

On the Life of Moses, I

Philo of Alexandria

tr. C. D. Yonge translation

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Chapter I

I have conceived the idea of writing the life of Moses, who, according to the account of some persons, was the lawgiver of the Jews, but according to others only an interpreter of the sacred laws, the greatest and most perfect man that ever lived, having a desire to make his character fully known to those who ought not to remain in ignorance respecting him,

for the glory of the laws which he left behind him has reached over the whole world, and has penetrated to the very furthest limits of the universe; and those who do really and truly understand him are not many, perhaps partly out of envy, or else from the disposition so common to many persons of resisting the commands which are delivered by lawgivers in different states, since the historians who have flourished among the Greeks have not chosen to think him worthy of mention,

the greater part of whom have both in their poems and also in their prose writings, disparaged or defaced the powers which they have received through education, composing comedies and works full of Sybaritish profligacy and licentiousness to their everlasting shame, while they ought rather to have employed their natural endowments and abilities in preserving a record of virtuous men and praiseworthy lives, so that honourable actions, whether ancient or modern, might not be buried in silence, and thus have all recollection of them lost, while they might shine gloriously if duly celebrated; and that they might not themselves have seemed to pass by more appropriate subjects, and to prefer such as were unworthy of being

mentioned at all, while they were eager to give a specious appearance to infamous actions, so as to secure notoriety for disgraceful deeds.

But I disregard the envious disposition of these men, and shall proceed to narrate the events which befell him, having learnt them both from those sacred scriptures which he has left as marvellous memorials of his wisdom, and having also heard many things from the elders of my nation, for I have continually connected together what I have heard with what I have read, and in this way I look upon it that I am acquainted with the history of his life more accurately than other people.

Chapter II

And I will begin first with that with which it is necessary to begin. Moses was by birth a Hebrew, but he was born, and brought up, and educated in Egypt, his ancestors having migrated into Egypt with all their families on account of the long famine which oppressed Babylon and all the adjacent countries; for they were in search of food, and Egypt was a champaign country blessed with a rich soil, and very productive of every thing which the nature of man requires, and especially of corn and wheat,

for the river of that country at the height of summer, when they say that all other rivers which are derived from winter torrents and from springs in the ground are smaller, rises and increases, and overflows so as to irrigate all the lands, and make them one vast lake. And so the land, without having any need of rain, supplies every year an unlimited abundance of every kind of good food, unless

sometimes the anger of God interrupts this abundance by reason of the excessive impiety of the inhabitants.

And his father and mother were among the most excellent persons of their time, and though they were of the same time, still they were induced to unite themselves together more from an unanimity of feeling than because they were related in blood; and Moses is the seventh generation in succession from the original settler in the country who was the founder of the whole race of the Jews.

Chapter III

And he was thought worthy of being bred up in the royal palace, the cause of which circumstance was as follows. The king of the country, inasmuch as the nation of the Hebrews kept continually increasing in numbers, fearing lest gradually the settlers should become more numerous than the original inhabitants, and being more powerful should set upon them and subdue them by force, and make themselves their masters, conceived the idea of destroying their strength by impious devices, and ordered that of all the children that were born the females only should be brought up (since a woman, by reason of the weakness of her nature, is disinclined to and unfitted for war), and that all the male children should be destroyed, that the population of their cities might not be increased, since a power which consists of a number of men is a fortress difficult to take and difficult to Destroy.(the similitude of this passage to Sir William Jones' Ode is very remarkable: "What constitutes a state.")

Accordingly as the child Moses, as soon as he was born, displayed a more beautiful and noble form than usual, his parents resolved, as far as was in their power, to disregard the proclamations of the tyrant. Accordingly they say that for three months continuously they kept him at home, feeding him on milk, without its coming to the knowledge of the multitude;

but when, as is commonly the case in monarchies, some persons discovered what was kept secret and in darkness, of those persons who are always eager to bring any new report to the king, his parents being afraid lest while seeking to secure the safety of one individual, they who were many might become involved in his destruction, with many tears exposed their child on the banks of the river, and departed groaning and lamenting, pitying themselves for the necessity which had fallen upon them, and calling themselves the slayers and murderers of their child, and commiserating the infant too for his destruction, which they had hoped to avert.

