THE HISTORY OF

EGYPT

UNDER THE ROMANS.

BY

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THE EARLY HISTORY OF EGYPT, from the Old Testament, Herodotus, Manetho, and the Hieroglyphical Inscriptions.

THE HISTORY OF EGYPT under the Ptolemies.

EGYPTIAN INSCRIPTIONS, from the British Museum and other sources. One hundred and twenty plates in folio.

RUDIMENTS OF A VOCABULARY OF EGYPTIAN HIEROGLYPHICS.

THE NEW TESTAMENT, translated from the text of J. J. Griesbach.

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PREFACE.

AMONG the histories of the ancient world those of the Jews, of Greece, and of Rome will always hold the first place in value; that of the Jews because it contains the history of our religion; those of Greece and Rome from the number of writings and works of art and the quantity of knowledge that those nations have left us, and from the share that they have had in forming our opinions and guiding our tastes even in the present day. After these three histories, that of Egypt may certainly claim the next place, from the influence which that remarkable people has had upon the philosophy and the science of the world, and from the additions that it has made to the great stream of civilization, which, after flowing through ages of antiquity and fertilizing the centuries through which it has passed, is even now in its present fulness still coloured with the earliest of the sources from which it sprung. Architecture, the use of an alphabet, and some other sciences in which the Egyptians have been the teachers of the world,

belong to the earlier pages of history; but Egypt under the Romans has had its full share in forming the opinions of modern Europe in religion, philosophy, and science.

In attempting in a former work to trace the history of Egypt under the Ptolemies, the chief difficulty was to join together the scattered facts so as to make a continued chain of events. It was seldom necessary to balance contradictory statements, and never to choose between a number of anecdotes, or to prune the length of the original writers. The difficulty was to find in the whole round of Greek and Roman authors, helped by the coins and inscriptions, the few scattered hints out of which that history was woven. Here the difficulty is of a different kind; more materials are at hand; but then we want that useful thread that is usually found in the personal history of the sovereign. It is no longer the history of a kingdom but of a province; it must want much that relates to the wars, government, and legislation, but it may at least embrace the literature, science, and religion of a most interesting people.

To the Alexandrian copiers and libraries we mainly owe our knowledge of the great writers of Greece, and our earliest manuscripts of the Bible; while whatever help we have received from grammarians and critics, whatever in history we have gained from chronology, in poetry from prosody,

in geography from mathematics, in medicine from anatomy, was first taught by the Alexandrians. Moreover, after the rise of christianity Alexandria no longer played that second part in civilization, nor furnished the handmaid sciences alone, but had its own schools in philosophy and sects in religion.

The New Platonists of Alexandria have perhaps hardly had justice done them by the moderns, either in regard to the improvement which they wrought in paganism, or to the share they have had in forming the present opinions of the world. Taking the doctrine of Plato as the foundation, borrowing something from the Jews, and something from the other sects of pagans, they formed a philosophical religion which we may think of little worth when offered as the rival of christianity, but which we ought yet to admire as far passing any other sect of paganism.

In Gnosticism we see another form of philosophy, which had at the time, and no doubt still has, some share in moulding the opinions of the Christians. It was common among the Jews at the time of the apostles; Paul censures it by name, and John indirectly. It was the parent, or perhaps the sister of Manicheism, and has left its traces among several sects of Christians who seem to look for some other source for the origin of evil than the will of a benevolent Creator.

Among the three great families of christianity, the Greek the Egyptian and the Roman, the Egyptians often held the first place in importance, and were usually followed by the Romans as their pupils. The Egyptians long held the Nicene creed against the Greek and Syrian churches; and though the opinions of modern Europe are in the first case to be traced up to Rome, yet if we would carry back our search to their original source in Palestine, we must in most cases pass through Alexandria.

When the seat of government was removed from Rome to Constantinople, and Alexandria lost its power over Egypt, the difference of religion between the two countries was the cause of a growing difficulty to the government. The Greeks of Alexandria, like the protestants of Dublin, were of the same religion, politics, and blood as their rulers, and in a constant state of quarrel with their fellow subjects. Sometimes an emperor like Zeno healed the disputes by treating both parties with equal justice. At other times, as under Theodosius, the country was governed according to the wishes of the unenlightened majority, and the Arian Greeks of Alexandria lost that ascendancy which they claimed as their birthright. But more often the emperors tried to govern the Egyptians by means of the favoured class; they goaded the people to rebellion by appointing to the churches and bishopricks, and civil offices, men whom the

people hated as heretics and aliens; and at last the Egyptians with an equal want of wisdom threw themselves into the arms of their Arab neighbours, in hopes of regaining the government of their own church.

With respect to the following pages, the author has only to add that he has in every case stated in the text or in the margin the works from which he has taken each piece of information. He has been very much guided in his search for materials by the labours of Gibbon, Lardner, Mosheim, Brucker, Fabricius, and others; but, as he has never failed to go to the original authors, he has never quoted the moderns and can only make this general acknowledgement of the use that he has made of their writings.

Highbury, 28th December, 1841.

ERRATUM.

In page 260, line 3, for *Chronicon Paschale*, read *Chronicon Orientale*.

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THE HISTORY OF

EGYPT UNDER THE ROMANS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE older monuments of Theban sculpture teach us the names of numerous kings of Thebes, of Memphis, and of the Arab or Phenician shepherds; and though there may be doubts as to the order in which these early dynasties are to be placed, yet they leave us in no doubt as to the high antiquity which must be granted to this earliest of nations. Greek history begins with the Trojan war; Jewish history begins eight hundred years earlier, with the migration of Abraham from Chaldea; but even when he entered Egypt it was already a highly civilized country, and the obelisk of Heliopolis, with the other monuments which he must have seen as he passed, still prove the high state of the arts at that time. After the time of Abraham, the history of Egypt may be traced with certainty through the reigns of Amunothph, Thothmosis, Rameses, and the other great Coptic kings, who for upwards of five hundred years made Thebes their capital, and usually held Lower Egypt as a province. It was during these reigns

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INTROD. that Egypt passed every country in the known world in wealth and power, and was foremost in all the arts of civilization, of commerce, and of agriculture. Moses was then educated in the learning of the Egyptians; and though Upper Egypt was then little known to the Greeks, Homer speaks of the armies and wealth of Egyptian Thebes as proverbial. The massive temples and obelisks, covered with hieroglyphics, and the colossal statues, which have already outlived three thousand years, prove the high civilization of the kingdom, even before the Jews had become a people, before the Greeks had got an alphabet; and are one of the causes of the lively interest with which we trace its history in the following ages.

B. C. 970. For about five hundred years more, beginning with Shishank the conqueror of Rehoboam, the kingdom was governed by kings of Lower Egypt, and the Thebaid fell to the rank of a province. The wealth and population of the country was as great or greater under these kings of Memphis and Sais, but the public spirit and virtue of the people was less; and much of that wealth which had before raised the great temples of Thebes was then spent in the hire of Greek mercenaries to surround a throne which native courage alone was no longer able to uphold. It was then that Egypt was first open to Greek travellers, and the philosophers eagerly sought from the priests a knowledge of their famed science. The great names of Plato, who studied at Heliopolis, of Solon and Pythagoras, who had visited the Delta still earlier, and the names of many others of less note, prove how ready Greece then was to learn from Egypt.

During the next two hundred years, beginning with the conquest of the country by Cambyses, Egypt was mostly a province of Persia, and when not smarting under the tyranny of a foreign satrap was suffering as severely from its own half-successful attempts to regain its freedom. In these struggles between the Egyptians and their conquerors, both parties trusted much to the courage of Greek mercenaries and allies: the Athenians were ranged on one side and the Spartans on the other; Persians and Egyptians had both placed the sword in the hands of the Greeks; and hence, when the power of Macedonia rose over the rest of Greece, when the Greek mercenaries flocked to the standard of Alexander, he found little difficulty in adding Persia, and its tributary province Egypt, to his other conquests.

INTROD. B. C. 525.

For three hundred years after this Macedonian conquest Egypt was an independent Greek kingdom, and nearly as remarkable for wealth and power under Ptolemy and his descendants as it had been under its native sovereigns. Upper Egypt fell off each century in population, while Alexandria, the new seat of government, became the most powerful capital, the greatest trading city in the world, and one of the chief seats of Greek learning. If poetry and oratory still lingered in Athens, Alexandria was at least the chief school for grammar, criticism, mathematics, astronomy, and anatomy; and its public library was the admiration of the world. But after a reign or two we find that every public virtue was wanting among the Greeks of Alexandria, while vice and luxury rioted in the palace. Each succeeding Ptolemy seemed worse

B. C. 323.

INTROD. than his father; till Cleopatra, the last sovereign of that remarkable family, unable to quell the rebellions of her Alexandrian subjects, yielded up her person and her capital to each Roman general who in his turn seemed able to uphold her power.

At that time the population of Egypt, which, if we may trust the earlier statements, had lessened under the Ptolemies, was about three millions of souls, of which the Alexandrians were three hundred thousand. The taxes of the country were about twelve thousand five hundred talents, or two millions sterling, of which one third part was paid at the port of Alexandria. The population of that capital was made up of Greeks and Jews, who together enjoyed the privileges of citizenship, and of Egyptians, who in that city, as in Ptolemais and Parembole, were a degraded class, while in the Egyptian cities they lived under their own laws. Of the troops, the best in discipline though fewest in number were Greeks; but as the army was in part commanded by Roman officers, the kingdom fell an easy prey to Octavian, as soon as the death of Mark Antony had left him sole master of the Roman legions.

The Roman republic, during the reigns of Cleopatra and her father, had been undergoing a change which seems to have been very much caused by the overgrown size of its provinces. Its princely generals, who, under the modest name of proconsuls, commanded armies, pillaged kingdoms, and dethroned or patronized kings, were powerful enough to disobey the weak voice of the senate, and wealthy enough to buy those offices which had formerly been given to merit. Mark Antony, as

the husband of Cleopatra and one of the triumvirs with Octavian and Lepidus, had in reality become sovereign of Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor. Rome was ruined and torn to pieces by being made the scene of the base intrigues and murderous struggles of these great generals for power; and the Romans, in despair of regaining their liberties, hailed with joy the successes of Octavian, who, uniting the claims of birth and of conquest, seemed likely to be strong enough to govern without assassinations, and to make Rome once more the mistress of her provinces. His last victory was over Mark Antony at Actium, soon after which Antony, and then Cleopatra, put an end to their lives, and Octavian, who was already sole lord of Rome, became master of every kingdom in the world in which the Greek or Latin languages were either spoken or understood.

Chapter I.

The emperors of the Julian and Claudian families.

Dion Cassius, lib. li. 5.

B. C. 29.

Plutarch. in vit. Anton.

Octavian, whom we shall henceforth call Augustus, began by promising his soldiers two hundred and fifty drachms each as prize-money, for not being allowed to plunder Alexandria. He soon afterwards entered the city on foot, leaning on the arm of the philosopher Arius; and, as he wished to be thought as great a lover of learning as of mercy, he gave out that he spared the place to the prayers of his Alexandrian friend. He called the citizens together in the Gymnasium, and mounting the tribunal promised that they should not be hurt. He ordered all the statues of Antony, of which there were more than fifty, to be broken to pieces; and he had the meanness to receive a bribe of one thousand talents from Archibius, a friend of Cleopatra, that the queen's statues might be left standing. Cleopatra's three children by Antony, who had not the misfortune to be of the same blood with the conqueror, were kindly treated and taken care of, while Cæsarion, her child by Julius Cæsar, was put to death as a rival.

Augustus, who had only just raised himself above his equals, might well be careful in the choice of the friends to whom he intrusted the command of the provinces; and it seems to have

been part of his king-craft to give the offices of greatest trust to men of low birth, who, like Mæcenas the prefect of Rome, might be flattered with being called 'the ornament of the equestrian rank,' but who were at the same time taught that they owed their employments to their seeming want of ambition. Thus the government of Egypt, the greatest and richest of the provinces, was given to Cornelius Gallus. Gallus was the friend of Virgil, and himself a poet; he is however better known in Virgil's tenth eclogue than in the command of his province or in his own Greek epigrams.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

Anthologia Græca, iv. 8.

Augustus showed an equal jealousy in the rest of the laws by which his new province was to be governed. While other conquered cities usually had a senate or municipal form of government granted to them by the Romans, no city in Egypt was allowed that privilege, which, by teaching the citizens the art of governing themselves and the advantages of union, might have made them less at the mercy of their masters. He not only gave the command of the kingdom to a man below the rank of a senator, but ordered that no senator should even be allowed to set foot in Egypt without leave from himself; and centuries later, when the weakness of the country had led the emperors to soften some of the other stern laws of Augustus, this was still strictly enforced.

Dion Cassius, lib. li.

Among other changes then brought in by the Romans was the use of a fixt year in all civil reckonings. The Egyptians, for all the common purposes of life, called the day of the heliacal rising of the dog-star, about our 18th of July, their new-year's day, and the husbandman marked it with religious

Porphyrius de Antro.

CHAP. I. ceremonies as the time when the Nile began to overflow; while for all civil purposes, and dates of king's reigns, they used a year of three hundred and sixty-five days, which of course had a moveable new-year's day. But by the orders of Augustus all public deeds were henceforth dated by the new year of three hundred and sixty-five days and a quarter, which was named, after Julius Cæsar, the Julian year. The years were henceforth made to begin on the 29th of August, the day on which the moveable new-year's day then happened to fall, and were numbered from the last year of Cleopatra, as from the first year of the reign of Augustus. But notwithstanding the many advantages of the Julian year, which was used throughout Europe for sixteen centuries, till its faultiness was pointed out by Pope Gregory XIII., the Egyptian astronomers and mathematicians distrusted it from the first, and chose to stick to their old year, in which there could be no mistake about its length. Thus there were at the same time three years and three new-year's days in use in Egypt; one about the 18th of July, used by the common people, one on the 29th of August, used by order of the emperor, and one moveable used by the astronomers.

B. C. 24.

Dion Cassius, lib. li. 6.

Æthici Cosmographia.

By the conquest of Egypt, Augustus was also able to extend another of the plans of his late uncle. Julius Cæsar, whose powerful mind found all sciences within its grasp, had ordered a survey to be taken of the whole of the Roman provinces, and the length of all the roads to be measured; and Augustus was now able to add Egypt to the survey. Polyclitus was employed on this southern portion of the empire; and, after thirty-two years from its

beginning by Julius, the measurement of nearly the whole known world was finished and reported to the senate.

The Greeks of Alexandria, who had for some time past very unwillingly yielded to the Jews the right of citizenship, now urged upon Augustus that it should no longer be granted; though they had only just then had it promised to themselves they wished to deny it to their Hebrew townsmen. Augustus however, who never did a wrong unless it were necessary to his own ends, at once refused their prayer, and he set up in Alexandria an inscription, granting to the Jews the full privileges of Macedonians, which they claimed and had hitherto enjoyed under the Ptolemies. They were allowed their own magistrates and courts of justice, with the free exercise of their own religion; and soon afterwards, when their ethnarch or high-priest died, they were allowed as usual to choose his successor. The Greek Jews of Alexandria were indeed very important, both from their numbers and their learning; they spread over Syria and Asia Minor; they had a synagogue in Jerusalem in common with the Jews of Cyrene and Libya; and we find that one of the chief teachers of christianity after the apostles, in Ephesus, in Corinth, and in Crete, was Apollos the Alexandrian.

Josephus, Antiq. xii. 3.

Contra Apion, ii.

Antiq. xiv. 12.

Antiq. xix. 4.

Acts, vi. 9.

On his return to Rome, Augustus carried with him the whole of the royal treasure; and though perhaps there might have been less money than usual in the palace of the Ptolemies, still it was so large a sum that when, upon the establishment of peace over all the world, the rate of interest upon loans fell in Rome, the fall was thought to have

Suetonius, vit. August. 41.

CHAP. I. been caused by the money from Alexandria. At the same time were carried away the valuable jewels, furniture, and ornaments, which had been handed down from father to son, with the crown of Upper and Lower Egypt. These were as usual drawn through the streets of Rome in triumph, and with them were shown to the wondering crowd Alexander Helius and Cleopatra Selene, the children of Cleopatra and Antony, while the conqueror was forced to be content with a statue of Cleopatra, whose voluntary death had saved her from that disgrace. The Romans were at the same time amused with the sight of crocodiles walking and swimming about in the theatre, guided and played with by some men from the city of Tentyra, whose citizens were always famous for their skill in catching these dangerous animals, and who had been taken with them to Rome as their keepers.

Strabo, lib. li. 7.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

The rest of the world had long been used to see their finest works of art carried away by their conquerors, and the Egyptians soon learned that if any of the monuments of which they were so justly proud were to be left to them, it would only be because they were too heavy to be moved by the Roman engineers. Beside a statue of Janus, loaded with gold, which was placed in the temple of that god in Rome, and many other of the smaller Egyptian works, two of the large obelisks which even now ornament Rome were carried away by Augustus, that of Thothmosis IV. which stands in the Piazza del Popolo, and that of Psammetichus on Monte Citorio. And the Egyptians might have found some comfort in their fall by remarking that the Romans, in despair of equalling what they had

Pliny, lib. xxxvi. 4.

Pliny, lib. xxxvi. 14.

seen, believed that they did enough for the grandeur of their city in borrowing these monuments of Theban glory.

Cornelius Gallus, the first prefect of Egypt, seems either to have misunderstood or soon forgotten the terms of his appointment. He was intoxicated with power; he set up statues of himself in the cities of Egypt, and, copying the kings of the country, he carved his name and deeds upon the pyramids. On this Augustus recalled him, and he killed himself to avoid punishment. Two legions were found force enough to keep this great kingdom in quiet obedience to their new masters; and when Heroopolis revolted, and afterwards when a rebellion broke out in the Thebaid against the Roman tax-gatherers, these risings were easily crushed. The spirit of the nation seems to have been wholly broken; and Petronius, who succeeded Cornelius Gallus, found no difficulty in putting down a rising of the Alexandrians.

Dion Cassius, lib. liii.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

The canals, through which the overflowing waters of the Nile were carried to the more distant fields, were of course each year more or less blocked up by the same mud which made the fields fruitful; and the clearing of these canals was one of the greatest boons that the monarch could bestow upon the tillers of the soil. This had often been neglected by the less powerful and less prudent kings of Egypt, in whose reigns the husbandman believed that Heaven in its displeasure withheld part of the wished-for overflow; but Petronius employed the leisure of his soldiers on this wise and benevolent work; and it was then found that a rise in the waters of the Nile of twelve cubits

Suetonius, vit. August. 18.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

CHAP. I. overflowed as wide a tract of country as fourteen did before the prefect Petronius cleared the canals.

Strabo, lib. xvii. It was under Ælius Gallus, the third prefect, that Egypt was visited by Strabo, the most careful and judicious of all the ancient travellers. He accompanied the prefect in a march to Syene, the border town, and he has left us a most valuable account of the state of the country at that time. The harbour of Alexandria held more ships than were to be seen in any other port in the world, and its export trade was thought greater than that of all Italy. Heliopolis, the ancient seat of Egyptian learning, had never been wholly repaired since its siege by Cambyses, and was then almost a deserted city. Its schools were empty, its teachers silent; but the houses in which Plato and his friend Eudoxus were said to have dwelt and studied were pointed out to the traveller, to warm his love of knowledge and encourage him in the pursuit of virtue. Memphis was the second city in Egypt, while Thebes and Abydos had fallen to the size and rank of villages. Ptolemais, which was at first only an encampment of Greek soldiers, had risen under the sovereigns to whom it owed its name to be the largest city in the Thebaid, and scarcely less than Memphis. It was wholly built by the Greeks, and, like Alexandria, it was under the Greek laws, while all the other cities in Egypt were under Egyptian laws and magistrates. It was situated half way between Panopolis and Abydos; but while the temples of Thebes, which were built so many centuries earlier, are still standing in awful grandeur, scarcely a trace of this Greek city can be found in the villages of Mensheeh and

Geergeh, which now stand on the spot. Strabo and the Roman generals did not forget to visit the colossal statue of Amunothph, near Thebes, which sent forth its musical sounds every morning at sunrise; but this intelligent traveller could not make up his mind whether the music came from the statue, or the base, or the people around it.

Strabo, lib. xvi.

Ælius Gallus spent two years in an unsuccessful inroad into Arabia Nabatæa, led by the reports of the boundless wealth which was to be found in the Arab fastnesses. Much of the trade of Petra was carried on by the Arabs receiving gold and silver in exchange for the spices and other costly and portable articles of the east; and the Romans, who had little knowledge of where those products were brought from, seem to have thought that at least a part of the precious metals which they saw flowing eastward through Arabia would be found in hoards in its cities. The legions however were beaten by the want of water and by the other difficulties of the desert, rather than by the Arab forces, and they were at last called back by the news of an Ethiopian invasion.

In the earlier periods of Egyptian history we have seen Ethiopia peopled with a race of men who, as they spoke the same language and worshipped the same gods as their neighbours of Upper Egypt, we must call Copts. But the Arabs, under the name of Troglodytæ, and other tribes, had made an early settlement on the African side of the Red Sea. So numerous were they in Upper Egypt that in the time of Strabo half the population of the city of Coptos were Arabs. Some of the conquests of Rameses had been over that na-

lib. xvii.

CHAP. I. tion in southern Ethiopia, and the Arab power must have further risen after the defeat of the Ethiopians by Euergetes I. At any rate, as we learn from the history of Africa by the younger Juba, Ethiopia in the time of Augustus was held by Arabs; and the Romans were content with placing a body of troops near the cataracts of Syene to stop their marching northwards. However, while the larger part of the Roman legions was now withdrawn into Arabia, a body of thirty thousand of these men, whom we may call either Arabs from their blood and language or Ethiopians from their country, marched northward into Egypt, and easily overpowered the three Roman cohorts at Elephantine, Syene, and Phylæ. But they were badly armed and badly trained, some carrying large shields of skins, many with no better weapon than a club, while others had axes, and some few swords. They were led on by the generals of Candace queen of Meroe, a woman of masculine mind who had lost one eye. They were however easily driven back when Gallus led against them an army of ten thousand Romans and Greeks, and they withdrew to Pselche, sixty-five miles beyond the frontier. Gallus then followed them, and drove them seventy miles further, to Premmis, where the army of Cambyses had been stopt; and, passing the upper cataracts, he took the city of Napata. But he would venture no further into a country which could furnish no supplies to his troops and against an enemy that withdrew at his approach, so he led his army into Egypt, and sent his prisoners to Rome.

Pliny, lib. vi. 34.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

Of the state of the Ethiopic Arabs under Queen

Candace we learn but little from this hasty inroad; but they must have been very far from the barbarians that, from their ignorance of the arts of war, the Romans judged them to be. The Jews had settled among them in such numbers, and for so long a time, that they had nearly lost the use of their own language, and soon afterwards translated the Holy Scriptures into the Ethiopic. Some of them were employed in the highest offices, and must have brought with them the arts of civilized life. A few years later we meet with a Jewish eunuch, the treasurer of Queen Candace, travelling with some pomp from Ethiopia to the religious festival at Jerusalem. It is true that the Ethiopians no longer raised massive and sculptured temples, such as were built when the country was Coptic; but the loss of this evidence in their favour is well supplied by the Ethiopic version of the Old Testament. The religion of Ethiopia under these Arabs was no longer Coptic, but, like the language, was an offset of the Jewish, and most likely nearly the same as what we find it when, being reduced to writing in the Koran, six centuries later, it took the name of Mahomedanism.

CHAP. I.

Acts, viii. 27.

The Egyptian coins of Augustus and his successors are all Greek; the conquest of the country by the Romans made no change in its language. Though nine tenths of the population spoke Coptic, it was still a Greek province of the Roman empire; the decrees of the prefects of Alexandria and of the upper provinces were written in Greek; and every Roman traveller who, like a school-boy, has scratched his name upon the foot of the musical statue of Amunothph, to let the world know the

CHAP. I.

extent of his travels, has helped to prove that the Roman government of the country was carried on in the Greek language. The coins often bear the eagle and thunderbolt on one side, while on the other is the emperor's head with his name and titles, and they are all dated with the year of the emperor's reign. The historian indeed in his labours should never lose sight of the coins. They teach us by their workmanship the state of the arts, and by their weight, number, and purity of metal the wealth of the country. They also teach dates, titles, and the places where they were struck; and, even in those cases where they seem to add little to what we learn from other sources, they are still the living witnesses to which we appeal, to prove the truth of the authors who have told us more. After Egypt lost its liberty, we no longer find any gold coinage in the country; that metal, with every thing else that was most costly, was carried away to pay the Roman tribute. This was chiefly taken in money, except indeed the tax on corn, which the Egyptian kings had always received in kind and which was still gathered in the same way, and each year shipped to Rome to be distributed among the idle poor of that great city. At this time it amounted to two millions of bushels, which was not half of what was levied in the reign of Philadelphus.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

A. Victor, Epitome.

No change was made in the Egyptian religion by this change of masters; and though the means of the priests were lessened they still carried forward the buildings which were in progress, and even began new ones. The small temple of Isis at Tentyra, behind the great temple of Athor, was either built or finished in this reign, and was de-

Wilkinson's Thebes.

dicated to the goddess in a Greek inscription on the cornice. The large temple at Talmis in Nubia was also then built, though not wholly finished; and we find the name of Augustus at Philæ on some of the additions to the temple of Isis, which had been built in the reign of Philadelphus. In the hieroglyphical inscriptions on these temples, Augustus is called Autocrator Cæsar, and is styled Son of the Sun, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, with the other titles which had always been given by the priests to the Ptolemies and their own native sovereigns for so many centuries.

The Greeks had at all times been forward in owning the Egyptians as their teachers in religion; and in the dog Cerberus, the judge Minos, the boat of Charon, and the river Styx, of the Greek mythology, we see a clear proof that it was in Egypt that they gained their faint glimpse of the immortality of the soul, a day of judgment, and a future state of rewards and punishments; and now that the Romans were brought into close intercourse with the Egyptians, they were equally ready to copy their religious ceremonies. So fashionable was the worship of Isis and Serapis becoming in Italy, that Augustus made a law that no Egyptian ceremonies should enter the city or even the suburbs of Rome. His subjects might copy the luxuries, the follies, and the vices of the Alexandrians, but not the gloomy devotion of the Egyptians.

Dion Cassius, lib. liii.

During this reign lived Sotion of Alexandria, under whom the philosopher Seneca studied when young, from whom he gained his habits of Stoical abstinence, and of whom he speaks in his works with affectionate remembrance. Sotion taught the

Epist. 49. 108.

CHAP. I. Pythagorean doctrines of abstinence from animal food, on the ground that animals have souls, and that, as nothing that has been created ever dies, most likely the souls of men, when they quit their own bodies, remove into the bodies of animals.

Suidas. Tryphon, the son of Ammonius, lived about the same time in Alexandria. He was a poet and a grammarian; he wrote on the dialects of the Greek poets, on grammar, and on spelling.

Philo, Legat. cap. ix. Egypt felt no change on the death of Augustus; the province was well governed during the

A. D. 14. whole of the reign of Tiberius, and the Alexandrians built a beautiful temple to his honour, named the Sebaste or Cæsar's temple. It stood by the side of the harbour, and was surrounded with a sacred grove. It was ornamented with porticoes and fitted up with libraries, paintings, and statues;

Pliny, lib. xxxvi. 14. and was the most lofty building in the city. In front of this temple they set up two ancient obelisks, which had been made by Thothmosis III. and

Burton's Excerp. 51, 52. carved by Rameses II., and which, like the other monuments of the Theban kings, have outlived all the temples and palaces of their Greek and Roman successors. One of these obelisks has fallen to the ground, but the other is still standing, and bears the unmeaning name of Cleopatra's needle.

The harsh justice with which the emperor began his reign was at Rome soon changed into a cruel tyranny; but in the provinces it was only felt as a check to the injustice of the prefects. On

Dion Cassius, lib. lvii. one occasion, when Æmilius Rectus sent home from Egypt a larger amount of taxes than was usual, his zeal was severely blamed by Tiberius, who said that he wished his sheep to be sheared,

but not to be flayed. Another proof of the equal justice with which this province was governed was to be seen in the buildings then carried on by the priests in Upper Egypt. We find the name of Tiberius carved in hieroglyphics on additions or repairs made to the temples at Thebes, at Aphroditopolis, at Berenice on the Red Sea, at Philæ, and at the Greek city of Parembole in Nubia. The great portico was at this time added to the temple at Tentyra, with an inscription dedicating it to the goddess in Greek and in hieroglyphics. As a building is often the work of years while sculpture is only the work of weeks, so the fashion of the former is always far less changing than that of the latter. The sculptures on the walls of this beautiful portico are crowded and graceless; the columns also which uphold the roof have human heads for capitals, with other false ornaments; while, on the other hand, the building itself has the same grand simplicity and massive strength that we admire in the older temples of Upper Egypt. On the ceiling of the portico is the well-known zodiac, which our antiquaries once thought was of a great antiquity; but the sign of the Scales might alone have taught them that it could not be older than the reign of Augustus, who gave that name to the group of stars which before formed the spreading claws of the Scorpion. We cannot but admire the zeal of the Egyptians by whom this great work was then finished. They were treated as slaves by their Greek fellow-countrymen; their houses were ransacked every third year by military authority in search of arms; they could have had no help from their Roman masters,

Wilkinson's Thebes.

Denon, pl. 38, 39, 40.

Philo, in Flaccum.

CHAP. I. who only drained the province of its wealth; and the temple had perhaps never been heard of by the emperor, who could have been little aware that the most lasting monument of his reign was being raised in the distant province of Egypt.

Tacitus, Ann. ii. A. D. 16. In the third year of this reign Germanicus Cæsar, who, much against his will, had been sent into the east as governor, found time to leave his own province, and to snatch a hasty view of the time-honoured buildings of Egypt. He went up as high as Thebes, and while gazing on the huge remains of the temples, he asked the priests to read to him the hieroglyphical writing on the walls. He was told that it recounted the greatness of the country in the time of king Rameses, when there were seven hundred thousand Egyptians of an age to bear arms; and that with these troops Rameses had conquered the Libyans, Ethiopians, Medes, Persians, Bactrians, Scythians, Syrians, Armenians, Cappadocians, Bithynians, and Lycians. He was also told the tributes laid upon each of those nations; the weight of gold and silver, the number of chariots and horses, the gifts of ivory and scents for the temples, and the quantity of corn which the conquered provinces sent to feed the population of Thebes. After listening to the musical statue of Amunothph, Germanicus went on to Elephantine and Syene, which were then the bounds of the Roman empire; and on his return he turned aside to the pyramids, and the lake of Mœris, which regulated the overflow of the Nile on the neighbouring fields. This blameless and seemingly praiseworthy visit of Germanicus did not however escape the notice of the jealous Tiberius.

He had been guilty of gaining the love of the people by walking about without guards, in a plain Greek dress, and of lowering the price of corn by opening the public granaries; and Tiberius sternly reproached him with breaking the known law of Augustus, by which no Roman citizen of consular or even of equestrian rank might enter Alexandria without leave from the emperor. CHAP. I.

There were at this time about a million Jews in Egypt. In Alexandria they seem to have been about one third of the population, as they formed the majority in two wards out of the five into which the city was divided, and which two wards were called the Jews' wards. In the neighbourhood of Alexandria, on a hill near the shores of the lake Maria, was a little colony of these Greek Jews, who, joining their own religion with the mystical opinions and gloomy habits of the Egyptians, have left us one of the earliest known examples of the monastic life. They bore the name of Therapeutæ. They had left, says the historian Philo, their worldly wealth to their families or friends; they had forsaken wives, children, brethren, parents, and the society of men, to bury themselves in solitude, and pass their lives in the contemplation of the divine essence. Seized by this heavenly love they were eager to enter upon the next world as though they were already dead to this. Each man or woman lived alone in his cell or monastery, caring neither for food nor for raiment, but having his thoughts wholly turned to the Law and the Prophets, or to sacred hymns of their own composing. They had God always in their thoughts, and even the broken sentences which they uttered in their

Philo, in Flaccum.

Philo, de Vitâ contempl.

CHAP. I.

Philo, de Vitâ contempl.

dreams were treasures of religious wisdom. They prayed each morning at sunrise, and then spent the day in turning over the sacred volumes, and the commentaries which explained the allegories or pointed out a secondary meaning as hidden beneath the surface of even the historical books of the Old Testament. At sunset they again prayed, and then tasted their first and only meal. Self-denial indeed was the foundation of all their virtues. Some made only three meals in the week, that their meditations might be more free; while others even attempted to prolong their fast to the sixth day. During six days of the week they saw nobody, not even one another. On the seventh they met together in synagogue. Here they sat, each according to his age; the women separated from the men. Each wore a plain modest robe which covered the arms and hands, and they sat in silence while one of the elders preached. As they studied the mystic powers of numbers they thought the number seven was a holy number, and that seven times seven made a great week, and hence they kept the fiftieth day as a solemn festival. On that day they dined together, the men lying on one side and the women on the other. The rushy papyrus formed the couches; bread was their only meat, water their drink, salt the seasoning, and cresses the only delicacy. They had no slaves, since all men were born equal. Nobody spoke unless it were to propose a question out of the Old Testament or to answer the question of another. The feast ended with a hymn to the praise of God, which they sang, sometimes in full chorus and sometimes in alternate verses.

We owe this beautiful picture of the contemplative life to the pen of the eloquent Philo, who while painting the virtues of the Therapeutæ in such glowing colours has told us nothing of their history. To these men we perhaps owe many manuscript copies of the Old Testament; and the Greek translation, called the Septuagint, has been thought to have been made by their predecessors in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

Pliny, lib. v. 15.

The ascetic Jews of Palestine, the Essenes on the banks of the lake Asphaltites, by no means, according to Philo, thus quitted the active duties of life; and it would seem that the Therapeutæ rather borrowed their customs from the country in which they had settled than from any sects of the Jewish nation. Some classes of the Egyptian priesthood had always held the same views of their religious duties. These Egyptians slept on a hard bed of palm branches, with a still harder wooden pillow for the head; they were plain in their dress, slow in walking, spare in diet, and scarcely allowed themselves to smile. They washed thrice a day, and prayed as often; at sunrise, at noon, and at sunset. They often fasted from animal food, and at all times refused many meats as unclean. They passed their lives alone, either in study or wrapt in religious thought. They never met one another but at set times, and were seldom seen by strangers. Thus, leaving to others the pleasures, wealth, and lesser prizes of this life, they received from them in return, what most men value higher, namely, honour, fame, and power. And the same religious feeling which among the Egyptian Jews formed the sect of Therapeutæ afterwards among

Chæremon, ap. Porphyr. de Abst. iv.

CHAP. I. the Egyptian Christians gave birth to monks and nuns.

The Romans, like the Greeks, felt but little partiality in favour of their own gods, and were rarely guilty of intolerance against those of others; and would hardly have checked the introduction of a new religion unless it made its followers worse citizens. But in Rome, where every act of its civil or military authorities was accompanied with a religious rite, any slight towards the gods was a slight towards the magistrate; and Egypt was now so closely joined to Italy that the Roman senate made a new law against the Egyptian and Jewish superstitions, and banished to Sardinia four thousand men who were found guilty of being Jews.

Tacitus, Ann. ii. A. D. 19.

Egypt had lost with its liberties its gold coinage, and it was now made to feel a further proof of being a conquered country in having its silver much alloyed with copper. But Tiberius, in the tenth year of his reign, altogether stopped the Alexandrian mint, as well as those of the other cities which occasionally coined; and after this year we find no more Egyptian coins, but a few with the head and name of Augustus Cæsar, which seem hardly to have been meant for money, but to commemorate on some peculiar occasions the emperor's adoption by his step-father. We are left to guess at the reasons for this policy, but it was most likely an intention on the part of Tiberius to put down all the provincial mints of the empire, and to have no money coined but by his own authority.

Mionnet, Med. antiq.

A. D. 23.

It seems to have been usual to change the prefect of Egypt about every seventh year, and the prefect elect was often sent to Alexandria to wait

till his predecessor's term of years had ended. Thus in this reign of twenty-three years Æmilius Rectus was succeeded by Vetrasius Pollio; and on his death Tiberius gave the government to his freedman Iberus. During the last five years Egypt was under the able but stern government of Flaccus Avillius, a man who united all those qualities of prudent forethought with prompt execution and attention to business which were so necessary in controlling this irritable people, who were liable to be fired into rebellion by the smallest spark. Justice was administered fairly; the great were not allowed to tyrannize over the poor, nor the people to meet in tumultuous mobs; and the legions were regularly paid, so that they had no excuse for plundering the unfortunate Egyptians.

Dion Cassius, lib. lvii. lib. lviii. Philo, in Flaccum.

On the death of Tiberius the old quarrel again broke out between Jews and Greeks. The Alexandrians were not slow in learning the feelings of his successor towards the Jews, nor in turning against them the new law that the emperor's statue should be worshipped in every temple of the empire. They had very unwillingly yielded a half obedience to the law of Augustus that the Jews should still be allowed the privileges of citizenship; and as soon as they heard that Caligula was to be worshipped as a god, they denounced the Jews as traitors and rebels, who refused to honour the emperor. It happened unfortunately that their countryman Philip, the tetrarch of Iturea, at this time came to Alexandria. He had full leave from the emperor to touch there, as being the quickest and most certain way of making the voyage from Rome to the seat of his own government. Indeed the

Philo, Legat. A. D. 37. in Flaccum.

CHAP. I.

Mishna, de Vasis.

Alexandrian voyage had another merit in the eyes of a Jew; for whereas wooden water-vessels were declared by the Law to be unclean, an exception was made by their tradition in favour of the larger size of the water wells in the Alexandrian ships.

Philo, in Flaccum, et Legat.

Philip had seen Egypt before, on his way to Rome, and he meant to make no stay there; but though he landed purposely after dark, and with no pomp or show, he seems to have raised the anger of the prefect Flaccus, who felt jealous at any man of higher rank than himself coming into his province. The Greeks easily fell into the prefect's humour, and during Philip's stay in Alexandria they lampooned him in songs and ballads, of which the raillery was not of the most delicate kind. They even mocked him by leading about the streets a poor idiot dressed up with a paper crown and a reed for a sceptre, in ridicule of the tetrarch's rather doubtful right to the style of royalty.

As these insults towards the emperor's friend passed wholly unchecked by the prefect, the Greeks next assaulted the Jews in the streets and market-place, attacked their houses, rooted up the groves of trees round their synagogues, and tore down the decree by which the privileges of citizenship had been confirmed to them. The Greeks then proceeded to set up by force a statue of the emperor in each Jewish synagogue, and not finding statues enough they made use of the statues of the Ptolemies, which they carried away from the Gymnasium for that purpose. During the last reign, under the stern government of Tiberius, Flaccus had governed with justice and prudence, but under Caligula he seemed to have lost all

judgment in his zeal against the Jews. When the riots in the streets could no longer be overlooked, instead of defending the injured party, he issued a decree in which he styled the Jews foreigners; thus at one word robbing them of their privileges and condemning them unheard. By this the Greeks were hurried forward into further acts of injustice and the Jews of resistance. But the Jews were the weaker party: they were overpowered and all driven into one ward, and four hundred of their houses in the other wards were plundered, and the spoil divided as if taken in war. They were stoned and even burned in the streets if they ventured forth to buy food for their families. Flaccus seized and scourged in the theatre thirty-eight of their venerable councillors, and to show them that they were no longer citizens the punishment was inflicted by the hands of Egyptian executioners. While the city was in this state of riot, the Greeks gave out that the Jews were concealing arms, and Flaccus, to give them a fresh proof that they had lost the rights of citizenship, ordered that their houses should be forcibly entered and searched by a centurion and a band of soldiers.

During their troubles the Jews had not been allowed to complain to the emperor, or to send an embassy to Rome to make known their grievances. But it happened that king Agrippa then landed in Egypt in his way to his kingdom, and he forwarded to Caligula the complaints of his countrymen the Jews, with an account of the rebellious state of Alexandria. The riots, it is true, had been wholly raised by the prefect's zeal in setting up the emperor's statue to be worshipped by the Jews,

CHAP. I.

Philo, in Flaccum.

and in carrying into effect the emperor's decree; but as he had not been able to keep his province quiet, it was necessary that he should be recalled, and punished for his want of success. To have found it necessary to call out the troops was of course a fault in a governor; but doubly so at a time and in a province where a successful general might so easily become a formidable rebel. Accordingly a centurion, with a trusty cohort of soldiers, was sent from Rome for the recall of the prefect. On approaching the coast of Egypt, they kept the vessel in deep water till sunset, and then entered the harbour of Alexandria in the dark. The centurion on landing met with a freedman of the emperor, from whom he learned that the prefect was then at supper, entertaining a large company of friends. The freedman led the cohort quietly into the palace, into the very room where Flaccus was sitting at table; and the first tidings that he heard of his government being disapproved of in Rome was his finding himself a prisoner in his own palace. The friends stood motionless with surprise, the centurion produced the emperor's order for what he was doing, and as no resistance was attempted all passed off quietly; Flaccus was hurried on board the vessel on the same evening, and immediately taken to Rome.

It so happened that on the night that Flaccus was seized the Jews had met together to celebrate their autumnal feast, the feast of the Tabernacles; not as on former years with joy and pomp, but in fear, in grief, and in prayer. Their chief men were in prison, their nation smarting under its wrongs and in daily fear of fresh cruelties; and it was not

without alarm that they heard the noise of soldiers moving to and fro through the city, and of the guards marching by torch-light from the camp to the palace. But their fear was soon turned into joy when they heard that Flaccus, the author of all their wrongs, was already a prisoner on board the vessel in the harbour; and they gave glory to God, not, says Philo, that their enemy was going to be punished, but because their own sufferings were at an end.

Josephus, Antiq. lib. xviii. 10.

The Jews then sent an embassy to Rome, at the head of which was Philo, the Platonic philosopher, who was to lay their grievances before the emperor, and to beg for redress. The Greeks also at the same time sent their embassy, at the head of which was the learned Apion, who was to accuse the Jews of not worshipping the statue of the emperor, and to argue that they had no right to the same privileges of citizenship with those who boasted of their Macedonian blood. But as the Jews did not deny the charge that was brought against them, Caligula would hear nothing that they had to say; and Philo withdrew with the remark that, though the emperor was against them, God would be their friend.

We learn this sad tale of the Jews' sufferings under Caligula from the pages of their own historian only. But though Philo may have felt and written as one of the sufferers, his truth is undoubted. He was a man of unblemished character, and the writer of greatest learning and of the greatest note at that time in Alexandria; being also of a great age he well deserved the honour of being sent on the embassy to Caligula. He was

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in religion a Jew, in his philosophy a Platonist, and by birth an Egyptian; and in his numerous writings we may trace the three sources from which he drew his opinions. He is always devotional and in earnest, full of pure and lofty thoughts, and often eloquent. His fondness for the mystical properties of numbers, and for finding an allegory or secondary meaning in the plainest narrative, seems borrowed from the Egyptians. Thus he says that Abraham's wife Sarah is Wisdom, while Hagar is Instruction, who after being banished is recalled by the Word in the form of an angel; and he elsewhere explains the Word to mean God's first-begotten son, by whom he governs the world as a shepherd does his flock. In Philo's speculative theology he seems to have borrowed less from Moses than from the abstractions of Plato, whose shadowy hints he has embodied in a more solid form. Thus, speaking of the Creator, he says that there are three orders, of which the best is the Being that is, and who has two ancient powers near him, one on one side and one on the other, the one on the right hand being called God, and the one on the left Lord; and that the middle divinity, accompanied on each side by his powers, presents to the enlightened mind sometimes one image and sometimes three. Philo's writings are chiefly religious, each beginning with a text of the Old Testament; and they are valuable as showing the steps by which the philosophy of Greece may be traced from the writings of Plato to those of Justin Martyr and Clemens Alexandrinus: his historical works are on the Therapeutæ, the Jews' sufferings under Flaccus, and his own embassy to Rome.

De Cherubim.

De Agriculturâ.

De Abrahamo.

Apion, who went to Rome at the same time to plead against Philo, was a native of the Great Oasis, but as he was born of Greek parents, he claimed and received the title and privileges of an Alexandrian, which he denied to the Jews who were born in the city. His writings are now lost. They were attacks upon the Jews and their religion, calling in question the truth of the Jewish history and the justice of that nation's claim to high antiquity; and to these attacks we owe Josephus's Answer, in which several valuable fragments of pagan history are saved by being quoted against the pagans in support of the Old Testament.

We may for a moment leave our history, to bid a last farewell to the family of the Ptolemies. Augustus had given Selene, the daughter of Cleopatra and Antony, in marriage to the younger Juba, the historian of Africa; and about the same time he gave him the kingdom of Mauritania, the inheritance of his fathers. His son Ptolemy succeeded him on the throne, but was put to death without cause by Caligula. Drusilla, another grandchild of Cleopatra and Antony, married Antonius Felix, the procurator of Judea, after the death of his first wife, who was also named Drusilla. These are the last notices that we meet with of the royal family of Egypt.

Dion Cassius, lib. xlii.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

Suetonius, vit. Calig.

Tacitus, Hist. lib. v.

Acts, xxiv. 24.

