine irony depasseth all others!

Lust. "My rage equals thine! I also yell; I bite! I, too, have sweats of agony, and aspects cadaverous!"

Death. "It is I that make thee awful! Let us intertwine!"

Death: It is I that make thee awful! Let us intertwine!

(Death laughs mockingly; Lust roars. They clasp each other about the waist, and chant alternately):

"I hasten the dissolution of matter!"

"I facilitate the dispersion of germs!"

"Thou dost destroy for my renovations!"

"Thou dost engender for my destructions!"

"Ever-active my power!"

"Fecund, my putrefaction!"

(And their voices, whose rolling echoes fill the horizon, deepen and become so mighty that Anthony falls backward as if thunder-stricken. A shock from time to

time causes him to reopen his eyes; and he perceives in the midst of the darkness a manner of monster before him.

It is a skull, crowned with roses, dominating the torso of a woman nacreously white. Below, a shroud starred with specks of gold forms something like a tail; and the whole body undulates, after the fashion of a gigantic worm erect on end.

The vision attenuates,—disappears.)

Anthony (rising to his feet):

"The Devil yet again, and under his two-fold aspect: the spirit of fornication, and the spirit of destruction.

"Neither affrights me! I repel happiness; and I know myself to be eternal.

"Thus death is only an illusion, a veil-masking betimes the continuity of life.

"But Substance being unique, wherefore should forms be varied?

"Somewhere there must be primordial figures, whose bodily forms are only symbols. Could I but see them, I would know the link between matter and thought; I would know in what Being consists.

Anthony: Somewhere there must be primordial figures, whose bodily forms are only symbols

"Such were the figures painted at Babylon upon the walls of the temple of Belus; and others like them covered a mosaic in the port of Carthage. I myself have sometime beheld in the sky, as it were, forms of spirits. Those who cross the desert meet with animals surpassing all conception...."

I myself have sometime beheld in the sky, as it were, forms of spirits

(And opposite, upon the further side of the Nile, suddenly appears the Sphinx.[1] He stretches his paws, shakes the bandelets upon his forehead, and crouches upon his belly.

Leaping, flying, spitting fire through her nostrils, lashing her winged sides with her

dragon-tail, the green-eyed Chimera circles, barks.

The thick curls of her head tossed back upon one side mingle with the hair of her loins; on the other side they hang down to the sand, quivering with the swinging of her body, to and fro.)

The Sphinx (remaining motionless, and gazing at the Chimera):

"Hither, Chimera! rest awhile!"

The Chimera. "No! never!"

The Sphinx. "Do not run so fast, do not fly so high, do not bark so loudly!"

The Chimera. "Do not call me!—call me no more; since thou must remain forever dumb."

The Sphinx. "Cease casting thy flames in my face, and uttering thy yells in my ear: thou canst not melt my granite."

The Chimera. "Thou shalt not seize me, terrible sphinx!"

The Sphinx. "Thou art too mad to dwell with me!"

The Chimera. "Thou art too heavy to follow me!"

The Sphinx. "Yet whither goest thou, that thou shouldst run so fast?"

The Chimera. "I gallop in the corridors of the Labyrinth—I hover above the mountains—I graze the waves in my flight—I yelp at the bottom of precipices—I suspend myself with my mouth from the skirts of clouds—I sweep the shores with my dragging tail; and the curves of the hills have taken their form from the shape of my shoulders! But thee I find perpetually immobile, or perhaps making strange designs with thy claws upon the sand."

The Sphinx. "It is because I keep my secret;—I dream and calculate.

"The sea returns to its bed; the wheat bends back and forth in the wind; the caravans pass by; the dust flies; cities crumble; and yet my gaze, which naught can deviate, remains fixed, gazing through all intervening things, upon a horizon that none may

reach."

The Sphinx: ... and yet my gaze, which naught can deviate, remains fixed, gazing through all intervening things, upon a horizon that none may reach. The Chimera: I am light and joyous!