Then, as was natural for people involved in a miserable misfortune, they accused themselves as having brought a heavier affliction on themselves than they need have done. "For why," said they, "did we not expose him at the first moment of his birth?" For people in general do not look upon one who has not lived long enough to partake of salutary food as a human being at all. "But we, in our superfluous affection, have nourished him these three entire months, causing ourselves by such conduct more abundant grief, and inflicting upon him a heavier punishment, in order that he, having at last attained to a great capacity for

feeling pleasures and pains, should at last perish in the perception of the most grievous evils."

Chapter IV

And so they departed in ignorance of the future, being wholly overwhelmed with sad misery; but the sister of the infant who was thus exposed, being still a maiden, out of the vehemence of her fraternal affection, stood a little way off watching to see what would happen, and all the events which concerned him appear to me to have taken place in accordance with the providence of God, who watched over the infant.

Now the king of the country had an only daughter, whom he tenderly loved, and they say that she, although she had been married a long time, had never had any children, and therefore, as was natural, was very desirous of children, and especially of male offspring, which should succeed to the noble inheritance of her father's prosperity and imperial authority, which was otherwise in danger of being lost, since the king had no other grandsons.

And as she was always desponding and lamenting, so especially on that particular day was she overcome by the weight of her anxiety, that, though it was her ordinary custom to stay in doors and never to pass over the threshold of her house, yet now she went forth with her handmaidens down to the river, where the infant was lying. And there, as she was about to indulge in a bath and purification in the thickest part of the marsh, she beheld the child, and commanded her handmaidens to bring him to her.

Then, after she had surveyed him from head to foot, and admired his elegant form and healthy vigorous appearance, and saw that he was crying, she had compassion on him, her soul being already moved within her by maternal feelings of affection as if he had been her own child. And when she knew that the infant belonged to one of the Hebrews who was afraid because of the commandment of the king, she herself conceived the idea of rearing him up, and took counsel with herself on the subject, thinking that it was not safe to bring him at once into the palace;

and while she was still hesitating, the sister of the infant, who was still looking out, conjecturing her hesitation from what she beheld, ran up and asked her whether she would like that the child should be brought up at the breast by some one of the Hebrew women who had been lately delivered;

and as she said that she wished that she would do so, the maiden went and fetched her own mother and that of the infant, as if she had been a stranger, who with great readiness and willingness cheerfully promised to take the child and bring him up, pretending to be tempted by the reward to be paid, the providence of God thus making the original bringing up of the child to accord with the genuine course of nature. Then she gave him a name, calling him Moses with great propriety, because she had received him out of the water, for the Egyptians call water “mos.”

Chapter V

But when the child began to grow and increase, he was weaned, not in accordance with the time of his age, but

earlier than usual; and then his mother, who was also his nurse, came to bring him back to the princess who had given him to her, inasmuch as he no longer required to be fed on milk, and as he was now a fine and noble child to look upon.

And when the king's daughter saw that he was more perfect than could have been expected at his age, and when from his appearance she conceived greater good will than ever towards him, she adopted him as her son, having first put in practice all sorts of contrivances to increase the apparent bulk of her belly, so that he might be looked upon as her own genuine child, and not as a supposititious one; but God easily brings to pass whatever he is inclined to effect, however difficult it may be to bring to a successful issue.

Therefore the child being now thought worthy of a royal education and a royal attendance, was not, like a mere child, long delighted with toys and objects of laughter and amusement, even though those who had undertaken the care of him allowed him holidays and times for relaxation, and never behaved in any stern or morose way to him; but he himself exhibited a modest and dignified deportment in all his words and gestures, attending diligently to every lesson of every kind which could tend to the improvement of his mind.