As soon as the news of the death of Caligula reached Egypt, the joy of the Jews knew no bounds. They at once flew to arms to revenge themselves on the Alexandrians, whose streets were again the seat of civil war. The governor did what he could to quiet both parties, but was not wholly success-

Josephus, Antiq. xix. 4.

A. D. 41.

CHAP. I. ful till the decree of the new emperor reached Alexandria. In this Claudius again granted to the Jews the full rights of citizenship, which they had enjoyed under the Ptolemies and which had been allowed by Augustus; he left them to choose their own ethnarch or high priest, to enjoy their own religion without hindrance, and he repealed the laws of Caligula under which they had been groaning.

The government of Claudius was mild and just, at least as far as a government could be in which every tax-gatherer, every military governor, and every sub-prefect meant to enrich himself by his appointment. Every Roman officer, from the general down to the lowest tribune, claimed the right of travelling through the country free of expense, under the pretence of being couriers on the public service; and we have a decree of the ninth year of this reign, carved on the temple in the great Oasis, in which Cneius Capito, the prefect of Egypt, endeavours to put a stop to this injustice. He orders that no traveller shall have the privilege of a courier unless he has a proper warrant, and that then he shall only claim a free lodging; that clerks in the villages shall keep a register of all that is claimed on account of the public service; and that if anybody make an unjust claim he shall pay four times the amount to the informer, and six times the amount to the emperor. But royal decrees could do little or nothing in cities and provinces where there were no judges to enforce them; and the people of the distant province of Upper Egypt must have felt this well-meant law as a cruel insult when they were told that if they

Hoskins's Visit to Oasis.

were ill-used they might bring up their complaints to Basilides the freedman of the emperor at Alexandria. The employment of the informer is a full acknowledgement that the prefect had not the power to enforce his own decrees; and when we compare this law with that of Alexander on his conquest of the country, we have no difficulty in seeing why Egypt rose under the Ptolemies, and sunk under the selfish policy of Augustus.

Claudius was somewhat of a scholar and an author; he had studied history by the help, or at least by the advice, of Livy, and wrote several volumes both in Greek and Latin. The former he might perhaps think would be chiefly valued in Alexandria, and when he founded a new college in that city, called after himself the Claudian Museum, he ordered that on given days in each year his history of Carthage should be publicly read in one museum, and his history of Italy in the other.

Suetonius, vit. Claud. 42.

Under the government of Claudius the Egyptians were again allowed to coin money; and with the first year of this reign begins that most rich and elegant series, in which every coin is dated with the year of the emperor's reign. The coins of the Ptolemies were strictly Greek in their workmanship, and the few Egyptian characters that we see upon them are so much altered by the classic taste of the dye-engraver that we hardly know them again. But it is much otherwise with the coins of the emperors; they are covered with the ornaments, characters, and religious ceremonies of the native Egyptians; and though the style of art is often bad, they are not passed by any series

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

CHAP. I. of coins whatever in the service they render to the historian.

Pliny, lib. vi. 26. It was in this reign, in the time of the elder Pliny, that the route through Egypt to India first became really known to the Greeks and Romans. The trade was then so great that Pliny calculated the worth of gold and silver sent every year to the east at four hundred thousand pounds sterling, in exchange for which Egypt received back goods which in Rome were sold for one hundred times that amount. The merchants went up the Nile to Coptos, whence they travelled through the desert for two hundred and sixty miles to Berenice, the port on the Red Sea; but, as this journey was made only by night to avoid the heat, and on camels' backs, it was not done in less than twelve days. From Berenice they set sail about the middle of July, when the dog-star rose with the sun, and in about thirty days reached either Canes in the frankincense country or Ocelis, another town on the coast of Arabia. Thence, leaving the coast and trusting themselves to the trade wind, they crossed the Arabian Sea, and reached the coast of India near the mouth of the Indus in forty days, or in the middle of September. They left India on their return at the end of December. The whole voyage from Alexandria and back took rather less than a year. The products of the Indian trade were chiefly silk, diamonds and other precious stones, ginger, spices, and some scents. The state of Ethiopia was then such that no trade came down the Nile to Syene; and the produce of southern Africa was brought by coasting vessels to Berenice, the beforementioned port on the Red Sea.

lib. vi. 34.

These products were ivory, rhinoceros teeth, hippopotamus skins, tortoise shell, apes, monkeys, and slaves.

Pliny, though he had never been in Egypt, gives us an account of many of the products of the country, and is very particular in his notice of the papyrus and its uses, that rush upon which he boasted, in the pride of authorship, that man's immortality rested. It was grown in the pools of stagnant water which were left after the overflow of the Nile. Its thick knotted roots were used as wood, both for making fires and for furniture, and its graceful feathery head was often entwined round the statues of the gods as a garland. Wicker-work boats were woven out of its stalk, while of the bark were made sails, cordage, and cloth. It was chewed as food, both raw and cooked, though the juice only was swallowed. Paper was made of it by splitting it into sheets as thin as possible. The best kind had been called Hieratic paper, because it was used for the sacred books; but in the time of Augustus two better kinds were made, which were named Augustan and Livian, after himself and his wife. A fourth and fifth of worse quality were called Fannian, from the name of a clever Roman maker, and Amphitheatric, from the name of the street in Rome where it was sold. A sixth kind was called Saitic, from the city Sais, near which it grew in greater quantity, but of a still worse quality. A seventh, called Leneotic, was nearer the bark, and so much worse as to be sold by weight. The eighth and last kind was the Emporetic, which was not good enough to write on, and was used in the shops to wrap up parcels.

lib. xiii. 22.

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The first two were thirteen inches wide, the Hieratic eleven, the Fannian ten, the Amphitheatric nine, while the Emporetic was not more than six inches wide. After a time the best kinds were found too thin for books, as the writing on one side often made a blot through to the other; and so in the reign of Claudius Cæsar a new kind was made, called Claudian, of two sheets thick, in which the fibres of one crossed those of the other.

Codex Theod. xii. 97.

The Romans seem in most cases to have collected the revenues of a province by means of a publican or farmer, to whom the taxes were let by auction; but such was the importance of Egypt that the same jealousy which made them think its government too great to be trusted to a man of high rank made them think its revenues too large to be trusted to one farmer. The smaller branches of the Egyptian revenue were however let out as usual, and even the collection of the customs of the whole of the Red Sea was not thought too much to trust to one citizen. Annius Plocamus, who farmed them in this reign, must have had a little fleet under his command to collect them with; and, tempted either by trade or plunder, his ships were sometimes as far out as the south coast of Arabia.

Pliny, lib. vi. 34.

On one occasion one of his freedmen in the command of a vessel was carried by a north wind into the open ocean, and after being fifteen days at sea found himself on the coast of Ceylon. This island was not then wholly new to the geographers of Egypt and Europe. It had been heard of by the pilots in the voyage of Alexander the Great; Eratosthenes had given it a place in his map; and it had often been reached from Africa by the sai-

lors of the Red Sea in wicker-work boats made of papyrus; but this was the first time that it had been visited by an European. CHAP. I.

In the seventh year of this reign the emperor celebrated the secular games at Rome with great pomp, at the end of the eighth century since the city was built; and in honour of this event it was said that the phœnix, a marvellous bird which was seen upon earth only at remarkable epochs, had come to Egypt and was thence brought to Rome. This was in the consulship of Plautius and Vitellius, and it would seem to be only from a mistake in the name that Pliny places the event eleven years earlier, in the consulship of Plautius and Papinius, and Tacitus places it thirteen years earlier, in the consulship of Fabius and Vitellius. This fable of the Phœnix is of no importance; but as on other occasions it is connected with some of the remarkable epochs in Egyptian history, it is as well that no mention of it by the historians should be passed by without notice.

Aurelius Victor, vit. Claudii.

A. D. 47.

Pliny, lib. x. 2.

Annal. lib. vi. 28.

We find the name of Claudius on several of the temples of Upper Egypt, particularly on that of Apollinopolis Magna, and on the portico of the great temples of Latopolis, which were being built in this reign.

Wilkinson's Thebes.

In the beginning of the reign of Nero an Egyptian Jew, who claimed to be listened to as a prophet, raised the minds of his countrymen into a ferment of religious zeal by preaching about the sufferings of their brethren in Judea; and he was able to get together a body of men called, in reproach, the Sicarii, or murderers, whose numbers are variously stated at four thousand and thirty

Josephus, Bell. Jud. ii. 12.

A. D. 55.

Acts, xxi. 38.

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thousand, whom he led out of Egypt to free the holy city from the bondage of the heathen. But Felix the Roman governor led against them the garrison of Jerusalem, and easily scattered the half-armed rabble. By such acts of religious zeal on the part of the Jews, they were again brought to blows with the Greeks of Alexandria. The Macedonians, as the latter still called themselves, had met in public assembly to send an embassy to Rome, and some Jews who entered the meeting, which as citizens they had a full right to do, were seized and ill-treated by them as spies. They would perhaps have even been put to death if a large body of their countrymen had not run to their rescue. The Jews attacked the assembled Greeks with stones and lighted torches, and would have burnt the amphitheatre and all that were in it, if the prefect, Tiberius Alexander, had not sent some of the elders of their own nation to calm their angry feelings. But though the mischief was stopt for the time, it soon broke out again; and the prefect was forced to call out the garrison of two Roman legions and five thousand Libyans before he could reestablish peace in the city. The Jews were always the greatest sufferers in these civil broils, and Josephus says that fifty thousand of his countrymen were left dead in the streets of Alexandria. But this number is very improbable, as the prefect was a friend to the Jewish nation, and as the Roman legions were not withdrawn to the camp till they had guarded the Jews in carrying away and burying the bodies of their friends.

Josephus, Bell. Jud. ii. 21.

It was a natural policy on the part of the emperors to change a prefect whenever his province

was disturbed by rebellion, as we have seen in the case of Flaccus, who was recalled by Caligula. It was easier to send a new governor than to enquire into a wrong or to redress a grievance; and accordingly in the next year C. Balbillus was sent from Rome as prefect of Egypt. He reached Alexandria on the sixth day after leaving the straits of Sicily, which was spoken of as the quickest voyage known. The Alexandrian ships were better built and better manned than any others, and as a greater number of vessels sailed each year between that port and the southern coast of Italy than between any other two places, no voyage was better understood or more quickly performed. Hence we see that the quickest rate of sailing, with a fair wind, was at that time about one hundred and fifty miles in the twenty-four hours. Balbillus is praised by Seneca as an elegant and learned writer; but his history of Egypt is now lost. We only learn from it that crocodiles, which are now not often seen below Syene, were then still common in the Delta; Balbillus says that he saw them fighting with the dolphins in the very mouth of the Nile.

Tacitus, Annal. xiii. A. D. 56. Pliny, lib. xix.

Nat. Quæst. iv. 13.

The first five years of this reign, the *quinquennium Neronis*, while the emperor was under the tutorship of the philosopher Seneca, became in Rome proverbial for good government, and on the coinage we see marks of Egypt being equally well treated. In the third year we see on a coin the queen sitting on a throne with the word *agreement*, as if to praise the young emperor's good feeling in following the advice of his mother Agrippina. On another the emperor is styled *the young*

Aurelius Victor.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt. A. D. 58.

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good genius, and he is represented by the sacred basilisk crowned with the double crown of Egypt. But in the latter part of the reign the Egyptians smarted severely under that cruel principle of a despotic monarchy that every prefect, every sub-prefect, and even every deputy tax-gatherer, might be equally despotic in his own department. On a coin of the thirteenth year we see a ship with the word *emperor-bearer*, being that in which he then sailed into Greece, or in which the Alexandrians thought that he would visit their city. But if they had really hoped for his visit as a pleasure, they must have thought it a danger escaped when they learned his character; they must have been undeceived when the prefect Cæcinna Tuscus was punished by banishment for venturing to bathe in the bath which was meant for the emperor's use if he had come.

Dion Cassius, lib. lxiii.

During the first century and a half of Roman sway in Egypt the school of Alexandria was nearly silent. The professors were still followed by numerous pupils, who, after taking lessons in rhetoric at Rome, and perhaps studying philosophy at Athens, might for some time sit under a grammarian in Alexandria; but we meet with no author of note. Chæremon, a stoic philosopher, had been, during the last reign, at the head of the Alexandrian library, but he was removed to Rome as one of the tutors to the young Nero. He is ridiculed by Martial for writing in praise of death, when from age and poverty he was less able to enjoy life. We still possess a most curious account by him of the monastic habits of the ancient Egyptians.

Suidas.

Epigr. xi. 57.

Ap. Porphyr. de Abstinen. iv.

He was succeeded at the museum by Dionysius, who was also employed by the prefect as a secretary of state. Dionysius had the charge of the library till the reign of Trajan, and was the author of the Periegesis, a treatise on geography in heroic verse, from which work he is called Dionysius Periegetes. We also have a few poems by Leonides of Alexandria, one of which is addressed to the Empress Poppæa, as the wife of Jupiter, on his presenting a celestial globe to her on her birthday.

CHAP. I.

Suidas.

Anthologia Græca.

If we may trust to the traditions of the church, it was in this reign that christianity was first brought into Egypt by the evangelist Mark, the disciple of the apostle Peter. His preaching converted crowds in Alexandria; but after a short stay he returned to Rome, in about the eleventh year of this reign, leaving Annianus to watch over the growing church. Annianus is usually called the first bishop of Alexandria; and Eusebius, who lived two hundred years later, has given us the names of his successors in an unbroken chain. But though the spread of christianity must have been rapid, both among the Greeks and the Egyptians, we must not hope to find any early traces of it in the historians. It was at first embraced by the unlearned and the poor, whose deeds and opinions are seldom mentioned in history; and we may readily believe much of the scornful reproach of the unbelievers, that it was chiefly received by the unfortunate, the unhappy, the despised, and the sinful. When the crier, standing on the steps of the portico, in front of the great temples of Alexandria, called upon the pagans to come near and

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. ii. 16.

A. D. 65.

Celsus, ap. Origen. iii.

CHAP. I. join in the celebration of their mysteries, he cried out; 'All ye who are clean of hands and pure of heart, all ye who are guiltless in thought and deed, come to the sacrifice.' But many a repentant sinner and humble spirit must have drawn back in distrust from a summons which to him was so forbidding, and been glad to hear the good tidings of God's mercy offered by christianity to those who labour and are heavy laden, and to the broken hearted who would turn away from their wickedness. While such were the chief followers of the gospel, it was not likely to be much noticed by the historians; and we must wait till it forced its way into the schools and the palace before we shall find many traces of the rapidity with which it spread.

During these reigns the Ethiopian Arabs kept up their irregular warfare against the southern frontier. The Blemmyi were the tribe most dreaded, and it was under that name that they spread during each century further and further into Egypt. The cities along the banks of the Nile in Lower Ethiopia, between Nubia and Meroë, were ruined by being in the debateable land between the two nations. The early Greek travellers had counted about twenty cities on each side of the Nile between Syene and Meroë; but when in a moment of leisure the Roman government proposed to punish and stop the inroads of these troublesome neighbours, and sent forward a tribune with a guard of soldiers, he reported on his return that the whole country was a desert, and that there was scarcely a city inhabited on either side of the Nile beyond Nubia.

Dionysius Perieg. 42.

Pliny, lib. vi. 35.

Wilkinson's Thebes.

We find a temple of this reign in the Oasis of Dakleh, or the western Oasis, which seems to have been a more flourishing spot in the time of the Romans than when Egypt itself was better governed. It is so far removed from the cities in the valley of the Nile that its position, and even existence, was long unknown to Europeans, and to such hiding-places as this many of the Egyptians fled to be further from the tyranny of the Roman tax-gatherers.

Chapter II.

The Reigns of Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian.

Tacitus, Hist. lib. i. A. D. 68.

Hitherto the Roman empire had descended for just one hundred years through five emperors like a family inheritance; but on the death of Nero the Julian and Claudian families were at an end, and Galba, who was raised to the purple by the choice of the soldiers, endeavoured to pursuade the Romans, and their dependant provinces, that they had regained their liberties. The Egyptians may have been puzzled by the word *freedom*, then struck upon the coins by their foreign master, but must have been pleased to find it accompanied with a redress of grievances.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

Galba began his reign with the praiseworthy endeavour of repairing the injustice done by his cruel predecessor. He at once recalled the prefect of Egypt, and appointed in his place Tiberius Julius Alexander, an Alexandrian, a son of the former prefect of that name; and thus Egypt was under the government of a native prefect. The peaceable situation of the Great Oasis, withdrawn from many of those tumults which have in other places overthrown temples and destroyed records, has saved a long Greek inscription of the decree which was issued at the beginning of this reign

in redress of the grievances suffered under Nero. It is a proclamation by Julius Demetrius, the commander of the Oasis, quoting the decree of Tiberius Julius Alexander, the new prefect of Egypt.

The prefect acknowledges that the loud complaints with which he was met on entering upon his government were well founded, and he promises that the unjust taxes shall cease; that nobody shall be forced to act as a provincial tax-gatherer; that no debts shall be cancelled or sales made void under the plea of money owing to the revenue; that no freeman shall be thrown into prison for debt, unless it be a debt due to the royal revenue, and that no private debt shall be made over to the tax-gatherer to be by him collected as a public debt; that no property settled on the wife at marriage shall be seized for taxes due from the husband, and that all new charges and claims which had grown up within the last five years shall be repealed. In order to discourage informers, by whom the families in Alexandria were much harrassed, and to whom he laid the great falling off in the population of that city, he orders that if any body should make three charges and fail in proving them, he shall forfeit half his property, and lose the right of bringing an action at law. The land had always paid a tax in proportion to the number of acres overflowed and manured by the waters of the Nile, and the husbandmen had latterly been frightened by the double threat of a new measurement of the land, and of making it at the same time pay according to the ancient registers of the overflow when the canals had been more open and more acres flooded; but the pre-

CHAP. II. fect promises that there shall be no new measurement, and that they shall only be taxed according to the actual overflow.

But Galba's reign was short. An ambitious general, raised to the throne by the bought or even unbought choice of the army, has always been found less able to secure the obedience of his subjects than those princes who gained their rank by the accident of birth. The power that made is tempted to unmake; and thus Galba was murdered after a reign of a few months.

Tacitus, Hist. i. ii. A. D. 69.

On his death Otho was acknowledged as emperor by Rome and the east, while the hardy legions of Germany thought themselves entitled to choose for themselves, and they set up their own general Vitellius. The two legions in Egypt sided with the four legions in Syria, under Mucianus, and the three legions which under Vespasian were carrying on the memorable siege of Jerusalem, and all took the oaths to Otho.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

We find no hieroglyphical inscriptions during this short reign of a few weeks, but there are many Alexandrian coins to prove the truth of the historian; and some of them, like those of Galba, bear the unlooked-for word *freedom*.

A. D. 69.

In the few weeks which then passed between the news of Otho's death and of Vespasian's being raised to the purple in Syria, Vitellius was acknowledged in Egypt; and the Alexandrian mint struck a few coins in his name with the word *victory*. But as soon as the legions of Egypt heard that the Syrian army had made choice of another emperor, they withdrew their allegiance from Vitellius, and promised it to his Syrian rival.

Vespasian was at Cæsarea when the news reached him that Otho was dead, and that Vitellius had been raised to the purple by the German legions, and acknowledged at Rome; and without wasting more time in refusing the honour than was necessary to prove that his soldiers were in earnest in offering it, he at once allowed himself to be proclaimed emperor, as the successor of Otho. He would not however then risk a march upon Rome, but he sent to Alexandria to tell Tiberius Alexander, the governor of Egypt, what he had done; he ordered him to claim in his name the allegiance of that great province, and added that he should soon be there himself.

CHAP. II.

Josephus, Bell. Jud. v. 10.

A. D. 69.

The two Roman legions in Egypt much preferred the choice of the eastern to that of the western army, and the Alexandrians, who had only just acknowledged Vitellius, readily took the oath to be faithful to Vespasian. This made it less necessary for him to hasten thither, and he only reached Alexandria in time to hear that Vitellius had been murdered after a reign of eight months, and that he himself had been acknowledged as emperor by Rome and the western legions. He therefore sent back his best troops with his son Titus, to finish the siege of Jerusalem, from which he had been called off; and his Egyptian coins in the first year of his reign, by the word *peace*, point to the end of the civil war.

A. D. 70.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

When Vespasian entered Alexandria he was met by the philosophers and magistrates of the city in grand pomp. The philosophers indeed, in a city where, beside the officers of government, talent formed the only aristocracy, were a very

Philostratus, vit. Apollon.

CHAP. II. important body; and Dion, Euphrates, and Apollonius had been useful in securing for Vespasian the allegiance of the Alexandrians. Dion was an orator, who had been professor of rhetoric, but he had given up that study for philosophy. His orations, many of which have come down to us, gained for him the name of Chrysostome, or golden-mouthed. Euphrates, his friend, was a Platonist, who afterwards married the daughter of the prefect of Syria, and removed to Rome. There his talents and virtues gained him the friendship of the younger Pliny, who admired his philosophic garb, his mild but reverend countenance, his uncut hair, and long white beard, and quoted him as a proof of the healthy state of the liberal studies in Rome. Apollonius of Tyana, the most celebrated of these philosophers, had been travelling in the east; and boasting that he was already master of all the fabled wisdom of the Magi of Babylon and of the Gymnosophists of India, he was come to Egypt to compare this mystic philosophy with that of the hermits of Ethiopia and the Thebaid. By the Egyptians he was looked upon as the favourite of heaven; he claimed the power of working miracles by his magical arts, and of foretelling events by his knowledge of astrology; and if we could believe the wonderful stories told of him by his biographer, we should not wonder at Hierocles and other pagans comparing his miracles to those of Jesus.

Eunapius, Proem.

Epist. i. 10.

Philostratus.

Apollonius had been useful to Vespasian, and the emperor repaid the philosopher by the flattery which was most agreeable to him. He kept him always by his side during his stay in Egypt, he

acknowledged his rank as a prophet, and tried to make further use of him in persuading the Egyptians of his own divine right to the throne. As Vespasian was walking through the streets of Alexandria, a man well known as having a disease in his eyes threw himself at his feet and begged of him to heal his blindness. He had been told by the god Serapis that he should regain his sight if the emperor would but deign to spit upon his eyelids. Another man, who had lost the use of a hand, had been told by the same god that he should be healed if the emperor would but trample on him with his feet. Vespasian at first laughed at them and thrust them off; but at last he so far yielded to their prayers, and to the flattery of his friends, as to have the physicians of Alexandria consulted whether it was in his power to heal these unfortunate men. The physicians were not so unwise as to think it impossible; besides, it seemed meant by the god as a public proof of Vespasian's right to the throne; if he were successful the glory would be his, and if he failed the laugh would be against the cripples. The two men were therefore brought before him, and in the face of the assembled citizens he trampled on one and spit on the other; and his flatterers declared that he had healed the maimed and given sight to the blind.

Tacitus, Hist. lib. iv.

Vespasian met with further wonders when he entered the temple of Serapis to consult the god as to the state and fortunes of the empire. He went into the inner sanctuary alone, and to his surprise there he beheld the old Basilides, the freedman of Claudius, one of the chief men of Alexandria, who

CHAP. II. he knew was then lying dangerously ill, and several days journey from the city. He enquired of the priests whether Basilides had been in the temple, and was assured that he had not been there. He then asked whether he had been in Alexandria; but nobody had seen him there. Lastly, on sending messengers, he learned that he was on his death-bed eighty miles off. With this miracle before his eyes he could not distrust the answers which the priests gave to his questions.

The Jewish writer Joseph the son of Matthias, or Flavius Josephus as he called himself when he entered the service of the emperor, was then in Alexandria. He had been taken prisoner by Vespasian, but had gained his freedom by the betrayal of his country's cause; and he joined the army of Titus and marched to the overthrow of Jerusalem, and of the Temple in which his forefathers had served as high priests. Notwithstanding the obstinate and heroic struggles of the Jews, Judea was wholly conquered by the Romans, and Jerusalem and its other fortresses were either dismantled or received Roman garrisons. Titus made slaves of ninety-seven thousand men, many of whom he led with him into Egypt, and then sent them to work in the mines. These were soon followed by a crowd of other brave Jews, who chose rather to quit their homes and live as wanderers in Egypt than to own Vespasian as their king. They knew no lord but Jehovah; to take the oaths or to pay tribute to Cæsar was to renounce the faith of their fathers. But they found no safety in Egypt. Their Greek brethren turned against them, and handed six hundred of them up to Lupus the governor of

Josephus, Bell. Jud. lib. vii. Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. iii. 7.

Egypt to be punished; and their countryman Josephus brands them all with the name of Sicarii, or murderers. They tried to hide themselves in Thebes, and other cities less under the eyes of the Roman governor. They were however followed and taken, and the courage with which even the boys and mere children bore their sufferings sooner than acknowledge Vespasian for their king drew forth the praise of even the time-serving Josephus.

The Egyptian Jews gained nothing by this treachery towards their Syrian brethren; they were themselves looked down upon by the Alexandrians and distrusted by the Romans. Indeed, when the Syrian Jews lost their capital and their rank as a nation, their brethren felt lowered in the eyes of their fellow citizens in whatever city they dwelt, and in Alexandria they lost all hope of keeping their privileges. The emperor ordered the prefect Lupus to shut up the temple of Leontopolis, in which during the last three hundred years they had been allowed to have an altar, in rivalry to the temple of Jerusalem. Even Josephus, whose betrayal of his countrymen might have saved him from their enemies, was sent with many others in chains to Rome, and was only set free on his making himself known to Titus.

In taking leave of the historian Josephus, whose writings have been so often quoted in these pages, we must remark that, though his style is elegant, his narrative simple, and his manner earnest, yet his history cannot be read without some distrust. He was false to his country, to its religious laws, and to his foreign wife. He is sometimes biassed by his wish to raise the character of his country-

CHAP. II.

men, at other times by his eagerness to excuse his own conduct. His history, however, throws great light upon the state of the Israelites at a time which is in the highest degree interesting to all Christians; and in his Answer to Apion, who had written against the Jews, we find some short but most valuable quotations from many writings which were then in the Alexandrian libraries but have been since lost, from Manetho, from Dius, from Menander of Ephesus, from Berosus, and from Hecatæus of Abdera.

Dion Cassius, lib. lxvi.

The Alexandrians were sadly disappointed in Vespasian. They had been among the first to acknowledge him as emperor while his power was yet doubtful, and they looked for a sum of money as a largess; but to their sorrow he increased the taxes, and reestablished some which had fallen into disuse. They had a joke against him about his claiming from one of his friends the trifling debt of six oboli; and upon hearing of their witticisms he was so angry that he ordered this sum of six oboli to be levied as a poll-tax upon every man in the city, and he only let them off on his son Titus's begging for them. He went to Rome carrying with him the nickname of Cybiosactes, the scullion, which the Alexandrians gave him for his stinginess and greediness, and which they had before given to Seleucus, who robbed the tomb of Alexander the Great of its golden sarcophagus.

Suetonius, vit. Vespas.

Wilkinson's Thebes.

The great temple of Kneph at Latopolis, which had been the work of many reigns and perhaps many centuries, was finished under Vespasian. It is a building worthy of the best times of Egyptian architecture. It has a grand portico upheld by

four rows of massive columns, with capitals in the form of lotus flowers. On the ceiling is a zodiac like that at Tentyra; and though many other kings' names are carved on the walls, that of Vespasian is in the dedication over the entrance. The economist will perhaps ask from what source the oppressed Egyptians drew the wealth, and where they found the encouragement necessary to finish these gigantic undertakings which were begun in times of greater prosperity; but the only answer which we can give is, that the chief encouragement at all times to any great work is a strong sense of religious duty, and the only fund of wealth upon which men can draw for their generosity, or nations for their public works, is to be found in self-denial.

CHAP. II.

Denon, pl. 52, 53, 54.

Of the reign of Titus in Egypt we find no trace beyond his coins struck each year at Alexandria.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt. A. D. 79.

Of the reign of Domitian we learn something from the poet Juvenal, who then held some military post in the province; and he gives us a sad account of the state of lawlessness in which the troops lived under his command. All quarrels between soldiers and citizens were tried by the officers according to martial law, and justice was very far from being even-handed between the Roman and the poor Egyptian. No witness was bold enough to come forward and say anything against a soldier, while everybody was believed who spoke on his behalf. But as it was much the same at this time with the Roman army everywhere, perhaps Egypt may not have been worse off than the other provinces of the empire.

Satyr. xvi. A. D. 82.

CHAP. II.

As what Juvenal chiefly aimed at in his writings was to lash the follies of the age, he of course found plenty of amusement in the superstitions of Egypt. Their worshipping of beasts, birds, and fishes, their even growing their gods in the gardens are happily hit off by him; they worshipped, said he, every thing but virtue. But he sometimes takes a poet's liberty, and when he tells us that man's was almost the only flesh that they ate without sinning, we must not believe him to the letter. He gives a lively picture of a fight which he saw between the citizens of two towns. The towns of Ombos and Tentyra, which are about a hundred miles apart, had a long-standing quarrel about their gods. At Ombos they worshipped the crocodile and the crocodile-headed god Savak, while at Tentyra they worshipped the goddess Athor, and were celebrated for their skill in catching and killing crocodiles. So, taking advantage of a feast or holiday, as the people of Modena and Bologna did in the days of Tassoni, they marched out for a fight. The men of Ombos were beaten and put to flight; but one of them stumbling as he ran away, he was caught and torn to pieces, and, as Juvenal adds, eaten by the men of Tentyra.

Satyr. xv.

But we gain a more agreeable and most likely a much truer notion of the mystical religion and philosophy of the Egyptians from the serious enquiries of Plutarch, who, instead of looking for what he could laugh at, was only too ready to believe that he saw wisdom hidden under an allegory in all their superstitions. Many of the habits of the priests, such as shaving the whole body, wearing linen instead of cotton, and refusing some meats as

De Iside et Osiride.

impure, seem to have arisen from a religious love of cleanliness. None but the vulgar looked upon the animals and statues as gods; the priests believed that the unseen gods, who acted with one mind and with one providence, were the authors of all good; and though these, like the sun and moon, were called in each country by a different name, yet, like those luminaries, they were the same over all the world. All the sacrifices to the gods had a secondary meaning, or at least they tried to join a moral aim to the outward act; as when on the twentieth day of the month, when they ate honey and figs in honour of Thoth, they sang 'Sweet is truth.' The Egyptians, like most other eastern polytheists, held the doctrine which was afterwards called Manicheism; they believed in a good and in a wicked god, who governed the world between them. Of these the former made himself threefold, because three is a perfect number, and every thing divine is formed of three parts; and accordingly on the Theban monuments we usually see the gods in groups of three. But the favourite part of their mythology was the lamentation of Isis for the death of her husband Osiris. He was killed by his wicked son Typhon, who scattered his limbs over the earth; and they were picked up by Isis, who put them together and buried them. Horus then undertook to avenge his father's death, and conquered his brother Typhon and put him to flight. The latter, the wicked Typhon, had two sons, named Hierosolymus and Judæus after the enemies of the nation. All this was supposed to cover much hidden wisdom; but as we do not recognize the story on the most ancient monu-

CHAP. II. ments of the Thebaid, it was most likely the growth of modern times, and perhaps of the province of Lower Egypt; but, at any rate, it was old enough to give birth to the more elegant Greek story of Venus lamenting for the death of Adonis.

The deep earnestness of the Egyptians in their belief of their own religion seems to have been the chief cause of its being adopted by others. We are more ready to be persuaded when the speaker is himself in earnest. The Greeks had borrowed much from it, and though it had been forbidden by law in Rome it was much cultivated there in private. But the superstitious Domitian, who was in the habit of consulting astrologers and Chaldæan fortune-tellers, built at Rome a temple to Isis, and another to Serapis; and such was the eagerness of the citizens for pictures of the queen of heaven, that, according to Juvenal, the Roman painters all lived upon the goddess Isis. Domitian also, though very little of a scholar, sent to Alexandria for copies of their books, to restore the public library at Rome which had been lately burnt.

Suetonius, in vitâ.

Cassiodori Chronicon.

Sat. xii. 28.

Suetonius, in vitâ.

During this century the coinage continues one of the subjects of chief interest to the antiquary. In the eleventh year of his reign, when Domitian took upon himself the tribunitian power at Rome for a a second period of ten years, the event was celebrated in Alexandria with a triumphal procession and games in the hippodrome, of all which we see clear traces on the Egyptian coins. The Egyptian coinage of that year passes that of all former years in beauty and variety.

A. D. 92.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

Chapter III.

The Reigns of Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines.

The coinage is almost the only proof of Nerva having reigned in Egypt. That of the eleventh year of his successor Trajan is very remarkable for its beauty and variety, even more so than that of the eleventh year of Domitian. The coins have hitherto proclaimed the games and conquests of the emperors, the bountiful overflow of the Nile, and sometimes the worship of Serapis; but we now enter upon the most brilliant period of the Egyptian coinage, and find a rich variety of fables taken both from Egyptian and Greek mythology. The coins of Rome in this and the following reigns show the wealth, good taste, and learning of the nation, but they are even passed by the coins of Egypt. While history is nearly silent, and the buildings and other proofs of Roman good government have perished, the coins alone are quite enough to prove the well-being of the people. Among the Egyptian coins those of Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines equal in number those of all the other emperors together, while in beauty they far surpass them. They are mostly of copper, of a small size, and thick, weighing about one hundred and ten and two hundred and twenty

Zoega, Num. Ægypt. A. D. 108.

CHAP. III. grains; the silver coins are less common, and of mixt metal.

Petronius, Anthologia Latina.

Though the Romans, while admiring and copying every thing that was Greek, affected to look upon the Egyptians as savages, who were only known to be human beings by their having a voice, still, the Egyptian physicians were held by them in the highest repute, and were always consulted by the more wealthy. Pliny the younger repaid his oculist Harpocrates by getting the emperor to make him a Roman citizen. But the statesman did not know under what harsh laws his friend was born, for the grant was void in the case of an Egyptian, the emperor's rescript was bad as being against the law, and Pliny had again to beg the greater favour that the Egyptian might first be made a citizen of Alexandria, without which the former favour was useless. Thus, even in Alexandria, a conquered province, governed by the despotic will of a military emperor, there were still some laws or principles which the emperor found it not easy to break. The courts of justice, those to whom the edicts were addressed and by whom they were to be explained and carried into effect, claimed a power in some cases above the emperor; and the first article in the Roman code was that an imperial rescript, by whomsoever or howsoever obtained, was void if it was against the law. As the lawyers and magistrates formed part of the body of citizens, the Alexandrians had so far a share in governing themselves; but this the Egyptians wholly lost by being under Greek magistrates.

Plin. Epist. x. 22.

Codex Theodos.

Lampridius, vit. Heliog.

Trajan always kept in the public granaries of Rome a supply of Egyptian corn equal to seven

times the *canon*, or yearly gift to the poor citizens; in which prudent course he was followed by all his successors, till the store was squandered by the worthless Elagabalus. One year, when the Nile did not rise to its usual height, and much of the corn-land of the Delta, instead of being moistened by its waters and enriched by its mud, was left a dry sandy plain, the granaries of Rome were unlocked to feed the city of Alexandria. The Alexandrians then saw the unusual sight of ships unloading their cargoes of corn in their harbour, and the Romans boasted that they took the Egyptian tribute in corn, not because they could not feed themselves, but because the Egyptians had nothing else to send them.

CHAP. III.

Pliny, Panegyr.

Alexandria under the Romans was still the centre of the trading world, not only having its own great trade in corn, but being the port through which the whole of the trade of India and Arabia passed to Europe, and at which the Syrian vessels touched in their way to Italy. The harbour was crowded with masts, and the quays always busy with loading and unloading; while in the streets might be seen men of all languages and all dresses, Egyptians, Jews, Greeks, and Italians, with Asiatics from the neighbouring coasts of Syria and Cilicia, and even Ethiopians, Arabs, Bactrians, Scythians, Persians, and Indians.

Dion Chrysost. ad Alexandr.

Of the Alexandrians themselves we receive a very unfavourable account from their countryman Dion Chrysostome. With their wealth, they had all those vices which usually follow or cause the loss of national independence. They seemed eager after nothing but food and horse-races, those never

CHAP. III.

Dion Chrysost. ad Alexandr.

failing bribes for which the idle of every country will sell all that a man should hold most dear. They were cool and quiet at their sacrifices and grave in business, but in the theatre or in the stadium men, women, and children were alike heated into passion, and overcome with eagerness and warmth of feeling. They cared more for the tumble of a favourite charioteer than for the sinking state of the nation. A scurrilous song or a horse-race would so rouse them into a quarrel that they could not hear for their own noise, nor see for the dust raised by their own bustle in the hippodrome; while all those acts of their rulers which, in a more wholesome state of society, would have called for notice, passed by unheeded. In the army they made but second-rate soldiers, while as singing boys at the supper tables of the wealthy Romans they were much sought after, and all the world acknowledged that there were no fighting-cocks equal to those reared by the Alexandrians.

Statius, Sylv. v.

Geoponica, lib. xiv. 7.

In the reign of Augustus the Roman generals had been defeated in their attacks on Arabia Nabatæa; but under Trajan, when the Romans were masters of all the countries which surround that little state, and when Egypt was so far quiet that the legions could be withdrawn without danger to the provinces, the Arabs could hold out no longer, and the rocky fastness of Petra was forced to receive a Roman garrison. For the next four hundred years that remarkable Arab city formed part of the Roman empire; and Europeans now travelling through the desert from Mount Sinai to Jerusalem are agreeably surprised at coming upon temples, carved out of the solid rock, ornamented

Ammianus, lib. xiv.

Laborde's Travels.

with Corinthian columns of the age of the Antonines. CHAP. III.

As Alexandria has been the birthplace of many forgeries in religious literature, we readily give it credit for others. Here most likely was written the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the work of a Jewish convert to Christianity. It pretends to be an account of the deaths of the twelve sons of Jacob, with the prophetic speeches which they made to their children on their death-beds. Trajan, in the fourth year of his reign, about thirty-four years after the destruction of Jerusalem, had promised Joshua the son of Annaniah that the Jews should have leave to return to the holy city and rebuild the Temple; and this, as we shall see, fixes the time when this work was written. The patriarch Reuben foretells the coming of the high priest Christ. Levi also, quoting from the book of Enoch, foretells the coming of a man in the power of the Most High to renew the Law; his being called an impostor, his death, and resurrection; and he makes the seventy weeks of the book of Daniel end with the destruction of the Temple. He then continues his prophecy through the space of seven weeks or forty-nine years more, each of which weeks is to be the reign of a new high priest. In the fifth week under the fifth high priest, that is, before the ninth year of Trajan's reign, the Jews are to return into the land of their desolation, and to rebuild the house of the Lord. In the seventh week there are to be wicked idolatrous priests, after which the priesthood is to be at an end, and is to be followed by the reign of God upon earth. Judah and Nephthalim also fore-

D. Ganz, Zemach David.

CHAP. III. tell the glory of Israel; but it is not clear whether they point to Jesus, or to the reestablishment of the Jews as a nation in their own country. This great and glorious event, whether it was to be the second coming of Christ and the end of the world, as many of the Christians seem to have thought, or whether it was to be the restoration of the sceptre to Judah and the reestablishment of the Jewish kingdom, was looked forward to as an event close at hand, and it raised the minds of the Jews into a fervour of religious enthusiasm. As the wished-for time drew near, the end of the seven great weeks from the destruction of the Temple, all the eastern provinces of the Roman empire were disturbed by the rising of the Jews.

Most likely, at the same time the poet Ezekiel wrote his Greek tragedy of the Departure from Egypt, to encourage his countrymen to march a second time through the desert from Egypt to the promised land. In this poem the chief speakers are God and Moses; but we now only possess a few dialogues of it, in one of which an angel boastfully describes the triumphant march of the Israelites and the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. 2. Orosius, lib. vii. 12.

Moved by these writings, or rather by the religious enthusiasm which gave birth to the writings, the Jews of Egypt in the eighteenth year of this reign were again roused into a quarrel with

A. D. 116.

their Greek fellow-citizens; and in the next year, the last of the reign, they rose against their Roman governors in open rebellion, and they were not put down till the prefect Lupus had brought his whole force against them. At first the Jews

were successful, more particularly in the villages, and the Greeks fled to Alexandria, where they were the stronger, and where they slew the Jews in revenge, though not till after many obstinate and bloody battles in the streets. After this the Jews of Cyrene marched into Egypt, under the command of Lucuas, to help their brethren, and the rebellion took the regular form of a civil war, with all its usual horrors. The emperor sent against the Jews an army followed by a fleet, which, after numerous skirmishes and battles, routed them with great slaughter, and drove numbers of them into the desert, from whence they harrassed the villages as robbers.

By these unsuccessful appeals to force the Jews lost all right to those privileges of citizenship which they always claimed, and which had been granted by the emperors, though usually refused by the Alexandrians. Henceforth they were lowered to the rank of Egyptians, and nothing but the emperor's edict could raise a Jew or an Egyptian to the rank of an Alexandrian. The overthrow of Jerusalem had sealed the fate of the Jews in every country where they dwelt in their dispersion; their second temple at Leontopolis was also closed, and their despair and disappointment at the failure of these hopes seem in many cases to have turned their minds to the Christian view of the Old Testament prophecies; henceforth, says Eusebius, the Jews embraced the Christian religion more readily and in greater numbers.

Eccl. Hist. iii. 35.

In the sixth year of the reign of Hadrian, Egypt was honoured by a visit from the emperor, who,

A. D. 122.

CHAP. III. with a restless activity, joined to a praiseworthy love of knowledge, had already run over a large part of his dominions. He was led to Egypt at that time by some riots of a character more serious than usual, which had arisen between two cities about a bull (probably between Memphis and Heliopolis), as to whether it was to be Apis or Mnevis. Egypt had been for some few years without a sacred bull, and when at length the priests found one, marked with the wished-for spots, the inhabitants of those two cities flew to arms, and the peace of the province was disturbed by their religious zeal, each claiming the bull as their own. Hadrian was accompanied by his favourite, the beautiful Antinous, who drowned himself in the Nile during their journey towards Thebes. It would seem that the emperor had been consulting the Egyptian astrologers as to his future fate and the welfare of the empire; and that the oracle had declared that the loss of what he then held most dear was necessary to his future happiness; and that on this Antinous had generously devoted his own life in the service of his master and thrown himself into the Nile. The emperor to show his gratitude built a large city near the spot; he ornamented it with temples and statues, and named it Antinoopolis, in honour of the lost favourite. It stood on the east bank of the Nile, opposite to Hermopolis. Travellers still trace the walls of a theatre and a hippodrome, while the wide space covered by the ruins and the number of the Corinthian columns prove the magnificence and taste of the founder. Here divine honours were regularly paid to the favourite in his own temple, as to

Spartianus, vit. Hadr.

Dion Cass. lib. lxix.

Wilkinson's Thebes.

Origen in Celsum, iii.

one of the gods of the country; public games were every year celebrated to his memory in the theatre and hippodrome; and in the seventh and following years coins were struck to his honour in Alexandria under the name of the hero Antinous.

CHAP. III.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. iv. 8.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

In Alexandria the emperor mixed freely with the professors in the Museum, asking them questions and answering theirs in return; and he dropped his tear of pity on the tomb of the great Pompey, in the form of a Greek epigram with very little point. He laid out large sums of money in building and ornamenting the city, and the Alexandrians were much pleased with his behaviour. Among other honours that they paid him, they changed the name of the month December, calling it the month Hadrian; but, as they were not followed by the rest of the empire, the name soon went out of use. But the emperor's patronage of philosophy was rather at the cost of the Alexandrian Museum; for he enrolled among its paid professors men who were teaching from school to school in Italy and Asia Minor. Thus Polemon of Laodicea, who taught oratory and philosophy at Rome, Laodicea, and Smyrna, and had the right of a free passage for himself and his servants in any of the public ships, whenever he chose to move from city to city for the purposes of study or teaching, had at the same time a salary from the Alexandrian Museum. Dionysius of Miletus also received his salary as a professor in the Museum, while teaching philosophy and the art of memory at Miletus and Ephesus. Pancrates, the Alexandrian poet, gained his salary by the easy task of a little flattery. On Hadrian's return to Alexandria, the poet pre-

Spartianus, vit. Hadr.

Antholog. Græca, i. 54.

Cassiodori Chronic.

Young's Hierogl. pl. 52.

Philostrat. vit. Soph.

Athenæus, lib. xv.

CHAP. III. sented to him a rose-coloured lotus, a flower less common in Egypt than either the blue or white lotus, and assured him that it had sprung out of the blood of the lion slain by his royal javelin at a lion hunt in Libya. The emperor was pleased with the compliment, and gave him a place in the Museum; and Pancrates in return named the plant the lotus of Antinous. But the Alexandrian author of greatest note was Appian, who tells us that he had dwelt some years in Rome practising as a lawyer, and returned to Egypt on being appointed to a high post in the government of his native city. There he wrote his Roman history. It is an unornamented faithful narrative, divided according to the nations with whom the Romans fought, and particularly valued for the writer's knowledge of military tactics. It is indeed rather a history of the wars and conquests of the Romans than a history of the republic.

Proem.