The Chimera. "I am light and joyous! I offer to the eyes of men dazzling perspectives with Paradise in the clouds above, and unspeakable felicity afar off. Into their souls I pour the eternal madnesses; projects of happiness, plans for the future, dreams of glory and vows of love, and all virtuous resolutions.

"I urge men to perilous voyages and great enterprises. I have chiselled with my claws the wonders of architecture. It was I who suspended the little bells above the tomb of Porsenna, and surrounded the quays of Atlantis with a wall of orichalcum.

"I seek for new perfumes, for vaster flowers, for pleasures never felt before. If I perceive in any place a man whose mind reposes in wisdom, I fall upon him, and strangle him."

The Sphinx. "All those tormented by the desire of God, I have devoured.

"In order to climb up to my royal brow, the strongest ascend upon the flutings of my bandelets as upon the steps of a stairway. Then a great lassitude comes upon them, and they fall backward."

(Anthony begins to tremble.

He is no longer before his cabin, but in the desert itself, with those two monsters beside him, whose breath is hot upon his shoulders.)

The Sphinx. "O thou Fantasy, bear me away upon thy wings that my sadness may be lightened!"

The Chimera. "O thou Unknown, I am enamoured of thine eyes! Like a hyena in heat I turn about thee, soliciting those fecundations whereof the desires devour me!

"Ope thy mouth, lift thy feet—mount upon my back!"

The Sphinx. "My feet, since they have been outstretched, can move no more. The lichen, like an eruption, has formed upon my jaws. By dint of long dreaming I have no longer aught to say."

The Chimera. "Thou liest, hypocrite Sphinx! Wherefore dost thou always call me and always disown me!"

The Sphinx. "It is thou, indomitable caprice, that dost forever pass and repass, whirling in thy course!"

The Chimera. "Is the fault mine? What? Let me be!"

(She barks.)

The Sphinx. "Thou movest away! thou dost escape me!"

(He growls.)

The Chimera. "Essay!—Thou crushest me!"

The Sphinx. "Nay!—impossible!"

(And gradually sinking down he disappears in the sand; while the Chimera, ramping with tongue protruding, departs, describing circles on her way.

The breath of her mouth has produced a fog.

Through this mist Anthony perceives wreathings of clouds, undecided curves.

At last he can distinguish something like the appearance of human bodies.

And first:—

The Astomi—approach, like bubbles of air traversed by sunlight. They cry):

"Do not breathe too hard! The drops of rain bruise us, false notes excoriate us, darknesses blind us! Composed wholly of breezes and of perfumes, we float along, we roll along:—a little more than Dreams, yet not quite beings...."

The Nisnas

(have only one eye, one cheek, one hand, one leg, half a body, half a heart. They

say):

"We live quite in our halves of houses, with our halves of wives and our halves of children!"

The Blemmyes

(who have no head at all):

"Our shoulders are all the broader;—and there is no ox, rhinoceros, or elephant able to carry what we carry.

"Something dimly resembling features—as it were a vague face—imprinted upon our breasts: that is all! We think digestions; we subtleize secretions. God, in our belief, floats peacefully within the interior chyles.

"We go straight upon our way, through all mires, crossing all morasses, skirting the edges of all abysses: and we are the most laborious, the most happy, the most virtuous of all peoples!"

The Pygmies:

"We, good little men, swarm upon the world like vermin upon the hump of a dromedary.

"We are burned, drowned, crushed; and we always reappear, more vivacious and countless than before—terrible by reason of our numbers!"

The Sciapods:

"Fettered to the earth by our hair, long as lianas, we vegetate beneath the shelter of our feet, broad as parasols; and the light comes to us through the thickness of our heels. No annoyances for us, no work! The head as low as possible—That is the secret of happiness."

The Sciapods: The head as low as possible—That is the secret of happiness.

(Their lifted thighs,—resembling the trunks of trees,—multiply.

And a forest appears. Great apes clamber through it on all fours:—these are men

with the heads of dogs.)

The Cynocephali:

"We leap from branch to branch in search of eggs to suck; and we pluck the little fledglings alive; then we put their nests upon our heads in lieu of caps.