And immediately he had all kinds of masters, one after another, some coming of their own accord from the neighbouring countries and the different districts of Egypt, and some being even procured from Greece by the temptation of large presents. But in a short time he

surpassed all their knowledge, anticipating all their lessons by the excellent natural endowments of his own genius; so that everything in his case appeared to be a collecting rather than a learning, while he himself also, without any teacher, comprehended by his instinctive genius many difficult subjects;

for great abilities cut out for themselves many new roads to knowledge. And just as vigorous and healthy bodies which are active and quick in motion in all their parts, release their trainers from much care, giving them little or no trouble and anxiety, and as trees which are of a good sort, and which have a natural good growth, give no trouble to their cultivators, but grow finely and improve of themselves, so in the same manner the well disposed soul, going forward to meet the lessons which are imparted to it, is improved in reality by itself rather than by its teachers, and taking hold of some beginning or principle of knowledge, bounds, as the proverb has it, like a horse over the plain.

Accordingly he speedily learnt arithmetic, and geometry, and the whole science of rhythm and harmony and metre, and the whole of music, by means of the use of musical instruments, and by lectures on the different arts, and by explanations of each topic; and lessons on these subjects were given him by Egyptian philosophers, who also taught him the philosophy which is contained in symbols, which they exhibit in those sacred characters of hieroglyphics, as they are called, and also that philosophy which is conversant about that respect which they pay to animals which they invest with the honours due to God. And all the

other branches of the encyclical education he learnt from Greeks; and the philosophers from the adjacent countries taught him Assyrian literature and the knowledge of the heavenly bodies so much studied by the Chaldaeans.

And this knowledge he derived also from the Egyptians, who study mathematics above all things, and he learnt with great accuracy the state of that art among both the Chaldaeans and Egyptians, making himself acquainted with the points in which they agree with and differ from each other — making himself master of all their disputes without encouraging any disputatious disposition in himself — but seeking the plain truth, since his mind was unable to admit any falsehood, as those are accustomed to do who contend violently for one particular side of a question; and who advocate any doctrine which is set before them, whatever it may be, not inquiring whether it deserves to be supported, but acting in the same manner as those lawyers who defend a cause for pay, and are wholly indifferent to the justice of their cause.

Chapter VI

And when he had passed the boundaries of the age of infancy he began to exercise his intellect; not, as some people do, letting his youthful passions roam at large without restraint, although in him they had ten thousand incentives by reason of the abundant means for the gratification of them which royal places supply; but he behaved with temperance and fortitude, as though he had bound them with reins, and thus he restrained their onward impetuosity by force.

And he tamed, and appeased, and brought under due command every one of the other passions which are naturally and as far as they are themselves concerned frantic, and violent, and unmanageable. And if any one of them at all excited itself and endeavoured to get free from restraint he administered severe punishment to it, reproving it with severity of language; and, in short, he repressed all the principal impulses and most violent affections of the soul, and kept guard over them as over a restive horse, fearing lest they might break all bounds and get beyond the power of reason which ought to be their guide to restrain them, and so throw everything everywhere into confusion. For these passions are the causes of all good and of all evil; of good when they submit to the authority of dominant reason, and of evil when they break out of bounds and scorn all government and restraint.

Very naturally, therefore, those who associated with him and every one who was acquainted with him marvelled at him, being astonished as at a novel spectacle, and inquiring what kind of mind it was that had its abode in his body, and that was set up in it like an image in a shrine; whether it was a human mind or a divine intellect, or something combined of the two; because he had nothing in him resembling the many, but had gone beyond them all and was elevated to a more sublime height.

For he never provided his stomach with any luxuries beyond those necessary tributes which nature has appointed to be paid to it, and as to the pleasures of the organs below the stomach he paid no attention to them at all, except as far as the object of having legitimate children

was concerned.

And being in a most eminent degree a practiser of abstinence and self-denial, and being above all men inclined to ridicule a life of effeminacy and luxury (for he desired to live for his soul alone, and not for his body), he exhibited the doctrines of philosophy in all his daily actions, saying precisely what he thought, and performing such actions only as were consistent with his words, so as to exhibit a perfect harmony between his language and his life, so that as his words were such also was his life, and as his life was such likewise was his language, like people who are playing together in tune on a musical instrument.