Travellers, on reaching a distant point of a journey, or on viewing any remarkable object of their curiosity, have at all times been fond of carving or scribbling their names on the spot, to boast of their prowess to after comers; and never had any place been more favoured with memorials of this kind than the great statue of Amunothph at Thebes. This colossal statue, fifty-three feet high, was famed, as long as the Egyptian priesthood lasted, for sending forth musical sounds each morning at sunrise, when first touched by the sun's rays; and no traveller ever visited Thebes without listening for these remarkable notes. The journey through Upper Egypt was at this time perfectly open and safe, and the legs and feet of the

statue are covered with names, and inscriptions in prose and verse, of travellers who had visited it at sunrise during the reigns of Hadrian and the Antonines. From these curious memorials we learn the names of Egyptian prefects otherwise unknown to history; and from the same we learn that Hadrian visited Thebes a second time with his queen Sabina, in the fifteenth year of his reign, and his triumphal entry into Alexandria is marked on the coins of that year. When the empress first visited the statue at sunrise, she was disappointed at not hearing the musical sounds; but, on her hinting threats of the emperor's displeasure, her curiosity was gratified on the following morning.

CHAP. III.

Inscript. Transact. R. Soc. Lit. vol. ii. 2.

A. D. 130.

From this second visit and a longer acquaintance, Hadrian seems to have formed a very poor opinion of the Egyptians; and the following curious letter to his friend Servianus throws much light upon their religion as worshippers of Serapis, at the same time that it proves how numerous the Christians had become in Alexandria, even within seventy years of the evangelist Mark beginning to preach there.

'Hadrian Augustus to Servianus the consul, greeting:

Vopiscus, vit. Saturnini.

'As for Egypt, which you were praising to me, dearest Servianus, I have found its people wholly light, wavering, and flying after every breath of a report. Those who worship Serapis are Christians, and those who call themselves bishops of Christ are devoted to Serapis. There is no ruler of a Jewish synagogue, no Samaritan, no presbyter of the Christians, who is not a mathemati-

A. D. 134.

CHAP. III. cian, an augur, and a soothsayer. The very patriarch himself, when he came into Egypt, was by some made to worship Serapis, and by others to worship Christ. As a race of men they are seditious, vain, and spiteful; as a body, wealthy and prosperous, of whom nobody lives in idleness. Some blow glass, some make paper, and others linen. There is work for the lame and work for the blind; even those who have lost the use of their hands do not live in idleness. Their one god is nothing; Christians, Jews, and all nations worship him. I wish this body of men was better behaved, and worthy of their number; for as for that they ought to hold the chief place in Egypt. I have granted every thing unto them; I have restored their old privileges, and have made them grateful by adding new ones.'

Among the crowd of gods that had formerly been worshipped in Egypt, Serapis had latterly been rising above the rest. He was the god of the dead, who in the next world was to reward the good and punish the wicked; and in the growing worship of this one all-seeing judge of man's actions we cannot but trace the downfall of some of the evils of polytheism. Hence the opinion which seems to have been given to Hadrian, that the Egyptians had only one god, and his mistake in thinking that the worshippers of Serapis were Christians. The emperor indeed himself, though a polytheist, was very little of an idolator; for though he wished to add Christ to the number of the Roman gods, he on the other hand ordered that the temples built in his reign should have no images for worship; and in after ages it was com-

Lampridius, vit. Alexandri.

mon to call all temples without statues Hadrian's temples. But there were other and stronger reasons for Hadrian's classing the Christians with the Egyptian astrologers. A christian heresy was then rising into notice in Egypt in that very form, taking its opinions from the philosophy on which it was engrafted. Before christianity was preached in Alexandria, there were already three religions or forms of philosophy belonging to the three races of men who peopled that busy city. First, the Greek philosophy, which was chiefly Platonism; secondly, the eastern mysticism of the Egyptians; and lastly, the religion of the Jews. These were often more or less mixt, as we see them all united in the writings of Philo Judæus; and in the writings of the early converts we usually find christianity clothed in one or other of these forms, according to the opinions held by the writers before their conversion. The first christian teachers, the apostolic fathers as they are called because they had been hearers of the apostles themselves, were mostly Jews; but among the Egyptians and Greeks of Alexandria their religion lost much of its purely moral cast, and became, with the former, an astrological mysticism, and with the latter an abstract speculative theology. It is of the native Egyptians that Hadrian speaks in his letter just quoted; many of them had been already converted to christianity, and their religion had taken the form of Gnosticism.

Gnosticism, or science, for the name means no more, was not then new in Alexandria, nor were its followers originally Christians. It was the proud name claimed for their opinions by those

CHAP. III. who studied the eastern philosophy of the Magi; and Egypt seems to have been as much its native soil as India. Simon Magus, who, distrusting his own art of sorcery, wished to buy from the apostles the power of working miracles, is supposed to have been a Gnostic; the Nicolaitans spoken of in the book of Revelation were Gnostics; and it was against the antitheses of gnosticism, or the 'oppositions of science falsely so called,' that the apostle Paul warned Timothy. Cerinthus was one of the first who tried to engraft christianity on these opinions. He had studied many years in Alexandria, but it was in Asia Minor that he gathered round himself a sect of followers. The Gnostics taught that there were several *æons* or spiritual powers, which they thought were so many beings proceeding out of God, and to whom he had trusted the creation and government of the world; and Cerinthus said that one of these *æons*, named Christ, dwelt in the body of Jesus.

Acts, viii.

Epiphanius, Hæres. 24.

1 Tim. vi. 20.

Theodoret, Hæret. ii.

But Basilides was the founder of the Egyptian sect of christian Gnostics. By his learning and ability he raised himself and his followers into importance, and they would seem to be the persons spoken of by Hadrian. Basilides dwelt sometimes at Aphroditopolis and sometimes in the neighbourhood of Alexandria, but not in the capital itself; and he counted many more Egyptians than Greeks among his followers. He taught a religious fatalism, and the doctrine of election, that nobody could believe in christianity unless he had been elected to salvation, and that the elect could not fall by sin. He held that matter was itself eternal like the deity; and, making the divine at-

Eusebii Chronicon.

Epiphanius, Hæres. 24.

Clemens, Strom. i. ii.

Theodoret, Hæret.

Irenæus, adv. Hæres.

tributes into so many persons, taught that the deity had begotten out of himself seven *æons* or natures, namely, Mind, Word, Prudence, Wisdom, Power, Justice, and Peace; which eight persons together formed the one ever-blessed Ogdoad. Puzzled, as so many other enquirers have been, with the origin of evil, and with the difficulty of believing that the Giver of all good was himself the author of sin, Basilides made a second god of the devil or the personification of sin. He set a great value on mathematics; sometimes enquiring into Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks, and the number of months in our Lord's ministry; at other times naming God the Abraxas, because the letters of that word are the numerals for three hundred and sixty-five, the number of days in a year. The Gnostics endeavoured to blend these and other mischievous opinions with christianity. We still possess the traces of their astrology in a number of amulets and engraved gems with the word Abraxas and other emblems of their superstition. To their mystic rites we may perhaps trace many of the reproaches thrown upon our religion, such as that the Christians worshipped the head of an ass. To the same source we may also trace some of the peculiarities of the christian fathers, such as St. Ambrose calling Jesus 'the good scarabæus, who rolled up the before unshapen mud of our bodies;' a thought which seems to have been borrowed from the Egyptian priests, who in their hieroglyphics used the scarabæus to denote the word *only-begotten.*

Minucius Felix.

In Luc. x. 113.

Horapollo, lib. i. 10.

But there were other Egyptians who rivalled Basilides in forming large sects of christian Gnos-

CHAP. III.

Theodoret, Hæretic. i. Epiphanius, Hæres. i.

tics. One of these was Carpocrates of Alexandria, whose followers differed but little from the Basilidians, except in the greater looseness of their morals, and in their having portraits of Jesus. He was followed by his son Epiphanes, who had studied Platonism in Alexandria, and who was thus enabled to give a more Grecian form to the Gnostic opinions. Then came Isidorus, the son of Basilides, who taught the same heresy before the end of this reign; and in the following reign Valentinus, a native of Pharbæthum, who had studied in Alexandria. This last raised the number of the *æons* to thirty, and after preaching through Upper and Lower Egypt he carried his Gnostic opinions to Italy, where he threw the Roman church into alarm by the crowd of followers who eagerly embraced this mystical superstition. Apelles also, another Gnostic, when driven away from Italy, studied many years in Alexandria, and returned, says Tertullian, no better for living in that city of heretics.

Tertullian, Hæretic. xxx.

So far we have seen the form which christianity at first took among the Egyptians; but, as none of their writings are come down to our time, we only know their opinions from the reproaches of their enemies. It was not till the second generation of Gnostic teachers were spreading their poisonous heresies, that the Greek philosophers began to embrace christianity or the Christians to study Greek literature; but as soon as that was the case we have an unbroken chain of writings, in which we find christianity more or less mixt with Alexandrian Platonism. The philosopher Justin is, after those who had talked with the

apostles, the earliest christian writer whose works have reached us. He was a Greek, born in Samaria; but he studied many years in Alexandria under philosophers of all opinions. He did not however at once find in the schools the wisdom he was in search for. The Stoic could teach him nothing about God; the Peripatetic wished to be paid for his lessons before he gave them; and the Pythagorean proposed to begin with music and mathematics. Not content with these, Justin turned to the Platonist, whose purer philosophy seemed to add wings to his thoughts, and taught him to mount aloft towards true wisdom. While turning over in his mind what he had thus learnt in the several schools, he chanced one day to meet with an old man walking on the sea shore near Alexandria, by whom he was converted to christianity.

CHAP. III.

Dialog. cum Tryphone. Apolog. ii.

When Justin became a Christian he still wore the dress of a philosopher, and held to many of the opinions which he had gained from other sources; and his writings, like those of all the christian fathers of the Alexandrian school, have many traces of Platonism. His chief work is a Dialogue which he held under the porticoes of the Museum with a Jew named Trypho. He therein explains his own change of opinion from Platonism to christianity, and quotes largely from the Old Testament to prove to the Jew that Jesus is the Messiah whom his nation had been looking for. To these arguments Trypho makes suitable answers, and the dialogue ends with Justin's setting sail for Rome, Trypho thanking him for calling his attention to the prophecies, and wishing him health

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and a safe voyage, while Justin prays that Trypho may have his mind turned to Christ. At Rome he wrote his Apologies for Christianity, addressed to the Romans and to the emperor Antoninus Pius, and there, by his death in the cause of his religion, he gained the name of Justin Martyr.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. v.

In this reign the Jews, forgetful of what they had just suffered under Trajan, again rose against the power of Rome; and when Judea rebelled against its prefect Tinnius Rufus, a little army of Jews marched out of Egypt and Libya to help their brethren, and to free the holy land. But they were every where routed and put down with a slaughter equalled to their resolute struggles.

Orosius, lib. vii. 13.

G. Syncellus.

A. D. 130.

The Egyptian coins of Hadrian are very remarkable both for number and variety. In the sixth year of the reign we see a ship with spread sails, most likely in gratitude for the emperor's safe arrival in Egypt. In the eighth year we see the head of the favourite Antinous, who had been placed among the gods of the country. In the eleventh year, when the emperor took up the tribunitial power at Rome for a second period of ten years, we find a series of coins each bearing the name of the *nome* or district in which it was coined. This indeed is the most remarkable year of the most remarkable reign in the whole history of coinage; we have numerous coins for every year of this reign, and, in this year, for nearly every nome in Egypt.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

The beginning of the reign of Antoninus Pius was remarkable as being the end of the Sothic period of one thousand four hundred and sixty-one

Censorinus, de Die Nat. Theon, ap. Cory.

A. D. 138.

years; the moveable new-year's day had come round to the place from which it first began to move when the Egyptian calendar was arranged in the reign of Menophres or Thothmosis III. This was known by seeing that the dog-star rose heliacally, or just before sunrise, on the moveable new-year's day, as it had done at the beginning of the period. If the years had been counted from the beginning of this great year there could have been no doubt when it came to an end, as from the want of a leap year the new-year's day must have been always moving one day in four years; but no satisfactory reckoning of the years had been kept, and as the end of the period was only known by observation, there was most likely some little doubt about the exact year. Thus among the Greek astronomers Dositheus says that the dog-star rises heliacally twenty-three days after midsummer, Meton twenty-eight days, and Euctemon thirty-one days. This end of the Sothic period was called the return of the phœnix, and had been looked forward to by the Egyptians for many years, and is well marked on the coins of this reign. The coins for the first eight years teem with astronomy. There are several with the goddess Isis in a boat, which we know, from the zodiac in the Memnonium at Thebes, was meant for the heliacal rising of the dog-star. In the second and in the sixth year, we find on the coins the remarkable word AIΩN, *the age* or *period*, and an ibis with a glory of rays round its head, meant for the bird phœnix. In the seventh year we see Orpheus playing on his lyre, while all the animals of the forest are listening, thus pointing out the

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

CHAP. III. return of the golden age. In the eighth year we have the head of Serapis, surrounded by the seven planets, and the whole within the twelve signs of the zodiac; and on another coin we have the sun and moon within the signs of the zodiac. A series of twelve coins for the same year tells us that the house of the sun, in the language of the astrologers, is in the lion, that of the moon in the crab, the houses of Venus in the scales and the bull, those of Mars in the scorpion and the ram, those of Jupiter in the archer and the fishes, those of Saturn in the sea-goat and aquarius, those of Mercury in the virgin and the twins. On the coins of the same year we have the eagle and thunderbolt, the sphinx, the bull Apis, the Nile and crocodile, Isis nursing the child Horus, the hawk-headed Aroeris, and the winged sun. On coins of other years we have a camelopard; Horus sitting on the lotus flower; and a sacrifice to Isis, which was celebrated on the last day of the year. The coins also tell us of the bountiful overflow of the Nile, and of the goodness of the harvests that followed; thus, in the ninth, tenth, thirteenth, and seventeenth years, we see the river Nile in the form of an old man leaning on a crocodile, pouring corn and fruit out of a cornucopia, while a child by his side, with the figures 16, tells us that on those years the waters of the Nile rose to the wished-for height of sixteen cubits.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

Lucian. Rhetor. Præc.

From these latter coins it would seem that but little change had taken place in the soil of the Delta by the yearly deposit of mud; Herodotus says that sixteen cubits was the wished-for rise of the Nile in Lower Egypt when he was there.

Lib. ii. 13.

And we should almost think that the seasons were more favourable to the husbandman during the reigns of these good emperors, did we not set it down to the canals being better cleansed by the care of the prefect, and to the mildness of the government leaving the people at liberty to enjoy the bounties of nature, and at the same time making them more grateful in acknowledging them.

The mystic emblems on the coins are only what we might look for from the spread of the Gnostic opinions, and the eagerness with which the Greeks were copying the superstitions of the Egyptians; and while astrology was thus countenanced by the state, of course it was not less followed by the people. We find among the Theban ruins numerous tiles with inscriptions, describing the positions of the heavens at particular hours in this reign, for the astrologers therewith to calculate the nativities of the persons then born. On one is a complete horoscope containing the places of the sun, moon, and every planet, noted down on the zodiac, in degrees and minutes of a degree; and with these particulars the mathematician undertook to foretell the marriage, fortune, and death of the person who had been born at the instant when the heavenly bodies were so situated; and as the horoscope was buried in the tomb with the mummy we must suppose that it was thought to hold good even in the next world.

Young's Hierogl. pl. 52.

But astrology was not the only end to which mathematics were then turned. Claudius Ptolemy, the astronomer and geographer, was at that time the ornament of the mathematical school of Alexandria. In his writings he treats of the earth as

CHAP. III. the centre of the heavens, and the sun, moon, and planets as moving in circles round it. This had been the opinion of most of the early astronomers; but since this theory of the heavens received the stamp of his authority it is now always called the Ptolemaic system. He has left many valuable observations on the planets and fixt stars; but has done us a still greater service by collecting together in his great work, his Syntaxis or Almagest, the scattered observations and knowledge of the earlier astronomers. What is now of the greatest value to us is the series of eclipses which had been observed at Babylon and Alexandria for the eight hundred years before his time. By recording these Ptolemy has done more for chronology than any other writer whatever; on these we chiefly rest for the dates of the kings of Babylon, of Persia, of Judea, and of Egypt. In his work on geography Ptolemy explains how a globe is to be made, and how a map is to be laid down on a projection nearly the same as that now used. He measures the latitudes by the length of the longest day at each place, and the longitudes by their distance from the meridian of Alexandria.

In this reign was made a new survey of all the military roads in the Roman empire, called the Itinerary of Antoninus. It included the roads of Egypt; where, beside those of the Delta, there was a great road on each side of the Nile through Upper Egypt, reaching as far as Hiera Sycaminon, eighty Roman miles beyond Syene. Though Syene was the boundary of the province of Egypt, the Roman power was felt for about one hundred miles into Nubia, and we find the names of the

Wilkinson's Thebes.

emperors on several temples between Syene and Hiera Sycaminon. But beyond this, though we find inscriptions left by Roman travellers, the emperors seem never to have aimed at holding any cities against the inroads of the Blemmyi and other Arabs.

Arriani Periplus.

To this survey we must add the valuable geographical knowledge given by Arrian in his voyage round the coasts of the Red Sea, wherein he mentions the several ports and their distances, with the tribes and cities near the coast. The trade of Egypt to India, Ethiopia, and Arabia was then most valuable, and carried on with great activity; but, as the merchandize was in each case carried only for short distances from city to city, the traveller could gain but little knowledge of where it came from, or even sometimes of where it was going. The Egyptians sent coarse linen, glass bottles, brazen vessels, brass for money, and iron for weapons of war and hunting; and they received back ivory, rhinoceros teeth, Indian steel, Indian ink, silk, slaves, tortoise shell, myrrh, and other scents, with many other eastern articles of high price and little weight. The presents which the merchants made to the petty kings of Arabia were chiefly horses, mules, and gold and silver vases. Beside this, the ports on the Red Sea carried on a brisk trade among themselves in corn, expressed oil, wicker boats, and sugar. Of sugar, or honey from the cane, this is perhaps the earliest mention found in history; but Arrian does not speak of the sugar-cane as then new, nor does he tell us where it was grown. Had sugar been then seen for the first time he would cer-

CHAP. III. tainly have said so; it must have been an article well known in the Indian trade.

Antoninus was the only emperor in whose Greek inscriptions we find the complimentary titles of the Ptolemies; he is styled Euergetes and Soter. He made a hippodrome, or race-course, for the amusement of the citizens of Alexandria, and built two gates to the city, called the gate of the sun and the gate of the moon; the former fronting the harbour and the latter fronting the lake Maria, and joined by the great street which ran across the whole width of the city.

Inscript. apud Goltzium.

J. Malala, lib. xi.

Achilles Tatius, v.

But this reign was not wholly without trouble; there was a rebellion in which the prefect Dinarchus lost his life, and for which the Alexandrians were severely punished by the emperor.

The coins of Marcus Aurelius, the successor of Antoninus Pius, have a rich variety of subjects, falling not far short of those of the last reign. On those of the fifth year, the bountiful overflow of the Nile is gratefully acknowledged by the figure of the god holding a cornucopia, and a troop of sixteen children playing around him. It had been not unusual in hieroglyphical writing to express a thought by means of a figure which in the Coptic language had nearly the same sound; and we have seen this copied on the coins in the case of a Greek word, in the bird phœnix being used for the palm-branch phœnix, or the hieroglyphical word *year*; and here we seem to have the same done in the case of a Latin word, as the sixteen children or *cupids* mean sixteen *cubits*, the wished-for height of the Nile's overflow. The statue of the Nile which had been carried by Vespasian to

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

A. D. 166.

Pliny, lib. xxxvi. 12.

Rome and placed in the temple of Peace, was surrounded by the same sixteen children. CHAP. III.

We find no coins in the eleventh or fourteenth years of this reign, which makes it probable that it was in the eleventh year that the rebellion of the native soldiers took place. These were most likely Arabs who had been admitted into the ranks of the legions, but having withdrawn to the desert now harrassed the towns with their marauding inroads, and it was not till after some time that they were wholly put down by Avidius Cassius, at the head of the legions. But Cassius himself was unable to resist the temptation which always beset a successful general, and after this victory allowed himself to be declared emperor by the legions of Egypt; and this seems to have been the cause of no coins being struck in Alexandria in the fourteenth year of the reign. Cassius left his son Mæcianus in Alexandria, with the title of Pretorian Prefect, while he himself marched into Syria to secure that province. There the legions followed the example of their brethren in Egypt, and the Syrians were glad to acknowledge a general of the eastern armies as their sovereign. But on Marcus leading an army into Syria he was met with the news that the rebels had repented and had put Cassius to death, and he then moved his army towards Egypt; but before his arrival the Egyptian legions had in the same manner put Mæcianus to death, and all had returned to their allegiance.

A. D. 172.

J. Capitolinus, in vitâ Antonini.

A. D. 175.

When Marcus arrived in Alexandria the citizens were agreeably surprised by the mildness of his conduct. He at once forgave his enemies; and

CHAP. III. nobody whatever was put to death for having joined in the rebellion. The severest punishment, even to the children of Cassius, was banishment from the province, but without restraint, and with the forfeiture of less than half their patrimony. In Alexandria the emperor wholly laid aside the severity of the soldier, and mingled with the people as a fellow-citizen in the temples and public places; while with the professors in the Museum he was a philosopher, joining them at their studies in the schools.

Athenæus, if we may judge from his writings, must then have been in the centre of the Alexandrian wits and men of learning. His Deipnosophist, or Table-talk of the Philosophers, is a large work, full of amusing anecdotes and curious information, gathered from authors without number that have long since been lost. His industry and memory are more remarkable than his judgement or good taste; and we are sorry to find that the table-talk is too often turned towards eating and drinking. We learn from his writings that he was born at Naucratis, and was the friend of Pancrates who lived under Hadrian, and also of Oppian, who died in the reign of Caracalla.

Suidas. Valerius Harpocration of Alexandria may have lived about the same time; but at any rate not earlier than Athenæus, since he had read the Deipnosophist. He was the author of a lexicon in explanation of the writings of the ten Grecian orators. It is one of the many useful works of learning and industry without genius for which the world is indebted to the grammarians of Alexandria. It explains the customs of the judges and

lawyers at Athens, and the lives of the persons mentioned by the orators. CHAP. III.

Ælius Harpocration was another grammarian of Alexandria, who lived about the same time, unless Suidas has made two persons out of one. He was the author of several works not now extant, and was called to Rome to give lessons in Greek to the young Ælius Verus, the adopted son of Hadrian and Marcus; and from the youthful patron the grammarian received the name of Ælius. J. Capitolinus, in vitâ Veri.

Hephæstion of Alexandria was another grammarian who assisted in the education of Verus. He was the author of the Encheiridion, a valuable work on the metres, lines, and feet of Greek poetry. The Encheiridion is quoted by Longinus, and is still the chief authority on the subject. When the age of poetry was past, the grammarians explained the rules by which verses had been formed; had there been any chance of a new poet arising, they would not have wasted their labour in laying down the laws of versification, which might have been immediately contradicted.

To these grammarians we must add Julius Pollux of Naucratis, who afterwards removed to Athens, where he taught rhetoric. He was the author of the Onomasticon, an useful work on the words and names used in science; and he dedicated it to the emperor Commodus. Suidas.

Lucian, the author of the Dialogues, was at that time secretary to the prefect of Egypt, and he boasts that he had a large share in writing the laws and ordering the justice of the province. Here the laughing philosopher found a broad Apolog. pro Merc. Cond.

CHAP. III. mark for his humour, in the religion of the Egyptians; their worshipping animals and water-jars; their love of magic; the general mourning through the land on the death of the bull Apis; their funeral ceremonies; their placing their mummies round the dinner table as so many guests, and pawning a father or a brother when in want of money. So little had the customs changed, that the young Egyptians of high birth still wore their long hair tied in one lock and hanging over the ear, as we see on the Theban sculptures fifteen centuries earlier; but the freedom which Lucian used in making game of the old habits would seem to prove that they were already being weakened by the spread of the new religion from Judea.

Lucian, de Luctu.

Navigium.

Eutychii Annales.

Before the end of this reign we meet with a strong proof of the spread of christianity in Egypt. The number of believers made it necessary for the bishop of Alexandria to appoint three bishops under him, to look after the churches in three other cities; and accordingly Demetrius, who then held that office, took upon himself the rank if not the name of Patriarch of Alexandria. Another and a painful proof of the number of Egyptian Christians is seen in the frauds of which their writers were guilty, most likely to satisfy the minds of the pagan converts that they had already made, rather than from a wish to make new ones. About this time was written by an unknown christian author, a poem in eight books, named the Sibylline Verses, which must not be mistaken for the pagan fragments of the same name. It is written in the form of a prophecy, in the style used by the Gnostics, and is full of dark sentences and

half-expressed hints. It begins with a slight glance at the history of the Jews, it grieves in a melancholy tone over the several nations of the earth, and foretells Christ's coming about the time that Egypt should be conquered by the Romans. It then enumerates the emperors who are to reign over Rome, down to the three successors of him who is to be named after the Adriatic Sea, in whose family the sceptre is to remain for ever. This fixes the time of the author to the reign of Aurelius and Verus, or at latest to that of Commodus; while the whole train of thought points to Alexandria as the place where it was written. These verses profess to be the work of an inspired sibyl of the time of Noah, and they were received by many of the Egyptian Christians as a proof of the divine mission of Jesus. They are undoubtedly a pious fraud, and as such they deceived many. Celsus charges the Christians with being sibyllists; but, notwithstanding this sneer, these verses are quoted as authority by many christian writers, and even by the Romish church to the present day.

Ap. Origen.

Hymn *Dies iræ.*

Another spurious christian work of about the same time is the Clementina, or the Recognitions of Clemens bishop of Rome. It is an account of the travels of the apostle Peter, and his conversation with Simon Magus; but the author's knowledge of the Egyptian mythology, of the opinions of the Greek philosophers, and of the astrological rules by which fortunes are foretold from the planets' places, amply prove that he was an Egyptian or an Alexandrian. He was most likely a Jewish convert, as he does not believe the divi-

CHAP. III. nity of Jesus, and he puts into the mouth of Simon Magus, the heretic, the Platonic doctrine of two inferior gods proceeding from the Creator of all things. No name ranked higher among the Christians than that of Clemens Romanus; and this is only one out of several cases of christian authors who wished to give weight to their own opinions by passing them upon the world as his writings.

A third proof of the spread of christianity is the pagan philosophers' thinking it necessary to write against it. Celsus, an epicurean of Alexandria, was one of the first to attack it; but his works are only known to us in Origen's Answer. The arguments which he brought forward are not altogether the same as those by which christianity has been assailed in more modern days. Celsus scarcely called in question the truth of the gospels as a history; he might perhaps himself, as a child, have seen men who had seen the apostles. He did not doubt the miracles, but argued that they proved nothing, as they might have been worked by magic or by Egyptian arts. But he refused to grant the antiquity of the Hebrew scriptures, and said that they were borrowed from the Egyptians; he brought forward the opinion of the Jews that their prophecies respecting the Messiah did not point to Jesus; and he blamed the philosophy of the New Testament as being unfavourable to learning, and its morality as too forgiving towards sinners.

Origen, contra Celsum.

Origen, whom we shall hereafter have to speak of, answered the several arguments of Celsus with skill and candour. He challenged him to a comparison between the Christians and pagans in point

of morals, in Alexandria or in any other city. He argues in the most forcible way that christianity had overcome all difficulties, and had spread itself far and wide against the power of kings and emperors, which it could not have done without the help of God; and he shows that nobody but a Christian ever died as a martyr to the truth of his religion. He makes good use of the Jewish prophecies; but, unlike modern writers on the truth of christianity, he brings forward no proofs in support of the truth of the gospel history; they were not wanted, as Celsus and the pagans had not called it in question.

Celsus was a believer in one God, and thought it unimportant under what name he was spoken of, whether as Ammon, Jupiter, or Adonai. He defended the pagans, as only believing that their numerous gods were so many angels or servants of the Almighty. He blamed the Hebrew writers for saying that God created man in his own image, because God is without form. But though a pagan, Celsus had a great respect for the Hebrew scriptures; in quoting the Dialogue between Jason and Papiscus, the one a Christian and the other a Jew of Alexandria, though he argued that the Christian's arguments were weak, it is clear that he in some part admitted the weight of an appeal to prophecy, in proof of Jesus being a divine teacher. Jews and Christians were not then separated by the wide gulph that was set between them by the council of Nice. They were fellow sufferers under pagan persecution and contempt, and they made common cause against atheism on the one side and idolatry on the other. The real

CHAP. III. strength of christianity lay then as now in the purity of its morality, and in its consoling view of God's mercy; but the logical arguments by which it was supported during the first two centuries were more drawn from the Hebrew prophecies than they ever have been since.

Chapter IV.

The Reigns of Commodus, Pertinax, Niger, Severus, Caracalla, Macrinus, Elagabalus, Alexander, Maximinus, Balbinus, the Gordians, and Philip.

The late emperor had pardoned the children of the rebel general Avidius Cassius, but Commodus began his reign by putting them to death; and, while thus disregarding the example and advice of his father, he paid his memory the idle compliment of continuing his series of dates on his own coins. But the Egyptian coinage of Commodus clearly betrays the sad change that was gradually taking place in the arts of the country; we no longer see the former beauty and variety of subjects; and the silver, which had before been very much mixt with copper, was under Commodus hardly to be known from brass. On a coin of the tenth year we see the lighthouse of the island of Pharos with a ship sailing away from it, in token of the Egyptian fleet which Commodus established to fetch with the necessary regularity the yearly supply of corn from Alexandria.

Vulcatius, vit. Cassii. A. D. 181.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

Lampridius, vit. Commodi.

The celebrated Museum, which had held the vast library of the Ptolemies, had been burnt by the soldiers of Julius Cæsar in one of their battles with the Egyptian army in the streets of Alexandria; but the loss had been in part repaired by Mark Antony's gift of the library from Pergamus to the

CHAP. IV. temple of Serapis. The new library however would seem to have been placed in a building somewhat separated from the temple, as when the temple of Serapis was burnt in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, and again when it was in part destroyed by fire in the second year of this reign, we hear of no loss of books; and two hundred years later the library of the Serapeium had risen to the number of seven hundred thousand volumes.

Eusebii Chronicon.

Upper Egypt had latterly been falling off fast in population. It had been drained of all its hoarded wealth. Its carrying trade through Coptos to the Red Sea was much lessened. Any tribute that its temples received from the piety of Lower Egypt was small. Nubia was a desert; and a few soldiers at Syene were enough to guard the poverty of the Thebaid from the inroads of the Blemmyi. It was no longer necessary to send criminals to the Oasis; it was enough to banish them to the neighbourhood of Thebes. Hence we learn but little of the state of the country. Now and then a traveller, like the orator Aristides and his friend Dion, after measuring the pyramids of Memphis and the underground tombs of Thebes, might venture as far as the cataracts, and watch the sun at noon on the longest day, shining to the bottom of the sacred well at Syene; but even such travellers were few. Aristides indeed lost the notes which he made upon his journey; and from him we learn little beyond the measure of the Nile's rise, which was twenty-eight cubits at Elephantine, twenty-one at Coptos, and fourteen at Memphis.

Aristides, Orat. Ægypt.

The sculptures on the beautiful temples of Contra-Latopolis were finished in this reign, and the

Wilkinson's Thebes.

emperor's names and titles were carved on the walls in hieroglyphics with those of the Ptolemies, under whom the temple itself had been built. Commodus may perhaps not have been the last emperor whose name and praises were carved in hieroglyphics; but all the great buildings in the Thebaid, which add such value to the early history of Egypt, had ceased before his reign. Other buildings of a less lasting form were no doubt being built, such as the Greek temples of Antinoopolis and Ptolemais, which have long since been swept away; but the Egyptian priests, with their gigantic undertakings, their noble plan of working for after ages rather than for themselves, were nearly ruined, and we find no building now standing in Egypt that was raised after the time of the Antonines.

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Denon, pl. 53.

But the poverty of the Egyptians was not the only cause why they built no more temples. Though the colossal statue of Amunothph still uttered its musical notes each morning at sunrise, nevertheless the religion itself, for which the temples had been built, was fast giving way before the silent spread of christianity. The religion of the Egyptians, unlike that of the Greeks, was no longer upheld by the magistrate; it rested solely on the belief of its followers, and it may have sunk into christianity the faster for the greater number of truths which were contained in it than in the paganism of other nations. The scanty hieroglyphical records tell us little of thoughts, feelings, and opinions. Indeed that cumbersome mode of writing, which alone was used in religious matters, was little fitted for any thing beyond the most

Inscript. R. Soc. Lit. vol. ii. 2.

CHAP. IV. material parts of their mythology. Hence we must not believe that the Egyptian polytheism was quite so gross as would appear from the sculptures; and indeed we there learn that they believed, even at the earliest times, in a resurrection from the tomb, a day of judgement, and a future state of rewards and punishments.

But the Egyptians, like most other nations, had two religions, one for the many and one for the few; one, material and visible, for the crowds in the outer court-yards, in which every hero was made a god and every attribute of deity was made a person; and another, spiritual and intellectual, for the learned in the schools and the priests in the sacred colleges. Even if we were not told, we could have no doubt but the main point of secret knowledge among the learned was a disbelief in those very doctrines which they were teaching to the vulgar. But we learn from Celsus that even those who believed in the gods of the vulgar looked upon them only as so many inferior agents of the one God. And we are told more expressly in the religious treatise of Hermes Trismegistus, which was written about this reign, that the Egyptians taught that first of truths, that beside the Creator and his created works there was no third being; that all that was visible to eyesight was created; and that the one God, the creator and father of all, was an all-powerful, good, invisible being. How far the Egyptian priests taught this in their schools as early as the great Jewish lawgiver taught it openly to his whole nation, we have now no means of knowing; but the writings of Plato, who studied at Heliopolis, will be acknow-

Celsus, ap. Origen.

Lib. xvii.

ledged as evidence that it was there taught before the Greeks had a notion of it.

The Egyptian priests, who had been proud of the superiority of their own doctrines over the paganism of their neighbours, felt for the overthrow of their national religion. 'Our land,' says the author of Hermes Trismegistus, 'is the temple of the world; but as wise men should foresee all things, you should know that a time is coming when it will seem that the Egyptians have by an unfailing piety served God in vain, and their holy religion will become void; for the divinity will return from earth to heaven, Egypt will be forsaken, and the land which was the seat of the divinity will be void of religion. For when strangers shall possess this kingdom, religion will be neglected, and laws made against piety and divine worship, with punishment on those who favour it. Then this holy seat will be full of idolatry, idols' temples, and dead mens' tombs. O Egypt, Egypt! there will remain only a feigned show of thy religion, not believed by posterity; and nought but the letters which stand engraven on thy pillars will declare thy pious deeds; and in thee will dwell the Scythians, the Indians, or some other barbarous nation. The divinity will fly to heaven, and Egypt will be forsaken by God and man. I call upon thee, most holy river, I foretell unto thee what will come to pass. Thy waters and holy streams will be filled with blood, and will overflow thy banks, so that the dead will be more numerous than the living; and he that remains alive will be known to be an Egyptian only by his language, but in his deeds he will seem a barbarian.'

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The spread of christianity among the Egyptians was such that their teachers found it necessary to supply them with a life of Jesus, written in their own language, that they might the more readily explain to them his claim to be obeyed, and the nature of his commands. The Gospel according to the Egyptians, for such was the name this work bore, has long since been lost, and was little quoted by the Alexandrians. It was most likely a translation from one of the four gospels, though it had some different readings, and contained some things not found in the New Testament; but it was not valued by the Greeks, and was lost on the spread of the Coptic translation of the whole New Testament.

Clemens Alexandr. Strom. iii.

The grave serious Christians of Upper Egypt were of course very unlike the lively Alexandrians; but though the difference arose from peculiarities of national character it was only spoken of as a difference of opinion. The Egyptians formed an ascetic sect in the church, who were called heretics by the Alexandrians, and named Docetæ. They of necessity used the Gospel according to the Egyptians, which is quoted by Cassianus, one of their writers; many of them renounced marriage, with the other pleasures and duties of social life, and placed their chief virtue in painful self-denial, and out of them sprung that remarkable class of hermits, monks, and fathers of the desert, who in a few centuries covered Europe with monasteries.

It is remarkable that the translation of the gospels into Coptic introduced a Greek alphabet into the Coptic language. Though for all religious

purposes the scribes continued to use the ancient hieroglyphics, in which we trace the first steps by which pictures are made to represent words and syllables rather than letters, yet for the common purposes of writing they had long since made use of the *enchorial* or common hand, in which the earlier system of writing is improved by the characters representing only letters. But as the hieroglyphics were also always used for carved writing on all subjects, and the common hand only used on papyrus with a reed pen, the latter became wholly an indistinct running hand; it lost that beauty and regularity which the hieroglyphics, like the Greek and Roman characters, kept by being carved on stone, and hence it would seem arose the want of a new alphabet for the New Testament. This was made by merely adding to the Greek alphabet six new letters for those sounds which the Greeks did not use; and the writing was then written from left to right like an European language.

It was only on the ancient hieroglyphics thus falling into disuse that the Greeks of Alexandria, almost for the first time, had the curiosity to study the principles on which they were written. Clemens Alexandrinus, who thought no branch of knowledge unworthy of his attention, gives a slight account of them, nearly agreeing with the results of our modern discoveries. He mentions the three kinds of writing; first, the *hieroglyphic*; secondly, the *hieratic*, which is nearly the same, but written with a pen, and less ornamental than the carved figures; and thirdly, the *epistolographic*, or common alphabetic writing, now usually

Strom. v.

CHAP. IV. called the enchorial. He then divides the hieroglyphic into the alphabetic and the symbolic; and lastly, he divides the symbolic characters into the imitative, the figurative, and the allegorical.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist.

In this reign Pantænus, a stoic philosopher, held the first place among the Christians of Alexandria. He is celebrated for uniting the study of heathen learning with a religious zeal which led him to preach christianity in India. He introduced a taste for philosophy among the Christians, and was the founder of the catechetical school which gave birth to the series of learned christian writers that flourished in Alexandria for the next century. To have been a learned man and a Christian, and to have encouraged learning among the catechists in his schools may seem deserving of no great praise. But we shall hereafter see that in the quarrels between pagans and Christians, and between the self-styled orthodox and the heretics, learning was often reproached with being unfavourable to true religion, and then it will be granted that it was no small merit to have founded a school in which learning and christianity went hand in hand for nearly two centuries. Pantænus has left no writings of his own, and is best known through his pupil or fellow-student Clemens. He is said to have brought to Alexandria from the east a copy of St. Matthew's gospel in the original Hebrew, now unfortunately lost.

Hieronymus, Catal. Script.

The learned, industrious, and pious Clemens, who, to distinguish him from Clemens of Rome, is usually called Clemens Alexandrinus, succeeded Pantænus in the catechetical school, and was

at the same time a voluminous writer. He was in his philosophy a Platonist, though sometimes called of the Eclectic school. He has left an Address to the Gentiles, a treatise on christian behaviour called Pedagogus, and eight books of Stromata, or collections. In these writings he pleads the cause of learning, both as a Christian and a scholar, saying that all science is sent from heaven as the true foundation of religion; and he does not scruple to quote Plato for his philosophical arguments, while quoting the New Testament for its religious truths. He points out to us the passage in Plato, which we could scarcely otherwise have found, in which that philosopher was said to have taught the doctrine of the trinity. 'When Plato says, All things are around the King of all, and all things are because of him, and he is the cause of all that is good; and the things which are second are around the second; and the things which are third are around the third; I cannot but understand that the holy trinity was meant; that the third was the Holy Spirit, and the second the Son, through whom all things were made according to the will of the Father.'

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Strom. v.

(Epist. ad Dionys. ii.)

But Clemens was not wholly free from the mysticism which was the chief mark of the Gnostic sect. He thought much of the sacred power of numbers. Abraham had three hundred and eighteen servants when he rescued Lot, which, when written in Greek numerals thus, ιΤΗ, formed the sacred sign for the name of Jesus. Ten was a perfect number, and is that of the commandments given to Moses. Seven was a glorious number, and there are seven pleiades, seven planets, seven

Strom. vi.

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During the reign of Pertinax, which lasted only three months, we find no traces of his power in Egypt, except the money which the Alexandrians coined in his name. It seems to have been the duty of the prefect of the mint, as soon as ever he heard of an emperor's death, to lose no time in issuing coins in the name of his successor. It was one of the means to proclaim and secure the allegiance of the province for the new emperor.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

A. D. 194.

During the reign of Commodus, Pescennius Niger had been at the head of the legion that was employed in Upper Egypt in stopping the inroads of their troublesome neighbours, who already sometimes bore the name of Saracens. He was a hardy soldier, and strict in his discipline, while he shared the labours of the field and of the camp with the men under him. He would not allow them the use of wine, and once, when the troops that guarded the frontier at Syene sent to ask for it, he told them that they had got the Nile and could not possibly want more to drink. Once, when a cohort had been routed by the Saracens, the men complained that they could not fight without wine; but he told them that those who had just beaten

Spartianus, vit. Pescennii.

A. D. 194.

them drank nothing but water. He gained the love and thanks of the people of Upper Egypt by thus bridling the lawlessness of the troops; and they are said to have given him his statue cut in black basalt, in allusion to his name Niger. The statue was placed in his Roman villa, but was most likely a statue not of himself but of one of the Egyptian gods. CHAP. IV.

But on the death of Pertinax, when Septimius Severus declared himself emperor in Pannonia, Niger, who was then in the province of Egypt, did the same. Egypt and the Egyptian legions readily and heartily joined his party, which made it unnecessary for him to stay in Alexandria; so he marched upon Greece, Thrace, and Macedonia. But there, after a few months, he was met by the army of his rival, who also sent a second army into Egypt; and he was defeated and slain at Cyzicus in Mycia, after having been acknowledged as emperor in Egypt and Syria for perhaps a year and a few months. We find no Alexandrian coins of Niger, although we cannot allow a shorter space of time to his reign than one whole year together with a few months of the preceding and following years. Within that time Severus had to march upon Rome against his first rival Julian, to punish the prætorian guards, and then to conquer Niger. Spartianus, vit. Severi.

After the death of his rival, when Severus was the undisputed master of the empire, and was no longer wanted in the other provinces, he found leisure to visit Egypt; and like other active-minded travellers he examined the pyramids of Memphis and the temples of Thebes, and laughed at the worship of Serapis and the Egyptian animals. A. D. 196.

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CHAP. IV. His visit to Alexandria was marked by many new laws. Now that the Greeks of that city, crushed beneath two centuries of foreign rule, had lost any remains of courage or of pride that could make them feared by their Roman master, he relaxed part of the strict policy of Augustus. He gave them a senate and a municipal form of government, a privilege that had hitherto been refused in distrust to that great city, though freely granted in other provinces, where rebellion was less dreaded. He also ornamented the city with a temple to Rhea, and with a public bath which was named after himself the Bath of Severus.

J. Malala.

Philostratus, in vit. Sophist.

The quick succession of three usurping emperors within three years of the murder of Commodus had left many cities marked with the guilt of rebellion, and some eager to rush into it. Proclus the sophist, who had a profitable school of rhetoric at Naucrates, his native city, found the place then too much unsettled by the political changes for his school to thrive there; so he put his large property, of money, furniture, slaves, books, papyrus, and other merchandise, on board a ship, and removed to Athens, where a number of pupils flocked around him as before, each paying one hundred drachmæ, or about four pounds sterling, for as many lectures as he chose to attend.

Spartianus, vit. Severi.

Severus made a law, says the pagan historian, forbidding anybody, under a severe punishment, from becoming Jew or Christian. But he who gives the blow is likely to speak of it more lightly than he who smarts under it; and we learn from the historian of the Church that, in the tenth year of this reign, the Christians suffered a cruel perse-

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi.

A. D. 204.

cution from their governors and their fellow-citizens. Among others who then lost their lives for their religion was Leonides the father of Origen. He left seven orphan children, of whom the eldest, that justly celebrated writer, was only sixteen years old, but was already deeply read in the holy Scriptures, and in the great writers of Greece. As the property of Leonides was forfeited, his children were left in poverty; but the young Origen was adopted by a wealthy lady, zealous for the new religion, by whose help he was enabled to continue his studies under Clemens. In order to read the Old Testament in the original he made himself master of the Hebrew language, which was a study then very unusual among the Greeks, whether Jews or Christians.

In this persecution of the Church the catechetical school was broken up and scattered, so that there was no public teaching of christianity in Alexandria. But Origen ventured to do that privately which was forbidden to be done openly; and when the storm had blown over, Demetrius, the bishop, appointed him to that office at the head of the school which he had already so bravely taken upon himself in the hour of danger; and Origen could boast of several pupils who added their names to the noble list of martyrs who lost their lives for christianity. Origen afterwards removed to Palestine, and fell under the displeasure of his own bishop for being there ordained a presbyter.

Hieronymus, Cat. Script.

In Egypt Severus seems to have dated the years of his reign from the death of Niger, though he had reigned in Rome since the deaths of Pertinax

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

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Tochon, Med. Egypt.

and Julian. His Egyptian coins are either copper, or brass plated with a little silver; and after a few reigns even those last traces of a silver coinage are lost in this falling country. In tracing the history of a word's meaning we often throw a light upon the customs of a nation. Thus, in Rome, gold was so far common that avarice was called the love of gold; while in Greece, where silver was the metal most in use, money was called *argurion*. In the same way it is curiously shown that silver was no longer used in Egypt, by our finding that the brass coin of one hundred and ten grains weight, as being the only piece of money seen in circulation, was named an *argurion*.