"We tear off the teats of cows; and we put out the eyes of lynxes: we let fall our dung from the heights of the trees—we parade our turpitude in the full light of the sun.

"Lacerating the flowers, crushing the fruits, befouling the springs, violating women, we are the masters of all,—by the strength of our arms, and the ferocity of our hearts.

"Ho! companions!—gnash with your jaws!"

(Blood and milk pour down their chops. The rain streams over their hairy backs.

Anthony inhales the freshness of the green leaves.

There is a movement among them, a clashing of branches; and all of a sudden appears a huge black stag, with the head of a bull, having between his ears a thicket of white horns.)

The Sadhuzag:

"My seventy-four antlers are hollow like flutes.

"When I turn me toward the wind of the South, there issue from them sounds that draw all the ravished animals around me. The serpents twine about my legs; the wasps cluster in my nostrils; and the parrots, the doves, the ibises, alight upon the branches of my horns.

"Listen!"

(He throws back his horns, whence issues a music of sweetness ineffable.

Anthony presses both hands upon his heart. It seems to him as though his soul were being borne away by the melody.)

The Sadhuzag:

"But when I turn me toward the wind of the North, my antlers, more thickly bristling than a battalion of lances, give forth a sound of howlings: the forests are startled with fear; the rivers remount toward their sources; the husks of fruits burst open; and the bending grasses stand erect on end, like the hair of a coward.

"Listen!"

(He bends his branching antlers forward: hideous and discordant cries proceed from them. Anthony feels as though his heart were torn asunder.

And his horror augments upon beholding)—

The Martichoras

(A gigantic red lion, with human face, and three rows of teeth):

"The gleam of my scarlet hair mingles with the reflection of the great sands. I breathe through my nostrils the terror of solitudes. I spit forth plague. I devour armies when they venture into the desert.

"My claws are twisted like screws, my teeth shaped like saws; and my curving tail bristles with darts which I cast to right and left, before and behind!

"See! see!"

(The Martichoras shoots forth the keen bristles of his tail, which irradiate in all directions like a volley of arrows. Drops of blood rain down, spattering upon the foliage.)

The Catoblepas

(A black buffalo with a pig's head, falling to the ground, and attached to his shoulders by a neck long, thin, and flaccid as an empty gut.

He wallows flat upon the ground, and his feet entirely disappear beneath the enormous mane of coarse hair which covers his face):

"Fat, melancholy, fierce—thus I continually remain, feeling against my belly the

warmth of the mud. So heavy is my skull that it is impossible for me to lift it. I roll it slowly all around me, open-mouthed; and with my tongue I tear up the venemous plants bedewed with my breath. Once, I even devoured my own feet without knowing it!

"No one, Anthony, has ever beheld mine eyes,—or at least, those who have beheld them are dead. Were I to lift my eyelids—my pink and swollen eyelids, thou wouldst forthwith die!"

Anthony. "Oh, that one! Ugh! As though I could desire it?—Yet his stupidity fascinates me! No, no! I will not!"

(He gazes fixedly upon the ground.

But the weeds take fire; and amidst the contorsions of the flames, arises)—

The Basilisk

(A great violet serpent, with trilobate crest, and two fangs, one above, one below):

"Beware, lest thou fall into my jaws! I drink fire. I am fire!—and I inhale it from all things: from clouds, from flints, from dead trees, the fur of animals, the surface of marshes. My temperature maintains the volcanoes: I lend glitter to jewels: I give colours to metals!"

The Griffin

(A lion with a vulture's beak, and white wings, red paws and blue neck):

"I am the master of deep splendours. I know the secrets of the tombs wherein the Kings of old do slumber.

"A chain, issuing from the wall, maintains their heads upright. Near them, in basins of porphyry, the women they loved float upon the surfaces of black liquids. Their treasures are all arrayed in halls, in lozenge-shaped designs, in little heaps, in pyramids;—and down below, far below the tombs, and to be reached only after long travelling through stifling darkness, there are rivers of gold bordered by forests of

diamonds, there are fields of carbuncles and lakes of mercury.