Therefore men in general, even if the slightest breeze of prosperity does only blow their way for a moment, become puffed up and give themselves great airs, becoming insolent to all those who are in a lower condition than themselves, and calling them dregs of the earth, and annoyances, and sources of trouble, and burdens of the earth, and all sorts of names of that kind, as if they had been thoroughly able to establish the undeviating character of their prosperity on a solid foundation, though, very likely, they will not remain in the same condition even till tomorrow,

for there is nothing more inconstant than fortune, which tosses human affairs up and down like dice. Often has a single day thrown down the man who was previously placed on an eminence, and raised the lowly man on high. And while men see these events continually taking place, and though they are well assured of the fact, still they overlook their relations and friends, and transgress the laws according to which they were born and brought up; and

they overturn their national hereditary customs to which no just blame whatever is attached, dwelling in a foreign land, and by reason of their cordial reception of the customs among which they are living, no longer remembering a single one of their ancient usages.

Chapter VII

But Moses, having now reached the very highest point of human good fortune, and being looked upon as the grandson of this mighty king, and being almost considered in the expectations of all men as the future inheritor of his grandfather's kingdom, and being always addressed as the young prince, still felt a desire for and admiration of the education of his kinsmen and ancestors, considering all the things which were thought good among those who had adopted him as spurious, even though they might, in consequence of the present state of affairs, have a brilliant appearance; and those things which were thought good by his natural parents, even though they might be for a short time somewhat obscure, at all events akin to himself and genuine good things.

Accordingly, like an uncorrupt judge both of his real parents and of those who had adopted him, he cherished towards the one a good will and an ardent affection, and he displayed gratitude towards the others in requital of the kindness which he had received at their hands, and he would have displayed the same throughout his whole life if he had not beheld a great and novel iniquity wrought in the country by the king;

for, as I have said before, the Jews were strangers in Egypt, the founders of their race having migrated from Babylon and the upper satrapies in the time of the famine, by reason of their want of food, and come and settled in Egypt, and having in a manner taken refuge like suppliants in the country as in a sacred asylum, fleeing for protection to the good faith of the king and the compassion of the inhabitants;

for strangers, in my opinion, should be looked upon as refugees, and as the suppliants of those who receive them in their country; and, besides, being suppliants, these men were likewise sojourners in the land, and friends desiring to be admitted to equal honours with the citizens, and neighbours differing but little in their character from original natives.

The men, therefore, who had left their homes and come into Egypt, as if they were to dwell in that land as in a second country in perfect security, the king of the country reduced to slavery, and, as if he had taken them prisoners by the laws of war, or had bought them from masters in whose house they had been bred, he oppressed them and treated them as slaves, though they were not only free men, but also strangers, and suppliants, and sojourners, having no respect for nor any awe of God, who presides over the rights of free men, and of strangers, and of suppliants, and of hospitality, and who beholds all such actions as his.

Then he laid commands on them beyond their power to fulfil, imposing on them labour after labour; and, when they fainted from weakness, the sword came upon them. He appointed overseers over their works, the most pitiless and

inhuman of men, who pardoned and made allowance for no one, and whom they from the circumstances and from their behaviour called persecutors of work.

And they wrought with clay, some of them fashioning it into bricks, and others collecting straw from all quarters, for straw is the bond which binds bricks together; while others, again, had the task allotted to them of building up houses, and walls, and gates, and cutting trenches, bearing wood themselves day and night without interruption, having no rest or respite, and not even being allowed time so much as to sleep, but being compelled to perform all the works not only of workmen but also of journeymen, so that in a short time their bodies failed them, their souls having already fainted beneath their afflictions.

And so they died, one after another, as if smitten by a pestilential destruction, and then their taskmasters threw their bodies away unburied beyond the borders of the land, not suffering their kinsmen or their friends to sprinkle even a little dust on their corpses, nor to weep over those who had thus miserably perished; but, like impious men as they were, they threatened to extend their despotism over the passions of the soul (that cannot be enslaved, and which are nearly the only things which nature has made completely free), oppressing them with the intolerable weight of a necessity beyond their powers.