Epiphanius, de Ponderibus.

Herodianus, lib. iv. A. D. 211.

The latter years of the reign of Caracalla were spent in visiting the provinces of his wide empire; and after he had passed through Thrace and Asia Minor, Egypt had the misfortune to be honoured by a visit from its emperor. The satirical Alexandrians, who in the midst of their own follies and vices were always clever in lashing those of their rulers, had latterly been turning their unseemly jokes against Caracalla. They had laughed at his dressing like Achilles and Alexander the Great, while in his person he was below the usual height; and they had not forgotten his murder of his brother, and his talking of marrying his own mother. Some of these dangerous witticisms had reached his ears at Rome, and they were not forgotten. But Caracalla never showed his displeasure, and as he passed through Antioch he gave out that he was going to visit the city founded by Alexander the Great, and to consult the oracle in the temple of Serapis.

The Alexandrians in their joy got ready the hecatombs for his sacrifices; and he entered their city through rows of torches to the sound of soft music, while the air was sweetened with costly scents, and the road scattered with flowers. After a few days the emperor sacrificed in the temple of Serapis, and then visited the tomb of Alexander, where he took off his scarlet cloak, his rings, and his girdle covered with precious stones, and dutifully laid them in the sarcophagus of the hero. The Alexandrians were delighted with their visitor, and crowds flocked into the city to witness the daily and nightly shows, little aware of the unforgiving malice that was lurking in his mind.

The emperor then issued a decree that all the youths of Alexandria, of an age to enter the army, should meet him in a plain on the outside of the city; they had already a Macedonian and a Spartan phalanx, and he was going to make an Alexandrian phalanx. Accordingly the plain was filled with thousands of young men, who were ranged in bodies according to their height, their age, and their fitness for bearing arms, while their friends and relations came in equal numbers to be witnesses of their honour. The emperor moved through their ranks, and was loudly greeted with their cheers, while the army which encircled the whole plain was gradually closing round the crowd and lessening the circle. When he thought that the ring was formed, Caracalla withdrew with his guards and gave the looked-for signal. The soldiers then lowered their spears and charged on the unarmed crowd, of whom a part were butchered and part driven headlong into the ditches and

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canals; and such was the slaughter that the waters of the Nile were said to have flowed coloured to the sea. Caracalla then returned to Antioch, congratulating himself on the revenge that he had taken on the Alexandrians for their jokes; not however till he had consecrated in the temple of Serapis the sword with which he boasted that he had slain his brother Geta.

Dion Cass. lib. lxxvii.

Caracalla further punished the Alexandrians by stopping the public games and the allowance of corn to the citizens; and to lessen the danger of their rebelling he had the fortifications carried between the city and the great suburb the Bruchium, thus dividing Alexandria into two fortified cities, with towers to the walls between them. Hitherto, under the Romans as under the Ptolemies, the Alexandrians had been the trusted favourites of their rulers, who made use of them to keep the Egyptians in bondage. But under Caracalla that policy was changed; the Alexandrians were treated as enemies; and we see for the first time Egyptians taking their seat in the Roman senate, and the Egyptian religion openly cultivated by the emperor, who then built a temple in Rome to the goddess Isis.

Lib. li.

Spartianus.

J. Capitolinus. A. D. 217.

On the murder of Caracalla, Macrinus, who was thought to be the author of his death, was acknowledged as emperor; and though he only reigned for about two months, yet as the Egyptian new-year's day fell within that time we find Alexandrian coins for the first and second years of his reign. The Egyptians pretended that the death of Caracalla had been foretold by signs from heaven; that a ball of fire had fallen on the temple

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

Dion Cass. lib. lxxviii.

of Serapis, which destroyed nothing but the sword with which Caracalla had slain his brother; and that an Egyptian named Serapion, who had been thrown into a lion's den for naming Macrinus as the future emperor, had escaped unhurt by the wild beasts.

Macrinus recalled Julian, the prefect of Egypt, and appointed to that post his friend Basilianus, with Marius Secundus, a senator, as second in command, being the first senator that had ever held command in Egypt. He was himself at Antioch when Bassianus, a Syrian, pretending to be the son of Caracalla, offered himself to the legions as that emperor's successor. When the news reached Alexandria that the Syrian troops had joined the pretended Antoninus, the prefect Basilianus at once put to death the public couriers that brought the unwelcome tidings. But when, a few days afterwards, it was known that Macrinus had been defeated and killed, the doubts about his successor led to serious struggles between the troops and the Alexandrians. The Alexandrians could have had no love for a son of Caracalla; Basilianus and Secundus had before declared against him; but, on the other hand, the choice of the soldiers was guided by their brethren in Syria. The citizens flew to arms, and day after day was the battle fought in the streets of Alexandria between two parties, neither of whom was strong enough, even if successful, to have any weight in settling the fate of the Roman empire. Marius Secundus lost his life in the struggle; the prefect Basilianus fled to Italy to escape from his own soldiers, and the province of Egypt then followed the example

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of the rest of the East in acknowledging the new emperor.

Lampridius, vita Heliogabali. A. D. 218. Zoega, Num. Æg.

For four years Rome was disgraced by the sovereignty of Elagabalus, the pretended son of Caracalla, and we find his coins each year in Alexandria. He was succeeded by the young Alexander, whose amiable virtues could not gain for him the respect which he lost by the weakness of his government. The Alexandrians, always ready to lampoon their rulers, laughed at his wish to be thought a Roman; they called him the Syrian, the high priest, and the ruler of the synagogue. Epagathus, the prefect of Egypt, owed his appointment to the emperor's want of power to punish him. He had headed a mutiny of the prætorian guards in Rome, in which their general Ulpian was killed; and Alexander, afraid to punish the murderers, made the ringleader of the rebels prefect of Egypt; so little did it then seem necessary to follow the cautious policy of Augustus, or to fear a rebellion in that province. But after a short time, when Epagathus had been forgotten by the Roman legion, he was removed to the government of Crete, and then at last punished with death.

Lampridius, vita Alexandri. A. D. 222.

Dion Cassius, lib. lxxx.

Potamo of Alexandria had formerly tried, though with very little success, to unite the followers of Plato and Aristotle, by showing how far the doctrines of those two philosophers agreed. But in this reign he was followed in his attempt by Ammonius Saccas, who became the founder of a new and most important school of philosophy, that of the Alexandrian Platonists. It is much to be regretted that we know so little of a man who was

Diog. Laert. Proem.

Suidas.

able to work so great a change in the philosophy of the pagan world, and who had so great an influence on the opinions of the Christians. But he wrote nothing, and is only known to us through his pupils. The most celebrated of these were Plotinus, Herennius, and Origen, together with Longinus, the great master of the 'sublimè,' who owns him his teacher in elegant literature. Ammonius was unequalled in the variety and depth of his knowledge, and was by his followers called heaven-taught. He aimed at putting an end to the triflings and quarrels of the philosophers by showing that all the great truths were the same in each system, and by pointing out where Plato and Aristotle agreed rather than where they differed.

Porphyrius, vit. Plotini.

Eunapius, vit. Soph.

Plotinus, his great pagan pupil, was born at Lycopolis in Upper Egypt, and, after studying philosophy for many years, he entered the school of Ammonius at the age of twenty-eight, where he studied for eleven years more. In the works of Plotinus we have the philosophy of the Greeks, freed from their mythology, taking up the form of a philosophical religion, a deism accompanied with a pure and high-toned morality, but clouded in all the darkness of metaphysics. Like the other Platonists he enlarges on the doctrine of the trinity, though without using the word. He argues against the philosophy of the Gnostics, and points out that in calling the world evil, and the cause of evil, they were denying the goodness or power of the Creator, and lowering the model upon which their own characters were to be formed. He teaches that it is not enough for a man to have the virtues of society, or even to be without vices,

Porphyrius, vit. Plotini.

CHAP. IV. but he must aim higher, and take God for his model; and that after all his pains he will still fall far short of his aim; for though one man may be like another, as a picture is like a picture, yet a good man can only be like God, as a copy is like the original.

In the Greek mythology the gods were limited in their powers and knowledge; they were liable to mistakes, to vicious passions, and to change of purpose. Like mankind, whose concerns they rather meddled with than governed, they were themselves under the all-powerful laws of fate; and they seem to have been looked upon as agents or servants of a deity, while the deity himself was wanting. It was round this unfortunate framework that the pagans entwined their hopes and fears, their feelings of human weakness, of devotion, of duty, and of religion. By the philosophers indeed this had been wholly thrown aside as a fable; but they had offered to the ignorant multitude nothing in its place. They often sneered at the baseless system of the many, but they raised no fabric of their own. It remained for the Alexandrian Platonists, borrowing no doubt freely from the Egyptians, the Jews, and the Christians, to offer to their followers the beautiful philosophy of Plato in a form more nearly approaching what we could call a religion. The overwhelming feeling of our own weakness, and the debt which we owe to some unseen power above us, was not confined to the Christians, though perhaps strongly called into being by the spread of their religion. It was this feeling that gave birth to the New Platonism of the Alexandrians, which the pagans

then raised up as a rival to the religion of the New Testament. The same spirit which led these Eclectic philosophers in forming their own system to make use of the doctrines of Aristotle, as well as those of Plato, taught them to look also to christianity for whatever would give a further strength to their philosophy. To swell the numbers of their forces they counted among their allies many of the troops of the enemy. And in so doing they were followed unfortunately by the Christians, who, while they felt the strength of their own arguments and the superiority of their own philosophy, still, in order to help the approach of converts, and to lessen the distance which separated them from the philosophers, were willing to make large advances towards Platonism.

Ammonius had had Christians as well as pagans among his pupils. Of these the best known is Origen, who on his return to Alexandria was the chief ornament of the christian church. He was as well read in the poets and philosophers of Greece as in the Jewish and Christian scriptures; and he pleaded the cause of his religion as well by the purity, piety, and humility of his life as by the learning and ability of his writings. But he is now called a heretic, because in his work on Prayer he writes against the custom of addressing prayers to Jesus. His chief work is his Answer to Celsus, who had written an attack upon christianity. Origen however was misled by the examples of Clemens and Ammonius, and like them attempted to unite with christianity many of the dreams of Alexandrian Platonism. Indeed it is from the rise of the school of Ammonius, and from

De Oratione, cap. 44.

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this spread of Platonism amongst the Christians, that we must date the wide division between Judaism and Christianity, which became broader and broader till by the decrees of the Council of Nice it was made into a gulf that now seems scarcely to be passed.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi.
A. D. 231.
Hieronymus, Cat. Script.

In the tenth year of this reign Origen withdrew to Cæsarea, on finding himself made uncomfortable at Alexandria by the displeasure of Demetrius the bishop; and he left the care of the christian school to Heraclas. He died at Tyre in the reign of Gallus. Many of his writings are addressed to his friend Ambrosius, at whose persuasion they were written and who had been recalled by him from the heresy of the Marcionites. Ambrosius was a deacon in the church and a rich man; he died before Origen, and was much blamed for having left nothing by will to his friend, who was then in old age and poverty.

Eutychii Annales.

On the death of Demetrius, Heraclas, who had just before succeeded Origen in the charge of the christian school, was chosen bishop of Alexandria; and christianity had by that time so far spread through the cities of Upper and Lower Egypt that he found it necessary to ordain twenty bishops under him, while three had been found enough by his predecessor. From his being the head of the bishops, who were all styled fathers, Heraclas received the title of *Papa*, pope or grandfather, the title afterwards used by the bishops of Rome.

Among the presbyters ordained by Heraclas was Ammonius Saccas, the founder of the Platonic school; but he afterwards forsook the religion of

Jesus; and we must not mistake him for a second Alexandrian Christian of the name of Ammonius, who can hardly have been the same person as the former, for he never changed his religion, and was the author of the Evangelical Canons, a work afterwards continued by Eusebius of Cæsarea. CHAP. IV. Hieronymus, Cat. Script.

Among the pagans of Alexandria we may mention Herodian, the author of a history of Rome from the reign of Marcus Aurelius to his own times. It is written in an elegant style, and is more particularly valuable for a period of history where we have so few historians to guide us.

On the death of Alexander, while Italy was torn to pieces by civil wars and by its generals' rival claims for the purple, the Alexandrians seem to have taken no part in the struggles, but to have acknowledged each emperor as soon as the news reached them that he had taken the title. In one year we find Alexandrian coins of Maximin and his son Maximus, with those of the two Gordians, who for a few weeks reigned in Carthage; and in the next year we again have coins of Maximin and Maximus, with those of Balbinus and Pupienus, and of Gordianus Pius. A. D. 235. Zoega, Num. Ægypt. A. D. 237. A. D. 238.

The Persians, taking advantage of the weakness in the empire caused by these civil wars, had latterly been harrassing the eastern frontier, and it soon became the duty of the young Gordian to march against them in person. Hitherto the Roman armies had usually been successful, but unfortunately the Persians, or rather their Syrian and Arab allies, had latterly risen as much as the Romans had fallen off in courage and warlike skill. The army of Gordian was routed, and the emperor Porphyrius, vit. Plotini.

CHAP. IV. himself slain, either by traitors or by the enemy. Hereafter we shall see the Romans paying the just penalty for the example that they had set to the surrounding nations. They had taught them that conquest should be a people's chief aim, that the great use of strength was to crush a neighbour; and it was not long before Egypt and the other eastern provinces suffered under the same treatment. So little had a defeat been expected that the philosopher Plotinus had left his studies in Alexandria to join the army in hopes of gaining for himself an insight into the eastern philosophy that was so much talked of in Egypt. After the rout of the army he with difficulty escaped to Antioch, and thence he removed to Rome, where he taught the New Platonism to scholars of all nations, including Serapion the rhetorician, and Eustochius, the physician from Alexandria.

Porphyrius, vit. Plotini.

Philip, who is accused by the historians of being the author of Gordian's death, succeeded him on the throne; but he is only known in the history of Egypt by his Alexandrian coins, which we find with the dates of each of the seven years of his reign, and which seem to prove that for one year he had been associated with Gordian in the purple.

Capitolinus, vita Gordiani.

A. D. 244.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

Chapter V.

The reigns of Decius, Gallus, Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius, Aurelian, Tacitus, Probus, Carus, Diocletian, Galerius, and Licinius.

In the reign of Decius the Christians of Egypt were again harrassed by the zeal with which the laws against their religion were put in force. The persecution began by their fellow-citizens informing against them; but in the next year it was followed up by the prefect Æmilianus; and several Christians were summoned before the magistrate and put to death. Many fled for safety to the desert, where they fell into a danger of a different kind; they were taken prisoners by the Saracens and carried away as slaves. Dionysius, the bishop of Alexandria, himself fled from the storm, and was then banished to the village of Cephro in the desert. But his flight was not without some scandal to the church, as there were not a few who thought that he was called upon by his rank at least to await, if not to court, the pains of martyrdom. Indeed the persecution was less remarkable for the sufferings of the Christians than for the numbers who failed in their courage, and renounced christianity under the threats of the magistrate. Dionysius the bishop was willing to pardon their weakness, and after fit proof of sorrow again to receive them as brethren. But his hu-

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi.

A. D. 250.

Dionysius, ap. Syncellum.

CHAP. V. manity offended the zeal of many whose distance from the danger had saved them from temptation; and it was found necessary to summon a council at Rome to settle the dispute. In this assembly the moderate party prevailed; and Novatus and his followers, who refused to receive back those who had once fallen away from the faith, were themselves turned out of the church.

Hieronymus, Cat. Script.

Dionysius had succeeded Heraclas in the bishoprick, having before succeeded him as head of the catechetical school. He was the author of several works, written in defence of the trinitarian opinions, on the one hand against the Egyptian Gnostics, who said that there were eight, and even thirty, persons in the godhead, and, on the other hand, against the Syrian bishop Paul of Samosata, who said that Jesus was a man, and that the Word and Holy Spirit were not persons, but attributes of God.

Theodoret. Hæretic. ii.

But while Dionysius was thus engaged in a controversy with such opposite opinions, the Thebaid was giving birth to a new view of the Trinity. Sabellius bishop of Ptolemais was putting forth the opinion that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were only three names for the one God, and that the Creator of the world had himself appeared upon earth in the form of Jesus. Against this opinion Dionysius again engaged in controversy, arguing against Sabellius that Jesus was not the Creator, but the first of created beings. Thus, while Paul of Samosata said that Jesus was only a man, Sabellius said that he was the Almighty Creator; and though starting from such opposite points they met together in the belief of the strict unity of God.

Ap. Syncellum.

During the reigns of Gallus, of Æmilius Æmilianus, and of Valerian, the Alexandrians coined money in the name of each emperor as soon as the news reached Egypt that he had made Italy acknowledge his title. Gallus and his son reigned two years and four months; Æmilianus, who rebelled in Pannonia, reigned three months; and Valerian reigned about six years.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt. A. D. 252. Eusebii Chronicon. A. D. 254. A. Victor.

During these latter years the eastern half of the empire was chiefly guarded by Odenathus of Palmyra, the brave and faithful ally of Rome, under whose wise rule Palmyra held for a short time a rank among the great empires of the world which it never could have gained but for an union of many favourable circumstances. The city and little state of Palmyra is situated in the desert of Syria, one hundred and seventy-six Roman miles from Damascus, and is remarkable for the riches of its soil and its pleasant streams, while surrounded on every side by vast plains of barren sands. Thus separated from the rest of the world, between the Roman and the Parthian empires, it had long kept its freedom, each of those great rival powers rather courting its friendship than aiming at conquering it. But, as the cause of Rome grew weaker, Odenathus threw his weight into the lighter scale; and latterly, without aiming at conquest, he found himself almost the sovereign of those provinces of the Roman empire which were in danger of being overrun by the Persians. Valerian himself was conquered, taken prisoner, and put to death by Sapor king of Persia; and Gallienus his son, who was idling away his life in disgraceful pleasures in the west, wisely gave

Pliny, lib. v. 21.

Tr. Pollio, vit. Gallieni. A. D. 260.

CHAP. V. the title of emperor to Odenathus, and declared him his colleague on the throne.

Tr. Pollio, XXX. Tyranni. A. D. 260.

No sooner was Valerian taken prisoner than every province of the Roman empire, feeling the sword powerless in the weak hands of Gallienus, declared its own general emperor; and when Macrianus, who had been left in command in Syria, gathered together the scattered forces of the eastern army, and made himself emperor of the East, the Egyptians owned him as their sovereign. As Macrianus found his age too great for the activity required of a rebel emperor, he made his two sons, Macrianus junior and Quietus, his colleagues; and we find their names on the coins of Alexandria, dated the first and second year of their reign. But Macrianus was defeated by Domitianus at the head of a part of the army of Aureolus, who had made himself emperor in Illyricum, and he lost his life, together with one of his sons, while the other soon afterwards met with the same fate from Odenathus.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

After this, Egypt was governed for a short time in the name of Gallienus; but the fickle Alexandrians soon made a rebel emperor for themselves. 'The Roman republic,' says the historian, 'was often in danger from the headstrong giddiness of the Alexandrians. Any civility forgotten, a place in the baths not yielded, a heap of rubbish or even a pair of old shoes in the streets was often enough to throw the state into the greatest danger, and make it necessary to call out the troops to put down the riots.' Thus, one day one of the prefect's slaves was beaten by the soldiers for saying that his shoes were better than theirs. On this

Tr. Pollio, vit. Æmiliani. A. D. 265.

a riotous crowd gathered round the house of Æmilianus to complain of the conduct of his soldiers. He was attacked with stones and such weapons as are usually within the reach of a mob. He had no choice but to call out the troops, who, when they had quieted the city and were intoxicated with their success, saluted him with the title of emperor; and hatred of Gallienus made the rest of the Egyptian army agree to their choice.

The new emperor called himself Alexander, and was even thought to deserve the name. He governed Egypt during his short reign with great vigour. He led his army through the Thebaid, and drove back the barbarians with a courage and activity which had latterly been uncommon in the Egyptian army. 'Well! cannot we live without the mud of Egypt?' was the forced joke of Gallienus, when the Romans were looking forward with alarm to the loss of the usual supply of corn. But Æmilianus was soon beaten by Theodotus the general of Gallienus, who besieged him in the suburb of Alexandria called the Bruchium, and then took him prisoner and strangled him.

Tr. Pollio, vit. Gallieni.

During the siege the ministers of christianity were able to lessen some of the horrors of war by persuading the besiegers to allow the useless mouths to quit the blockaded fortress; Eusebius, afterwards bishop of Laodicea, was without the trenches trying to lessen the cruelties of the siege; and Anatolius the christian peripatetic was within the walls endeavouring to persuade the rebels to surrender. Gallienus, in his gratitude to his general, would have granted him the honour of a pro-

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. vii. 32.

CHAP. V. consular triumph, to dazzle the eyes of the Alexandrians; but the policy of Augustus was not wholly forgotten, and the emperor was reminded by the priests that it was unlawful for the consular fasces to enter Alexandria.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii.

In this weakness of the empire, Gallienus could no longer with safety allow the Christians to be persecuted for their religion. Both their numbers and their station made it dangerous to treat them as enemies; and the emperor ordered all persecution to be stopt. The imperial rescript for that purpose was even addressed to 'Dionysius, Pinna, Demetrius, and the other bishops;' it grants them full indulgence in the exercise of their religion, and by its very address almost acknowledges their rank in the state.

In these times of war and rebellion, the schools, whether christian or pagan, fell off in scholars and in learning; but we may mention with honour Anatolius, whom we have just spoken of at the siege of the Bruchium. He attempted to revive the peripatetic school in Alexandria; and, by taking the opinions of Aristotle as his basis, and joining thereto such doctrines, christian as well as pagan, as he thought true, he wished to do for Aristotle what Ammonius and Plotinus had done so successfully for Plato. He wrote largely on mathematics and astronomy, and on the true time of Easter; and some years afterwards he succeeded Eusebius of Alexandria in the bishoprick of Laodicea. We may also mention Pierius, another presbyter of the Alexandrian church, whose learned and elegant writings gained him the name of the younger Origen.

Hieronymus, Cat. Script.

At the same time Nepos, one of the Egyptian bishops, wrote his work in favour of the millennium, or the expected reign of Christ upon earth for the space of one thousand years; in support of which opinion he quoted the book of Revelation. Against this heresy Dionysius, as his superior bishop, wrote an epistle, in which he even denied the authority of the book of Revelation, and gave it as his opinion that it was written by Cerinthus the Gnostic, who was known to have held the same view of the millennium. Dionysius died in the twelfth year of this reign, at a great age, having been too old to attend the synod at Antioch, where Paul of Samosata was condemned as a heretic.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii.

The short rebellions of Macrianus and Alexander Æmilianus had made no break in the series of Alexandrian coins in the name of Gallienus. We have them for every year of his reign of sixteen years, from the death of Æmilius Æmilianus, when he was made emperor by his father Valerian. The natural consequence of this unsettled state of the empire was famine and disease. It appears by the letters of Dionysius the bishop of Alexandria, that the population of that city had so much fallen off that the number of inhabitants between the ages of fourteen and eighty was no greater than the number of those between forty and seventy had been formerly, as appeared by old records then existing.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii.

As long as Odenathus lived, the victories of the Palmyrenes were always over the enemies of Rome; but on the assassination of himself and his son Herodes, though the armies of Palmyra were still led to battle with equal courage, its counsels

Trebonius Pollio.

CHAP. V.

were no longer guided with the same moderation. Zenobia, the widow of Odenathus, seized the command of the army for herself and her infant sons Herennius and Timolaus; and her masculine courage and stern virtues well qualified her for the task that she had undertaken. She threw off the friendship of Rome, and routed the armies which Gallienus sent against her; and, claiming to be descended from Cleopatra, she marched upon Egypt to seize the throne of her ancestors, and to add that kingdom to Syria and Asia Minor which she already possessed.

A. D. 268.

Tr. Pollio, vit. Claudii.

It was in the last year of the reign of Gallienus that Zenobia, the queen of Palmyra, sent an army against Egypt. It was led by her general Zabda, who was joined by an Egyptian named Timogenes; and, with seventy thousand Palmyrenes, Syrians, and other barbarians, they routed the Roman army of fifty thousand Egyptians under Probatus. The unfortunate Roman general put an end to his own life; but nevertheless the Palmyrenes were unsuccessful, and Egypt followed the example of Rome and took the oaths to Claudius. For three years the coins of Alexandria bear the name of that emperor.

Zosimus, lib. i.

A. D. 268.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

Tr. Pollio.

On the death of Claudius, his brother Quintillus assumed the purple in Europe, and though he only reigned for seventeen days the Alexandrians found time to engrave dies and coin money in his name.

A. D. 270.

On the death of Claudius, also, the Palmyrenes renewed their attacks upon Egypt, and this second time with success. The whole kingdom soon acknowledged Zenobia as their queen, and in the fourth year of her reign in Palmyra we find her

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

name on the Alexandrian coins. The Greeks, who had been masters of Egypt for six hundred years, ever since the time of Alexander the Great, either in their own name or in that of the Roman emperors, were then for the first time governed by an Asiatic. CHAP. V.

Zenobia was a handsome woman of a dark complexion, with an aquiline nose, quick piercing eyes, and a masculine voice. She had the commanding qualities of Cleopatra, from whom her flatterers traced her descent, and she was without her vices. She could not speak so many languages as flattery had attributed to that fascinating queen; but, while Syriac was her native tongue, she was not ignorant of Latin, which she was careful to have taught to her children; she carried on her government in Greek, and could speak Coptic with the Egyptians, whose history she had studied and written upon. In her dress and manners she joined the pomp of the Persian court to the self-denial and military virtues of a camp. With these qualities, followed by a success in arms which they seemed to deserve, the world could not help remarking that, while Gallienus was wasting his time with fiddlers and players, in idleness that would have disgraced a woman, Zenobia was governing her half of the empire like a man. Tr. Pollio, vit. Zenobiæ.

Zenobia made Antioch and Palmyra the capitals of her empire, and Egypt became for the time a province of Syria. But as her troops were many of them Saracens or Arabs, a people nearly the same as the Blemmyi, who already formed part of the people of Upper Egypt, her conquest gave a new rank to that part of the population, and

CHAP. V.

made them less quiet thereafter, in their slavery to the Greeks of Alexandria.

But the sceptre of Rome had lately been grasped by the firmer hand of Aurelian, and the reign of Zenobia drew to a close. Aurelian at first granted her the title of his colleague in the empire, and we find Alexandrian coins with her head on one side and his on the other. But he lost no time in leading his forces into Syria, and, after routing Zenobia's army in one or two battles, he took her prisoner at Emessa. He then led her to Rome, where, after being made the ornament of his triumph, she was allowed to spend the rest of her days in quiet, having reigned for four years in Palmyra, though only for a few months in Egypt.

Zoeg. Num. Ægypt.

Fl. Vopiscus, in vit. Aureliani.

On the defeat of Zenobia it would seem that Egypt was still left under the government of one of the family of her late husband, with the title of colleague of Aurelian; and the Alexandrian coins are then dated in the first year of Aurelian and the fourth of Vaballathus Athenodorus, who counted his years from the death of Odenathus.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

A. D. 270.

Herodes, who had been killed with his father Odenathus, was not the son of Zenobia, but of a former wife, and Zenobia always acted towards him with the unkindness of a stepmother. She had claimed the throne for her infant sons Herennius and Timolaus, and we are left in doubt by the historians about Vaballathus, and can hardly believe Vopiscus, who calls him the son of Zenobia. We know but little of him beyond his coins; but from these we learn that, after reigning one year with Aurelian, he aimed at reigning alone, took the title of Augustus, and dropped the name of

Tr. Pollio, vit. Herod.

Fl. Vopiscus, in vit. Aureliani.

Aurelian from his coins. This step was most likely the cause of his overthrow and death, which happened in the same year. CHAP. V. A. D. 271.

On the overthrow of Zenobia's family, Egypt submitted to the emperor Aurelian, but it was only for a few months. The Greeks of Alexandria were found to be no longer masters of the kingdom. Former rebellions in Egypt had been caused by the two Roman legions and the Greek mercenaries sometimes claiming the right to appoint an emperor to the Roman world; but Zenobia's conquest had raised the Egyptian and Arab population in their own opinion, and they were no longer willing to be governed by an Alexandrian or European master. They set up Firmus a Syrian, a native of Seleucia, who took the title of emperor; and, resting his power on that part of the population that had been treated as slaves or barbarians for six hundred years, he aimed at the conquest of Alexandria. Fl. Vopiscus, in vit. Firmi. A. D. 272.

Firmus was a man of great size and bodily strength, and of coarse barbarian manners. He had gained great wealth by trading to India; and had a paper trade so profitable that he used to boast that he could feed an army on papyrus and glue. His house was furnished with glass windows, a luxury then but little known, and the squares of glass were fastened into the frames by means of bitumen. His chief strength was in the Arabs or Blemmyi of Upper Egypt, and in the Saracens who had lately been fighting against Rome under the standard of Zenobia. Firmus fixed his government at Coptos and Ptolemais, and held all Upper Egypt, where he coined money Vopiscus, vit. Probi. Numism. Pembroch.

CHAP. V.

in his own name; but he either never conquered Alexandria, or did not hold it for many months, as for every year that he reigned in the Thebaid we find Alexandrian coins bearing the name of Aurelian. Firmus was at last conquered by Aurelian in person, who took him prisoner, and had him tortured and then put to death. During these troubles Rome had been thrown into alarm at the thoughts of losing the usual supply of Egyptian corn, as since the reign of Elagabalus the Roman granaries had never held more than was wanted for the year; but Aurelian hastened to write word to the Roman people that the country was again quiet, and that the yearly supplies which had been delayed by the wickedness of Firmus would soon arrive safe. Had Firmus raised the Roman legions in rebellion, he would have been honoured with the title of a rebel emperor; but, as his power rested on the Egyptians and Arabs, Aurelian only boasted that he had rid the world of a robber.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

Another rebel emperor about this time was L. Domitius Domitianus; but we have no certain knowledge of the year in which he rebelled, nor indeed without the help of the coins should we know in what province of the whole Roman empire he had assumed the purple. The historian only tells us that in the reign of Aurelian Domitianus was put to death, for aiming at a change. We learn however from the coins, that he reigned for parts of a first and a second year in Egypt: but the subject of his reign is not without its difficulties, as we find Alexandrian coins of Domitianus with Latin inscriptions, and dated in the third year of his reign. The Latin language had not

Zosimus, lib. i. 49.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

Numism. Pembroch.

at this time been used on the coins of Alexandria; and he could not have held Alexandria for any one whole year, as the series of Aurelian's coins is not broken. CHAP. V.

Aurelian had reigned in Rome from the death of Claudius; and, notwithstanding the four rebels to whom we have given the title of sovereigns of Egypt, money was coined in Alexandria in his name during each of those years. His coinage however reminds us of the troubled and fallen state of the country; and from this time forward, copper, or rather brass, is the only metal used. Zoega, Num. Egypt. Tochon, Med. Egypt.

Aurelian left Probus in the command of the Egyptian army, and that general's skill and activity found full employment in driving back the barbarians who pressed upon the province on each of the three sides on which it was open to attack. His first battles were against the Africans and Marmaridæ, who were in arms on the side of Cyrene, and he next took the field against the Palmyrenes and Saracens, who still claimed Egypt in the name of the family of Zenobia. He employed the leisure of his soldiers in many useful works; in repairing bridges, temples, and porticoes, and more particularly in widening the trenches and keeping open the canals, and in such other works as were of use in raising and forwarding the yearly supply of corn to Rome. Aurelian increased the amount of the Egyptian tribute, which was paid in glass, paper, linen, hemp, and corn; the latter he increased by one twelfth part, and he placed a larger number of ships on the voyage to make the supply certain. The Christians were well treated during this reign, and their patriarch Nero so far Fl. Vopiscus, in vit. Probi. Eutychii Annales.

CHAP. V.

took courage as to build the church of St. Mary in Alexandria.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

We learn from the Alexandrian coins that some months were allowed to pass between the death of Aurelian and the choice of a successor, during which time the government was carried on in the name of the empress Severina. The last coins of Aurelian bear the date of the sixth year of his reign, and the coins of Severina are dated in the sixth and seventh years. But after Tacitus was chosen emperor by his colleagues of the Roman senate, and during his short reign of six months, his authority was obeyed by the Egyptian legions under Probus, as is fully proved by the Alexandrian coins bearing his name, all dated in the first year of his reign.

Fl. Vopiscus, in vit. Taciti.

A. D. 276.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

Fl. Vopiscus, in vit. Probi.

A. D. 276.

On the death of Tacitus, his brother Florian hoped to succeed to the imperial power, and was acknowledged by the senate and troops of Rome. But when the news reached Egypt, it was at once felt by the legions that Probus, both by his own personal qualities and by the high state of discipline of the army under his command, and by his success against the Egyptian rebels, had a better claim to the purple than any other general. At first the opinion ran round the camp in a whisper, and at last the army spoke the general wish aloud; they snatched a purple cloak from a statue in one of the temples to throw over him, they placed him on an earthen mound as a tribunal, and against his will saluted him with the title of emperor. The choice of the Egyptian legions was soon approved of by Asia Minor, Syria, and Italy; Florian was put to death, and Probus shortly afterwards

marched into Gaul and Germany, to quiet those provinces. CHAP. V.

After a year or two, Probus was recalled into Egypt by hearing that the Blemmyi had risen in arms, and that Upper Egypt was again independent of the Roman power. Not only Coptos, which had for centuries been an Arab city, but even Ptolemais, the Greek capital of the Thebaid, was now peopled by those barbarians, and had to be reconquered by Probus as foreign cities, and kept in obedience by Roman garrisons; and on his return to Rome he thought his victories over the Blemmyi of Upper Egypt not unworthy of a triumph. Fl. Vopiscus, in vit. Probi.

By these unceasing wars, the Egyptian legions had lately been brought into a high state of discipline, and, confident in their strength, and in the success with which they had made their late general emperor of the Roman world, they now attempted to raise up a rival to him in the person of their present general Saturninus. Saturninus had been made general of the eastern frontier by Aurelian, who had given him strict orders never to enter Egypt. 'The Egyptians,' says the historian, meaning however the Alexandrians, 'are boastful, vain, spiteful, licentious, fond of change, clever in making songs and epigrams against their rulers, and much given to soothsaying and augury.' Aurelian well knew that the loyalty of a successful general was not to be trusted in Egypt, and during his lifetime Saturninus never entered that province. But after his death, when Probus was called away to the other parts of the empire, the government of Egypt was added to the other duties of Saturninus; and no sooner was he seen there, at Fl. Vopiscus, in vit. Saturnini.

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the head of an army that seemed strong enough to enforce its wishes, than the fickle Alexandrians saluted him with the titles of emperor and Augustus. But Saturninus was a wise man, and shunned the dangerous honour; he had saved the provinces of Spain, Gaul, and Africa from the enemy or from rebellion, and he knew the value of his rank and character too well to fling it away for a bauble. To escape from further difficulties, he withdrew from Egypt, and moved his head quarters into Palestine. But the treasonable cheers of the Alexandrians could neither be forgotten by himself nor by his troops; he had withstood the calls of ambition, but he yielded at last to his fears, he became a rebel for fear of being thought one, and he declared himself emperor as the safest mode of escaping punishment. But he was soon afterwards defeated and strangled, against the will of the forgiving Probus.

A. D. 283.

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

On the death of Probus, the empire fell to Carus and his sons Numerianus and Carinus, whose names are found on the Alexandrian coins, but whose short reigns have left no other trace in Egypt. At this time also we find upon the coins the name of the second Egyptian legion of Trajan, which was at all times stationed in Egypt.

Dion. Cass. lib. lv. 24.

A. D. 285.

Zonaras, lib. ii. Eusebii Chronicon.

The reign of Diocletian was one of sad suffering and trouble to the unhappy Egyptians; and in the fourth year the people of Upper Egypt rose in open war against the Roman government, and gave the title of emperor to Achilleus, their leader in the rebellion. Galerius, the Roman general, led an army against the rebels, and marched through the whole of the Thebaid; but though the Egyp-

tians were routed whenever they were bold enough to meet the legions in battle, yet the rebellion was not very easily crushed. The Romans were scarcely obeyed beyond the spot on which their army was encamped. In the fourth year of the rebellion, the cities of Coptos and Busiris were besieged by the emperor in person, and wholly destroyed after a regular seige.

CHAP. V.

A. D. 292.

When Diocletian reached the southern limits of Egypt he was able to judge of the difficulty, and indeed the uselessness, of trying to hold any part of Ethiopia; and he found that the tribute levied there was less than the cost of the troops required to collect it. He therefore made a new treaty with the Nobatæ, giving up to them the whole of Nubia, and he strengthened the fortifications on the isle of Elephantine, to guard what was thenceforth the uttermost point of defence, and agreed to pay to the Nobatæ and Blemmyi a yearly sum of gold on their promising no longer to harrass Upper Egypt with their marauding inroads.

Procopius, Persic. i.19.

But so much was the strength of the Greek party lessened, and so deeply rooted among the Egyptians was their hatred of their rulers and the belief that they should then be able to throw off the yoke, that soon afterwards Alexandria declared in favour of Achilleus, and Diocletian was again called to Egypt to regain the capital. Such was the strength of the rebels that the city could not be taken without a regular siege. Diocletian surrounded it with a ditch and wall, and turned aside the canals that supplied the citizens with water. After a tedious seige of eight months, Alexandria was at last taken by storm, and Achilleus was put

Eusebii Chronicon.

J. Malala.

Eutropius, lib. ix.

A. D. 297.

CHAP. V.

to death. A large part of the city was burnt at the storming, nor would the punishment of the citizens have there ended, but for Diocletian's humane interpretation of an accident. The horse on which he sat stumbled as he entered the city with his troops, and he had the humanity to understand it as a command from heaven that he should stop the pillage of the city; and the citizens in gratitude erected on the spot a bronze statue of the horse to which they owed so much. This statue, whether of the horse or of the emperor on horseback, as we may rather suppose it to have been, has long since been lost, but we cannot be mistaken in the place where it stood. The lofty column, well known by the name of Pompey's pillar, once held a statue on the top, and on the base it still bears the inscription of the grateful citizens, 'to the most honoured emperor, the saviour of Alexandria, the unconquerable Diocletian.'

J. Malala.

Wilkinson's Thebes.

This rebellion had lasted more than nine years, and the Egyptians seemed never in want of money for the purposes of the war. Diocletian was struck with their riches, and he ordered a careful search to be made through Egypt, for all writings on alchemy, an art which the Egyptians studied together with magic and astrology. These books he ordered to be burnt, under a belief that they were the great sources of the wealth by which his own power had been resisted.

Suidas.

We do not know, nor perhaps did Diocletian think it wise to enquire, how far the Alexandrian Greeks, the favoured citizens, had joined their Egyptian townsmen in the rebellion. They must have encouraged if not headed the revolt; they had

Procopius, Arcan. cap. 26.

certainly deserved punishment, but the emperor even made an addition to the yearly supply of corn which was granted to them, together with the citizens of Rome, out of the Egyptian land tax, and he allowed them to divide it among themselves. This was the bribe paid by the government to the Alexandrians for their help against the Egyptians; and after the Alexandrians had joined the rebels, Diocletian, instead of punishing their disobedience, raised the bribe for the future.

We can have no difficulty in picturing to ourselves the evils that followed upon this unwise practice of maintaining a crowd of idle poor in the capital at the public expense. With this privilege of a supply of food offered to every citizen who was poor enough to claim it, the citizens were likely to be the least industrious of all the inhabitants of the place. The poorer Alexandrians formed a riotous mob, proud of their superiority over the Egyptians and Jews, who were not entitled to carry arms. They were ready on every occasion to laugh at their rulers, and to meet in public assembly in the theatre to express their blame, without possessing any of those habits which form sober and virtuous citizens. As they were not dependent on trade, they had nothing to lose by a riot; they had the privileges of an upper class without their motives to guard the peace of the city. They increased all the evils which necessarily arise out of the overgrown size of a capital, without adding anything to the stock of industry and intelligence.

In the twelfth year of the reign, that in which Alexandria rebelled and the siege was begun, the Egyptian coinage ceased. Henceforth, though mo-

CHAP. V. ney was often coined in Alexandria as in every other great city of the empire, the inscriptions were in Latin, and the designs the same as those on the coins of Rome. In taking leave of this long and valuable series of coins with dates, which has been our guide in the chronology of these reigns, we must not forget to acknowledge how much we owe to the labours of the learned Zoega. In his *Numi Ægypti Imperatorii*, the mere descriptions, almost without a remark, speak the very words of history.

The reign of Diocletian is chiefly remarkable for the new law which was then made against the Christians, and for the cruel severity with which it was put into force. The issuing of this fearful edict, which was to root out christianity from the world, took place in the twentieth year of the reign, according to the Alexandrians, or in the nineteenth year after the emperor's first installation as consul, as years were reckoned in the other parts of the empire. The churches were ordered to be destroyed and the Bibles to be burnt, while banishment, slavery, and death were the punishments threatened against those who obstinately clung to their religion. In no province of the empire was the persecution more severe than in Egypt; and many Christians fled to Syria, where the law, though the same, was more mildly carried into execution. But the Christians were too numerous to fly, and too few to resist. The ecclesiastical writers present us with a sad tale of tortures and of death borne by those who nobly refused to renounce their faith, a tale which is only made less sad by the doubt how far the writers' feelings may

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. viii. A. D. 304.

have misled their judgement, and made them overstate the numbers.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. viii.

But we may safely rely upon the account which Eusebius gives us of what he himself saw in Egypt. Many were put to death on the same day, some beheaded, and some burnt. The executioners were tired, and the hearts of the pagan judges melted, by the unflinching firmness of the Christians. Many who were eminent for wealth, rank, and learning chose to lay down their lives rather than throw a few grains of corn upon the altar, or comply with any ceremony that was required of them as a religious test. The judges begged them to think of their wives and children, and pointed out that they were the cause of their own death; but the Christians were usually firm, and were beheaded for the refusal to take the test. Among the most celebrated of the Egyptian martyrs was the learned Phileas bishop of Thmuis; though the pagans must have been still more surprised at Philoromus, the receiver general of the taxes at Alexandria. This man, after the prefect of Egypt and the general of the troops, was perhaps the highest Roman officer in the province. He sat in public as a judge in Alexandria, surrounded by a guard of soldiers, daily deciding all causes relating to the taxes of Egypt. He was accused of no crime but that of being a Christian, which he was earnestly entreated to deny, and was at liberty indirectly to disprove by joining in some pagan sacrifice. The bishop of Thmuis may have been strengthened under his trials by his rank in the church, by having himself urged others to do their duty in the same case, but the receiver general

CHAP V. of the taxes could have had nothing to encourage him but the strength of his faith and a noble scorn of falsehood; he was reproached or ridiculed by all around him, but he refused to deny his religion and was beheaded as a common criminal.

Eusebius, Martyr. Palest. lib. v.

In many cases the Christians even willingly and unnecessarily brought death and torture upon themselves. When the pagan judge in Alexandria was reproaching some Christians who were brought before him with their folly, obstinacy, and treason, Ædisius, who stood by, came up and struck him as he sat upon the judgement seat surrounded by his guards, and rudely reproached him with his cruelty. Conduct such as that would be overlooked in no court of justice, and we cannot be surprised that Ædisius should have been punished severely for such an insult to the magistrate; he was put to death with torture, and his body was thrown into the sea.

Epiphanius, Hæres. lxviii.

The ready ministers of this cruel persecution were Culeianus the prefect of the Thebaid and Hierocles the prefect of Alexandria. The latter was peculiarly well chosen for the task; he added the zeal of the theologian to the ready obedience of the soldier. He had written against the Christians a work, named *Philalethes* (the lover of truth), which we now only know in the answer of Eusebius of Cæsarea. In this he denounced the apostles as impostors, and the christian miracles as trifling; and, comparing them with the pretended miracles of Apollonius of Tyana, he pronounced the latter more numerous, more important, and better authenticated by Maximus and Damis the philosophers than the former by the evangelists;

and he ridiculed the Christians for calling Jesus a god, while the pagans did not raise Apollonius higher than a man beloved by the gods.

This persecution under Diocletian was one of the most severe that the Christians ever underwent from the Romans. It did not, however, wholly stop the religious services, nor break up the regular government of the church. In the twentieth year of the reign, on the death of Peter the bishop of Alexandria, the presbyters of the church met to choose a successor. Among their number was Arius, whose name afterwards became so famous in ecclesiastical history, and who had already, even before he was ordained a priest, offended many by the bold manner in which he stated his religious opinions. But upon him, if we may believe a partial historian, the majority of votes fell in the choice of a patriarch of Alexandria, and had he not himself modestly given way to the more ambitious Alexander, he might perhaps have been saved from the treatment which he afterwards suffered from his rival.

Eutychii Annales.

Philostorgius, Eccl. Hist. lib. i.

When Diocletian and his colleague Maximian resigned the purple, Egypt with the rest of the East was given to Galerius, while Constantius Chlorus ruled the West. Galerius granted some slight indulgence to the Christians without wholly stopping the persecution. But all favour was again withdrawn from them by his successor Maximin, who had indeed misgoverned Egypt for some years, under the title of Cæsar, before the rank of Augustus was granted to him. He encouraged private informers, he set townsman against townsman; and as the wishes of the emperor are quickly

A. D. 305.

Lactantius, Mort. Persec.