"Addossed against the subterranean gate I remain with claws uplifted; and my flaming eyes spy out those who seek to approach. The vast and naked plain that stretches away to the end of the horizon is whitened with the bones of travellers. But for thee the gates of bronze shall open; and thou shalt inhale the vapour of the mines, thou shalt descend into the caverns.... Quick! quick!"

(He burrows into the earth with his paws, and crows like a cock.

A thousand voices answer him. The forest trembles.

And all manner of frightful creatures arise:—The Tragelaphus, half deer, half ox; the Myrmecoles, lion before-and ant behind, whose genitals are set reversely; the python Askar, sixty cubits long, that terrified Moses; the huge weasel Pastinaca, that kills the trees with her odour; the Presteros, that makes those who touch it imbecile; the Mirag, a horned hare, that dwells in the islands of the sea. The leopard Phalmant bursts his belly by roaring; the triple-headed bear Senad tears her young by licking them with her tongue; the dog Cepus pours out the blue milk of her teats upon the rocks. Mosquitoes begin to hum, toads commence to leap; serpents hiss. Lightnings flicker. Hail falls.

Then come gusts, bearing with them marvellous anatomies:—Heads of alligators with hoofs of deer; owls with serpent tails; swine with tiger-muzzles; goats with the crupper of an ass; frogs hairy as bears; chameleons huge as hippopotami; calves with two heads, one bellowing, the other weeping; winged bellies flitting hither and thither like gnats.

They rain from the sky, they rise from the earth, they pour from the rocks; everywhere eyes flame, mouths roar, breasts bulge, claws are extended, teeth gnash, flesh clacks against flesh. Some crouch; some devour each other at a mouthful.

Suffocating under their own numbers, multiplying by their own contact, they climb over one another; and move about Anthony with a surging motion as though the

ground were the deck of a ship. He feels the trail of snails upon the calves of his legs, the chilliness of vipers upon his hands:—and spiders spinning about him enclose him within their network.

But the monstrous circle breaks, parts; the sky suddenly becomes blue; and)—

The Unicorn (appears):

"Gallop! Gallop!

"I have hoofs of ivory, teeth of steel; my head is the colour of purple, my body the colour of snow; and the horn of my forehead is bestreaked with the tints of the rainbow.

"I travel from Chaldea to the Tartar desert,—upon the shores of the Ganges and in Mesopotamia. I overtake the ostriches. I run so swiftly that I draw the wind after me. I rub my back against the palm-trees. I roll among the bamboos. I leap rivers with a single bound. Doves fly above me. Only a virgin can bridle me.

"Gallop! Gallop!"

(Anthony watches him depart.

And as he gazes he beholds all the birds that nourish themselves with wind: the Gouith, the Ahuti, the Alphalim, the Iukneth, of the mountains of Kaf, the homai of the Arabs—which are the souls of murdered men. He hears the parrots that utter human speech; and the great Pelasgian palmipeds that sob like children or chuckle like old women.

A saline air strikes his nostrils. Now a vast beach stretches before him.

In the distance jets of water arise, spouted by whales; and from the very end of the horizon come)—

The Beasts of the Sea

(round as wineskins, flat as blades, denticulated like saws, dragging themselves over the sand as they approach):

The beasts of the sea round as wineskins

"Thou wilt accompany us to our immensities, whither as yet no one has descended.

"Divers peoples inhabit the countries of the Ocean. Some dwell in the sojourn of tempests; others swim freely amid the transparency of chill waves;—or, like oxen, graze upon the coral plains, or suck in through their trunks the reflux of the tides,—or bear upon their shoulders the vast weight of the sources of the sea."

Divers peoples inhabit the countries of the Ocean

(Phosphorences gleam in the moustaches of the seals, shift in the scales of fish. Echini whirl like wheels; ammonites uncoil like cables; oysters make their shell hinges squeak; polypi unfold their tentacles; medusæ quiver like balls of crystal suspended; sponges float hither and thither, anemones ejaculate water; wrack and sea-mosses have grown all about.