Chapter VIII

At all these events Moses was greatly grieved and indignant, not being able either to chastise the unjust oppressors of his people nor to assist those who were

oppressed, but he gave them all the assistance that was in his power, by words, recommending their overseers to treat them with moderation, and to relax and abate somewhat of the oppressive nature of their commands, and exhorting the oppressed who were labouring thus to bear their present distresses with a noble spirit and to be men in their minds, and not to let their souls faint as well as their bodies, but to hope for good fortune after their present adversity;

for that all things in this world have a tendency to change to the opposite, cloudy weather to fine, violent gales to calm and absence of wind, storms and heavy billows at sea to fair weather and an unruffled surface of the water; and much more are human affairs likely to change, inasmuch as they are more unstable than anything.

By using these charms, as it were, like a good physician, he thought he should be able to alleviate their afflictions, although they were most grievous. But whenever their distress abated, then again their taskmasters returned and oppressed them with increased severity, always after the respite adding some new evil which should be even more intolerable than their previous sufferings;

for some of their overseers were very savage and furious men, being, as to their cruelty, not at all different from poisonous serpents or carnivorous beasts — wild beasts in human form — being clothed with the form of a human body so as to give an appearance of gentleness in order to deceive and catch their victim, but in reality being harder than iron or adamant.

One of these men, then, the most violent of them, when, in addition to yielding nothing of his purpose, he was even exasperated at the exhortations of Moses and rendered more savage by them, beating those who did not labour with energy and unremittingly at the work which was imposed upon them, and insulting them and subjecting them to every kind of ill-treatment, so as even to be the death of many, Moses slew, thinking the deed a pious action; and, indeed, it was a pious action to destroy one who only lived for the destruction of others.

When the king heard of this action he was very indignant, thinking it an intolerable thing, not for one man to be dead, or for another to have killed him, whether justly or unjustly, but for his grandson not to agree with him, and not to look upon his friends or his enemies as his own, but to hate persons whom the king loved, and to love persons whom the king looked upon as outcasts, and to pity those whom he regarded with unchangeable and implacable aversion.

Chapter IX

But when the Egyptian authorities had once got an opportunity of attacking the young man, having already reason for looking upon him with suspicion (for they well knew that he would hereafter bear them ill-will for their evil practices, and would revenge himself on them when he had an opportunity) they poured in, at all times and from all quarters, thousands and thousands of calumnies into the willing ears of his grandfather, so that they even implanted in his mind an apprehension that Moses was plotting to deprive him of his kingdom, saying to him: "He will strip

you of your crown. He has no humble designs or notions. He is continually seeking to busy himself in what does not concern him, and to acquire some additional power. He is eager for the kingdom before his time. He caresses some people; he threatens others; he kills others without a trial; he hates all those who are the best affected towards you. Why do you delay? Why do you not cut short all his designs and machinations? Delay on the part of those against whom they are plotting is of the greatest advantage to those who wish to attack them."

As they urged these arguments to the king he retreated to the contiguous country of Arabia, where it was safe to abide, entreating God that he would deliver his countrymen from inextricable calamities, and would worthily chastise their oppressors who omitted no circumstance of insolence and tyranny, and would double his joy by allowing him to behold the accomplishment of both these prayers. And God heard his prayers, looking favourably on his disposition, so devoted to what is good, and so hostile to what is evil, and not long after he pronounced his decision upon the affairs of that land as became a God.

But while he was preparing to display the decision which he was about to pronounce, Moses was devoting himself to all the labours of virtue, having a teacher within himself, virtuous reason, by whom he had been trained to the most virtuous pursuits of life, and had learnt to apply himself to the contemplation and practice of virtue and to the continual study of the doctrines of philosophy, which he easily and thoroughly comprehended in his soul, and committed to memory in such a manner as never to forget

them; and, moreover, he made all his own actions, which were intrinsically praiseworthy, to harmonise with them, desiring not to seem wise and good, but in truth and reality to be so, because he made the right reason of nature his only aim; which is, in fact, the only first principle and fountain of all the virtues.