A. D. 307.

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understood by all under him, those who wished for his favour courted it by giving him an excuse for his cruelties. The cities sent up petitions to him, begging that the Christians might not be allowed to have churches within their walls. The history of these reigns indeed is little more than the history of the persecutions; and when the Alexandrian astronomers, dropping the era of Augustus, began to date from the first year of Diocletian, the christian writers in the same way dated from the era of Martyrs.

Abul-Pharag. Dyn. vii.

Epiphanius, Hæres. lxviii.

It can be no matter of surprise to us that in a persecution which threatened all classes of society, there should have been many, who, when they were accused of being Christians, wanted the courage to undergo the pains of martyrdom, and escaped the punishment by joining in a pagan sacrifice. When the storm was blown over these men again asked to be received into the church, and their conduct gave rise to the very same quarrel that had divided the Christians in the reign of Decius. Meletius, a bishop of the Thebaid, was at the head of the party who would make no allowance for the weakness of their brethren, and who refused to grant to the repentant the forgiveness that they asked for. He had himself borne the same trials without bending, he had been sent as a criminal to work in the Egyptian mines, and had returned to Alexandria from his banishment, proud of his sufferings and furious against those who had escaped through cowardice. But the larger part of the bishops were of a more forgiving nature, they could not all boast of the same constancy, and the repentant christians were re-

admitted into communion with the faithful, while the followers of Meletius were branded with the name of heretics.

In Alexandria, Meletius soon found another and as it proved a more memorable occasion for the display of his zeal. He has the unenviable honour of being the author of the great Arian quarrel, by accusing of heresy Arius, a presbyter of the church of Baucala near Alexandria, and by calling upon Alexander the bishop to enquire into his belief, and to condemn it if found unsound. Arius frankly and openly acknowledged his opinions, and defended them by an appeal to the Scriptures. But he soon found that his defence was thought weak, and without waiting to be condemned he withdrew before the storm to Palestine, where he remained till summoned before the council of Nice in the coming reign.

Alexander Lycopol.

Epiphanius, adv. Manich.

It was during these reigns of trouble, when history is sadly silent, that the eastern doctrine of Manicheism was said to have been brought into Egypt by Papus, and Thomas or Hermas, disciples of the Persian Manes, who has given his name to his opinions. Little however is known of any of these men; for though their doctrines were widely spread, yet they scarcely made a sect. Indeed the history of Manicheism is not so much the history of a sect as of an opinion. Manicheism was a Persian form of Gnosticism, and its most important doctrine was that the world was created and governed by two principles, one good and the other evil, but equally eternal and self-existent. One was mind and the other matter, one causing the happiness and the other the misery of man-

CHAP. V. kind, one living in light and the other in darkness. This opinion had its rise in the difficulty of explaining the origin of sin, and of understanding how a merciful Creator could allow the existence of evil. The ignorant in all ages of christianity seem to have held nearly the same opinion in one form or other, thinking that sin has arisen either from a wicked being or from the wickedness of the flesh itself. But we know of no writers who have ever owned themselves Manicheans, though many have been reproached as such; their doctrine is now only known in the works written against it. Of all heresies among the Christians this is the one most denounced by the ecclesiastical writers, and most severely threatened by the laws, when the lawmakers became christian; and of all the accusations of the angry controversialists this was the most reproachful. We might almost think that the numerous fathers who have written against the Manicheans must have had an easy victory when the enemy never appeared in the field, when their writings were scarcely answered, or their arguments denied; but perhaps a juster view would lead us to remark how much the writers as well as the readers must have felt the difficulty of accounting for the origin of sin, since men have run into such wild opinions to explain it.

Epiphanius, Hæres. lxvii. Another heresy, which for a time made even as much noise as the last, was that of Hieracas of Leontopolis. Even in Egypt, where for the last two thousand years it had been the custom to make the bodies into mummies, to embalm them against the day of resurrection, a custom which had been usually practised by the Christians, this

native Egyptian ventured to teach that nothing but the soul would rise from the dead, and that we must look forward to only a spiritual resurrection. Hieracas was a man of some learning, and, much to the vexation of those who opposed his arguments, he could repeat nearly the whole Bible by heart. He wrote chiefly in Coptic, though he was not ignorant of Greek; and he died at a great age, leaving works in both languages.

Zosimus, lib. ii. A. D. 313.

The emperor Maximin died at Tarsus after being defeated by Licinius, who like himself had been raised to the rank of Augustus by Galerius, and to whom the empire of Egypt and the East then fell, while Constantine the son of Constantius governed Italy and the West. Licinius held his empire for ten years against the growing strength of his colleague and rival; but the ambition of Constantine increased with his power, and Licinius was at last forced to gather together his army in Thrace, to defend himself from an attack. His forces consisted of one hundred and fifty thousand foot, fifteen thousand horse, and three hundred and fifty triremes, of which Egypt furnished eighty. He was defeated near Adrianople; and then, upon a promise that his life should be spared, he surrendered to Constantine at Nicomedia. But the promise was forgotten and Licinius hanged, and the Roman world was once more governed by a single emperor.

Chapter VI.

The Reigns of Constantine, Constantius, Julian, Jovian, and Valens.

A. D. 323. Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. x.

The reign of Constantine is remarkable for the change which was then wrought in the religion and philosophy of the empire by the emperor's embracing the christian faith. The Christians were at once released from every punishment and disability on account of their religion, which was then more than tolerated; they were put upon a nearly equal footing with the pagans, and every minister of the Church was released from the burden of civil and military duties. Whether the emperor's conversion arose from education, from conviction, or from state policy, we have no means of knowing; but christianity did not reach the throne before it was the religion of a most important class of his subjects. His reign is no less remarkable for the religious quarrel which then divided the Christians, which set church against church and bishop against bishop, as soon as they lost that great bond of union the fear of the pagans. Jesus of Nazareth was acknowledged by Constantine as a god or divine person, and, in the attempt then made by the Alexandrians to arrive at a more exact definition of his nature, while the emperor was willing to be guided by the bishops

in his theological opinions, he was able to instruct them all in the more valuable lessons of mutual toleration and forbearance. CHAP. VI.

Though Egypt had long been the slave of Greece and Rome, those two great states had always owned her as their mistress in pagan superstitions and religious novelties; and the schools of Alexandria, in which mathematics and chemistry were now only valued as helps to astrology and alchemy, and in which the study of philosophy had almost given place to verbal subtleties, now gave birth to a quarrel about the nature of Jesus which has divided the Christian world for fifteen centuries. Theologians have found it difficult to determine what the immediate successors of the apostles and the early writers thought about the exact nature of the great founder of our religion. As it had never been brought to a logical dispute to be settled by argument or authority, the writers had not expressed their opinions in those exact terms which are so carefully used after a controversy has arisen. The Christians who had been born Jews believed that Jesus was a man, the Messiah foretold in the Old Testament; with the philosophical Greeks he was the divine wisdom, the Platonic Logos; and with the Egyptians he was one out of several æons, or powers proceeding from the Deity. Clemens Romanus only calls him our high priest and master, phrases which Photius in the ninth century thought little short of blasphemy; but the philosopher Justin Martyr, and after him Clemens Alexandrinus, speak of Jesus as a god in a human form. Ap. Syncellum. Dionysius bishop of Alexandria, when arguing

CHAP. VI. against Sabellius, says that our Lord was the first born of every created being; but as Origen writes against the practice of addressing prayers to him, many Christians must have already considered him as the disposer or one of the disposers of all human events. But these inexact opinions did not satisfy that school which united the superstition of the Egyptians with the more refined speculations of the New Platonists; and, as soon as the quarrels with the pagans ceased, we find the Christians of Egypt and Alexandria divided into two parties, on the question whether the Son is of the *same substance* or only of a *similar substance* with the Father.

De Oratione.

Eusebius, vit. Constantini, lib. i.

These disputes were brought to the ears of the emperor by Alexander bishop of Alexandria, and Arius the presbyter before mentioned. The bishop had been enquiring into the belief of the presbyter, and the latter had argued against his superior and against the doctrine of the *consubstantiality* of the Father and the Son. The emperor's letter to the angry theologians, in this first ecclesiastical quarrel that was ever brought before a christian monarch, calls for our warmest praise. It is addressed to Alexander and Arius, and he therein tells them that they are raising useless questions, which it is not necessary to settle, and which, though a good exercise for the understanding, only breed ill will, and should be kept by each man in his own breast. He regrets the religious madness which has seized all Egypt; and lastly he orders the bishop not to question the priest as to his belief, and orders the priest, if questioned, not to return an answer. But this wise letter, so worthy

lib. ii.

lib. iii.

of a Christian and a statesman, had no weight with the Alexandrian divines. The quarrel gained in importance from being noticed by the emperor; the civil government of the country was clogged; and Constantine, after having once interfered, was persuaded to call a council of bishops to settle the christian faith for the future. Nicæa in Bithynia was chosen as the spot most convenient for eastern Christendom to meet in; and two hundred and fifty bishops, followed by crowds of priests, there met in council from Greece, Thrace, Asia Minor, Syria, Arabia, Egypt, and Libya, with one or two from western Europe.

A. D. 325.

At this synod, Athanasius, a young deacon in the Alexandrian church, came for the first time into notice as the champion of Alexander his bishop against Arius, who was then placed upon his trial. All the authority, eloquence, and charity of the emperor were needed to quell the tumultuous passions of the assembly, which ended its stormy labours by voting what was called the Homoousian doctrine, that Jesus was of one substance with God. They put forth to the world the celebrated creed, named, from the city in which they met, the Nicene creed, and they excommunicated Arius and his followers, who were then all banished by the emperor. They had afterwards less difficulty in coming to an agreement about the true time of Easter, and in excommunicating the Jews; and all except the Egyptians returned home, with a wish that the quarrel should be forgotten and forgiven.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. i.

Eusebius, vit. Const. lib. iv.

But this first attempt among the Christians at settling the true faith by putting fetters on the

CHAP. VI. mind, by drawing up a creed and punishing those that disbelieved it, was but the beginning of theological difficulties, and had the Christians grown wise by experience they would never have allowed the attempt to be repeated. The difficulties, however, in Egypt arose as much from the difference of blood and language of the races that inhabited the country as from their religious belief; and Constantine must soon have seen that if as a theologian he had decided right, yet as a statesman he had been helping the restless unsettled Egyptians against the friends of his own Greek government in Alexandria.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. i.

After a reasonable delay, Arius addressed to the emperor a letter either of explanation or apology, asserting his full belief in christianity, explaining his faith by using the words of the apostles' creed, and begging to be readmitted into the church. The emperor, either from a readiness to forgive, or from a change of policy, or from an ignorance of the theological controversy, was satisfied with the apology, and thereupon wrote a mild conciliatory letter to Athanasius, who had in the mean time been made bishop of Alexandria, expressing his wish that forgiveness should at all times be offered to the repentant, and ordering him to readmit Arius to his rank in the church. But the haughty Athanasius, who had gained his favour with the Egyptian clergy, and had been raised to his high seat, by his zeal shown against Arius, refused to obey the commands of the emperor, alleging that it was unlawful to readmit into the church anybody who had once been excommunicated. Constantine could hardly be expected

to listen to this excuse, or to overlook this direct refusal to obey his orders. The rebellious Athanasius was ordered into the emperor's presence at Constantinople, and then called before a council of bishops at Tyre, where he was deposed from his see and banished for disobedience. At the same council, in the thirtieth year of this reign, Arius was readmitted into communion with the church, and after a few months allowed to return to Alexandria, to the indignation of the popular party in that city, while Athanasius remained in banishment during the rest of the reign.

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Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. i.

A. D. 335.

Among other evils which arose from this practice of judging and condemning the opinions of our neighbours was, that it gave power in the Church to men who would otherwise have been least entitled to weight and influence. Humble, meek, and affectionate Christians are least forward in making creeds for their brethren and blaming those who differ from them. On the other hand, the violent, proud, and enthusiastic, who either cannot or will not weigh the arguments of their opponents, are always most positive and most unsparing in their reproaches. These men usually take the lead in a system of persecution. Athanasius rose to his high rank by his fitness for the harsh duties then required of an archbishop. Theological opinions became the watchwords of two contending parties; religion lost much of its empire over the heart; and the mild spirit of christianity gave way to angry quarrels and cruel persecutions. Such has too often been the history of the Church.

After the council of Nice we hear little more

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of the despised body of Nazarenes, or Jewish Christians. That name had once embraced the whole body of believers; but on the spread of christianity among the gentiles it was confined to those who held fast to the laws of Moses, and believed that Jesus was no more than the greatest of the prophets. The Jews felt little encouragement to embrace christianity, and form part of a sect that was denounced by all other Christians as heretical, and after the time of Constantine the name and the opinions of the Nazarenes are only known among the Jews of Abyssinia and the opposite coast of Arabia.

Epiphanius, Hæres. xx.

Chronicon Alexandr.

Another remarkable event of this reign was the foundation of the new city of Constantinople, to which the emperor removed the seat of his government. Rome lost much by the building of the new capital, although the emperors had for some time past ceased to live in Italy: but Alexandria lost more; it lost the rank which it had long held as the centre of Greek learning and Greek thought, and it felt a blow from which Rome was saved by the difference of language. The patriarch of Alexandria was no longer the head of Greek christendom, that rank was granted to the bishop of the imperial city; many of the philosophers who hung round the palace at Constantinople would otherwise have joined the Museum; and the Greeks, by whose superiority Egypt had so long been kept in subjection, gradually became the weaker party. In the opinion of the historian, as in the map of the geographer, Alexandria had hitherto been a Greek state on the borders of Egypt; but henceforth it became more and more

A. D. 328.

Macrobius, Saturn. i.

an Egyptian city; and those who in religion and politics thought and felt as Egyptians formed the larger half of the Alexandrians. Few problems are more difficult than to find the reasons why civilization and literature forsake a once favoured shore, why empires fall and arts decay on spots where they once flourished; but we may sometimes find out a part of the reasons, and in this case it would seem that the gradual fall of Alexandria takes date from the building of Constantinople. CHAP. VI.

Constantine removed an obelisk from Egypt for the ornament of his new city, and he brought down another from Heliopolis to Alexandria; but he died before the second left the country, and it was afterwards taken by his son to Rome. These obelisks were as usual covered with hieroglyphics, and we have a translation said to be made from the latter by Hermapion, an Egyptian priest; but though from the style and matter we know that it is a real translation from an obelisk we have not found the inscription from which it was taken. In order to take away its pagan character from the religious ceremony with which the yearly rise of the Nile was celebrated in Alexandria, Constantine removed the sacred cubit from the temple of Serapis to one of the christian churches; and, notwithstanding the gloomy forebodings of the people, the Nile rose as usual, and the time of its overflow was afterwards celebrated as a christian festival.

Chronicon Alexandr. Ammianus, lib. xvii.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. i.

The pagan philosophers under Constantine had but few pupils and met with but little encouragement. Alypius of Alexandria and his friend Iam-

Eunapius, vit. Soph.

CHAP. VI. blichus, however, still taught the philosophy of Ammonius and Plotinus, though the philosophers were so much in the habit of moving about to Alexandria, Pergamus, or Rome, that it is not always easy to know in what school they taught. The only writings of Alypius now remaining are his Introduction to Music; but all knowledge of the musical notation of the ancients is so far lost that it is doubtful whether his works will ever again be understood. Iamblichus, who had studied under Anatolius in the school of christian Peripatetics, has left many works. In his Treatise on Mysteries, in which he quotes the Hermetic books of Bytis, an Egyptian priest, the outward visible symbols become emblems of divine truth; the Egyptian religion becomes a branch of Platonism; and their gods so many agents or intermediate beings, only worshipped as servants of the one Creator.

A. D. 337. On the death of Constantine, his three sons, without entirely dismembering the empire, divided the provinces of the Roman world into three shares. Constantine II., the eldest son, who succeeded to the throne of his father in Constantinople, and Constans the youngest, who dwelt in Rome, divided Europe between them; while Constantius, the second son, held Syria, Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Egypt, of which possessions Antioch was at that time the capital.

Chronicon Alexandr. Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. Abul-Pharagius.

The three emperors did not take the same side in the quarrel which, under the name of religion, was then unsettling the obedience of the Egyptians, and even in some degree troubling the rest of the empire. Constantine II. and Constans openly

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

gave their countenance to the party of the rebellious Athanasius, who under their favour ventured to return to Alexandria, where, after an absence of two years and four months, he was received in the warmest manner by his admiring flock. But on the death of Constantine II., who was shortly afterwards killed in battle by his brother Constans, Constantius felt himself more master of his own kingdom; he deposed Athanasius and summoned a council of bishops at Antioch to elect a new patriarch of Alexandria. Christian bishops, though they had latterly owed their ordination to the authority of their equals, had always received their bishopricks by the choice of their presbyters or flocks; and though they were glad to receive the support of the emperor, they were not willing to acknowledge him as their head. Hence, when the council first elected Eusebius Emisenus, an Alexandrian monk, into the bishoprick of Alexandria, he refused the honour which they had only a doubtful right to bestow, rather than venture into the city in the face of his popular rival. The council then elected Gregory, whose greater courage and ambition led him to accept the office.

Theodoretus, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

Abul-Pharagius.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

The council of Antioch then made some changes in the creed; they left out the words 'God of God, of one substance with the Father,' as being the chief cause of the quarrel, and as supporting too much the Egyptian doctrine of Sabellianism; and they styled Jesus 'the first begotten of every creature, and the express image of his Father's substance.' A few years later, a second council met in the same place, and drew up a creed nearly the same as what we now call the Athanasian; but it

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Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

did not at once gain the general approbation which that creed has since received; it was firmly rejected by the Egyptian and Roman churches, because it did not contain the Homoousian or consubstantial doctrine.

Gregory was no sooner elected to the bishoprick than he issued his commands as bishop, though, if he had the courage, he had not at the time the power to enter Alexandria. But Syrianus the general of the Egyptian troops was soon afterwards ordered by the emperor to place him on his episcopal throne; and he led him into the city, surrounded by the spears of five thousand soldiers, and followed by the small body of Alexandrians that after this invasion of their acknowledged rights still called themselves Arians. Gregory entered Alexandria in the evening, meaning to take his seat in the church on the next day; but the people in their zeal did not wait quietly for the dreaded morning, they ran at once to the church and passed the night there with Athanasius in the greatest anxiety. In the morning, when Gregory arrived at the church, accompanied with the troops, he found the doors barricadoed and the building full of men and women, denouncing the sacrilege, and threatening resistance. But when the general gave orders that the church should be stormed, and the new bishop carried in by force of arms, Athanasius saw that all resistance was useless, he ordered the deacons to give out a psalm, and they all marched out at the opposite door singing. After these acts of violence on the part of the troops, and of zealous resistance on the part of the people, the whole city was

thrown into an uproar, and the prefect was hardly strong enough to carry on the government; the regular supply of corn for the poor citizens of Alexandria, and for Constantinople, was stopped; and the blame of the whole thrown upon Athanasius, who was a second time obliged to leave Egypt, and he fled to Rome, where he was warmly received by the emperor Constans and the Roman bishop. But the zeal of the Athanasian party would not allow Gregory to keep possession of the church which he had gained only by force; they soon afterwards set fire to it and burnt it to the ground, choosing that there should be no church at all rather than that it should be in the hands of the Arians; and the Arian clergy and bishops, though supported by the favour of the emperor and the troops of the prefect, were everywhere throughout Egypt driven from their churches and monasteries.

During this quarrel it seems to have been felt by both parties that the choice of the people, or at least of the clergy, was necessary to make a bishop, and that Gregory had very little claim to that rank in Alexandria. Julius the bishop of Rome warmly espoused the cause of Athanasius, and he wrote a letter to the Alexandrian church, praising their zeal for their bishop, and ordering them to readmit him to his former rank from which he had been deposed by the council of Antioch, but to which he had been restored by the western bishops. Athanasius was as warmly supported by Constans the emperor of the West, who at the same time wrote to his brother Constantius, begging him to replace the Alexandrian bishop, and

CHAP. VI. threatening that if he would not he should be made to do so by force of arms.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

Constantius, after taking the advice of his own bishops, thought it wisest to yield to the wishes or rather the commands of his brother Constans, and he wrote to Athanasius calling him into his presence in Constantinople. But the rebellious bishop was not willing to trust himself within the reach of his offended sovereign; and it was not till after a second and a third letter, pressing him to come and promising him his safety, that he ventured within the limits of the eastern empire. Strong in his high character for learning, firmness, and political skill, carrying with him the allegiance of the Egyptian nation, which was yielded to him much rather than to the emperor, and backed by the threats of Constans, Athanasius was at least a match for Constantius. At Constantinople the emperor and the Alexandrian bishop made a formal treaty, by which it was agreed that, if Constantius would allow the Homoousian clergy throughout his dominions to return to their churches, Athanasius would in the same way throughout Egypt restore the Arian clergy; and upon this agreement Athanasius himself returned to Alexandria.

But the return of Athanasius was only the signal for a fresh uproar, and the Arians complained that Egypt was kept in a constant turmoil by his zealous activity. Nor were the Arians his only enemies. He had offended many others of his clergy by his overbearing manners, and more particularly by his following in the steps of Alexander the late bishop, in claiming new and higher

Theodoret. Hæretic. iv.

powers for the office of patriarch than had ever been yielded to the former bishops of Alexandria. Meletus headed a strong party of bishops, priests, and deacons, in opposing the new claims of the archiepiscopal see of Alexandria. His followers differed in no point of doctrine from the Athanasian party, but as they always sided with the Arians they were usually called heretics.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

While Athanasius was at the height of his popularity in Egypt, and was supported by the emperor of the West, Constantius was very far from being his master. But on the death of Constans, when Constantius became sovereign of the whole empire, he once more tried to make Alexandria and the Egyptian church obedient to his wishes. He was, however, still doubtful how far it was prudent to measure his strength against that of the bishop, and he chose rather to begin privately with threats before using his power openly. He first wrote word to Athanasius, as if in answer to a request from the bishop, that he was at liberty, if he wished, to visit Italy; but he sent the letter by the hands of the notary Diogenes, who added, by word of mouth, that the permission was meant for a command, and that it was the emperor's pleasure that he should immediately quit his bishoprick and the province. But this underhand conduct of the emperor only showed his own weakness; Athanasius steadily refused to obey any unwritten orders, and held his bishoprick for upwards of two years longer, before Constantius felt strong enough to enforce his wishes. Towards the end of that time, Syrianus, the general of the Egyptian army, to whom this delicate task was

Athanasius, Apolog. ad Constant.

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Athanasius, Apolog. ad Constant.

entrusted, gathered together from all parts of the province a body of five thousand chosen men, and with these he marched quietly into Alexandria, to overawe, if possible, the rebellious bishop. He gave out no reasons for his conduct; but the Arians, who were in the secret, openly boasted that it would soon be their turn to possess the churches. Syrianus then sent for Athanasius, and in the presence of Maximus the prefect again delivered to him the command of Constantius, that he should quit Egypt and retire into banishment, and he threatened to carry this command into execution by the help of the troops, if he met with any resistance. Athanasius, without refusing to obey, begged to be shown the emperor's orders in writing; but this reasonable request was refused. He then entreated them even to give him, in their own handwriting, an order for his banishment; but this was also refused, and the citizens, who were made acquainted with the emperor's wishes and the bishop's firmness, waited in dreadful anxiety to see whether the prefect and the general would venture to enforce their orders. The presbytery of the church and the corporation of the city went up to Syrianus in solemn procession to beg him either to show a written authority for the banishment of their bishop, or to write to Constantinople to learn the emperor's pleasure. And to this request Syrianus at last yielded, and gave his word to the friends of Athanasius that he would take no further steps till the return of the messengers from Constantinople.

But Syrianus had before received his orders, which were, if possible, to frighten Athanasius

into obedience, and, if that could not be done, then to employ force, but not to expose the emperor's written commands to the danger of being successfully resisted. He therefore only waited for an opportunity of carrying them into effect; and at midnight, on the fourteenth of Mechir, our ninth of February, only twenty-three days after the promise had been given, Syrianus, at the head of his troops, armed for the assault, surrounded the church where Athanasius and a crowded assembly were at prayers. The doors were forcibly and suddenly broken open, the armed soldiers rushed forward to seize the bishop, and numbers of his faithful friends were slain in their efforts to save him. Athanasius, however, escaped in the tumult; but though the general was unsuccessful, the bodies of the slain, and the arms of the soldiers found scattered through the church in the morning, were full proofs of his unholy attempt. The friends of the bishop drew up and signed a public declaration describing the outrage, and Syrianus sent to Constantinople a counter protest declaring that there had been no disturbance in the city.

A. D. 356.

Athanasius, Hist. Arian.

Athanasius, with nearly the whole of the nation for his friends, easily escaped the vengeance of the emperor, and, withdrawing for a third time from public life, he passed the remainder of this reign in concealment. He did not however neglect the interests of his flock. He encouraged them with his letters, and even privately visited his friends in Alexandria. There he hid himself for six years, in the house of a young woman who concealed him in her chamber, and waited on him with untiring zeal. She was then in the flower of

Palladius, Hist. Lausiac.

CHAP. VI. her youth, only twenty years of age; and fifty years afterwards, in the reign of Theodosius II., when the name of Athanasius ranked with those of the apostles, this woman used to boast, among the monks of Alexandria, that in her youth she had befriended and concealed the great Athanasius.

Athanasius, Hist. Arian.

But though the general was not wholly successful, though he was not able even to recover from the church the broken weapons of his soldiers, the proofs of his outrage, though the bishop escaped his vigilance, yet the Athanasian party was for the time crushed. Sebastianus, the new prefect, was sent into Egypt with orders to seize Athanasius dead or alive, wherever he should be found within the province; and under his protection the Arian party in Alexandria again ventured to meet in public, and proceeded to choose a bishop. They elected to this high post the celebrated George of Cappadocia, a man who, while he equalled his more popular rival in learning and in ambition, fell far behind him in coolness of judgement, and in that political skill which is as much wanted in the guidance of a religious party as in the government of an empire.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

Ammianus, lib. xxii.

George was born in Epiphania, in Cilicia, and was the son of a clothier, but his ambition led him into the church, as being at that time the fairest field for the display of talent; and he rose from one station to another till he reached the high post of bishop of Alexandria. The fickle irritable Egyptians needed no such firebrand to light up the flames of discontent. George took no pains to conceal the fact that he held his bishoprick by the favour of the emperor and the power of the

army, against the wishes of his flock. To support his authority, he opened his doors to informers of the worst description; any body who stood in the way of his grasp at power was accused of being an enemy to the emperor; and, forgetting his profession, says the pagan historian, which should have made him gentle and forgiving, he was himself the chief cause of sedition in his bishoprick. He proposed to the emperor to lay a house-tax on Alexandria, thereby to repay the expense incurred by Alexander the Great in building the city; and he made the Roman government more unpopular than it had ever been since Augustus landed in Egypt. The crimes which he is said to have rushed into during his struggles with the Athanasian party almost pass belief; but we learn them chiefly from the pen of his enemy. He used the army as the means of terrifying the Homoousians into an acknowledgment of the Arian opinions. He banished fifteen bishops to the great Oasis, besides others of lower rank. He beat, tortured, and put to death; the persecution was more cruel than any suffered from the pagans, except perhaps that in the reign of Diocletian; and thirty Egyptian bishops are said to have lost their lives while George was patriarch of Alexandria.

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Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

Theodoret. Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

As we advance in the history of christianity in Egypt, we leave the ages of enlightened learning and enter upon those of ignorance and bigotry. We have more than once had to remark the readiness with which pagan Europe at all times copied the religious worship of Egypt; and not a few of the superstitions which have at times disfigured christianity seem to have sprung from

CHAP. VI. that fruitful soil. Though the origin of monastic life has sometimes been claimed for the Essenes, on the shores of the Dead Sea, yet it was in Egypt that it was framed into a system, and became the model for the christian world. It took its rise in the serious and gloomy views of religion which always formed part of the Egyptian polytheism, and which the Greeks remarked as very unlike their own gay and tasteful modes of worship, and which were readily engrafted by the Egyptian converts into their own christian belief. In the reigns of Constantine and his sons, hundreds of Christians, both men and women, quitting the pleasures and trials of the busy world, withdrew one by one into the deserts of Egypt, to spend their lonely days and watchful nights in religious meditation and in prayer. They were led by a gloomy view of their duty towards God, and by a want of fellow feeling for their neighbour; and they seemed to think that pain and misery in this world would be found to be the price of happiness hereafter. So difficult indeed do we all feel the practice of self-denial in the active paths of life, that these hermits, by habits which often degenerated into ignorance and idleness, earned the admiration of their fellow Christians more easily than they could have done by active benevolence or learned industry, among the crowds of a city. The lives of many of these Fathers of the Desert were written by the Christians who lived at the same time; but a full account of the miracles which were said to have been worked in their favour, or by their means, would now only call forth a smile of pity, or perhaps even of ridicule.

Pliny, lib. v. 15.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv.

One of the earliest of these ascetics was Ammon, who on the morning of his marriage is said to have persuaded his young wife of the superior holiness of a single life, and to have agreed with her that they should devote themselves apart to the honour of God in the desert. But, in thus avoiding the pleasures, the duties, and the temptations of the world, Ammon lost many of the virtues and even the decencies of society; he never washed himself, or changed his garments, because he thought it wrong for a religious man even to see himself undressed; and when he had occasion to cross a river, his biographer tells us that attendant angels carried him over the water in their arms, lest, while keeping his vows, he should be troubled by wet clothes. But the self-denial and severities of Ammon were thrown into the shade by the far greater amount of want and pain and torture which were borne by his follower Anthony. Had the life and temptations of St. Anthony been written in the monasteries of Spain or Italy, in the eleventh century, we should less wonder at the number of miracles that we are called upon to believe; but since we have them from the very pen of Athanasius, who lived at the same time, in whose diocese the monk dwelt, and who was visited by him at Alexandria, we are not a little startled at the boldness of the fable; and we are driven to the painful remark, that by as much as the ecclesiastical writers pass the pagan historians in earnestness and zeal, they fall below them in truth and impartiality.

St. Anthony dwelt in the neighbourhood of Heracleopolis, and was visited in his solitude by the

Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. i.

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Athanasius, vit. Antonii.

soul of Ammon, and guided in his religious duties by his advice. While living alone in the tombs, he was attacked by the devil in various forms. At one time the walls of his cell were broken down, and in rushed a troop of lions, bears, leopards, bulls, serpents, asps, scorpions, and wolves, that were however easily put to flight by the prayers of the saint. At another time, the devil in the form of a stranger knocked at the monastery, and when St. Anthony opened the door, and asked who was there, the wicked one unhesitatingly answered Satan, but fled on hearing the name of Christ. St. Anthony healed the sick by his prayers, drove out demons by the sign of the cross, and knew what was happening at a distance, as well as what was going to happen at a future time. After twenty years, thus spent in solitary meditation and painful self-denial, he came forth to the world as a heaven-taught teacher, to help in denouncing the Arian opinions. He had no respect for learning; letters, he said, were made by the understanding, and as he possessed an understanding he could have no want of letters. When his fame was at its height and he was honoured with a letter from the emperor, he was unable to write an answer to it in Greek. The only studies that he valued were those of the Bible and of astrology; and he chose to have his fortune told rather by calculations founded on the hour of his becoming a monk than on the hour of his birth. He wrote, however, a few letters in the Coptic language to the Egyptian monasteries, which gained him the title of one of the ecclesiastical writers, and which were afterwards translated into Greek.

Hieronymus, Cat. Script.

Among the christian writers of the time was Serapion bishop of Thmuis, a friend of Anthony, who wrote a valuable work against the opinions of the Manichæans. But the most learned Christian of this reign was the blind Didymus, who was at the head of the Catechetical school. He was deeply skilled in mathematics as well as in pagan philosophy; and many came from afar to Alexandria, to see him and hear his lectures. He was warmly attached to Athanasius and the Nicene creed, much indeed to the grief of the Arians, who wished to boast that every man of learning was on their side in the controversy. He wrote a commentary on the Bible, and a treatise against the Manichæans, which is still extant.

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Hieronymus, Cat. Script. Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. 15.

When Jerom visited Egypt he studied for some time under Didymus, holding the same religious opinions with the Egyptian and the same dislike of Arianism. But no dread of heresy stopped Jerom in his search for knowledge and for books. He obtained copies of the whole of Origen's works, and read them with the greatest admiration. It is true that he finds fault with many of his opinions; but no admirer of Origen could speak in higher terms of praise of his virtues and his learning, of the qualities of his head and of his heart, than Jerom uses, while he timidly pretends to think that he has done wrong in reading his works.

Epist. 61.

From the treatise of Julius Firmicus against the pagan superstitions, it would seem that the sacred animals of the Egyptians were no longer kept in the several cities in which they used to be worshipped, and that many of the old gods had been gradually dropped from the mythology,

CHAP. VI. which was then chiefly confined to the worship of Isis and Osiris. The great week of the year was the feast of Isis, when the priests joined the goddess in her grief for the loss of the good Osiris, who had been killed through jealousy by his wicked brother Typhon. The priests shaved their heads, beat their breasts, tore the skin off their arms, and opened up the old wounds of former years, in grief for the death of Osiris, and in honour of the widowed Isis. After some days' search for the scattered limbs of Osiris, which had been thrown by Typhon into the Nile, they are found by Isis, with the help of her sister Nephthis and the hunter Anubis; they are carefully buried, and the grief of the priests and worshippers is then turned into joy. The river Nile was also still worshipped, but we hear no more of Amun-Ra, Chem, Horus, Aroëris, and the other gods of the Thebaid, whose worship ceased with the fall of that part of the country.

But great changes often take place with very little improvement; the fall of idolatry only made way for the rise of magic and astrology. Abydos in Upper Egypt had latterly gained great renown for the temple of Besa, a god whose name is new to us, but whose oracle was much consulted, not only by the Egyptians but by Greek strangers, and by others who sent their questions in writing. Some of these letters on parchment had been taken from the temple by informers and carried to the emperor, whose ears were never deaf to a charge against the pagans. On this accusation numbers of all ranks were dragged out of Egypt to be tried and punished in Syria with torture and forfeiture

Ammianus, lib. xxx.

of goods. Such indeed was the nation's belief in these oracles and prophecies, that it gave to the priests a greater power than it was safe to trust them with. By prophesying that a man was to be an emperor they could make him a traitor, and perhaps raise a village in rebellion. As the devotedness of their followers made it dangerous for the magistrates to punish the mischiefmakers, they had no choice but to punish those who consulted them. Parnasius, who had been a prefect of Egypt, a man of spotless character, was banished for thus illegally seeking a knowledge of the future; and Demetrius Cythras, an aged philosopher, was put to the rack on a charge of having sacrificed to the god, and only released because he persisted through his tortures to assert that he sacrificed in gratitude for blessings received, and not from a wish thus to learn his future fate.

In the falling state of the empire the towns and villages of Egypt found their rulers too weak either to guard them or to tyrannize over them, and they sometimes formed themselves into small societies, and took means for their own defence. The law had so far allowed this as in some cases to grant a corporate constitution to a city. But in other cases a wealthy landlord would organize and arm his tenants or labourers for self-defence against robbers of the desert and the tax-gatherer; or a town would put itself under the patronage of a neighbour rich enough and strong enough to guard it. This however could not be allowed, even if not used as the means of throwing off the authority of the provincial government; and accordingly at this time we begin to find laws against

CHAP. VI. the new crime of *patronage*. These associations gave a place of refuge to criminals, they stopped the worshipper in his way to the temple, and the tax-gatherer in collecting the tribute. But new laws have little weight when there is no power to enforce them, and the orders of Constantinople were little heeded in Upper Egypt.

Codex Theod. xi. 24. i.

But this *patronage* which the emperor wished to put down was weak compared to that of the bishops and clergy, which the law allowed and even upheld, and which was the great check to the tyranny of the civil governor. While the emperor at a distance gave orders through his prefect, the people looked up to the bishop as their head; and hence the power of each was checked by the other. The emperors had not yet made the terrors of religion a tool in the hands of the magistrate; nor had they yet learned from the pontifex and augurs of pagan Rome the great secret that civil power is never so strong as when based on that of the Church.

A. D. 361. On the death of Constantius, Julian was at once acknowledged as emperor, and the Roman world was again, but for the last time, governed by a pagan. The Christians had been in power for fifty-five years under Constantine and his sons, during which time the pagans had been made to feel that their enemies had got the upper hand of them. But on the accession of Julian their places were again changed; and the Egyptians among others crowded to Constantinople to complain of injustice done by the christian prefect and bishop, and to pray for a redress of wrongs. They were however sadly disappointed in their

Ammianus, lib. xxii.

emperor; he put them off with an unfeeling joke; he ordered them to meet him at Chalcedon, on the other side of the straits of Constantinople, and, instead of following them according to his promise, he gave orders that no vessel should bring an Egyptian from Chalcedon to the capital; and the Egyptians, after wasting their time and money, returned home in despair. But though their complaints were laughed at they were not overlooked, and the author of their grievances was punished; Artemius the prefect of Egypt was summoned to Chalcedon, and not being able to disprove the crimes laid to his charge by the Alexandrians, he paid his life as the forfeit for his misgovernment during the last reign.

While Artemius was on his trial the pagans of Alexandria remained quiet, and in daily fear of his return to power, for after their treatment at Chalcedon they by no means felt sure of what would be the emperor's policy in matters of religion; but they no sooner heard of the death of Artemius than they took it as a sign that they had full leave to revenge themselves on the Christians. The mob rose first against the bishop George, who had lately been careless or wanton enough publicly to declare his regret that any of their temples should be allowed to stand; and they seized him in the streets, and trampled him to death. They next slew Dracontius, the prefect of the Alexandrian mint, whom they accused of overturning a pagan altar within that building. Their anger was then turned against Diodorus, who was employed in building a church on a waste spot of ground that had once been sacred to the worship of Mithra,

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii.

CHAP. VI. but had since been given by the emperor Constantius to the Christians. In clearing the ground, the workmen had turned up a number of human bones that had been buried there in former ages, and these had been brought forward by the Christians in reproach against the pagans as so many proofs of human sacrifices. Diodorus also, in his christian zeal, had wounded at the same time their pride and superstition, by cutting off the single lock from the heads of the young Egyptians, as being an offence against his religion. For this he was attacked and killed, with George and Dracontius. The mob carried the bodies of the three murdered men upon camels to the side of the lake, and there burnt them and threw the ashes into the water, for fear, as they said, that a church should be built over their remains, as had been sometimes done over the bodies of martyrs.

Ammianus, lib. xxii.

When the news of this outrage against the laws was brought to the philosophical emperor, he contented himself with threatening by an imperial edict that if the offence were repeated, he would visit it with severe punishment. But in every act of Julian we trace the scholar and the lover of learning. George had employed his wealth in getting together a large library, rich in historians, rhetoricians, and philosophers of all sects; and on the murder of the bishop, Julian wrote letter after letter to Alexandria, to beg the prefect and his friend Porphyrius to save these books, and send them to him in Cappadocia. He promised freedom to the librarian if he gave them up, and torture if he hid them; and further begged that no books in favour of christianity should be destroyed,

Juliani Epistolæ.

lest other and better books should be lost with them. CHAP. VI.

There is too much reason to believe that the friends of Athanasius were not displeased at the murder of the bishop George and their Arian fellow-christians; at any rate, they made no effort to save them, and the same mob that had put to death George as an enemy to paganism, now joined his rival Athanasius in a triumphal entry into the city, when, with the other Egyptian bishops, he was allowed to return from banishment. Athanasius could brook no rival to his power; the civil force of the city was completely overpowered by his party, and the Arian clergy were forced to hide themselves, as the only means of saving their lives. But, while thus in danger from their enemies, the Arians proceeded to elect a successor to their murdered bishop, and they chose Lucius to that post of honour, but of danger. Athanasius, however, in reality and openly filled the office of bishop; and he summoned a synod at Alexandria, at which he readmitted into the Church Lucifer and Eusebius, two bishops who had been banished to the Thebaid. Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii.

Though the emperor Julian thought that George the late bishop had deserved all that he suffered, as having been zealous in favour of christianity, and forward in putting down paganism and in closing the temples, yet he was still more opposed to Athanasius. That able churchman held his power as a rebel, by the help of the Egyptian mob, against the wishes of the Greeks of Alexandria, and against the orders of the late emperor; and Julian made an edict, ordering that he should Epist. ad Pop. Alex. Edict. ad Alexandr.

CHAP. VI. be driven out of the city within twenty-four hours of the command reaching Alexandria. The prefect of Egypt was at first unable, or unwilling, to enforce these orders against the wish of the inhabitants; and Athanasius was not driven into banishment till Julian wrote word that, if the rebellious bishop were to be found in any part of Egypt after a day then named, he would fine the prefect and the officers under him one hundred pounds weight of gold. Thus Athanasius was for the fourth time banished from Alexandria; first by Constantine who was willing to receive his own creed, twice by Constantius who held the Arian opinions, and now again by the pagan Julian.

Epist. ad Ecdicium.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii.

Though the Christians were out of favour with the emperor, and never were employed in any office of trust, yet they were too numerous for him to venture on a persecution. But Julian allowed them to be ill-treated by his prefects, and took no notice of their complaints. He made a law, forbidding any Christians from being educated in pagan literature, believing that ignorance would stop the spread of their religion. In the churches of Greece, Asia Minor, and Syria, this was felt as a heavy grievance; but it was less thought of in Egypt. Science and learning were less cultivated by the Christians in Alexandria since the overthrow of the Arian party; and a little later, to charge a writer with Græcizing was the same as saying that he wanted orthodoxy.

G. Syncellus.

Julian was a warm friend to learning and philosophy among the pagans. He recalled to Alexandria Zeno the physician, who in the last reign had fled from the Georgian faction, as the Chris-

Epist. xlv.

tians were then called. He founded, in the same city, a college for music, and ordered the prefect Ecdicius to look out for some young men of skill in that science, particularly from among the pupils of Dioscorus; and he allotted them a maintenance from the treasury, with rewards for the most skilful. At Canopus, a pagan philosopher, Antoninus the son of Eustathius, taking advantage of the turn in public opinion, and copying the christian monks of the Thebaid, drew round him a crowd of followers by his self-denial of all pleasures, and painful torture of the body. The Alexandrians flocked in crowds to his dwelling; and such was his character for holiness that his death, in the beginning of the reign of Theodosius, was thought by the Egyptians to be the cause of the overthrow of paganism.

CHAP. VI.

Epist. lvi.

Eunapius, vit. Sophist.

The sacred animals, in particular the bulls Apis and Mnevis, were again waited upon by their priests as of old; but it was a vain attempt on the part of the pagans. Not only was the Egyptian religion overthrown, but the Thebaid, the country of that religion, was fallen too low to be again raised. The people of Upper Egypt had lost all heart, not more from the tyranny of the Roman government in the north than from the attacks and settlement of the Arabs in the south. All changes in the country were laid to the charge of these latter unwelcome neighbours; and when the enquiring traveller asked to be shown the crocodile, the river-horse, and the other animals for which Egypt had once been noted, he was told with a sigh that they were seldom to be seen there since the Thebaid had been peopled with

Ammianus, lib. xxii.

CHAP. VI. the Blemmyi. Falsehood, the usual vice of slaves, had taken a deep hold on the Egyptian character. A denial of their wealth was the means by which they usually tried to save it from the Roman tax-gatherer; and an Egyptian was ashamed of himself as a coward, if he could not show a back covered with stripes gained in the attempt to save his money. Peculiarities of character often descend unchanged in a nation for many centuries; and, after fourteen hundred years of the same slavery, the same stripes from the lash of the tax-gatherer are still the boast of the Egyptian peasant. Cyrene was already a desert; the only cities of note in Upper Egypt were Coptos, Hermopolis, and Antinoopolis; but Alexandria was still the queen of cities, though the large quarter called the Bruchium had not been rebuilt; and the Serapium, with its library of seven hundred thousand volumes, was, after the capitol of Rome, the chief building in the world.

Lane's Egypt.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. iv.

A. D. 364.

The reign of Julian, instead of raising paganism to its former strength, had only shown that its life was gone; and, under Jovian, his successor, the Christians were again brought into power. A christian emperor, however, would have been but little welcome to the Egyptians if, like Constantius, and even Constantine in his latter years, he had leaned to the Arian party; but Jovian soon showed his attachment to the Nicene creed, and he reappointed Athanasius to the bishoprick of Alexandria. But though Athanasius regained his rank, yet the Arian bishop Lucius was not deposed. Each party in Alexandria had its own bishop; those who thought that the Son was of

the *same* substance with the Father looked up to Athanasius, while those who gave to Jesus the lower rank of being of a *similar* substance to the Creator obeyed Lucius. CHAP. VI.

We must not, however, be led away by words to think that a disagreement on this curious metaphysical proposition was in reality the cause of the quarrel which divided Egypt into such angry parties. The creeds were only the watchwords in a political struggle; blood, language, and geographical boundaries divided the parties, and religious opinions seldom cross these unchanging lines. Every Egyptian believed the Nicene creed and the incorruptibility of the body of Jesus, and hated the Alexandrian Greeks; while the more refined Greeks were as united in explaining away the Nicene creed by the doctrine of the two natures of Christ, and in despising the ignorant Egyptians. Christianity, which speaks so forcibly to the poor, the unlearned, and the slave, had educated the Egyptian population, had raised them in their own eyes, and, as the popular party gained strength, the Arians lost ground in Alexandria. At the same time the Greeks were falling off in learning and in science, and in all those arts of civilization which had given them the superiority. Like other great political changes, this may not have been understood at the time; but in less than a hundred years it was found that the Egyptians were no longer the slaves, nor the Greeks the masters.