And all sorts of plants extend themselves into branches, twist themselves into screws, lengthen into points, round themselves out like fans. Gourds take the appearance of breasts; lianas interlace like serpents.

The Dedaims of Babylon, which are trees, bear human heads for fruit; Mandragoras sing;—the root Baaras runs through the grass.

And now the vegetables are no longer distinguishable from the animals. Polyparies that seem like trees, have arms upon their branches. Anthony thinks he sees a caterpillar between two leaves: it is a butterfly that takes flight. He is about to step on a pebble: a grey locust leaps away. One shrub is bedecked with insects that look like petals of roses; fragments of ephemerides form a snowy layer upon the soil.

And then the plants become confounded with the stones.

Flints assume the likeness of brains; stalactites of breasts; the flower of iron resembles a figured tapestry.[2]

He sees efflorescences in fragments of ice, imprints of shrubs and shells—yet so that

one cannot detect whether they be imprints only, or the things themselves. Diamonds gleam like eyes; metals palpitate.

And all fear has departed from him! He throws himself down upon the ground, and leaning upon his elbows, watches breathlessly.

Insects that have no stomachs persistently eat; withered ferns bloom again and reflower; absent members grow again.

At last he perceives tiny globular masses, no larger than pinheads, with cilia all round them. They are agitated with a vibratile motion):

Anthony (deliriously):

"O joy! O bliss! I have beheld the birth of life! I have seen the beginning of motion! My pulses throb even to the point of bursting! I long to fly, to swim, to bark, to bellow, to howl! Would that I had wings, a carapace, a shell,—that I could breathe out smoke, wield a trunk,—make my body writhe,—divide myself everywhere,—be in everything,—emanate with odours,—develop myself like the plants,—flow like water,—vibrate like sound—shine like light, squatting upon all forms—penetrate each atom—descend to the very bottom of matter,—be matter itself!"

(Day at last appears;—and, like tabernacle curtains uplifted, clouds of gold uprolling in broad volutes unveil the sky.

Even in the midst thereof, and in the very disk of the sun, beams the face of Jesus Christ.

Day at last appears ... in the midst thereof and in the very disk of the sun, beams the face of Jesus Christ.

Anthony makes the sign of the cross, and resumes his devotions.)

FINIS

[1] Winkelmann claims to have been the first to discover that the Egyptian sphinxes were bisexual—females before—males otherwise. (See Book II, chap. I, § 25.)

Flaubert speaks of the Sphinx in the masculine like Philemon. (See also Signor Carlo Fea's note upon the paragraph in Winkelmann, old French edition. An II, R. F.)—Trans.

[2] Fleurs de fer, "flowers of iron." In mineralogy flos ferri, a form of Aragonite.—Trans.

[NOTE

Those who compare this translation with the original will observe the omission of some few paragraphs on pages 77, 96 and 211. They are speeches put in the mouths of certain Heresiarchs, or complaints of certain of the minor Roman household gods. The translator relegated these to an addenda, which the publishers have omitted as being unnecessary. Those who are familiar with the original will be able to supply them, and will realize that while they might be offensive to some persons, they are in no respect an integral or important part of the great drama.]

(added by transcribers)

ADDENDA

A. Observation of Manes, pages 82-3, original text; page 89 of translation.

Manes

Ou plutôt, faites si bien qu'elle ne soit pas fécondes. Mieux vaut pour l'ame tomber sur la terre que de languir dans des entraves charnelles.

Probably a calumny against Manes; for the Eastern philosophy, especially that of Zoroaster, which is said to have inspired the tenets of Manichæism, advocated no such abominations.