On the death of Jovian, when Valentinian divided the Roman empire with his brother, he took Italy and the West for his own kingdom, and gave Zosimus, lib. iv. A. D. 365.

CHAP. VI. to Valens Egypt and the eastern provinces, in which Greek was the language of the government. Each emperor adopted the religion of his capital; Valentinian held the Nicene faith and Valens the Arian faith, and unhappy Egypt was the only part of the empire whose religion differed from that of its rulers. Had the creeds marked the limits of the two empires, Egypt would have belonged to Rome; but, as geographical boundaries and language form yet stronger ties, Egypt was given to Constantinople.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv.

By Valens, Athanasius was forced for the fifth time to fly from Alexandria, to avoid the displeasure which his disobedience again drew down upon him. But his flock again rose in rebellion in favour of their popular bishop; and the emperor was either persuaded or frightened into allowing him to return to his bishoprick, where he spent the few remaining years of his life in peace. Athanasius died at an advanced age, leaving a name more famous than that of any one of the emperors under whom he lived. He taught the christian world that there was a power greater than that of kings, namely the Church. He was often beaten in the struggle, but every victory over him was followed by the defeat of the civil power; he was five times banished, but five times he returned in triumph. The temporal power of the Church was then nearly new; it only rose upon the conversion of Constantine, and it was weak compared to what it became in after ages; but, when an emperor of Germany did penance barefoot before Pope Hildebrand, and a king of England was whipped at Becket's tomb, we only witness the

full-grown strength of the infant power that was being reared by the bishop of Alexandria. His writings are numerous and wholly controversial, chiefly against the Arians. The Athanasian creed seems to have been so named only because it was thought to contain his opinions, for there is no reason to believe that he was the author of it. Nor is it likely that he would have wholly approved of it, as it does not state that 'the Son is of one substance with the Father,' words which he thought all important as a bulwark against the Arians, and for which he would willingly have laid down his life.

On the death of Athanasius, the Homoousian party chose Peter as his successor in the bishoprick, overlooking Lucius the Arian bishop, whose choice had had the approval of the emperors Julian, Jovian, and Valens; but as the Egyptian church had lost its great champion, the emperor ventured to reassert his authority. He sent Peter to prison, and ordered all the churches to be given up to the Arians, threatening with banishment from Egypt whoever disobeyed his edict. The persecution which the Homoousian party throughout Upper Egypt then suffered from the Arians equalled, says the ecclesiastical historian, anything they had before suffered from the pagans. Every monastery in Egypt was broken open by Lucius at the head of an armed force, and the cruelty of the bishop passed that of the soldiers. Men, of whose virtues the world was not worthy, were stript, beaten, stoned, and put to the sword. But the list of cruelties makes us doubt the truth of the tale; we must choose between one party

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being violent enough to act so wickedly, or the other party being violent enough to accuse them falsely of it; and though theological hatred has been the cause of many outrages, they fortunately have been more often inflicted by the pen than by the sword. We must hope that Lucius was innocent of some of the crimes thus laid to his charge; but we have no further knowledge of his character; he is unknown as an author, and wrote little beside his paschal letters to his churches.

Hieronymus, Cat. Script.

Orosius, lib. vii. 33.

The breaking open of the monasteries above spoken of seems to have been for the purpose of making the inmates bear their share in the military service of the state, rather than for any religious reasons. When Constantine embraced christianity, he at once recognised all the religious scruples of its professors, and not only the bishops and presbyters but all who had entered the monastic orders were freed from the duty of serving in the army. But under the growing dislike of military service, and the difficulty of finding soldiers, as well as the encreasing number of monks, this excuse could no longer be listened to, and Valens made a law that monastic vows should not save a man from enlistment. But this law was not easily carried into force in the monasteries on the borders of the desert, which were often well built and well guarded fortresses; and on mount Nitria in particular, many monks lost their lives in their resistance to the troops that were sent to fetch recruits.

Codex Theod. xii. 1, 63.

Eusebii Chronicon.

The monastic institutions of Egypt had already reached their full growth. They were acknowledged by the laws of the empire as ecclesiastical

corporations, and allowed to hold property; and, by a new law of this reign, if any monk or nun died without a will or any known kindred, the property went to the monastery as heir at law. One of the most celebrated monasteries was on Tabenna, an island in the Nile in the Thebaid, where Pachomius, after meditating for some years alone in a cave, had gathered round him thirteen hundred followers, who owned him as the founder of their order, and gave him credit for the gift of prophecy. His disciples in the monasteries in Upper Egypt amounted to six thousand more. His laws were of the severest kind, as best fitted to keep the thoughts always turned to heaven. The monks were clothed in skins, they prayed twelve times a day, they worked laboriously with their hands, and ate but little. The divine Anuph was at the head of another order of monks, and he boasted that he could by prayer obtain from heaven whatever he wished. Hor was at the head of another monastery, where, though wholly unable to read or write, he spent his life in singing psalms and trying to work miracles. Serapion was at the head of a thousand monks in the Arsenoite nome, who raised their food by their own labour, and shared it with their poorer neighbours. Near Nitria, a place in the Mareotic nome which gave its name to the nitre springs, there were as many as fifty monasteries; but those who aimed at greater solitude and severer mortification withdrew further into the desert, to Scetis in the same nome, a spot already sanctified by the trials and triumphs of St. Anthony. Here dwelt Apollonius, who in his youth had been a remarkable sinner, and in his

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Codex Theod. v. 3.

Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii.

Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi.

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Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi.

old age became even more remarkable as a saint. It was said that for six years he spent every night in prayer, without once closing his eyes in sleep; and that one night, when his cell was attacked by four robbers, he carried them all off at once on his back to the neighbouring monastery to be punished, because he would himself hurt no man. Benjamin also dwelt at Scetis; he consecrated oil to heal the diseases of those who washed with it, and during the eight months that he was himself dying of a dropsy, he touched for their diseases all who came to the door of his cell to be healed. Paul, who dwelt at Pherma, repeated three hundred prayers each day, and kept three hundred pebbles in a bag to help him in his reckoning. Hellas carried fire in his bosom, without burning his clothes. Elias spent seventy years in solitude near Antinoopolis. Apelles was a blacksmith near Achoris; he was tempted by the devil in the form of a beautiful woman, but he scorched the tempter's face with a red-hot iron. Apollos spent forty years in solitude, and the account of his life and miracles was written by Timotheus bishop of Alexandria. Dorotheus, who though a Theban had settled near Alexandria, mortified his flesh by trying to live without sleep. He never willingly lay down to rest, nor indeed ever slept till the weakness of the body sunk under the efforts of the spirit.

The unceasing prayers and sufferings of these men drew after them the admiration of those who had not the zeal and strength to copy their painful self-denial. All Egypt believed that they were the especial favourites of heaven, that they worked miracles, and that divine wisdom flowed from their

lips, without the help or hindrance of human learning. They were all Homoousians, believing that the Son was of one substance with the Father; some as trinitarians holding the opinions of Athanasius; some as Sabellians believing that Jesus was the creator of the world, and that his body was not liable to corruption; some as anthropomorphites believing that God was of a human form like Jesus, but all warmly attached to the Nicene creed, denying the two natures of Christ, and hating the Arian Greeks of Alexandria and the other cities.

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Among these monks, however, there were some few men of learning. Macarius the Egyptian, who was so called to distinguish him from Macarius the Alexandrian, is one of the best known of the monks of mount Nitria. He has left behind him fifty homilies, and a volume on Christian Perfection which places him in the first rank among the writers on practical christianity. He was strictly of the Athanasian party; but, while the writings of his brethren are sadly too much filled with reproaches against their adversaries, and extravagant praises of the lives and miracles of the monks, the works of Macarius breathe the purest love of God and of his neighbour. Evagrius, who had studied under both Macarius of Alexandria and Macarius of Egypt, wrote on the Gnostic philosophy, as well as a history of the monks; and his pupil Palladius wrote a history of the monasteries of Egypt.

Suidas.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv.

We must not hastily judge the extravagance of the monks without taking into account the moral state of the country. We may believe the historians, or we may satisfy ourselves from the codes

CHAP. VI. of the empire, that the monks were thought a blessing to the times in which they lived. The success which followed upon this preaching of an extreme asceticism only proves the grossness of the vice that it was meant to cure. While every luxury of the body was cultivated as the chief end of life, the monks preached and practised fasting and a neglect of dress. While scurrilous jokes, witty scandal, and illnatured epigrams were the chief ornaments of conversation, the monks practised solitary silence and prayer. While the sacred tie of marriage was so little known that the population fell off, and mind and body were alike ruined by debauchery, the monks preached celibacy. While riches were so much more gained by fraud than by honest industry that every rich man was thought to have been either a rogue or the heir to a rogue, the monks practised personal poverty or a community of goods.

During these reigns of weakness and misgovernment, it was no doubt a cruel policy rather than humanity that led the tax-gatherers to collect the tribute in kind. The provinces had little trade, and had long since been drained of all their hoarded gold and silver; and of course much more could be squeezed outof a ruined people by taking what they had to give, than by requiring it to be paid in copper coin. Hence Valens made a law that no tribute throughout the empire should be taken in money; and he laid a new land-tax upon Egypt, to the amount of a soldier's clothing for every thirty acres.

Codex Theodos. xi. 2.

vii. 6.

The Saracens had for some time past been encroaching on the eastern frontiers of the empire,

and had only been kept back by treaties which proved the weakness of the Romans, as the armies of Constantinople were still called, and which encouraged the barbarians in their attacks. On the death of their king, the command over the Saracens fell to their queen Mævia, who broke the treaty, laid waste Palestine and Phœnicia with her armies, conquered or gained over the Arabs of Petræa, and pressed upon the Egyptians at the head of the Red Sea. On this, Valens renewed the treaties, but on terms still more favourable to the invaders. Many of the Saracens were Christians, and by an article of the treaty they were to have a bishop ordained for their church, and for this purpose they sent Moses to Alexandria. But the Saracens sided with the Egyptians, in religion as well as policy, against the Arian Greeks. Hence Moses refused to be ordained by Lucius the patriarch of Alexandria, and chose rather to receive his appointment from some of the Homoousian bishops who were living in banishment in the Thebaid.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv.

Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi.

Chapter VII.

The reigns of Theodosius I., Arcadius, and Theodosius II.

A. D. 379. The reign of Theodosius is remarkable for the blow then given to paganism. It had been sinking even before christianity had become the religion of the emperors; it had been discouraged by Constantine, who had closed many of the temples; but Theodosius made a law in the first year of his reign that the whole of the empire should be christian and should receive the trinitarian faith. He soon afterwards ordered that Sunday should be kept holy, and forbad all work and law proceedings on that day; and he sent Cynegius the prefect of the palace into Egypt, to see these laws carried into effect in that province.

Codex Theod. xvi. 1, 2.

viii. 8, 3.

Zosimus, lib. iv.

The wishes of the emperor were ably followed up by Theophilus the bishop of Alexandria. He cleansed the temple of Mithra, and overthrew the statues in the celebrated temple of Serapis, which seemed the very citadel of paganism. He also exposed to public ridicule the mystic ornaments and statues which a large part of his fellow citizens still regarded as sacred. It was not however to be supposed that this could be peaceably borne by a people so irritable as the Alexandrians. The students in the schools of philosophy put them-

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. v.

selves at the head of the mob to stop the work of destruction, and to revenge themselves against their assailants. Several battles were fought in the streets between the pagans and Christians, in which both parties lost many lives; but, as the Christians were supported by the power of the prefect, the pagans were routed, and many whose rank would have made them objects of punishment were forced to fly from Alexandria. Among these were Ammonius, the author of a valuable work on Greek synonimes, and Helladius, the author of a biographical dictionary which forms a part of the larger dictionary of Suidas.

No sooner had the troops under the command of the prefect put down the pagan opposition than the work of destruction was again carried forward by the zeal of the bishop. The temples were broken open, their ornaments destroyed, and the statues of the gods melted for the use of the Alexandrian church. One statue of an Egyptian god was alone saved from the wreck, and was set up in mockery of those who had worshipped it; and this ridicule of their religion was a cause of greater anger to the pagans than even the destruction of the other statues.

In the plunder of the temple of Serapis the great library of more than seven hundred thousand volumes was wholly broken up and scattered. Orosius the Spaniard, who visited Alexandria in the next reign, and was the author of a short universal history full of bigotry and mistakes, may be trusted when he says that he saw in the temples the empty book-shelves, which within the memory of men then living had been plundered of the

Lib. vii. 36.

Lib. vi. 15.

CHAP. VII. books that had formerly been got together after the library of the Bruchium was burnt by Julius Cæsar. In a work of such lawless plunder carried on by ignorant zealots, many of these monuments of pagan genius and learning must have been wilfully or accidentally destroyed, though the larger number may have been carried off by the Christians for the other public and private libraries of the city. What other libraries this city of science may have possessed we are not told, but there were no doubt many. Had Alexandria during the next two centuries given birth to poets and orators, their works, the offspring of native genius, might perhaps have been written without the help of libraries; but the labours of the mathematicians and grammarians seem to prove that the city was still well furnished with books, beside those on the christian controversies.

It would be dishonest not to point out in each persecution, whether by the pagans or by the Christians, the superiority in worth and character of the oppressed over their persecutors. When the Christians were persecuted by the pagans, none but men of unblemished lives and unusual strength of mind stood to their religion in the day of trial, and suffered the penalties of the law; the weak, the ignorant, and the vicious readily joined in the superstitions required of them, and embracing the religion of the stronger party, easily escaped punishment. So it was when the pagans of Alexandria were persecuted by Theophilus; the chief sufferers were the men of learning, in whose minds paganism was a pure deism, and who saw nothing but ignorance and superstition on the side

of their oppressors. Olympius, who was the priest of Serapis when the temple was sacked, and as such the head of the pagans of Alexandria, was a man in every respect the opposite of the bishop Theophilus. He was of a frank open countenance and agreeable manners; and though his age might have allowed him to speak among his followers in the tone of command, he chose rather in his moral lessons to use the mild persuasion of an equal; and few hearts were so hardened as not to be led into the path of duty by his exhortations. Whereas 'the furious monks,' says the indignant pagan, 'were men only in form, but swine in manners. Whoever put on a black coat, and was not ashamed to be seen with dirty linen, gained a tyrannical power over the minds of the mob, from their belief in his holiness; and these men attacked the temples of the gods as a propitiation for their own enormous sins.'

Chap. VII.

Suidas.

Eunapius, vit. Sophist.

It would be unreasonable to suppose that the Egyptians, on embracing christianity, at once threw off the whole of their pagan rites and superstitions. Among others that they still clung to, was that of making mummies of the bodies of the dead. Saint Anthony had tried to dissuade the christian converts from that practice; not because the mummy cases were covered with pagan inscriptions, but he boldly asserted, what a very little reading would have disproved, that every mode of treating a dead body, beside burial, was forbidden in the Bible as wicked. St. Augustine on the other hand, well understanding that the immortality of the soul without the body was little likely to be understood or valued by the ignorant,

Athanasius, vit. Antonii.

Sermo 349, de Resurrec. cap. xii.

CHAP. VII. praises the Egyptians for that very practice, and says that they were the only Christians who really believed in the resurrection from the dead. The figures of the Virgin Mary standing on the moon, as painted on the windows of some of our cathedrals, seem borrowed from the goddess Isis, who was usually ornamented with that planet. The tapers, even now burnt before the Roman catholic altars, had also from the earliest times been used to light up the splendours of the Egyptian altars, in the darkness of their temples, and had been burnt in still greater numbers in the yearly festival of the candles. It would indeed be easy to point out other improvements or rather blots upon christianity, which seem to be the remains of paganism; but the subject is too important to be entered upon unless it were treated carefully and fully, and these cases are only mentioned as being of Egyptian growth.

Heliodorus, Æthiopica, lib. i.

Herodotus, lib. ii. 62.

When the season came for the overflow of the Nile, in the first summer after the destruction of the temples, the waters happened to rise more slowly than usual; and the Egyptians laid the blame upon the christian emperor, who had forbidden their sacrificing the usual offerings in honour of the river god. The alarm for the loss of their crops carried more weight in the religious controversy than any arguments that could be brought against pagan sacrifices; and the anger of the people soon threatened a serious rebellion. Evagrius, the prefect, in his doubts about the peace of the country, sent to Constantinople for orders; but the emperor remained firm, he would make no change in the law against paganism, and the fears of the Alexan-

Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii.

drians were soon put an end to by a most plenteous overflow. CHAP. VII.

The new law in favour of trinitarian christianity was enforced with as great strictness against the Arians as against the pagans; and the bishops and priests of that party were everywhere turned out of their churches, which were then given up to the Homoousians. Theodosius summoned a council of one hundred and fifty bishops at Constantinople, to reenact the Nicene creed; and in the future religious rebellions of the Egyptians they always quoted the council of Constantinople, with that of Nice, as the foundation of their faith against the Greeks. By this religious policy, Theodosius won the friendship of his Egyptian subjects, as well as of their Saracen neighbours, all of whom, as far as they were christian, held the Nicene faith. Egypt became the safest of his provinces; and, when his armies had been recruited with so many barbarians that they could no longer be trusted, these new levies were marched into Egypt under the command of Hormisdas, and an equal number of Egyptians were drafted out of the army of Egypt, and led into Thessaly.

Eusebii Chronicon.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. v.

Zosimus, lib. iv.

Since the time of Athanasius, and the overthrow of the Arian party in Alexandria, the learning of that city was wholly in the hands of the pagans, and was chiefly mathematical. Theon, Pappus, and Diophantus are still known by their writings to the mathematician and the scholar. Theon was a professor in the Museum, and, beside other mathematical works, wrote on the smaller astrolabe, the instrument then used to measure the stars' places, and on the rise of the Nile, a sub-

Suidas.

CHAP. VII. ject always of interest to the mathematicians of Egypt, from its importance to the husbandman. From Theon's astronomical observations we learn that the Alexandrian astronomers still made use of the old Egyptian moveable year of three hundred and sixty-five days only, and without a leap-year. Pappus wrote a description of the world, and a commentary on Ptolemy's Almagest, beside a work on geometry, published under the name of his Mathematical Collections. The time when Diophantus of Alexandria lived is unfortunately not so well known; but it was not later than this reign. He wrote on arithmetic and algebra, and has given his name to the Diophantine problems.

Suidas.

Horapollo, the grammarian, was also then a teacher in the schools of Alexandria, though after a short time he removed to Constantinople. He wrote in the Coptic language a work in explanation of the hieroglyphics, which has gained a notice far beyond what it deserves, because it is the only work on the subject that has come down to us. It is perhaps hardly fair to judge it by the Greek translation made by an unknown writer of the name of Philip, but it is a work of very little value. Before hieroglyphics were understood, nobody hoped to understand them by its help, and the reader saw at a glance that little could be learnt from it; though we now look to it with some curiosity, to see the sparklings of truth which here and there glimmer through the blunders.

Philippus Sidetes, ap. Dodwell.

The closing of the Catechetical school naturally followed upon the persecution with which this reign began. Rhodon, who had succeeded the blind Didymus, was the last of thirteen professors

who for upwards of two hundred years had been ornaments to Alexandria and to their religion. As they were appointed to the office by the bishop, the last two or three had been of the Homoousian opinions; but as their pupils were chiefly Arians, the violence of the quarrel would have ruined the school, even without the help of a persecution. Rhodon removed with his few remaining pupils to Side in Pamphylia, and henceforth the only remaining school of philosophy in Alexandria was that of the pagans. CHAP. VII.

The only christian writing of this time, that we know of, is the paschal letter of Theophilus bishop of Alexandria, which was much praised by Jerom, and by him translated into Latin. John, the famous monk of the Thebaid, was no writer, though believed to have the gift of prophecy. He was said to have foretold the victory of Theodosius over the rebel Maximus; and, when the emperor had got together his troops to march against Eugenius, another rebel who had seized the passes of the Julian Alps, he sent his trusty eunuch Eutropius to fetch the holy Egyptian, or at least to learn from him what would be the event of the war. John refused to go to Europe, but he told the messenger that Theodosius would conquer the rebel, and soon afterwards die; both of which came to pass, as might easily have been guessed.

Hieronymus ad Theoph.

Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii.

On the death of Theodosius, the Roman empire was again divided. Arcadius his eldest son ruled the East, while Honorius the younger held the West; and the reins of government at once passed from the ablest to the weakest hands. But the change was little felt in Egypt, which con-

A. D. 395.

CHAP. VII. tinued to be governed by the patriarch Theophilus, without the name but with very nearly the power of a prefect. He was a bold and wicked man, but, as his religious opinions were for the Homoousians against the Arians, and his political feelings were for the Egyptians against the Greeks, he rallied round his government the chief strength of the province. As the pagans and Arians of Alexandria were no longer worthy of his enmity, he fanned into a flame a new quarrel which was then breaking out in the Egyptian church. The monks of Upper Egypt, who were mostly ignorant and unlettered men, were anthropomorphites, or believers that God was in outward shape like a man. They quoted from the Jewish scriptures that he made man in his own image, in support of their unworthy opinion of the Creator, rather than as an encouragement to their own efforts, and a proof of the noble powers that he has entrusted to his creatures. They held that he was of a strictly human form, like Jesus, which to them seemed fully asserted in the Nicene creed. In this opinion they were opposed by those who were better educated, and more particularly by Dioscorus, bishop of Hermopolis, with his three brothers, Ammonius, Eusebius, and Euthymius, who were at the head of the monasteries at Scetis. It suited the policy of the violent Theophilus to side with the more ignorant and larger party, and he warmly espoused the anthropomorphite opinion, and branded with the name of Origenists those who argued that God was without form, and who quoted the writings of Origen in support of their opinion. This naturally led to a dispute about

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi.

Origen's orthodoxy; and that admirable writer, who had been praised by all parties for two hundred years, who had been quoted as authority as much by Athanasius as by the Arians, was declared to be a heretic by a council of bishops who then met in Cyprus; and his writings were forbidden to be read, because they contradicted the anthropomorphite opinions. CHAP. VII.

The quarrel between the Origenists and the anthropomorphites did not end in words. A proposition in theology, or a doubt in metaphysics, was no better cause of civil war than the old quarrels about the bull Apis or the crocodile; but a change of religion had not changed the national character. The patriarch, finding his party the stronger, attacked the enemy in their own monasteries; he marched to mount Nitria at the head of a strong body of soldiers, and, enrolling under his banners the anthropomorphite monks, attacked Dioscorus and the Origenists, set fire to their monasteries, and laid waste the place. Nicephorus, Eccl. Hist. lib. xiii.

Theophilus next quarrelled with Peter, the chief of the Alexandrian presbyters, whom he accused of admitting to the sacraments of the church a woman who had not renounced the Manichæan heresy; and he then quarrelled with Isidorus who had the charge of the poor of the church, because he bore witness to Peter's having had the orders of Theophilus himself for what he did.

The further we advance in the history of christianity in Egypt, by every step that we leave the bright ages of Origen, Clemens, and the Catechetical school, the thicker are the mists of superstition that surround us. In this century there was

CHAP. VII. a general digging up of the bodies of the most celebrated Christians of former ages, to heal the diseases and strengthen the faith of the living; and Constantinople, which as the capital of the empire had been ornamented by the spoils of its subject provinces, had latterly been enriching its churches with the remains of numerous christian saints. The tombs of Upper Egypt, crowded with mummies that had lain there for centuries, could of course furnish relics more easily than most countries; and in this reign Constantinople received from Egypt a quantity of bones which were supposed to be those of the martyrs slain in the pagan persecutions. The archbishop John Chrysostome received them gratefully, and though himself smarting under the reproach that he was not orthodox enough for the superstitious Egyptians, he thanks God that Egypt, which sent forth its corn to feed its hungry neighbours, could also send the bodies of so many martyrs to sanctify their churches.

Homil. in Martyr. Ægypt.

Another superstition, which by this time the pagans had engrafted on christianity, was that of having sacred trees. Though the Egyptian Christians had no sacred animals yet they had made the peach-tree sacred to Jesus. There was a peach-tree at Hermopolis which was said to heal the diseases of all who touched it. They also had a tradition that when the infant Jesus had been brought into Egypt by his parents, they had rested under the shade of a peach-tree, and that the tree, foreseeing his after greatness, had bowed down to worship the child. As this tree was not now to be found, it was one of the crimes laid to the charge

Cedrenus.

of Julian the apostate emperor, that he had destroyed it, as one of the steps towards outrooting christianity. Indeed, as soon as the Christians adopted the peach groves into their religion, the pagans made an attack upon them; and to stop this crime Arcadius made a law that no peach-tree should be cut down in Egypt, and that whoever should be guilty of buying or selling one should forfeit five pounds weight of gold.

Justinian, Cod. xi. 77.

We have traced the fall of the Greek party in Alexandria, in the victories over the Arians during the religious quarrels of the last hundred years; and in the laws of the empire we now read the city's loss of wealth and power. The corporation of Alexandria was no longer able to bear the expense of cleansing the river and keeping open the canals; and four hundred *solidi*, perhaps about two hundred and forty pounds sterling, were each year set apart from the custom-house duties of the city for that useful work.

Codex Theodos. xiv. 27, 2.

At a time when Italy had very little literature to boast of, and very little credit to spare, it seems hard to claim any of it for Egypt; but Claudian, the last of the Roman poets, was a native of Alexandria. He at first wrote in Greek, though a few epigrams are all that now remain in his native language. It is to his Latin poems, written after he had removed to Rome, that he owes his name and rank as an author. He is one of the few who have been successful as a poet in a foreign language; and though we cannot place him in the first class, with Lucretius, Virgil, and Ovid, he may safely be placed in the second, with Lucan and Statius.

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Nicephorus, Eccl. Hist. lib. xiv.

The chief man of learning was Synesius a Platonic philosopher, whom Theophilus persuaded to join the Christians. As a Platonist he naturally leaned towards many of the doctrines of the popular religion, but he could not believe in a resurrection; and it was not till after Theophilus had ordained him bishop of Ptolemais near Cyrene that he acknowledged the truth of that doctrine. He has left a volume of writings, including letters and some hymns. His thoughts are not unworthy of a christian philosopher, though his theology was drawn rather from pagan than from christian streams; for he believed in as many inferior gods as the most ignorant polytheist or the most imaginative Platonist. He laments in terms of great feeling over the ruined state of Cyrene, ruined by the Marcomanni and other barbarian mercenaries that were brought into the province to guard it; and he points with generous shame to the public decrees, carved on a marble monument in the forum, which still declared that the people were Dorians, descended from the Heraclidæ. His grateful praises have saved the names of two prefects of Cyrene; the one Anysius, under whose good discipline even the barbarians of Hungary behaved like Roman legionaries, and the other Pæonius, who cultivated science in this barren spot, and who had made him a present of an astrolabe.

Photius, xxvi.

Synesius, Catastasis.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii.

A. D. 409.

On the death of Arcadius, his son Theodosius was only eight years old, but he was quietly acknowledged as emperor of the East, and he left the government of Egypt, as heretofore, very much in the hands of the patriarch. In the fifth year of

his reign Theophilus died; and, as might be supposed, a successor was not appointed without a struggle for the double honour of bishop of Alexandria and governor of Egypt. The remains of the Greek and Arian party proposed Timotheus, an archdeacon in the church; but the Egyptian party were united in favour of Cyril, a young man of learning and talent, who had the advantage of being the nephew of the late bishop. Whatever were the forms by which the election should have been governed, it was in reality settled by a battle between the two parties in the streets; and though Abundantius the military prefect gave the weight of his name, if not the strength of his cohort, to the party of Timotheus, yet his rival conquered, and Cyril was carried into the cathedral with a pomp more like a pagan triumph than the modest ordination of a bishop.

Cyril was not less tyrannical in his bishoprick than his uncle had been before him. His first care was to put a stop to all heresy in Alexandria, and his second to banish the Jews. The theatre was the spot in which the riots between Jews and Christians usually began, and the sabbath was the time, as being the day on which the Jews chiefly crowded in to see the dancing. On one occasion the quarrel in the theatre ran so high that the prefect with his cohort was scarcely able to keep them from blows; and the Christians reproached the poor Jews with plotting to burn down the churches. But the Christians were themselves guilty of the very crimes of which they accused their enemies. The next morning, as soon as it was light, Cyril headed the mob in their attacks upon the

CHAP. VII. Jewish synagogues, and they broke them open and plundered them, and in one day drove every Jew out of the city. Hereafter no Jew was allowed to live in Alexandria without paying a poll-tax, for leave to worship God according to the manner of his forefathers.

Eutychii Annales.

Orestes, the prefect of the city, had before wished to check the power of the bishop; and he in vain tried to save the Jews from oppression, and the state from the loss of so many good citizens. But it was useless to quarrel with the patriarch, who was supported by the religious zeal of the whole population. The monks of mount Nitria and the neighbouring mountains burned with a holy zeal to fight for Cyril as they had before fought for Theophilus, and when they heard that a jealousy had sprung up between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, more than five hundred of them marched into Alexandria to avenge the affronted bishop. They met the prefect Orestes as he was passing through the streets in his open chariot, and began reproaching him with being a pagan and a Greek. Orestes answered that he was a Christian, and had been baptized at Constantinople. But this only cleared him of the lesser charge, he was certainly a Greek; and one of these Egyptian monks taking up a stone threw it at his head, and the blow covered his face with blood. They then fled from the guards and people who came up to help the wounded prefect; but Ammonius who threw the stone was taken, and put to death with torture. After his death the grateful bishop buried him in the church with much pomp, and declared him to be a martyr and

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii.

a saint, and gave him the name of Saint Thaumasius. But the Christians were ashamed of the new martyr; and the bishop, who could not withstand the ridicule, soon afterwards withdrew from him the title.

CHAP. VII.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii.

Bad as was this behaviour of the bishop and his friends, the most disgraceful tale still remains to be told. The beautiful and learned Hypatia, the daughter of Theon the mathematician, was at that time the ornament of Alexandria and the pride of the pagans. She taught philosophy publicly in the Platonic school which had been founded by Ammonius, and which boasted of Plotinus as its pupil. She was as modest as she was graceful, eloquent, and learned; and though, being a pagan, she belonged to neither of the rival christian parties, yet, as she had more hearers among the Greek friends of the prefect than among the ignorant followers of the bishop, she became an object of jealousy with the Homoousian party. A body of these Christians, says the orthodox historian, attacked this admirable woman in the street; they dragged her from her chariot, and hurried her off into the church named Cæsar's temple, and there stripped her and murdered her with some broken tiles. She had written commentaries on the mathematical works of Diophantus, and on the conic sections of Apollonius.

Suidas.

In former reigns the Alexandrians had been in the habit of sending embassies to Constantinople to complain of tyranny or misgovernment, and to beg for a redress of grievances, when they thought that justice could be there obtained when it was refused in Alexandria. But this practice was

CHAP. VII. stopped by Theodosius, who made a law that the Alexandrians should never send an embassy to Constantinople, unless it were agreed to by a decree of the town council, and had the approbation of the prefect. The emperor would allow no appeal from the tyranny of his own governor.

Justinian. Cod. x. 63.

We may pass over the banishment of John Chrysostome bishop of Constantinople, as having less to do with the history of Egypt, though, as in the case of Nestorius, the chief mover of the attack upon him was a bishop of Alexandria, who accused him of heresy, because he did not come up to the Egyptian standard of orthodoxy. But among the bishops who were deposed with Chrysostome was Palladius of Galatia, who was sent a prisoner to Syene. As soon as he was released from his bonds, instead of being cast down by his misfortunes he proposed to take advantage of the place of his banishment, and he set forward on his travels through Ethiopia for India, in search of the wisdom of the Brachmins. He arrived in safety at Adule, the port on the Red Sea in latitude 15°, where he made acquaintance with Moses the bishop of that city, and persuaded him to join him in his distant and difficult voyage. From Adule they set sail in one of the vessels employed in the Indian trade; but they were unable to accomplish their purpose, and Palladius returned to Egypt worn out with heat and fatigue, having scarcely touched the shores of India. On his return through Thebes he met with a traveller who had lately returned from the same journey, and who consoled him under his disappointment by recounting his own failure in the same undertaking.

Palladius, vit. Chrysost.

de Bragmanibus.

His new friend had himself been a merchant in the Indian trade, but had given up business because he was not successful in it; and, having taken a priest as his companion, had set out on the same voyage in search of Eastern wisdom. They had sailed from Adule to Auxumis on the Arabian shores, and thence reached a coast which they thought was Taprobane or Ceylon. But there they were taken prisoners, and, after spending six years in slavery, and learning but little of the philosophy that they were in search of, were glad to take the first opportunity of escaping and returning to Egypt. Palladius had travelled in Egypt before he was sent there into banishment, and he had spent many years in examining the monasteries of the Thebaid and their rules, and he has left a history of the lives of many of those holy men and women, addressed to his friend Lausus.

Hist. Lausiaca.

When Nestorius was deposed from the bishoprick of Constantinople for disapproving of the words 'Mother of God' as the title of Jesus's mother, and for falling short in other points of what was then thought orthodoxy, he was banished to Hibe in the Great Oasis. Egypt was cruelly chosen as the place of his banishment, because he was shunned as a herètic by the whole of the people. While he was living there, the Great Oasis was overrun by the Blemmyi, the Roman garrison was defeated, and those that resisted were put to the sword. The Blemmyi pillaged the place and then withdrew; and, being themselves at war with the Mazices, another tribe of Arabs, they kindly sent their prisoners to the Thebaid, lest they should fall into the hands of the latter. Nestorius then went

Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. i.

CHAP. VII. to Panopolis to show himself to the governor, lest he should be accused of running away from his place of banishment, and soon afterwards he died of the sufferings brought on by these forced and painful journeys through the desert.

Eusebii Chronicon.

About the same time Egypt was visited by Cassianus, a monk of Gaul, in order to study the monastic institutions of the Thebaid. In his work on that subject he has described at length the way of life and the severe rules of the Egyptian monks, and has recommended them to the imitation of his countrymen. But the natives of Italy and the West do not seem to have been contented with copying the Theban monks at a distance. Such was the fame of the Egyptian monasteries that many zealots from Italy flocked there to place themselves under the severe discipline of those holy men. As these Latin monks did not understand either Coptic or Greek, they found some difficulty in regulating their lives with the wished-for exactness, and the rules of Pachomius, one of the most celebrated of the founders, were actually sent to Jerome at Rome, to be by him translated into Latin for the use of these settlers in the Thebaid.

Hieronymus, in Pachomii Regulam.

But among the monks of Egypt there were also some men of learning and industry, who in their cells in the desert were working for the benefit of their fellow-christians and posterity. They had made at least three translations of the New Testament into the three dialects of the Coptic language; namely, the Sahidic of Upper Egypt, the Basmuric of the Basmour province of the Delta, and the Coptic proper of Memphis. To these were afterwards added the Acts of the council of Nice, the

lives of the saints and martyrs, the writings of many of the christian Fathers, and the rituals of the Coptic church. Other monks were as busy in making copies of the Greek manuscripts of the Old and New Testament; and as each copy must have needed the painful labour of months, and almost years, their industry and zeal must have been great. Most of these manuscripts were on papyrus and have long since been lost, and we only possess the copies which were again made from them; but the well-known Alexandrian manuscript, which is still in the British Museum, was most likely written about this time. It was sent to Charles I. of England by a patriarch of Constantinople, who said that he had it from Egypt, and that there had once been a superscription on it saying that it was written by Thecla, an Egyptian lady of high rank, soon after the council of Nice. It is written in capitals, without accents or spaces between the words: it contains, beside the Old and New Testaments, the epistles of Clemens Romanus, and an epistle of Athanasius about the Psalms, with a list of those which are to be used in prayer for each hour of the day and night, and fourteen hymns, one of which is in praise of Mary 'the Mother of God.' These circumstances, together with the style of the hand-writing, seem to fix the date of this valuable manuscript to about this time.

Baber's Prolegom.

The christian writings of this reign are neither many nor valuable. Isidorus of Pelusium has left a large volume of letters, addressed to friends and enemies, on theological and religious subjects. But they seem to have been written for publica-

ASHMOLEAN OXFORD MUSEUM

CHAP. VII. tion rather than to be sent to the persons to whom they were addressed. At this time, perhaps, we ought to place Nonnus of the city of Panopolis, the author of a poetical paraphrase of St. John's gospel, and of the Dionysiaca, a tame and feeble history of the deeds of Bacchus, in heroic verse. Cyril the patriarch has left several writings, but of little worth for style or argument. They are homilies, commentaries on the Bible, and treatises against Nestorius, against the emperor Julian, and against the anthropomorphite monks. As he had succeeded his uncle, so on his death the bishoprick fell to Dioscorus, a relation of his own, a man of equal religious violence and of less learning, and who only differed with him in the points of doctrine about which he quarrelled with his fellow-christians.

Theophanes, Chronogr.

The Egyptian physicians had of old always formed a part of the priesthood, and they seem to have done nearly the same after the spread of christianity. We find an order of monks named *Parabalani*, who owned the bishop of Alexandria as their head, and who united the offices of physician and nurse in waiting on the sick and dying. As they professed poverty, they were maintained by the state and had other privileges; and hence it was a place much sought after, and even by the wealthy. But to lessen this abuse it was ordered by an imperial rescript that none but poor people who had been rate-payers should be *Parabalani*; and their number was limited, first to five hundred, but afterwards, at the request of the bishop, to six hundred. A second charitable institution in Alexandria had the care of strangers

Codex Theodos. xvi. 2, 42.

Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. viii.

and the poor, and was also managed by one of the priests. CHAP. VII.

Alexandria seems to have been fast sinking in wealth and population, and several new laws were made to lessen its difficulties. One was to add a hundred and ten bushels of corn to the daily alimony of the city, the supply on which the riotous citizens were fed in idleness. By a second and a third law the five chief men in the corporation, and every man that had filled a civic office for thirty years, were freed from all bodily punishment, and only to be fined when convicted of a crime. Theodosius built a large church in Alexandria, which was called after his name; and the provincial judges were told in a letter to the prefect that, if they wished to earn the emperor's praise, they must not only restore those buildings which were falling through age and neglect but must also build new ones.

Codex Theodos. xiv. 26, 2.

xii. 1, 190.
xii. 1, 191.

J. Malala, lib. xiv.

Codex Theodos. xv. 1, 20.

Though the pagan philosophy had been much discouraged at Alexandria by the destruction of the temples and the stop put to the sacrifices, yet the philosophers were still allowed to teach in the schools. Syrianus of Alexandria was at the head of the Platonists, and he wrote largely on the Orphic, Pythagorean, and Platonic doctrines; but so little does the world now value these studies that the works of Syrianus still remain in manuscript. We only know him in a translation of his Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics, in which he aims at showing how a Pythagorean or a Platonist would successfully answer Aristotle's objections. He seems to look upon the writings of Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus as the true

Suidas.

CHAP. VII. fountains of Platonic wisdom, quite as much as the works of the great philosopher who gave his name to the sect. Syrianus afterwards removed to Athens, to take charge of the Platonic school in that city, and henceforth Athens rather than Alexandria became the chief seat of Alexandrian Platonism.

Suidas. Marinus, vit. Procli.

Olympiodorus was at the same time undertaking the difficult task of forming a Peripatetic school in Alexandria, in opposition to the New Platonism, and he has left some of the fruits of his labour in his Commentaries on Aristotle. He also wrote a history, but it was in a stiff inelegant style, and has long since been lost with other works of second-rate merit. He was a native of the Thebaid, and travelled over his country. He described the Great Oasis as still a highly cultivated spot, where the husbandman irrigated his fields every third day in summer, and every fifth day in winter, drawing the water from wells of two and three hundred feet in depth, and thereby raising two crops of barley, and often three of millet, in a year. Olympiodorus also travelled beyond Syene into Nubia, with some danger from the Blemmyi, but he was not able to see the emerald mines, which seem to have been the chief object of his journey there.

Photius, lxxx.

Marinus, vit. Procli.

Proclus came to Alexandria about the end of this reign, and studied many years under Olympiodorus, but not to the neglect of the Platonic philosophy, of which he afterwards became such a distinguished ornament and support. The other Alexandrians under whom Proclus studied were Leonas the rhetorician, who introduced him to all

the chief men of learning, and Orion the grammarian, who boasted of his descent from the race of Theban priests. But Proclus removed to Athens, where christianity pressed less severely upon the philosophers than it did in Alexandria, and where, under Syrianus, the Alexandrian Platonism now flourished more vigorously than in its native city. At Athens he wrote his mathematical and philosophical works, in the latter of which Platonism appears even further removed from the opinions of its great author than it had been in the writings of Plotinus. CHAP. VII.

Beside these great pagan writers, we may mention Pampretius the Alexandrian critic, who removed to Athens at the same time with Proclus. Orion, the grammarian, who had the honour of having Proclus for his pupil, was a native of Thebes, and the author of a small work on etymology which has escaped the accidents of fourteen centuries. He afterwards removed to Cæsarea, where he for some time taught grammar. Asclepiodotus, who for some time lived at Aphroditopolis, wrote on physics, mathematics, and morals. Thus the pagans still held up their heads in the schools. Nor were the ceremonies of their religion, though unlawful, wholly stopt. In the twenty-eighth year of this reign, when the pagans were assembled in the theatre of Alexandria to celebrate the midnight festival of the Nile, a sacrifice which had been forbidden by Constantine and the council of Nice, the building fell beneath the weight of the crowd, and upwards of five hundred persons were killed by the fall.

Damascius, ap. Photium.

Suidas.

Theophanes Chronogr.

Eusebius, vit. Constant.

Here it will not be uninteresting to review the

CHAP. VII. Notitia Dign. Imp.

machinery of officers and deputies, civil as well as military, by which Egypt was governed under the successors of Constantine. The whole of the eastern empire was placed under two prefects, the pretorian prefect of the East and the pretorian prefect of Illyricum, who, living at Constantinople, like modern secretaries of state, made edicts for the government of the provinces and heard the appeals. Under the prefect of the East were fifteen consular provinces, together with Egypt, in which latter there was no consular governor between the prefect at Constantinople and the six prefects of the smaller provinces. These provinces were Upper Libya or Cyrene, Lower Libya or the Oasis, the Thebaid, Ægyptiaca or the western part of the Delta, Augustanica or the eastern part of the Delta, and the Heptanomis, now named Arcadia after the late emperor. Each of these was under an Augustal prefect, attended by a *Princeps*, a *Cornicularius*, an *Adjutor* and others; and was assisted in civil matters by a *Commentariensis*, a corresponding secretary, a secretary *ab actis*, with a crowd of *numerarii* or clerks. The military government was under a count with two dukes, with a number of legions, cohorts, troops, and wedges of cavalry, stationed in about fifty cities, which, if they had looked as well in the field as they do upon paper, would have made Theodosius II. as powerful as Augustus. But the number of Greek and Roman troops was small. These were only parts of the fifth Macedonian legion, and of Trajan's second legion, which were stationed at Memphis, at Parembole, and at Apollinopolis; while from the names of the other cohorts

we learn that they were Franks, Germans, Portuguese, Quadri, Spaniards, Britons, Moors, Vandals, Gauls, Sarmati, Assyrians, Galatians, Africans, Numidians, and others of less known and more remote places. Egypt itself furnished the Egyptian legion, part of which was in Mesopotamia, Diocletian's third legion of Thebans, the first Maximinian legion of Thebans, which was stationed in Thrace, Constantine's second Flavian legion of Thebans, Valens's second Felix legion of Thebans, and the Julian Alexandrian legion, stationed in Thrace. Beside these, there were several bodies of native militia, from Abydos, Syene, and other cities, which were not formed into legions. The Egyptian cavalry were a first and second Egyptian troop, several bodies of native archers mounted, three troops on dromedaries, and a body of Diocletian's third legion promoted to the cavalry. The taxes of the province were collected by a number of counts of the sacred largesses, who were under the orders of an officer of the same title at Constantinople, and were helped by a body of counts of the exports and imports, prefects of the treasury and of the mints, with an army of clerks of all titles and all ranks. From this government the Alexandrians were exempt, living under their own military prefect and corporation; and, instead of paying any taxes beyond the custom-house duties at the port, they received a bounty in corn out of the taxes of Egypt.

Hieroclis Syncedemus.

Soon after this we find the political division of Egypt slightly altered. It is then divided into eight governments; the Upper Thebaid with eleven cities under a duke; the Lower Thebaid with

CHAP. VII. ten cities, including the Great Oasis and part of the Heptanomis, under a general; Upper Libya or Cyrene under a general; Lower Libya or Parætonium under a general; Arcadia, or the remainder of the Heptanomis, under a general; Ægyptiaca, or the western half of the Delta, under an Augustalian prefect; the first Augustan government, or the rest of the Delta, under a *Corrector*; and the second Augustan government, from Bubastus to the Red Sea, under a general. We also meet with several military stations named after the late emperors; a Maximianopolis and a Dioclesianopolis in the Upper Thebaid; a Theodosianopolis in the Lower Thebaid, and a second Theodosianopolis in Arcadia. But it is not easy to determine what villages were meant by these high-sounding names, which were perhaps only used in official documents.

Chapter VIII.

The reigns of Marcian, Leo, Leo II., Zeno, Basilicus, and Anastasius.

The theological and political quarrel which, under the name of the Homoousian and Arian controversy, had nearly separated Egypt from the rest of the empire during the reigns of Constantius and Valens, had been healed by the wisdom of the first Theodosius, who governed Egypt by means of a popular bishop; and the policy which he so wisely began was continued by his successors through weakness. But in the reign of Marcian the old quarrel again broke out, and though it was under a new name it again took the form of a religious controversy. Eutyches, a priest of Constantinople, had in the last reign been condemned by his superiors and expelled from the church for denying the two natures of Christ, and for maintaining that he was truly God, and in no respect a man. This was the opinion of the Egyptian church, and therefore Dioscorus the bishop of Alexandria, who had no right whatever to meddle in the quarrels at Constantinople, yet, acting on the forgotten rule that each bishop's power extended over all christendom, undertook of his own authority to absolve Eutyches from his excommunication, and in return to excommunicate

A. D. 450.

Nicephorus, Eccl. Hist. lib. xiv.

CHAP. VIII. the bishop of Constantinople who had condemned him. To settle this quarrel, a general council was summoned at Chalcedon, where six hundred and thirty-two bishops met and condemned the faith of Eutyches, and further explained the Nicene creed, to which Eutyches and the Egyptians always appealed. They excommunicated Eutyches and his patron Dioscorus, who were banished by the emperor; and they elected Proterius to the then vacant bishoprick of Alexandria.

Nicephorus, Eccl. Hist. lib. xiv.

In thus condemning the faith of Eutyches, the Greeks were excommunicating the whole of Egypt. The Egyptian belief in the one nature of Christ and the incorruptible nature of his body, which soon afterwards took the name of the Jacobite faith from one of its more popular supporters, might perhaps be distinguished by the microscopic eye of the controversialist from the faith of Eutyches, but they equally fell under the condemnation of the council of Chalcedon. Egypt was no longer divided in its religious opinions. There had been a party who, though Egyptian in blood, held the Arian and half Arian opinions of the Greeks, but that party had ceased to exist. Their religion had pulled one way and their political feelings another; the latter were found the stronger, as being more closely rooted to the soil; and their religious opinions had by this time fitted themselves to the geographical boundaries of the country. Hence the decrees of the council of Chalcedon were rejected by the whole of Egypt, and the quarrel between the Chalcedonian and Jacobite party, like the former quarrel between the Athanasians and the Arians, was little more

than another name for the unwillingness of the Egyptians to be governed by Constantinople. CHAP. VIII.

Proterius the new bishop entered Alexandria, supported by the prefect Florus at the head of the troops. But this was the signal for a revolt of the Egyptians, who overpowered the cohort with darts and stones, and drove the magistrates to save their lives in the celebrated temple of Serapis. But they found no safety there; the mob surrounded the building and set fire to it, and burned alive the Greek magistrates and friends of the new bishop, and the city remained in the power of the rebellious Egyptians. When the news of this rising reached Constantinople, the emperor sent to Egypt a further force of two thousand men, who stormed Alexandria and sacked it like a conquered city, and established Proterius in the bishoprick. As a punishment upon the city for its rebellion, the prefect stopped the public games and the allowance of corn to the citizens, and only restored them after the return to peace and good order. Nicephorus, Eccl. Hist. lib. xv.

In the weak state of the empire, the Blemmyi, and Nubades or Nabatæ, had latterly been renewing their inroads upon Upper Egypt; they had overpowered the Romans, as the Greek and barbarian troops of Constantinople were always called, and had carried off a large booty and a number of prisoners. Maximinus the imperial general then led his forces against them, defeated them, and made them beg for peace. The barbarians proposed, as the terms on their side, to agree never to enter Egypt while Maximinus commanded the troops in the Thebaid; but the conqueror was not contented with such an unsatisfactory submission, Excerpt. Legat. Byzant.

CHAP. VIII. and would make no treaty with them till they had released the Roman prisoners without ransom, paid for the booty that they had taken, and given some of their nobles as hostages. On this Maximinus agreed to a truce for a hundred years.

Excerpt. Legat. Byzant.

The numerous tribes of Arabs had from very early times been divided by their religion into idolators and worshippers of one God. The barbarians who then harassed Egypt on the south were idolators, and since the Thebaid had been left open to their inroads, and had been in part peopled by them, they had made use of the Egyptian statues as emblems of their own gods. The Nubades had an old custom of going each year to the temple of Isis on the isle of Elephantine, and of carrying away one of the statues with them and of returning it to the temple when they had consulted it. But as they were now being driven out of the province, they bargained with Maximinus for leave to visit the temple each year without hindrance from the Roman guards; and the treaty was written on papyrus and nailed up in this temple. But this was no sooner done than Maximinus fell ill and died; and the Nubades at once broke the treaty, regained by force their hostages that had not yet been carried out of the Thebaid, and overran the province as they had done before their defeat.

Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

A. D. 457.

On the death of the emperor Marcian, the Alexandrians, taking advantage of the absence of the military prefect Dionysius, who was then fighting against the Nubades in Upper Egypt, renewed their attack upon the bishop Proterius, and deposed him from his office. To fill his place they made choice of a monk named Timotheus Ælurus,

who held the Jacobite faith, and, having among them two deposed bishops, they got them to ordain him bishop of Alexandria, and led him by force of arms into the great church which had formerly been called Cæsar's temple. Upon hearing of the rebellion, the prefect returned in haste to Alexandria; but his approach was only the signal for greater violence, and the enraged people murdered Proterius in the baptistery, and hung up his body at the Tetrapylon, in mockery. This was not a rebellion of the mob; Timotheus was supported by the men of chief rank in the city, the *Honorati* who had borne state offices, the *Politici* who had borne civic offices, and the *Navicularii*, or contractors for the freight of the Egyptian tribute, were all opposed to the emperor's claim to appoint the officer whose duties were much more those of prefect of the city than patriarch of Egypt. With such an opposition as this, the emperor would do nothing without the greatest caution, for he was in danger of losing Egypt altogether. But so much were the minds of all men then engrossed in ecclesiastical matters that this political struggle wholly took the form of a dispute in controversial divinity, and the emperor wrote a letter to the chief bishops in christendom, to ask their advice in his difficulty. These theologians were too busily engaged in their religious controversies to take any notice of the danger of Egypt's revolting from the empire and joining the Persians; so they strongly advised Leo not to depart from the decrees of the council of Chalcedon, or to acknowledge as bishop of Alexandria a man who denied the two natures of Christ. Accordingly

CHAP. VIII. the emperor again risked breaking the slender ties by which he held Egypt; he banished the popular bishop, and forced the Alexandrians to receive in his place one who held the Chalcedonian faith. The new bishop was named Timotheus Salophaciolus, but was sometimes called Timotheus Basilicus, or the emperor's Timotheus, to distinguish him from the former who was the Timotheus of the Egyptians.

Theophanes, Chronogr. Even the small province of Libya, which was little more than Parætonium and the surrounding desert, had ventured during these troubles to rebel against the empire; but it was reduced to obedience by an army under the command of the prefect Heraclius.

Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. On the death of Leo, he was succeeded by his grandson, Leo the younger, who, dying after a
A. D. 473. reign of one year, was succeeded by his father
A. D. 474. Zeno, the son-in-law of the elder Leo. Zeno gave himself up at once to debauchery and vice, while the empire was harassed on all sides by the barbarians, and the provinces were raised into rebellion by the cruelty of the prefects. The rebels at last found a head in Basilicus, the brother-in-law of Leo. He declared himself of the Jacobite faith, which was the faith of the barbarian enemies, of the barbarian troops, and of the barbarian allies of the empire, and, proclaiming himself emperor, made himself master of Constantinople without a battle, and drove Zeno into banishment in the third year of his reign.

A. D. 477. The first step of Basilicus was to recall from banishment Timotheus Ælurus, the late bishop of Alexandria, and to restore him to the bishoprick.

He then addressed to him and the other recalled bishops a circular letter, in which he repeals the decrees of the council of Chalcedon, and reestablishes the Nicene creed, declaring that Jesus was of one substance with the Father, and that Mary was the mother of God. The march of Timotheus to the seat of his own government, from Constantinople whither he had been summoned, was more like that of a conqueror than of a preacher of peace. He deposed some bishops and restored others, and, as the decrees of the council of Chalcedon were the particular objects of his hatred, he restored to the city of Ephesus the patriarchal power which that synod had taken away from it.

Unfortunately for the Egyptians, Basilicus, who held their opinions in religion, only reigned for about two years, when he was defeated and put to death by Zeno, who regained the throne.

As soon as Zeno was again master of the empire, he reestablished the creed of the council of Chalcedon, and drove away the Jacobite bishops from their bishopricks. Death however removed Timotheus Ælurus before the emperor's orders were put in force in Alexandria, and the Egyptians then chose Peter Mongus as his successor, in direct opposition to the orders from Constantinople. But the emperor was resolved not to be beaten; the bishoprick of Alexandria was so much a civil office that to have given up the appointment to the Egyptians would have been to allow the people to govern themselves; so he banished Peter, and recalled to the head of the church Timotheus Salophaciolus, who had been living at Canopus ever since he before lost the bishoprick.

CHAP. VIII.

Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii.

But as the patriarch of Alexandria enjoyed the ecclesiastical revenues, and was still in appearance a teacher of religion, the Alexandrians, in recollection of the former rights of the church, still claimed the appointment; and they sent John, a priest of their own faith, the dean of the church of John the Baptist, as their ambassador to Constantinople, not to remonstrate against the late acts of the emperor, but to beg that on future occasions the Alexandrians might be allowed their old privilege of choosing their own bishop. The emperor Zeno seems to have seen through the ambassador's earnestness, and he first bound him by an oath not to accept the bishoprick if he should ever be himself chosen to it, and he then sent him back with the promise that the Alexandrians should be allowed to choose their own patriarch on the next vacancy. But unfortunately the ambition of John was too strong for his oath, and when Timotheus died, which happened soon afterwards, he spent a large sum of money in bribes among the clergy and chief men of the city, and thereby got himself chosen patriarch.

On this, the emperor seems to have thought only of punishing John, and he at once gave up the struggle with the Egyptians. Believing that, of the two patriarchs who had been chosen by the people, Peter Mongus, who was living in banishment, would be found more dutiful than John, who was on the episcopal throne, he banished John and recalled Peter, on the latter agreeing to the terms of an imperial edict which Zeno then put forth to heal the disputes in the Egyptian church, and to recall the province to obedience. This celebrated

peacemaking edict, usually called the Henoticon, is addressed to the clergy and laity of Alexandria, Egypt, Libya, and the Pentapolis, and is an agreement between the emperor and the bishops who countersigned it, that neither party should ever mention the decrees of the council of Chalcedon, which was the great stumbling-block with the Egyptians. But in all other points the Henoticon is little short of a surrender to the people of the right to choose their own creed; it styles Mary the Mother of God, and allows that the decrees of the councils of Nice and Constantinople contain all that is important of the true faith.

John, when banished by Zeno, like many of the former deposed bishops, fled to Rome for comfort and for help. There he met with the usual support, and Felix bishop of Rome wrote to Zeno, remonstrating with him for dismissing the patriarch. But this was only a small part of the emperor's want of success in his attempt at peacemaking; for the crafty Peter, who had gained the bishoprick by his subscribing to the peacemaking edict, was no sooner safely seated on his episcopal throne than he denounced the council of Chalcedon and its decrees as heretical, and drove out of their monasteries all those who still adhered to that faith. Nephalius, one of these monks, wrote to the emperor at Constantinople in complaint, and Zeno sent Cosmas to the bishop to threaten him with his imperial displeasure, and to try to reestablish peace in the church. But the arguments of Cosmas were wholly unsuccessful; and Zeno then sent an increase of force to Arsenius, the military prefect, who settled the quarrel for the

CHAP. VIII. time by sending back the most rebellious of the Alexandrians as prisoners to Constantinople.

Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii.

Soon after this dispute Peter Mongus died, and fortunately he was succeeded in the bishoprick by a peacemaker. Athanasius the new bishop, very unlike his great predecessor of the same name, did his best to heal the angry disputes in the church, and to reconcile the Egyptians to the imperial government.

Suidas, ap. Photium.

Hierocles the Alexandrian was at this time teaching philosophy in his native city, where his zeal and eloquence in favour of Platonism drew upon himself the anger of the Christians and the notice of the government. He was sent to Constantinople to be punished for not believing in christianity, for it does not appear that, like the former Hierocles, he ever wrote against it. There he bore a public scourging from his christian torturers, with a courage equal to that formerly shown by their forefathers when tortured by his. When some of the blood from his shoulders flew into his hand, he held it out in scorn to the judge, saying with Ulysses, 'Cyclops, since human flesh has been thy food, now taste this wine.' After his punishment he was sent into banishment, but was soon allowed to return to Alexandria, where he again taught openly as before. Paganism never wears so fair a dress as in the writings of Hierocles: his commentary on the Golden Verses of the Pythagoreans is full of the loftiest and purest morality, and not less agreeable are the fragments that remain of his writings on our duties, and his beautiful chapter on the pleasures of a married life. In his essay on Providence and Free-will he shows

Odyss. lib. ix. 347.

himself a worthy member of the school of Alexandrian Platonists, maintaining the agreement between the doctrines of Plato and those of Aristotle, and quoting the opinions of his great master the heaven-taught Ammonius, as of little less or perhaps of not less weight than those of Plato himself. In the Facetiæ of Hierocles we have the earliest jest-book that has been saved from the wreck of time. It is a curious proof of the fallen state of learning; the Sophists had long since made themselves ridiculous, and in the jokes of Hierocles the blunderer is always called a pedant. CHAP. VIII.

At what time Tryphiodorus the Alexandrian grammarian lived is not certainly known, but most likely about this reign. He has left a short heroic poem, the Taking of Troy, in continuation of the Iliad; but it is a poor work, of little note. Tryphiodorus however is better known for his foolish attempt to rewrite the Odyssey without once using the letter S. Grammarians and critics have often been accused of overlooking the beauties of an author and wasting their time upon trifles, but it is not easy to believe that this childishness of the Alexandrian was anything but an idle boast. Nor was Tryphiodorus original in his task; for Nestor, a former grammarian, was said to have been the author of an Iliad in which each book was written without the help of the letter by which it was named; thus, there was not a single A in the book Alpha, nor a B in the book Beta.

Suidas.

Eustathius, Proem. Odyss.

Suidas.

Coluthus of Lycopolis was then writing his heroic poem named the Rape of Helen. It is a short, simple, but tame account of the three goddesses quarrelling about their beauty, of the judgement

Suidas.

CHAP. VIII. of Paris, and of Helen's leaving her husband and sailing away with Paris to Troy. But it has no beauties to make up for its unclassical style. The new philosophy of the pagans had taken away the reality from Jupiter and Juno, and all enthusiasm from their followers; though at the same time it had made the goddesses more modest. In the poem of Coluthus they only quarrel about the beauty of their faces, and the utmost boldness that Venus is guilty of is to uncover her bosom before the judge.

In the absence of other christian authors we may mention Euthalius, at this time bishop of Sulca in the Thebaid. He has left some notes on Paul's epistles, dedicated to his superior bishop Athanasius.

A. D. 491. Eutychii Annales.

Anastasius followed the wise policy which Zeno had entered upon in the latter years of his reign, and he strictly adhered to the terms of the peace-making edict. The four patriarchs of Alexandria who were chosen during this reign, John, a second John, Dioscorus, and Timotheus, were all of the Jacobite faith, and the Egyptians readily believed that the emperor was of the same opinion. But when called upon by the quarrelling theologians, he would neither reject nor receive the decrees of the council of Chalcedon, and by this wise conduct he governed Egypt without any religious rebellion during a long reign. But the bishops of the rest of the empire were by no means pleased with this policy, which instead of dividing the laity into parties broke up much of the power of the clergy; and the ecclesiastical historian tells us that the churches of the whole world were filled with

Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii.

doubt and disturbance. The orthodox bishop of Tunis adds that an unclean spirit seized everybody in Egypt; men, children, slaves, monks, and clergymen lost the use of speech and ran about barking like dogs, while strangers were free from the disease. Nobody knew the cause of their madness, till an angel in the form of a man told them that it all came from their wickedness in rejecting the decrees of the council of Chalcedon.

CHAP. VIII.

Victor, ap. Scaliger.

The election of Dioscorus, however, the third patriarch of this reign, did not go off altogether quietly. He was the cousin of a former patriarch, Timotheus Ælurus, which, if we view the bishoprick as a civil office, might be a reason for the emperor's wishing him to have the appointment, but was no good reason with the Alexandrians, who declared that he had not been chosen according to the canons of the Apostles; and the magistrates of the city were forced to employ the troops to lead him in safety to his throne. After the first ceremony he went, as was usual at an installation, to St. Mark's church, where the clergy robed him in the patriarchal state robes; and the grand procession then moved through the streets to the church of St. John, where the new bishop went through the communion service. But the city was far from quiet during the whole day, and in the riot Theodosius the son of Calliopus, a man of Augustalian rank, was killed by the mob. The Alexandrians treated the affair as a murder, and punished with death those who were thought guilty; but the emperor looked upon it as a rebellion of the citizens, and the bishop had to go on an embassy to Constantinople to appease his just anger.

Theophanes, Chronogr.

CHAP. VIII.

Chronicon Orientale.

Anastasius, who had deserved the obedience of the Egyptians by his moderation, pardoned their ingratitude when they offended; but he was the last Byzantine emperor who governed Egypt with wisdom, he was the last who failed to enforce the decrees of the council of Chalcedon. It may well be doubted whether any wise conduct on the part of the rulers could have healed the quarrel between the two countries, and made the Egyptians forget the wrongs that they had suffered from the Greeks; but at any rate it was never tried.

Eutychii Annales.

A. D. 501.

By the tenth year of the reign of Anastasius the Persians, after overrunning a large part of Syria and defeating the Roman generals, passed Pelusium and entered Egypt. The army of Kobades laid waste the whole of the Delta up to the very walls of Alexandria. Eustatius the military prefect led out his forces against the invaders, and fought many battles with doubtful success; but as the capital was safe the Persians were at last obliged to retire, leaving the people ruined as much by the loss of a harvest as by the sword. Alexandria suffered severely from famine and the diseases which followed in its train; and history has gratefully recorded the name of Urbib, a christian Jew of great wealth, who relieved the starving poor of that city with his bounty. Three hundred persons were squeezed to death in the church of Arcadius on Easter Sunday in the press of the crowd to receive his alms. As war brought on disease and famine, so these brought on rebellion. The people of Alexandria, in want of corn and oil, rose against the magistrates, and many lives were lost in the attempt to quell the riots.

J. Malala.

In the early part of this history we have seen ambitious bishops sent out of the way by a banishment to the Great Oasis; and as the whole country became more desolate, criminals were sufficiently separated from the rest of the empire by being sent to Thebes. Alexandria was then the last place in the world in which a pretender to the throne would be allowed to live; but Anastasius began his reign by banishing, to the fallen Alexandria, Longinus, the brother of the late king, and had him ordained a presbyter, to mark him as unfit for the throne.

Theophanes, Chronogr.

Chapter IX.

The reigns of Justin I., Justinian, Justin II., Tiberius, Mauricius, Phocas, and Heraclius.

Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. A. D. 519.

Justin, the next emperor, again lighted up in Alexandria the flames of discord which had been allowed to slumber since the publication of Zeno's peacemaking edict. But he was not able to command in the choice of the bishop without a struggle. In the second year of his reign, on the death of Timotheus, the two parties again found themselves nearly equal in strength, and Alexandria was for several years kept almost in a state of civil war between those who thought that the body of Jesus had been liable to corruption, and those who thought it incorruptible. The former chose Gaianas, whom his adversaries called a Manichæan, and the latter Theodosius, a Jacobite, who had the support of the prefect; and each in his turn was able to drive his rival out of Alexandria.

Theophanes, Chronogr. Eutychii Annales.

Theophanes, Chronogr. A. D. 528.

Justinian, the successor of Justin, settled the quarrel between the two Alexandrian bishops by summoning them both to Constantinople, and then sending them into banishment. But this had no effect in healing the divisions in the Egyptian church; and for the next half century the two parties ranged themselves in their theological or rather political quarrel, under the names of their

former bishops, and called themselves Gaianites and Theodosians. Nor did the measures of Justinian tend to lessen the breach between Egypt and Constantinople. He appointed Paul to the bishoprick, and required the Egyptians to receive the decrees of the council of Chalcedon. CHAP. IX.

After two years Paul was displaced either by the emperor or by his flock; and Zoilus was then seated on the episcopal throne by the help of the imperial forces. He maintained his dangerous post for about six years, when the Alexandrians rose in open rebellion, overpowered the troops, and drove him to seek his safety in flight; and the Jacobite party then turned out all the bishops who held the Greek faith. Eutychii Annales.

When Justinian heard that the Jacobites were masters of Egypt he appointed Apollinarius to the joint office of prefect and patriarch of Alexandria, and sent him with a large force to take possession of his bishoprick. Apollinarius marched into Alexandria in full military dress at the head of his troops; but when he entered the church he laid aside his arms, and putting on the patriarchal robes began to celebrate the rites of his religion. The Alexandrians were by no means overawed by the force with which he had entered the city; they pelted him with a shower of stones from every corner of the church, and he was forced to withdraw from the building in order to save his life. But three days afterwards the bells were rung through the city, and the people were summoned to meet in the church on the following Sunday, to hear the emperor's letter read. On the Sunday morning the whole city flocked to hear and to disobey Justi-

CHAP. IX.

Eutychii Annales.

nian's orders. Apollinarius began his address by threatening his hearers that, if they continued obstinate in their opinions, their children should be made orphans and their widows given up to the soldiery; and he was as before stopped with a shower of stones. But this time he was prepared for the attack; this christian bishop had placed his troops in ambush round the church, and on a signal given they rushed out on his unarmed flock, and by his orders the crowds within and without the church were put to rout by the sword, the soldiers waded up to their knees in blood, and the whole country yielded its obedience for the time to bishops who held the Greek faith.

Chronicon Orientale.

Henceforth the Melchite or royalist patriarchs, who were appointed by the emperor, and had the authority of civil prefect, and were supported by the power of the military prefect, are scarcely mentioned by the historian of the Coptic church. They were too much engaged in civil affairs to act the part of ministers of religion. While these men were enjoying the ecclesiastical revenues, and administering the civil affairs of the diocese and of the great monasteries, there was a second bishop who held the Jacobite faith, and who, having been elected by the people according to the ancient forms of the church, equally bore the title of patriarch, and administered in his more humble sphere to the spiritual wants of his flock. Had the emperors been at all times humane or politic enough to employ bishops of the same religion as the people, they would perhaps have kept the good will of their subjects; but as it was, the Coptic church, smarting under its insults, and forget-

ting the greater evils of a foreign conquest, would sometimes look with longing eyes to the condition of their neighbours, their brethren in faith, the Arabic subjects of Persia. CHAP. IX.

The records of the empire declared that the first Cæsars had kept six hundred and forty-five thousand men under arms to guard Italy, Africa, Spain, and Egypt, a number perhaps much larger than the truth; but Justinian could with difficulty maintain one hundred and fifty thousand ill-disciplined troops, a force far from large enough to hold even those provinces that remained to him. During the latter half of his reign the eastern frontier of this falling empire was sorely harrassed by the Persians under their king Chosroes. They overran Syria, defeated the army of the empire in a pitched battle, and then took Antioch. By these defeats the emperor was driven to a change in his religious policy. He gave over the persecution of the Jacobite opinions, and even went so far in one of his decrees as to call the body of Jesus incorruptible, thinking these the only means of keeping the allegiance of his subjects or the friendship of his Arab neighbours, all of whom, as far as they were Christians, held the Jacobite view of the Nicene creed, and denied the two natures of Christ.

Agathias.

Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv.

Abul-Pharag. Hist. Dyn.

As the forces of Constantinople were driven back by the victorious armies of the Persians, they lost, among other fortresses, the capital of Arabia Nabatæa, that curious rocky fastness that well deserved the name of Petra, and which had been garrisoned by Romans from the reign of Trajan till that of Valens. But the losses of an empire

CHAP. IX. are seldom recorded with the same accuracy as their conquests, and the fall of Petra is not mentioned by the historians. From this time all knowledge of that interesting city was lost to the civilized world for above twelve hundred years; and its place upon the map was unknown to geographers till it was again discovered in our own days by some European travellers, who were surprized to find that the temples cut out of the solid rock in this Arabic city were all ornamented with Roman architecture of the reigns of Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines.

Eutychii Annales.

On the loss of Petra it became necessary to fortify a new frontier post on the Egyptian side of the Elanitic gulf. Justinian then built the fortified monastery on mount Sinai, to guard the only pass by which Egypt could be entered without the help of a fleet; and when it was found to be commanded by one of the higher points of the mountain he beheaded the engineer who built it, and remedied the fault, as far as it could be done, by a small fortress on the higher ground. This monastery was held by the Egyptians and maintained out of the Egyptian taxes. In history we are so often misled by names, and facts are so often hid behind words, that it is sometimes useful to recall the attention to what is passing. When the Egyptians were formerly masters of their own country, before the Persian and Greek conquests, they were governed by a race of priests and the temples were their only fortresses. The temples of Thebes were the citadels of the capital, and the temples of Elephantine guarded the frontier. So now, when the military prefect is too weak to make himself obey-

ed, the emperor tries to govern through means of the christian priesthood; and, to complete the resemblance, when he is forced to get the Egyptians to defend their own frontier, he builds a monastery and garrisons it with monks. CHAP. IX.

A war had lately sprung up between two tribes of Jewish Arabs, the Hexumitæ of Abyssinia on the coast of the Red Sea near Adule, and the Homeritæ who dwelt in Arabia on the opposite coast. The Homeritæ had quarrelled with the Alexandrian merchants in the Indian trade, and had killed some of them as they were passing their mountains from India to the country of the Hexumitæ. On this the Hexumitæ found the trade injured, and they took up arms to keep the passage open for the merchants; and, having conquered their enemies, they made a new treaty with the emperor of Constantinople and promised to become Christians. They sent to Alexandria to beg for a priest to baptize them, and to ordain their preachers; and Justinian sent John, a man of piety and high character, the dean of the church of St. John, who returned with the ambassadors and became bishop of the Hexumitæ. The first teachers of christianity have in each country received the title of patron saint from the descendants of their grateful hearers, and their histories have usually been ornamented with fables and shrouded with mysteries; and the fame of Presbyter or Prester John, the apostle of Abyssinia, hardly falls short of that of St. George or St. Patrick. Within a hundred years of their conversion the Abyssinian Christians were wholly cut off from the rest of christendom by the Mahomedan Arabs; but eight centuries

Theophanes, Chronogr.

CHAP. IX. F. Mendes Pinto.

later, after the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, the Portuguese travellers found that the sovereign of a part of Abyssinia still bore the hereditary name of Prester John.

It is to some of these Jewish Ethiopians that we are indebted for our knowledge of that curious Hebrew work, the Book of Enoch, which gains its importance from being quoted by the apostle Jude. This is a spurious book written much later than it pretends to be, and, like parts of the Sibylline verses and the Testaments of the Patriarchs, in which latter it is so often quoted, it changes the facts of past history into the form of dark hints and unfulfilled prophecy. We do not know in what century the Ethiopic translation was made; but the book itself, which is in part copied from the Old Testament, was written only a few years before the christian era.

In the travels of Cosmas Indicopleustes, in this reign, we find a curious inscription which he copied from a monument at Adule in Abyssinia. It was set up eight centuries earlier by Ptolemy Euergetes, and it recounts his victories over those distant tribes of Ethiopia. The monument itself was a large chair or throne of white marble; but on the base was a second inscription, mentioning also victories over the Arabs and Sabæans, and boasting of a free passage being gained through Arabia for the Egyptian and Abyssinian traders by this success in arms. This second inscription is rather different in style from the former, and it seems probable that it was now added by the king of the Hexumitæ on his conquest of the Homeritæ.

On the defeat of the Homeritæ, Hellesthæus the king of the Abyssinian Hexumitæ set over the conquered Arabs an Abyssinian for their king, Esimiphæus, who like himself was a Christian. One of the first wishes of Esimiphæus, whether from religious or political motives, was to convert his new subjects to christianity; and for this purpose he engaged the assistance of Gregentius, a christian bishop, who was to employ his learning and eloquence in the cause. It was at Threlletum, the chief town of the Arabic Homeritæ, and in the presence of their Abyssinian king, that a public dispute on the evidences of christianity was said to have taken place between Gregentius and Herban a learned Jew. The arguments then used were much the same as they would be now. The bishop argued in favour of the trinity, and the Jew quoted the Old Testament to show that the Lord their God was one God. But the arguments of the king were most likely added to those of the bishop, and all the bystanders were converted. Herban was baptized on the spot; and the king, who stood as godfather, rewarded him with a high office in the government.

Procopius, Persic. i. 19, 20.

Grègentii Disputatio.

The defence of the empire against the Persians was the chief employment of the reign, and Justinian sent an embassy from Alexandria to the king of the Homeritæ with a large sum of money, to persuade him to move his forces from Arabia against the common enemy. The Arab received the ambassador with grand state, standing in a chariot drawn by four elephants. He was naked, except that he had a linen cloth woven with gold tied round his loins. His arms and hands were

Theophanes, Chronogr.

Procopius, Persic. i. 19.

CHAP. IX. loaded with gold rings; his hair was tied with a gold fillet, from which hung four gold chains, and he wore a gold collar round his neck. When the emperor's letter was given to him he placed it against his breast, and kissed it before breaking the seal. He was delighted with the presents which were sent to him, and, agreeing to the treaty as proposed, he promised to move his forces in attack upon the Persians, or rather on their Arabic allies.

Justinian. Edict. xiii.

Egypt in its mismanaged state seemed to be of little value to the empire but as the means of enriching the prefect and the tax-gatherers; it yielded very little tribute to Constantinople beyond the supply of grain, and that by no means regularly. To remedy these abuses Justinian made a new law for the government of the province, with a view of bringing about a thorough reform. By this edict the city of Menelaites and the district of Mareota to the west of Alexandria were separated from the rest of Egypt, and given to the prefect of Libya whose seat of government was at Parætonium, because his province was too poor to pay the troops required to guard it. The several governments of Upper Egypt, of Lower Egypt, of Alexandria, and of the troops, were then given to one prefect. The two cohorts, the Augustalian and the Ducal, into which the two legions had gradually dwindled, were henceforth to be united under the name of the Augustalian cohort, which was to contain six hundred men. The already high pay and privileges of this favoured troop were to be encreased; and, to secure its loyalty and to keep out Egyptians, nobody was to be admitted into it till his fitness had

been enquired into by the emperor's examiners. The first and almost the only duty of the Augustalian cohort was to collect the supply of corn for Constantinople, and to see it put on board the ships; and as for the supply which was promised to the Alexandrians, they were to collect it at their own risk, and by means of their own cohort. The corn for Constantinople was required to be in that city before the end of August, or within four months after the harvest, and the supply for Alexandria not more than a month later. The prefect was made answerable for the full collection, and whatever was wanting of that quantity was to be levied on his property and his heirs, at the rate of one *solidus* for three *artabæ* of corn, or about fifteen shillings for fifteen bushels; while to help the collection the export of corn from Egypt was forbidden from every port but Alexandria, except in small quantities. The quantity of corn required for Alexandria and Constantinople, to be distributed as a free gift among the idle citizens, was eight hundred thousand *artabæ*, or four millions of bushels, and the cost of collecting it was fixed at eighty thousand *solidi*, or about sixty thousand pounds. The prefect was ordered to assist the collectors at the head of his cohort, and if he gave credit for the taxes which he was to collect he was to bear the loss himself. If the archbishop interfered, to give credit and screen an unhappy Egyptian, then he was to bear the loss, and if his property was not enough the property of the Church was to make it good; but if any other bishop gave credit, not only was his property to bear the loss but he was himself to be deposed from his bishop-

CHAP. IX.

Justinian. Edict. xiii.

rick; and lastly, if any riot or rebellion should arise to cause the loss of the Egyptian tribute, the tribunes of the Augustalian cohort were to be punished with forfeiture of all property, and the cohort was to be removed to a station beyond the Danube.

Such was the new law which Justinian, the great Roman lawgiver, proposed for the future government of Egypt. The welfare of the Egyptians was wholly forgotten. They were to be treated as slaves, whose only duty was to raise corn for the use of their masters at Constantinople, and their taskmasters at Alexandria. They did not even receive from the government the usual benefit of protection from their enemies, and they felt bound to the emperor by no tie either of love or interest. The Alexandrians were sorely harrassed by Hæphæstus, a lawyer, who had risen by court favour to the chief post in the city. He made monopolies in his own favour of all the necessaries of life, and secured his ill-gotten wealth by ready loans of part of it to Justinian. His zeal for the emperor was at the cost of the Alexandrians, and to save the public granaries he lessened the supply of corn which the citizens looked for as a right. Alexandria was sinking fast and the citizens could ill bear this loss, for its population, though lessened, was still too large for the fallen state of Egypt.

Procopius, Arcana, 26.

The suffering and riotous citizens made Alexandria a very unpleasant place of abode for the prefect and magistrates. They therefore built palaces and baths for their own use, at the public cost, at Taposiris, about a day's journey to the west of the city, while at the same time it became neces-

Procopius, de Ædificiis, lib. vi. 1.

sary to fortify the public granaries against the rebellious mob. The corn was brought by the Nile to the village of Chæreum, and thence carried by barges on a canal to a part of the city named Phialæ, where the public granaries stood. In all riots and rebellions this place had been a natural point of attack; and often had the starving mob broken open these buildings, and seized the corn that was on its way to Constantinople. But Justinian surrounded them with a strong wall against such attacks for the future, and at the same time he rebuilt the aquaduct that had been destroyed in one of the sieges of the city.

Chap. IX.

J. Malala.

In civil suits at law an appeal had always been allowed from the prefect of the province to the emperor, or rather to the prefect of the East, at Constantinople; but as this was of course expensive it was found necessary to forbid it when the sum of money in dispute was small. Justinian forbad all Egyptian appeals for sums less than ten pounds weight of gold, or about five hundred pounds sterling; for smaller sums the judgement of the prefect was to be final, lest the expense should swallow up the amount in dispute.

Constitut. xxiii.

In this reign the Alexandrians, for the first time within the records of history, felt the shock of an earthquake. Their naturalists had very fairly supposed that the loose alluvial nature of the soil of the Delta was the cause of earthquakes not being felt in Lower Egypt, and believed that it would always save them from a misfortune which often overthrew cities in other countries. But this shock was felt by everybody in the city; and Agathias, who, after studying law in the university of Beroot,

Agathias.

CHAP. IX. was finishing his studies at Alexandria, says that it was strong enough to make the inhabitants all run into the street for fear the houses should fall upon them.

The reign of Justinian is remarkable for another blow then given to paganism throughout the empire. Though Constantine the first christian emperor had discouraged it, though Theodosius had closed the temples, and forbidden the public worship of the Greek and Egyptian gods, nevertheless the public teachers of philosophy and science still clung to the old religion as to one branch of their learning, and many of them openly taught its doctrines. Justinian either made a new law, or enforced an old one, against all such teaching, and threatened the disobedient with severe punishment; and many of the learned men of Alexandria then fled into Syria, to claim protection of the Persians, and to avoid the persecution without wounding their consciences. The philosophical school, which, through the works of Plotinus and Porphyry, and their successors, had altered the face of paganism, and which, through the writings of Clemens, Origen, and other Alexandrian fathers, had worked no little change on the opinions of the christian world, had been first closed when Sopater the professor was put to death by Constantine. Since that time the laws against the philosophers had been less strictly enforced; but under Justinian the pagan schools were again and for ever brought to a close. Isidorus the Platonist and Salustius the Cynic were among the learned men of greatest note who then withdrew from Alexandria. Isidorus had been chosen by Marinus

Suidas.

as his successor in the Platonic chair at Athens, to fill the high post of the Platonic successor; but he had left the Athenian school to Zenodotus, a pupil of Proclus, and had removed to Alexandria. Salustius the Cynic was a Syrian, who had removed with Isidorus from Athens to Alexandria. He was virtuous in his morals though jocular in his manners, and as ready in his witty attacks upon the speculative opinions of his brother philosophers as upon the vices of the Alexandrians. These philosophers, with Damascius and others from Athens, were kindly received by the Persians, who, when they soon afterwards made a treaty of peace with Justinian, generously bargained that these men, the last teachers of paganism, should be allowed to return home, and pass the rest of their days in quiet.

CHAP. IX.

Damascius, ap. Photium.

On the flight of the pagan philosophers, very little learning was left in Alexandria. Themistius, a deacon, was at the head of the sect of Agnoetæ, so called because they taught that Jesus was not infinite in wisdom, and might possibly have been ignorant of some things. Theodorus, a monk, took the other side in this controversy, but was nevertheless thought equally heretical with Themistius, as he equally denied the two natures of Christ, and said that divinity itself had suffered on the cross. One of the most remarkable men in this age of ignorance was Cosmas, a merchant of Alexandria, who wished that the world should not only be enriched but enlightened by his travels. After making many voyages through Ethiopia to India for the sake of gain, he quitted trade and became a monk and an author. When he writes as a traveller

Photius.

CHAP. IX. about the christian churches of India and Ceylon, and the inscriptions which he copied in Ethiopia, everything that he tells us is valuable; but when he reasons as a monk, the case is sadly changed. He then fights the battle, which has been so often fought before and since, and is even still fought so resolutely, the battle of religious ignorance against knowledge. He sets the words of the Bible against the results of science: he denies that the world is a sphere, and quotes the Old Testament against the pagan astronomers, to show that it is a plain, covered by the arched heavens, which touch the horizon on all sides. His work is named Christian Topography, and he is himself usually called Cosmas Indicopleustes, from the country which he visited.

The arguments employed by Cosmas were unfortunately but too often used by the christian world in general, who were even willing to see learning itself fall with the overthrow of paganism. All knowledge was divided into sacred and profane, and whatever was not drawn from the Scriptures was slighted and neglected; and this perhaps was one of the chief causes of the darkness which overspread the world during the middle ages. But we must confine ourselves to what took place in Egypt. When christianity was first preached in Alexandria, the converts saw no opposition between religion on the one hand and philosophy and science on the other, while many thought that the spread of the gospel truths might be aided by learning. Hence they founded the catechetical school, which, though uncountenanced and unendowed by emperors, brought forth christian scholars, who at

the time threw the well-paid pagan professors of the Alexandrian Museum into the shade. The troubled and rebellious state of Egypt during the fifty years which began with the persecution of Decius, and ended with that of Diocletian, mark an important break and change in the history of christianity. Before that time the Christian may trace with unmixt pleasure the silent struggle between christianity and paganism, and, watching the action and reaction of these systems on one another, may note with pride, as far as the scanty annals allow, the influence of christianity on manners, philosophy, and pagan literature. But no sooner were the Christians numerous enough to be divided into sects, and enough at ease to quarrel about their opinions, than we find, unfortunately, ignorance and the more popular opinions ranged on one side, against learning with the less popular opinions on the other. We then find creeds and fetters placed on the mind; the catechetical school is closed under the persecution of the Homoousian party, and the opinions of the unlettered monks are quoted as of greater weight than those of Clemens and Origen. Soon afterwards the pagan philosophers are forbidden to teach; and lastly, even the more certain truths of mathematics and astronomy are disbelieved, because they are not found in the Bible. Such were the steps by which learning fell in Alexandria, hastened by the fall of the Greek power, and by the Egyptians gaining strength in their own country, and no doubt by many other causes too deep for our search.

During the latter years of the government of

CHAP. IX. Theophanes, Chronogr.

Apollinarius, such was his unpopularity as a spiritual bishop that both the rival parties, the Gaianites and the Theodosians, had been building places of worship for themselves, and the more zealous Jacobites had quietly left the churches to Apollinarius and the royalists. But on the death of an archdeacon, they again came to blows with the bishop, and a monk of Alexandria had his beard torn off his chin by the Gaianites, in the streets of Alexandria; the emperor was obliged to interfere, and he sent the abbot Photeinus to Egypt to put down this rebellion, and heal the quarrel in the church. Apollinarius died soon afterwards, and Justinian appointed John to the joint office of prefect of the city and patriarch of the church. He was accused of being a Manichæan; but this seems to mean nothing but that he was too much of the Egyptian party, and that, though he was the imperial patriarch and not acknowledged by the Coptic church, yet his opinions were disliked by the Greeks. On his death, which happened in about three years, they chose Peter, who held the Jacobite or Egyptian opinions, and whose name is not mentioned in the Greek lists of the patriarchs. Peter died in the same year with the emperor.

Under Justinian we again find some small traces of a national coinage in Egypt. Ever since the reign of Diocletian the old Egyptian coinage had been stopped, and the Alexandrians had coined and used the money of the same weight, and with the same Latin inscriptions, as the rest of the empire. But under Justinian, though the inscriptions on the coins are still Latin, they have the Greek

letters ΑΛΕΞ for Alexandria. Like the coins of Constantinople, they have a cross, the emblem of christianity, and the numeral letters I B to denote the value of the coin. CHAP. IX.

Justin II. reigned twelve years, Tiberius reigned four years, and Mauricius his son-in-law twenty; and under these sovereigns the empire gained a little rest from its enemies by a rebellion among the Persians, which at last overthrew their king Chosroes. He fled to Mauricius for help, and was by him restored to his throne; after which the two kingdoms remained at peace to the end of this reign.

Chronicon Alexandr. A. D. 567. A. D. 579. A. D. 583.

Eulogius, the author of some homilies still extant, was bishop of Alexandria, and was succeeded by Peter before the end of the reign. But the most remarkable man of Alexandria was John the grammarian, who from his love of laborious learning took the name of Philoponus. In religion he was a tritheist, which seems to have been a common opinion among the Egyptians, and he lost his rank in the church for denying the unity of the Godhead in the Trinity. He has left a treatise written against the opinions of Proclus on the eternity of the world, and also some voluminous commentaries on Aristotle's philosophy, which was rising upon the fall of Platonism and of learning. Theophylactus Simocatta was also a native of Egypt, but he removed to Constantinople. There he wrote the life of Mauricius, giving an account of his wars against the Persians, both before and after he was made emperor. But we learn nothing from Theophylactus about his own unfortunate country, except that superstition, taking advan-

Nicephorus, Eccl. Hist. lib. xviii. 26.

Photius, lxv. 81.

CHAP. IX. tage of the cloud of ignorance that overspread the land, had advanced from the cells in the desert, into the capital. He only mentions Egypt to say that a half-human monster rose out of the Nile to frighten the archbishop Peter, and to foretell the death of the emperor; and that on the night that Mauricius died at Constantinople the statues came down from their pedestals in Alexandria.

Eutychii Annales. A. D. 603.

The emperor Mauritius was murdered by Phocas, who then succeeded him on the throne of Constantinople. No sooner did the news of his death reach Persia, than Chosroes the son of Hormuz, who had married Maria the daughter of Mauricius, declared the treaty with the Romans at an end, and moved his whole forces against the new emperor, the murderer of his father-in-law. During the whole of his reign, Constantinople was kept in a state of alarm and almost of siege by the Persians, and the crimes and misfortunes of Phocas alike prepared his subjects for a revolt. In the seventh year Alexandria rebelled in favour of the young Heraclius, son of the late prefect of Cyrene, and the patriarch of Egypt was slain in the struggle. Soon afterwards Heraclius entered the port of Constantinople with his fleet, and Phocas was put to death after an unfortunate reign of eight years, in which he had lost every province of the empire.

Chronicon Alexandr.

Eutychii Annales.

A. D. 611.

During the first three years of the reign of Heraclius, Theodorus was bishop of Alexandria; but upon his death the wishes of the Alexandrians so strongly pointed to John the son of the prefect of Cyprus, that the emperor, yielding to their request, appointed him to the bishoprick. Alexan-

Leontius, apud Baronium.

dria was not a place in which a good man could enjoy the pleasures of power without feeling the weight of its duties. It was then suffering under all those evils which usually befall the capital of a sinking state. It had lost much of its trade, and its poorer citizens no longer received a free supply of corn. The unsettled state of the country was starving the larger cities, and the population of Alexandria was suffering from want of employment. The civil magistrates had removed their palace to a distance. But the new bishop seemed formed for these unfortunate times, and though appointed by the emperor was in every respect worthy of the free choice of the citizens. He was foremost in every work of benevolence and charity. The five years of his government were spent in lightening the sufferings of the people, and he gained the truly christian name of John the Almsgiver. Beside his private acts of kindness, he established throughout the city hospitals for the sick and almshouses for the poor and for strangers, and as many as seven lying-in hospitals for poor women. John was not less active in out-rooting all that he thought heresy, and particularly in opposing Peter Gnapheus, who had ventured to say that the Son of God 'was crucified for us;' and the patriarch succeeded in convincing him that Jesus had not died and was unsuffering. If man were a creature only of understanding, without habits, without feelings of love and hatred, the sciences of morals, politics, and religion might be studied, like problems in pure mathematics, without uncertainty and without quarrels. But experience has amply proved that, with the close

CHAP. IX. union between our wishes and our belief, between our feelings and our judgement, no logical arguments are so convincing as an act of kindness; and the only conversions among the Christians that are to be found in this history are those brought about by John the Almsgiver.