B. Page 105 of original; page 108 translation. The realistic phraseology of the original passage is rather brutal. The French text reads: "Il souffrait de la maladie Bellerephontienne; et sa mère, la parfumeuse, s'est livrée à Pantherus, un soldat Romain, sur des gerbes de mais, un soir de moisson." C. Descriptive text, page 237

original, partly suppressed on page 223 translation: "Et il lui montre dans un bosquet d'aliziers Une Femme toute nue, à quatre pattes comme une bête, et saillie par un homme noir, tenant dans chaque main un flambeau."

D. Curious text of Crepitus, on page 228, pages 241-3 of original:

Crepitus

(——se fait entendre):

Moi aussi l'on m'honora jadis. On me faisait des libations. Je fus un Dieu!

L'Athénien me saluait comme un presage de fortune, tandis que le Romain dévot me maudissait les poings levés et que le pontife d'Egypte, s'abstinant des fèves, tremblait à ma voix et pâlissait à mon odeur.

Quand le vinaigre militaire coulait sur les barbes non rasées, qu'on se régalait de glands, de pois, et d'oignons crus, et que le bouc en morceau cuissait dans le beurre rance des pasteurs, sans souci du voisin, personne alors ne se gênait. Les nourritures solides faisaient digestions retentissantes. Au soleil de la campagne les hommes se soulageaient avec lenteur.

Ainsi, je passais sans scandale, comme les autres besoins de la vie, comme Mena, tourment des vierges, et la douce Rumina qui protège le sein de la nourrice, gonflé, des veines bleuâtres. J'étais joyeux. Je faisais rire. Et se dilatant d'aise à cause de moi, le convive exhalait toute sa gaieté par les ouvertures de son corps.

J'ai eu mes jours d'orgeuil. Le bon Aristophane me promena sur la scène, et l'empereur Claudius Drusus[1] me fit asseoir à sa table. Dans les laticlaves des patriciens j'ai circulé majestueusement! Les vases d'or, comme des tympanons, resonnaient sous moi; et, quand plein de murènes, de truffles, et de pâtés, l'intestin du maître se dégageait avec fracas, l'univers attentif apprenait que César avait diné!

Mais à présent, je suis confiné dans la populace[2] et l'on se récrie, même à mon nom!

Et Crepitus s'éloigne, en poussant un gémissement....

E. For descriptions of the Martichoras and other monsters, appearing page 287 in the original and 253 in the translation, see also Rabelais' Pantagruel, Book V, Chap. XXX.

[1] Needless to refer to the comedies of Aristophanes, with which English readers have been familiarized through the Bohn translations. The reference to Claudius ius Drusus seems based upon the following lines in Suetonius: "Dicitur etiam meditatus edictum, quo veniam daret flatum crepitumque ventris in convivio emittendi: cum periclitatum quemdam prae pudore ex continentia reperisset." (Suetonius-Tiberius Claudius Drusus: 32.)

[2] The so-called divinities, Deus Crepitus, Dea Pertunda, Deus Stercutius, Dea Rumina (or Rumilia), Dea Mena, concerning whose curious attributes the reader may consult English or French classical encyclopedists, were doubtless regarded by the intelligent classes of antiquity much as certain religious superstitions are regarded by educated moderns. It is true that they furnished grotesque themes to artists; but many existing superstitions regarding elves and goblins have inspired modern sculptors, painters and designers. Certainly, seriously worshipped as deities, Priapus might seem equally contemptible as a divinity; but his worship, degenerate as it became in later years, was primitively symbolical. The obscene image merely typified the procreative Spirit of Nature. The eccentric gods and goddesses above referred to had no such excuse for being. As previously observed, however, Flaubert artistically represents these divinities not as they were really considered in the antique world, but rather as they would have appeared to the eyes of zealous Christians in the third century—infamous and loathsome.—Translator.

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Transcribers' Note: This translation of the "Tentation" by Lafcadio Hearn, still regarded by many as the best up until now in English, still misses some small fragments (of a couple of words) not deemed fit for the Anglo-Saxon temperament of that time. There is a contemporary version (2002) of this translation available, with introduction by Michel Foucault and the inclusion of some missing expressions. The original French by Gustave Flaubert is also available at Project Gutenberg— http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10982

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