Abul-Pharag. Dyn. viii.

The first years of this reign are chiefly marked by the successes of the Persians. While Chosroes was himself attacking Constantinople, one general was besieging Jerusalem and a second overrunning Lower Egypt; in the fifth year the unbelievers were masters of Jerusalem, and in the eighth they entered Alexandria, and soon held all the Delta; and in that year the corn which had hitherto been given to the citizens of Constantinople was sold to them at a small price, and before the end of the year the supply from Egypt was wholly stopped.

A. D. 618.

Chronicon Alexandr.

Eutychii Annales.

When the Persians entered Egypt, the patrician Nicetas, having no forces with which he could withstand their advance, and knowing that no succour was to be looked for from Constantinople, and finding that the Alexandrians were unwilling to support him, fled with the patriarch John the Almsgiver to Cyprus, and left the province to the enemy. As John denied that the Son of God had suffered on the cross, his opinions would seem not to have been very unlike those of the Egyptians; but as he was appointed to the bishoprick by the emperor, though at the request of the people, he is not counted among the patriarchs of the Coptic church; and one of the first acts of the Persians was to appoint Benjamin, a Jacobite priest, who already performed the spiritual office of bishop of

Chronicon Orientale.

Alexandria, to the public exercise of that duty, and to the enjoyment of the civil dignity and revenues. CHAP. IX.

For ten years the Egyptians were governed by the Persians, and had a patriarch of their own religion and of their own choice; and the building of the Persian palace in Alexandria proves how quietly they lived under their new masters. But Heraclius was not idle under his misfortunes. The Persians had been weakened by the revolt of the Arabs, who had formed their chief strength on the side of Constantinople and Egypt; and Heraclius, leading his forces bravely against Chosroes, drove him back from Syria and became in his turn the invader, and he then recovered Egypt. The Jacobite patriarch Benjamin fled with the Persians, and Heraclius appointed George to the bishoprick, which was declared to have been empty since John the Almsgiver fled to Cyprus. Eutychii Annales.

The revolt of the Arabs, which overthrew the power of the Persians in their western provinces, and for a time restored Egypt to Constantinople, was the foundation of the mighty empire of the Caliphs; and the Hegira, or flight of Mahomet, from which the Arabic historians count their lunar years, took place in the twelfth year of Heraclius. A. D. 622. The vigour and success of the Arabic arms rapidly broke the Persian yoke, and then overran every province in the neighbourhood. It was soon felt by the Romans, who found the Arabs, even in the third year of their freedom, a more formidable enemy than the Persians whom they had overthrown; and, after a short struggle of only two years, Heraclius was forced to pay a tribute Chronicon Orientale.

CHAP. IX. to the Moslems for their forbearance in not conquering Egypt. For eight years he was willing to purchase an inglorious peace by paying tribute to the caliph; but when his treasure failed him and the payment was discontinued, the Arabs marched against the nearest provinces of the empire, offering to the inhabitants their choice of either paying tribute or receiving the Mahomedan religion; and they then began on their western frontier that rapid career of conquests which they had already begun against the Persians on the east.

Eutychii Annales.

When the news reached Alexandria that the Roman armies were defeated in Palestine, and that the Moslems had taken Jerusalem and Damascus and were marching upon Egypt, the patriarch George, either through cowardice or treachery, fled from Alexandria by sea, and the emperor appointed Cyrus to the bishoprick. Cyrus was of the Maronite faith, neither believing with George and his Melchite predecessors that Christ had two natures and two wills, nor with the Egyptian Jacobites that he had one nature and one will; but he believed with the emperor Heraclius, who appointed him, that Christ had two natures and only one will; and it was many a year, says the mournful historian, before Egypt saw another Melchite patriarch. But whatever had been the religion of the bishop, it was too late to win the willing obedience of the Egyptians, who heard of the approach of the Moslems without alarm, unwisely fancying that they should gain by a change of masters, and that their church would thereby be left free; and, in the vexation that they felt at being insulted by a handful of their own country-

men, they wholly forgot the greater tyranny they were to suffer from the conqueror.

Amrou the son of Asi marched from Palestine upon Egypt at the head of four thousand men, burning for the conquest of a country which when governed by a Ptolemy had sent seventy-three thousand to meet the invading army of Antiochus. But before Amrou had crossed the border of the two countries, while he was near Raphia, the very place where Antiochus had been defeated by Ptolemy Philopator, a messenger reached his camp, bearing a letter from the caliph Omar. Amrou guessed the contents of the letter, and refused to receive it from the messenger till he had moved his little army a few miles further and stood upon Egyptian soil, when he called together his officers and read to them the orders of the caliph. Omar commanded that, as his force was hardly great enough for what he was undertaking, he should return to Arabia if he had not already entered Egypt; but if he had already begun the invasion, the caliph promised to send him a larger force to support him.

On this promise of support Amrou marched forward; but he was delayed for a month before the city of Pelusium, and only made himself master of it after a regular siege. He then marched towards Memphis, and, meeting with no hindrance to his little army, he laid siege to Babylon, a strong Roman fortress, which was joined to Memphis by a bridge of boats and was the citadel to that great city. The Greeks defended themselves bravely behind their fortifications, and during a blockade of seven months Amrou met with several repulses.

CHAP. IX. Eutychii Annales.

He then wrote to Omar for reinforcements, and the caliph, well pleased with what he had done, sent him four thousand more men. But even with this force of eight thousand men Amrou would not soon have overcome the garrison had he not been helped by the treachery of the Egyptians. Makoukas the governor of Memphis, the prefect of the Egyptian taxes, only concealed his hatred of the Greeks through fear of punishment. He had, either through treachery or negligence, withheld the Egyptian tribute ever since the armies of Constantinople had been too much engaged with the Persians and Moslems to reduce Egypt to its usual obedience. Makoukas pointed out to the garrison the difficulty of any longer defending Babylon against the increased force of the Moslems, and he persuaded most of them, together with the chief men of the Egyptians, to quit the citadel by the southern gate and withdraw with him into the small island of Rhoda in the Nile, and they then broke down the bridge behind them. By this folly on the part of the Greeks the citadel was left with only half a garrison, and the Mahomedans, putting their scaling-ladders against the walls, and raising the encouraging shout of 'God is great,' made themselves masters of one of the strongest fortifications in Egypt, while the rest of the garrison flying to their boats joined their countrymen on the little island.

Amrou had before offered to the city and garrison their choice of three conditions; either to pay tribute to the caliph, to embrace the Mahomedan religion, or battle without quarter; and the Egyptians of Memphis had already privately and trai-

torously agreed to the first. But the Greeks, even if their courage had wholly failed them, hated the Arabs too much to think of anything but the last; therefore, seeing the city in the hands of the enemy, they took to their boats and quitted the island to march towards Alexandria. In the mean time Makoukas undertook, on behalf of the Egyptians, to settle the terms of surrender for the whole country. The Arabs were to leave them undisturbed in their religion, on condition of their paying a tribute to the caliph of two pieces of gold, perhaps one pound sterling, for every male within the military age, and the mistake of the historian, or perhaps the insolence of the conqueror, fixed the number who were liable to this poll-tax at four millions, a number more than equal to the whole population of Egypt. The Egyptians further undertook to feed the Mahomedan army, to make bridges over the Nile for them in their march to Alexandria, and to furnish them with everything that was necessary in their attack upon the Greeks.

Amrou then marched in pursuit of the garrison, whom he overtook at Cera Shoraic, where the Greeks bravely defended themselves for three days; but being conquered in every battle they fled hastily to St. Salstamus. From thence they retreated regularly for nineteen days with a skill and courage worthy of the pen of a Xenophon, bravely giving battle each day to their pursuers. At Caryun, about twenty miles from the end of their journey, the two armies fought a pitched battle, when the Greeks were again routed and fled to Alexandria, having in about three weeks made

CHAP. IX. good their retreat of one hundred and fifty miles in the face of a conquering army.

Eutychii Annales.

The garrison of Alexandria, now joined by the garrisons of Babylon and Memphis, strengthened the fortifications and got ready for a brave defence, while the Mahomedans prepared for a regular siege. The Greeks made daily sallies from the gates, which the Mahomedans as bravely repulsed; and on one occasion the Arabs followed so closely upon the heels of the retreating Greeks that the foremost of them entered the city with the fugitives, and when the gates closed Amrou the son of Asi found himself a prisoner with a handful of brave followers. 'Now that you are wholly in our power,' said the patrician of Alexandria when they were brought before him, 'what would you that we should do with you?' The haughty Mahomedan replied, 'You must either pay us a tribute, or embrace our religion, or one of us must die,' and from his lofty bearing the Greeks began to guess the rank of their prisoner. But Amrou was saved by the presence of mind of one of his followers, who, slapping his general rudely on the face, ordered him to hold his peace before his betters; and he then persuaded the patrician to make use of them as messengers to carry proposals of a truce to the besiegers. The prisoners were accordingly sent away by the patrician with letters to Amrou, and when they reached the Mahomedan camp in safety and the air rung with the joyous cries of 'God is great,' the Greeks at last found out their mistake, that they had had their greatest enemy in their power, and had released him to their own destruction.

The next assault was fatal to the besieged. The Mahomedans again entered the city, but in greater numbers; the garrison fled, some to their ships and some along the shore; and after a siege of fourteen months the Mahomedans were masters of Alexandria. Amrou then hastily and incautiously marched in pursuit of those who had quitted the city by land; when the ships, which had scarcely got out of the harbour, relanded the troops, and the Greeks again gained possession of the city and put to death the few Arabs that were left to guard it. But Amrou as hastily returned from the pursuit of the fugitives, a second time stormed the walls after a severe struggle, and a second time drove the Greek garrison to their ships.

Thus, on a Friday, the first day of the month of Moharra, being the new-year's day of the twentieth year of the Hegira, Egypt ceased to be a Greek or, as it was still called, a Roman province. Amrou wrote word to the caliph Omar, boasting that he had taken a city which passed all description, in which he found four thousand palaces, four thousand baths, forty thousand Jews paying tribute, four hundred theatres, and twelve thousand sellers of herbs; and such was the store of wheat which he sent on camels' backs to Medina that the Arabic historian declares, in the usual style of eastern poetry, that the first of an unbroken line of camels entered the holy city, before the last camel had left Egypt.

22 Dec. A. D. 640.

The Arabs may well have been startled at the beauty and wealth of their new conquest, which, notwithstanding the destruction brought on by its sieges and civil wars, was still crowded with

CHAP. IX. wonders of art, the fruits of long civilization. But to the mind of a Greek well stored with history Alexandria in its fall must have been viewed with a melancholy interest. To a traveller arriving by sea the first object to strike his eye was the lighthouse on the island of Pharos, that monument of the science and humanity of the first two Ptolemies, that has since been copied in every quarter of the habitable globe. Near it was the Heptastadium, a causeway of three quarters of a mile in length, that joined the island to the land, and divided the enclosed waters into two harbours. There were bridges over the passages which joined the two harbours; but the aqueduct which once brought fresh water to the island was in ruins. On landing and entering by the gate of the sun, the gate of the moon might be seen at the further side of the city, at the end of a straight street with a row of columns on each side. In this street stood the Soma, the mausoleum which held the body of Alexander, from whose death so many Greek cities and empires dated their rise, and of which Alexandria was the last to fall. A second street, crossing the former at the Tetrapylon, ran east and west from the Canobic gate to the gate of the Necropolis, and had also once been ornamented with columns through its whole length, till half of it had been ruined by the fortifications and sieges of the Bruchium. The new Museum, which had been built to replace that of the Ptolemies, had been very much deserted since the fall of paganism, its schools and spacious halls were empty, but the traveller would in vain seek for the humble building which once held the famed Cateche-

Strabo, lib. xvii.

J. Malala, lib. xi.

Achilles Tatius, v.

tical school of the Christians, and which contributed so largely to the desertion of its prouder neighbour. On the outside of the western gate was the Necropolis, whose memorials of the dead, both pagan and christian, lined the road side and sea coast for two miles, and harmonized most truly with the faded glories of the city; while the Jews had a humble burial-place of their own, beyond the eastern gate. Near the western gate also, but within the walls, stood the famed temple of Serapis, second to no building in the world but the Roman Capitol, a monument of the rise and fall of religions, once the very citadel of paganism, now the cathedral of a christian patriarch. In the same quarter stood, and indeed still stands, the lofty column of Diocletian, with an equestrian statue on the top, raised to record the conquering emperor's humanity and the gratitude of the citizens. Second among the larger buildings was the Sebaste, or Cæsar's temple, with two obelisks in front, which latter, having during the last two thousand years seen the downfall of the Egyptian superstition, and then been removed to Alexandria in honour of Greek polytheism, remained to ornament a christian church. Among the other churches the chief were those of St. Mark, of St. Mary, of John the Baptist, of Theodosius, of Arcadius, and the temple of Bacchus. Along the sea shore to the east lay the ruined Hippodrome; and on the same side, where the canal from the Nile reached the city, were the fortified granaries, a little citadel by itself; and not far off were the old mounds that marked out what was once the camp of the legionaries.

Descrip. de l'Egypte.

Pliny, lib. xxxvi. 14.

CHAP. IX.

The inhabitants were no longer numerous enough to use the whole space which the city once covered. The Bruchium with its fortifications, once a city of itself, was in ruins; and the Jews' quarter was nearly a desert, inhabited only by a despised few, from whom their persecutors wrung a tribute; they bought of the Christians that leave to worship the God of their fathers which the Christians were thenceforth to buy of the Moslems.

Eutychii Annales.

But great as was the ruin which had come upon Alexandria during the misrule of the Roman emperors, it was small to what afterwards befell it under the Arabs. As the city shrunk in size the Arabs surrounded it with a new fortification of a smaller circuit, which does not even include Diocletian's column; and the population has since that time again so much lessened that the whole of the modern city now stands on the widened Heptastadium, the causeway that joins to the main land what was once the island of Pharos.

Descrip. de l'Egypte.

The fate of the Alexandrian library still requires our attention. The first great library of that name, collected by the Ptolemies and placed in the Museum, in the quarter of the city called the Bruchium, was burnt by the soldiers of Julius Cæsar. The second, which was formed round the library from Pergamus, presented to Cleopatra by Mark Antony, was placed in the temple of Serapis; and, though that temple was twice burnt or at least injured by fire, once in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, and again in the reign of Commodus, the library was unhurt in the reign of Julian, when Ammianus was in Egypt, and it then amounted

to seven hundred thousand volumes. But when the pagan worship was put down by Theodosius I., and the temple of Serapis was sacked by the Christians, the library was either dispersed or destroyed, and when Orosius was in Egypt, in the reign of Theodosius II., he saw the empty bookshelves. There may have been other large libraries in Alexandria, although we have no account of them. The Museum of the Bruchium was rebuilt, but again destroyed with that part of the city in the reign of Gallienus. The emperor Claudius built a second college called the Claudian Museum, but we do not hear whether it had a library. But, as the public schools of pagan philosophy continued open until the reign of Justinian, as the astronomers continued to make their observations in Alexandria, and as the Christians wrote largely, though perhaps to little purpose, on controversial divinity, we can hardly believe that in a city so famed for its public libraries, the Museum should have been without one. The Arabic historian tells us that when Alexandria was conquered by Amrou he set his seal upon the library, together with the other public property of the city. But John Philoponus begged that the books might be spared, as being of no use to the conquerors; and Amrou would have granted the request at once if he had not thought it necessary to ask leave of the caliph. He therefore wrote to Omar for orders, who answered him that, if the books were the same as the Koran, they were useless, and if not the same they were worse than useless, and that in either case they were to be burnt. Amrou obeyed this order, and sent the books, most of which were of

Abul-Pharag. Dyn. ix.

CHAP. IX. Abdollatif, cap. iv.

papyrus, to the public baths of Alexandria, and the Arabic historian, in the poetic style of his nation, says that the baths were heated by them for the space of six months.

In these pages we have carefully followed the last faint traces of the old Egyptian arts and religion, and henceforth the very language begins to fall into disuse. The Coptic manuscripts of the Bible soon had an Arabic translation added on the same page, that while the services of the church were conducted in the ancient language the people might understand it by the help of the Arabic. Greek civilization and literature, which had flourished in Egypt for nine hundred years, at once came to an end; and the annals of science, of the Coptic church, and of the government, are henceforth only to be found in the Arabic historians. Alexandria then ceased to be an European colony. As for the Romans, they left no traces of their ever having ruled in the country; for, even before the seat of government was removed from Rome, Egypt was always governed as a Greek province; and afterwards, while the emperors dwelt at Constantinople, they were Roman in nothing but in name, and in the language of the laws and coins. On the fall of Alexandria, Egypt became a part of the great kingdom of the caliphs, and its history a part of the history of Arabia and the Arabs.

Additions.

In page 25, line 7, add

whose name is carved on the temple of Tentyra with that of the emperor. He was

Wilkinson's Thebes.

In page 41, line 22, add

If we would enquire whether the early converts to christianity in Alexandria were Jews or pagans, we have nothing to guide us but the names of the bishops. Annianus, or Annaniah as his name is written by the Arabic historians, was most likely a Jew; indeed the evangelist Mark would perhaps begin by addressing himself to the Jews, and would leave the care of the infant church to one of his own nation. The following bishops seem to have been pagan converts, and most likely Greeks.

Eutychii Annales.

In page 58, after line 2, add

One of the useful works of Trajan's reign was finishing the navigable canal between the Nile and the Red Sea. It began opposite Memphis; and passing through Babylon, near Heliopolis, and through Heroopolis, it reached the head of the Red Sea at the port of Daneon. It had been begun by Necho II. and continued by Darius, but long left unfinished in consequence of the difficulty of the work and the fear of an inundation, as the water of the Red Sea was found to be three cubits higher than the land of the Delta. Ptolemy Philadelphus carried it to the Bitter Springs, and, if he finished it, it must since have got choked up

Ptolemæi Geograph.

Diodorus, lib. i. 33. Pliny, lib. vi. 33.

with sand. When Trajan finished it the alarm was probably found to be groundless, and at the same time the canal less useful than was expected, in consequence of the difficulty of navigating the Red Sea.

In page 74, after line 7, add

Philippus Sidetes, ap. Dodwell.

The Platonic professorship in Alexandria had usually been held by an Athenian, and for a short time Athenagoras of Athens taught that branch of philosophy in the Museum; but he afterwards embraced the christian religion, and then taught christianity openly in Alexandria. He enjoys with Justin the honour of being one of the first men of learning who were converted, and, like Justin, his chief work is an apology for the Christians, addressed to the emperor Marcus Aurelius. Athenagoras confines himself in his defence to the resurrection from the dead and the unity of the deity, the points chiefly attacked by the pagans. The philosophers had defended their numerous gods, as being only parts of the deity, and said that they also believed in only one god; but Athenagoras argues that the eternal uncreated God is undivided and without parts, and he says that when the Christians spoke of the Son of God they did not mean either a second God or a part of the deity, but only God's wisdom and understanding. He beautifully explains the doctrines of the Christians by quoting the commands of the New Testament, that we should love our enemies and pray for those who injure us, and that we should guard even our looks and thoughts lest they lead us into sin. Athenagoras also wrote a treatise on Pla-

Apologia pro Christ.

tonic love, in the form of a tale or romance. Of this the original Greek text has been lost, and we now only possess an early French translation; but the writer's knowledge of Egyptian geography is enough to prove that the work is genuine. Du vray et parfait Amour.

In page 23, line 29, add

At the temple of Knef in the Oasis of Ammon the priests lived under a strict monastic rule. They never ate flesh, and they passed their lives in the practice of severities and in religious contemplation. They seldom met in public except to walk up and down their cloisters, discoursing on philosophy and theology. Every ornament on their dress had a symbolical meaning, and their actions were guided by fanciful rules of the same kind. The priestesses also belonging to the same temple were under vows of celibacy, and were governed by their elders with religious strictness. Their chief employment was praying and singing hymns in the temple. Athenagoras, du vray Amour, lib. v.

In page 68, in line 25, add

The priests of Upper Egypt also had already declared that, under the name of *Knef the spirit*, they worshipped the one unseen Creator of the world. Athenagoras, du vray Amour, lib. vi.

In page 119, after line 14, add

About this time Porphyry was at the head of the school of Alexandrian Platonists, as the pupil of Plotinus and the successor of Ammonius. But though the school and the philosophy took its name from the city of its founder, Porphyry lived for some time in Rome, as the rebellions in Alex- Suidas.

andria made it a very unfit place for a philosophical school. He has left a treatise, entitled On the Cave of the Nymphs, and a second On Abstinence. His short history or rather chronology of the Ptolemies is of great value, and its exactness is proved by several eclipses which have been recorded by the Alexandrian astronomers, and calculated by the help of modern science.

In page 135, line 10, add

who lost his life among the martyrs to their religion,

In page 148, after line 19, add

Suidas. Sopater succeeded Iamblichus as professor of Platonism in Alexandria, with the proud title of the Platonic successor. For some time he enjoyed the friendship of Constantine; but when religion made a quarrel between the friends the philosopher was put to death by the emperor. The pagan account of the quarrel was that, when Constantine had killed his son, he applied to Sopater to be purified from his guilt; and when the Platonist answered that he knew of no ceremony that could absolve a man from such a crime, the emperor applied to the Christians for baptism. This story may not be true, and the ecclesiastical historian remarks that Constantine had professed christianity several years before the murder of his son; but then, as he had after his conversion got Sopater to consecrate his new city with a variety of pagan ceremonies, he may in the same way have asked him to absolve him from the guilt of murder.

Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. i. 5.

Joh. Lydus.

APPENDIX.

The Bishops of Alexandria.

(From Syncellus and Nicephorus. Eutychius gives the names rather differently, but he is entitled to less weight.)

	Years.		Years.
Annianus (Annaniah)	22	Cyril	32
Abillius (Æmilius)	12	Dioscorus (I.)	5
Cerdon (A. D. 100)	10	Proterius	6
Primus	12	Timotheus Ælurus (II.)	2
Justinus	10	Timotheus Leucus (III.)	15
Eumenes	10	Peter Mongus (II.)	7
Marcianus	13	John (I.)	3
Celadion	10	Athanasius (II.)	7
Agrippinus	14	John (II.)	9
Julianus	15	John (III.) (A. D. 500)	11
Demetrius (A. D. 200)	43	Dioscorus (II.)	3
Heraclas	16	Timotheus (IV.)	17
Dionysius	17	Gaianas	1
Maximianus	8	Theodosius	2
Theonas (Nero)	19	Paul	2
Peter (I.) (A. D. 300)	11	Zoilus	7
Achillas	1	Apollinarius	19
Alexander	23	John (IV.)	11
Athanasius (I.)	46	(Peter)	
Gregory	10	Eulogius	17
George (I.)	6	(Peter) (A. D. 600)	
Peter	2	Theodorus Scribon	2
Lucius	5	John (V.) Almsgiver	10
Timotheus (I.)	8	George (II.)	11
Theophilus (A. D. 400)	28	Cyrus	10

The Bishops of Alexandria as acknowledged by the Coptic Church.

(From the Chronicon Paschale.)

This list is the same as the former down to Theodosius inclusive, with the omission of Gregory, George I., Lucius, Proterius, Timotheus Leucus, John I., and Gaianas; in the place of whom the Egyptians acknowledged their deposed predecessors, or thought the see empty. After Theodosius, the Egyptian bishops are

		Years.
Peter		2
Damianus		37
Anastasius	(A. D. 600)	13
Andronicus		6
Benjamin		37

These men, with the exception of the last, were living in obscurity while the imperial bishops were governing the country as prefects.

The Platonic Professors of the New School in Alexandria.

(From Suidas.)

Ammonius Saccas. (A. D. 200.)
Plotinus.
Amelius.
Porphyrius.
Iamblichus. (A. D. 300.)
Sopater,
who was put to death by Constantine; after which the regular succession was for a time broken.

THE PROFESSORS IN THE CATECHETICAL SCHOOL IN ALEXANDRIA.

(From Philippus Sidetes, in Dodwell's Dissertation on Irenæus.)

1. Athenagoras of Athens.
2. Pantænus of Athens.
3. Clemens Alexandrinus. (A. D. 200.)
4. Origen.
5. Heraclas (afterwards bishop).
6. Dionysius (afterwards bishop).
7. Pierius.
8. Theognostus.
9. Serapion. (A. D. 300 ?)
10. Peter (afterwards bishop and martyr).
11. Macarius of Alexandria.
12. Didymus.
13. Rhodon. (A. D. 380.)

Rhodon removed the school to Side in Pamphylia, in the reign of Theodosius I.

THE COINS OF ALEXANDRIA, AT THE TIME OF CLEOPATRA'S DEATH.

Their weight is given in grains, being multiples and parts of the didrachm.

	Gold.	Silver.	Bronze.
	—	—	1,100
	—	—	550
	440	—	—
	—	330	—
	220	220	220
The didrachm . .	110	110	110
	55	55	—
	27½	—	—

THE ALEXANDRIAN CHRONOLOGY, WITH SUCH PROOFS AS REST ON THE COINS AND ASTRONOMY.

The 1st year of Augustus begins August 31st, B.C. 30 (*a*)
43d of Augustus and 1st of Tiberius,
begins August 29th, A.D. 13 (*b*)
24th of Tiberius and 1st of Caligula,
August 29th, A.D. 36
5th of Caligula and 1st of Claudius,
August 29th, A.D. 40
15th of Claudius and 1st of Nero,
August 29th, A.D. 54
14th of Nero and 1st of Galba, August 29th, A.D. 67 (*c*)
2d of Galba, 1st of Otho,
1st of Vitellius, and
1st of Vespasian, Aug. 29th, A.D. 68 (*d*)
11th of Vespasian and 1st of Titus,
August 29th, A.D. 78
4th of Titus and 1st of Domitian,
August 29th, A.D. 81 (*e*)

(*a*) The Egyptian new-year's day is easily calculated from the remark of Censorinus in note (*r*), which also fixes the first year of Augustus. This year is also fixed by note (*g*), and by the eclipse in the 7th of Ptolemy Philometor, in Ptolemy's Syntaxis, taking the number of intermediate years from Porphyry's Chronology of the Ptolemies.

In the 5th of Augustus the Julian year was introduced into Alexandria, fixing the new-year's day for the future to the 29th of August, old style.—*Heraclius*.

(*b*) An Alexandrian coin is dated in the 43d of Augustus; and a coin of Damascus of the same year, dated 325 of the Seleucidæ, bears his name.—*Mionnet, Med. Antiq.*

(*c*) An Alexandrian coin is dated in the 14th of Nero, and a coin of Tripolis, dated 379 of the Seleucidæ, bears his name.—*Mionnet*.

(*d*) We have Alexandrian coins of the 2d of Galba, 1st of Otho, and 1st of Vitellius, and also a coin of Galba dated 117 of Antioch. —*Mionnet*.

(*e*) We have Alexandrian coins of the 4th of Titus.—*Mionnet*.

By an occultation of the Pleiades, the 12th of Domitian and 840 of Nabonassar began, according to the old Egyptian style, on 1st August A.D. 92.—*Ptolemy, Mag. Syntax.*

16th of Domitian and 1st of Nerva,
begins August 29th, A. D. 96 (*f*)
2d of Nerva and 1st of Trajan,
August 29th, A. D. 97
20th of Trajan and 1st of Hadrian,
August 29th, A. D. 116 (*g*)
22d of Hadrian and 1st of Antoninus Pius,
August 29th, A. D. 137 (*h*)
25th of Antoninus and 1st of Marcus Aurelius,
August 29th, A. D. 161 (*i*)
20th of Aurelius and 1st of Commodus,
August 29th, A. D. 180 (*k*)
33d of Aurelius, 14th of Commodus,
and 1st of Pertinax, August 29th, A. D. 193 (*l*)
2d of Severus . . . August 29th, A. D. 195
17th of Severus and 1st of Caracalla,
August 29th, A. D. 210
7th of Caracalla and 1st of Macrinus,
August 29th, A. D. 216 (*m*)
2d of Macrinus and 1st of Elagabalus,
August 29th, A. D. 217 (*n*)

(*f*) We have Alexandrian coins of the 16th of Domitian.—*Mionnet.*

(*g*) We have Alexandrian coins of the 20th of Trajan, and also a coin of Hadrian at Tripolis, dated 428 of the Seleucidæ.—*Mionnet.*

The year 17 of Hadrian is 162 of Augustus.—*Ptolemy.*

By an eclipse of the moon, the 20th of Hadrian begins, according to the old Egyptian style, on the 21st of July, A.D. 135.—*Ptolemy.*

(*h*) We have Alexandrian coins of the 22d of Hadrian.–*Mionnet.*

By an horoscope in Young's Hieroglyphics, the 1st of Antoninus begins on the 20th July, A.D. 137, according to the Egyptians.

The year 3 of Antoninus is 463 of Alexander's death.—*Ptolemy.*

(*i*) We have Alexandrian coins of the 25th of Antoninus Pius.—*Mionnet.*

(*k*) A coin of Aurelius is dated 229 of Antioch.—*Mionnet.*

(*l*) We have Alexandrian coins of Commodus, dated in the year 33 of Aurelius.—*Mionnet.*

(*m*) A coin of Caracalla at Emisus is dated 528 of the Seleucidæ, and we have Alexandrian coins of the 7th year of his reign.—*Ib.*

(*n*) We have Alexandrian coins of the 2d of Macrinus; also coins of Leucas of Macrinus dated 254, and of Gordianus Pius, dated 274.—*Mionnet.*

5th of Elagabalus and 1st of Alexander,
begins August 29th, A. D. 221 (*o*)
14th of Alexander and 1st of Maximinus,
August 29th, A. D. 234 (*p*)
3d of Maximinus and 1st of the Gordians,
August 29th, A. D. 236 (*q*)
4th of Maximinus, 1st of Balbinus and Pupienus,
and 1st of Gordianus Pius,
August 29th, A. D. 237 (*r*)
6th of Gordianus Pius and 1st of Philip,
August 29th, A. D. 242
7th of Gordianus Pius and 2d of Philip,
August 29th, A. D. 243 (*s*)
7th of Philip and 1st of Decius,
August 29th, A. D. 248 (*s*)
3d of Decius and 1st of Gallus, Aug. 29th, A. D. 250 (*s*)
3d of Gallus, 1st of Valerian and Gallienus,
and 1st of Æmilianus, Aug. 29th, A. D. 252 (*s*)
2d of Valerian and Gallienus and 2d of Æmilianus,
August 29th, A. D. 253 (*s*)
16th of Gallienus and 1st of Claudius,
August 29th, A. D. 267 (*s*)

(*o*) We have Alexandrian coins of the 5th of Elagabalus, and a coin of Tripolis dated 533 of the Seleucidæ, with his name.—*Mionnet.*

(*p*) We have Alexandrian coins of the 14th of Alexander.

(*q*) The two Gordians were killed before the total eclipse of the sun [12th April A.D. 237].—*Capitolinus.*

(*r*) Balbinus and Pupienus were slain at the Capitoline games. —*Herodian.* That is, 991 of Rome.—*Censorinus.*

After midsummer in the consulship of Ulpius and Pontianus, it is the year 991 of Rome, 1014 of the Olympiads, 267 of Augustus in Alexandria, 986 of Nabonassar, 562 of Alexander's death, and 100 of the new Sothic period. The old Egyptian year begins *ante VII. Kal. Jul.—Censorinus.*

This is proved to be A.D. 238 by notes (*e*) (*g*) and (*h*).

(*s*) We have Alexandrian coins for the 7th of Gordianus Pius, 7th of Philip, 3d of Decius, 3d of Gallus, 2d of Æmilius Æmilianus, 16th of Gallienus, 3d of Claudius Gothicus, 4th and 5th of Zenobia, 5th of Vaballathus Athenodorus, with the 2d of Aurelian on the same coin, 1st of Firmus, 2d of Domitianus, 7th of Severina, 8th of Probus, and 3d of Carinus.—*Mionnet.*

3d of Claudius, 1st of Quintillus,
1st of Aurelian, and
4th of Zenobia, Aug. 29th, A. D. 269 (*s*)
2d of Aurelian, 5th of Zenobia,
and 5th of Vaballathus Athenodorus,
August 29th, A. D. 270 (*s*)
3d of Aurelian and 1st of Firmus,
August 29th, A. D. 271 (*s*)
4th of Aurelian and 2d of Domitianus,
August 29th, A. D. 272 (*s*)
7th of Severina the widow of Aurelian,
1st of Tacitus, and
1st of Probus, August 29th, A. D. 275 (*s*)
8th of Probus and 1st of Carus and Carinus,
August 29th, A. D. 282 (*s*)
3d of Carinus and 1st of Diocletian,
August 29th, A. D. 284 (*s t*)
1st of Constantine at Rome, January 1st, A. D. 306 (*v*)
1st of Constantius at Constantinople,
January 1st, A. D. 338 (*w*)
1st of Julian . . . January 1st, A. D. 362 (*x*)
1st of Jovian . . . January 1st, A. D. 364

(*t*) The era of Augustus was not used after the accession of Diocletian. The last year of Augustus [the 313th] was 1605 Julian years from the beginning of the era of Menophres.—*Theon, apud Cory*. Thus there are 1460 Julian years in the Sothic period, 100 in the new period to the year when Censorinus wrote [see note *r*], and 45 more to the beginning of the 1st of Diocletian. The year 81 of Diocletian began in August, A.D. 364, by an eclipse of the moon.—*Theon*.

(*v*) The Alexandrian chronological records end with Diocletian's reign. The first year of each reign at Rome and Constantinople was reckoned from the January after the emperor's accession, when he was installed as consul. Thus the 1st of Diocletian, which began 29th August A.D. 284, at Alexandria, began in Rome on the 1st January, A.D. 286. The chronology of the following reigns is taken from the Paschal Chronicle.

(*w*) Constantine died when the 22d of May was the day of Pentecost, that is A.D. 337.

(*x*) Constantius died November 3d in the year 410 of Antioch; that is, near the beginning of that year; in A.D. 361.

1st of Valens .	begins	January 1st,	A. D. 365
1st of Gratian . .		January 1st,	A. D. 379
2d of Theodosius I. .		January 1st,	A. D. 380
1st of Arcadius . .		January 1st,	A. D. 395
1st of Theodosius II. .		January 1st,	A. D. 409 (*y*)
1st of Marcian . .		January 1st,	A. D. 451 (*z*)
1st of Leo I. . . .		January 1st,	A. D. 458
1st of Leo II. . .		January 1st,	A. D. 474
1st of Zeno . . .		January 1st,	A. D. 475
1st of Anastasius . .		January 1st,	A. D. 492
1st of Justin I. . .		January 1st,	A. D. 519 (*aa*)
1st of Justinian . .		January 1st,	A. D. 528 (*bb*)
1st of Justin II. . .		January 1st,	A. D. 567
1st of Tiberius . .		January 1st,	A. D. 579
1st of Mauricius . .		January 1st,	A. D. 583 (*cc*)
1st of Phocas . . .		January 1st,	A. D. 603
1st of Heraclius . .		January 1st,	A. D. 611 (*dd*)
Alexandria taken,		December 22d,	A. D. 640 (*ee*)

(*y*) The 10th of Theodosius II. was A.D. 418, by an eclipse of the sun.

(*z*) The 3d of Marcian was 501 of Antioch.

(*aa*) Anastasius died in the year 566 of Antioch.

(*bb*) Justin died in the year 575 of Antioch.

In the 5th of Justinian, the 17th of January, old style, was a Saturday; that is in A.D. 532.

(*cc*) In the 20th of Mauricius, the 23d of November, old style, was a Friday; that is in A.D. 602.

(*dd*) In the 6th of Heraclius, the 1st of March, old style, was a Monday; that is in A.D. 616.

The Arabic era of the Hegira began in 338 of Diocletian, according to Eutychius; and in the 12th of Heraclius, according to Theophanes; that is 16th July, A.D. 622.

(*ee*) Alexandria was taken in the year 357 of the martyrs, or of Diocletian, according to the *Chronicon Orientale;* and on the 1st day of the 20th Hegira, according to Eutychius.—*Note.* There are 354 days only in the Arabic lunar year.

THE NOMES AND CHIEF CITIES OF EGYPT.

(From Ptolemy's Geography.)

		Longitude E. of Alexandria.		Latitude N.	
	Alexandria	0°	0′	31°	0′
	Canopus	0	15	31	6
	Pelusium	2	50	31	10
	Cassium	3	15	31	15
	Rhinocorura	4	10	31	50
	Anthedon	4	20	31	40
	Arsinoe (*On the Red Sea.*)	2	50	29	10
	Clysma (*On the Red Sea.*)	2	50	28	50
	Mioshormus (*On the Red Sea.*)	4	0	27	15
	Philoteras (*On the Red Sea.*)	3	45	26	45
	Berenice (*On the Red Sea.*)	3	36	23	50
NOMES.	CITIES.				
Alexandrinus.	Hermopolis parva	0	30	30	50
Andropolites.	Andron	0	50	30	20
Latopolites.	Laton	1	0	30	6
Metelites.	Metelis	0	30	31	0
Phthenotes.	Butos	1	0	30	45
Cabasites.	Cabasa	1	0	30	40
Saites.	Sais	1	0	30	50
	Naucratis	0	45	30	30
Prosopites.	Nicion	1	0	30	20
Sebennytes (lower)	Pachnamunis	1	10	31	0
Xoites.	Xois	1	10	30	45
Phthemphuthus.	Tava	1	10	30	36
Onuphites.	Onuphis.	1	36	30	40
Athribites.	Athribis	1	30	30	30
Mendesius.	Thmuis	1	50	30	50
Sebennytes (upper)	Sabennytus	2	0	30	20
Busirites.	Busiris	2	0	30	15
Leontopolites.	Leonton	1	45	30	36
Neut.	Panephysis	2	10	31	6
Tanites.	Tanis	2	15	30	50
Pharbæites.	Pharbæthus	2	15	30	30
Sethroites.	Heracleopolis parva	2	50	31	0

		Longitude E. of Alexandria.	Latitude N.
Arabicus.	Phacusa . . .	2° 40′	30° 50′
Bubastites.	Bubastus . .	2 36	30 40
Heliopolites.	Onion . . .	2 0	30 10
	Babylon . . .	1 45	30 0
	Heliopolis . .	2 0	29 50
	Heroopolis . .	2 40	29 50
	In the Heptanomis.		
Memphites.	Memphis *(west bank)*	1 20	29 50
	Acanthon . .	1 10	29 40
Heracleopolites.	Nilopolis *(island)* .	1 30	29 0
	Heracleopolis (*west)*	1 20	29 10
Arsinoites.	Arsinoe . . .	1 10	29 30
	Ptolemais *(west)* .	1 10	29 20
Aphroditopolites.	Aphroditopolis *(east)*	1 45	29 40
	Angyron *(east)* :	1 50	29 20
Oxyrynchites.	Oxyrynchus *(west)* .	1 10	28 50
Cynopolites.	Co *(west)* . .	1 20	28 40
	Cynopolis (*island)* .	1 50	28 30
	Acoris *(east)* . .	1 30	28 30
	Alabastron . .	2 0	28 20
Hermopolites.	Hermopolis *(west)* .	1 10	28 26
	Custodiæ *(west)* .	1 20	28 15
Antinoites.	Antinoopolis *(east)*	1 36	28 10
	In the Thebaid, *to the west of the Nile.*		
Lycopolites.	Lycopolis . .	1 15	28 0
Hypselites.	Hypsele . . .	1 30	27 50
Aphroditopolites.	Aphroditopolis .	0 50	28 20
	Crocodilopolis .	0 50	27 20
Thinites.	Ptolemais Hermii .	1 20	27 10
	Abydus . . .	0 50	26 50
Diospolites.	Diospolis parva .	1 20	26 40
Tentyrites.	Tentyra . . .	1 20	26 10
	Pampanis . .	1 0	25 45
	Tathyris . .	1 50	25 30
Hermonthites.	Hermonthis . .	1 20	25 20
	Latopolis . .	1 15	25 0

		Longitude E. of Alexandria.	Latitude N.
(Apollinopolites. Pliny)	Apollinopolis magna	1° 20′	24° 40′
	Phthontis . .	1 10	24 20
Isle of Elephantine.	. . . . ,	1 0	23 56

To the east of the Nile.

Antæopolites.	Antæopolis . .	1 50	27 40
	Passalon . .	1 40	27 30
Panopolites.	Panopolis . .	1 30	27 20
	Lepidoton . .	1 30	26 50
	Chenoboscia . .	1 30	26 30
	Cæne . . .	1 40	26 20
Coptites.	Coptos . . .	2 0	26 0
	Apollinopolis parva .	2 0	25 50
Thebes.	Diospolis magna .	1 30	25 30
	Tuphion . .	1 30	25 20
	Chnubis . .	1 30	25 0
	Eilethya . .	1 36	24 45
	Toum . , .	1 45	24 20
(Ombites, Pliny.)	Ombos . . .	1 30	24 6
	Syene . . .	1 30	23 50
	Dodecascoenos . . .	1 20	23 45
	Hiera Sycaminon . .	1 15	23 40

		Long. W. of Alexandria.	Latitude N.
Berenice	. . .	12 45	31 20
Arsinoe	. . .	11 50	31 20
Ptolemais	*The Pentapolis* .	11 24	31 10
Apollonia	. . .	10 20	31 40
Cyrene	. . .	10 30	31 20
Parætonium	. . .	3 30	31 10
Taposiris	. . . .	0 40	30 15
The Oasis of Ammon	. . . .	5 0	28 0
The Lesser Oasis	. . . .	0 15	28 45
The Greater Oasis	. . . .	1 0	26 56

Note.—The latitudes were learnt by observation of the sun's shadow, and the error seems not often greater than the sun's semi-diameter, or 15′; the longitudes were learnt by measurement along the roads, and therefore the error becomes greater as the place is further from Alexandria. Moreover the figures in the Greek and ancient Latin translation often differ.

The Roman Roads and Stations, from the Itinerary of Antoninus.

(A work in its present form of about the age of Constantine.)

The Road from Syria to Alexandria.

Raphia	Miles	Thmuis	Miles 22
Rhinocolura	22	Cynon	25
Ostracena	26	Tava	30
Cassium	26	Andron	22
Pentachoenon	20	Nithine	12
Pelusium	20	Hermopolis	24
Heracleum	22	Chereum	24
Tanis	22	Alexandria	20

Note.—At Andron this road meets the road from Upper Egypt.

The road from Alexandria to Hiera Sycaminon, in Nubia, on the west bank of the Nile.

Alexandria		Abydos	22
Chereum	20	Diospolis parva	28
Hermopolis	24	Tentyra	27
Andron	21	Contra-Copton	12
Nicium	31	Papa	8
Letus	28	Hermunthis	30
Memphis	20	Latopolis	24
Peme	20	Apollinopolis magna	32
Isium	20	Contra-Thmuis	24
Cene	20	Contra-Ombos	24
Tacona	20	Contra-Syene	23
Oxyrynchon	24	Parembole	16
Ibium	30	Tzizi	2
Hermopolis	24	Taphis	14
Chusis	24	Talmis	8
Lycon	35	Tutzis	20
Apollonos minoris, *sic*, (Aphroditopolis)	18	Pselcis	12
Hisoris	28	Corte	4
Ptolemais	22	Hiera-Sycaminon	4

The road on the east bank of the Nile from opposite Hiera-Sycaminon, through Arabia to Clismon on the Red Sea.

Contra-Pselcis	Miles 11	Hieracon	Miles 20
Contra-Talmis	24	Pesla	28
Contra-Taphis	10	Antinoopolis	24
Philæ	24	Peos Artemidos	8
Syene	3	Muson	34
Ombos	30	Hipponon	30
Contra-Apollonos	40	Alyi	16
Contra-Laton	40	Thimonepsi	16
Thebes	40	Aphroditopolis	24
Apollinopolis parva	22	Scenas Mandras	20
Coptos	22	Babylon	12
Chenoboscion	40	Heliopolis	12
Thomum	50	Scenas Veteranorum	18
Panopolis	4	Vicum Judæorum	12
Selinon	16	Thoum	12
Antæopolis	16	Heroopolis	24
Muthum	8	Serapion	18
Isium	24	Clismon	50

Note.—This road leaves the Nile at Babylon, and runs nearly by the side of Trajan's canal till it reaches the Red Sea, near Suez, probably at Serapion. At Thoum (the Patumus of Herodotus, and Pithom of the Bible) the road to Pelusium branches off to the left hand.

The road from Pelusium to Memphis.

Daphnæ	20	Scenas Veteranorum	26
Tasacarta	18	Heliopolis	14
Thoum	24	Memphis	24

The road from Serapion, near the head of the Red Sea, to Pelusium.

Thaubasion	8	Magdolon	12
Sile	23	Pelusium	12

The road through the desert from Coptos to Berenice, the Port on the Red Sea.

Peniconon	Miles 24	Phalagron	Miles 30
Didime	24	Apollonos	24
Aphroditon	20	Cabalsi	24
Compasi	22	Cenon Hydreuma	27
Jovis	23	Berenice	28
Aristonis	30		

Note.—These were not villages, but merely public buildings in which the merchant rested with his camels each day, after travelling from the former station by night to avoid the heat.

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