Any one else, perhaps, fleeing from the implacable fury of the king, and coming now for the first time into a foreign land, when he had not as yet associated with or learnt the customs of the natives, and not knowing with any accuracy the objects in which they delighted or which they regarded with aversion, would have been desirous to enjoy tranquillity and to live in obscurity, escaping the notice of men in general; or else, if he had wished to come forward in public, he would have endeavoured by all means to propitiate the powerful men and those in the highest authority in the country by persevering attentions, as men from whom some advantage or assistance might be expected, if any pursuers should come after him and endeavour to drag him away by force.

But this man proceeded by the path which was the exact opposite of that which was the probable one for him to take, following the healthy impulses of his soul, and not allowing any one of them to be impeded in its progress. On which account, at times, with the fervour of youth, he attempted things beyond his existing strength; looking upon justice as an irresistible power, by which he was encouraged so as to go spontaneously to the assistance of the weaker side.

Chapter X

I will also mention one action which was done by him at that time, even although it may be but a trifling one in appearance, but still it proceeded from a lofty spirit. The Arabs are great breeders of cattle, and they all feed their flocks together, not merely men, but also women, and youths, and maidens with them, and this, too, not merely in the obscurer classes and lower ranks of life, but also among the most eminent persons of the nation.

Now there were seven damsels, whose father was the priest, and they all came to a certain fountain leading their flocks, and having loosened their vessels and let them down by thongs they succeeded one another in drawing up the water, so as for them all to have an equal share in the work; and in this way they cheerfully and rapidly filled the troughs which were at hand.

And when other shepherds came up they disregarded the weakness of the damsels and endeavoured to drive them away with their flocks, and then brought their own herds to the drink that was prepared, desiring to reap the fruits of the labour of others.

But Moses, seeing what was done, for he was at no great distance, hastened and ran up; and, when he had come near to them, he said: "Will not you desist from behaving thus unjustly, thinking this solitary place a fitting field for the exercise of your covetousness? Are you not ashamed to have such cowardly arms and hands? You are long-haired people, female flesh, and not men. The damsels behave like vigorous youths, hesitating about nothing that they ought to do; but you, young men, are now behaving lazily, like girls.

Will you not depart? Will you not be off and give place to those who arrived first, to whom the water belongs, and who are entitled to it; when you ought rather to have drawn water for them, that so they might have had it in greater abundance? And are you, on the contrary, endeavouring to take away from them what they themselves have got ready? “But I swear, by the celestial eye of justice, which sees what is done even in the most solitary places, that you shall not take it from them.

And at all events, now justice has sent me and appointed me to bring them assistance who never expected such an officer; for I am an ally to these damsels who are thus injured by violence, and I come with a might which you evil-doers and covetous people cannot face, but you shall feel it wounding you in an invisible manner, if you do not change your ways.”

He said this; and they, being alarmed at his words, since while he was speaking he appeared inspired, and his appearance became changed, so that he looked like a prophet, and fearing lest he might be uttering divine oracles and predictions, they obeyed and became submissive, and brought back the flock of the maidens to the troughs, first of all removing their own cattle.

Chapter XI

So the damsels went home exceedingly delighted, and they related all that had happened to them beyond their hopes, so that they wished their father with an earnest desire to see the stranger. At all events he blamed them for their ingratitude, speaking as follows: “What were ye about,

that ye let him go, when you ought at once to have brought him hither, and to have entreated him to come if he declined? Or when did you see any inhospitality in me? Or do you expect never again to fall into difficulties? Those who are forgetful of services must needs lack defenders, but nevertheless hasten after him, for as yet the error which you have committed may be repaired; and go with haste and invite him first of all to a hospitable reception, and then endeavour to requite his service, for great thanks are due to him."

So they made haste, and went after him, and overtook him at no great distance from the fountain; and when they had delivered their father's message to him, they persuaded him to return home with them. And their father was at once greatly struck by his appearance, and soon afterwards he learnt to admire his wisdom, for great natures are very easily discovered, and do not require a length of time to be appreciated, and so he gave him the most beautiful of his daughters to be his wife, conjecturing by that one action of his how completely good and excellent he was, and testifying that what is good is the only thing which deserves to be loved, and that it does not require any external recommendation, but bears in itself proofs by which it may be known and understood.

And after his marriage, Moses took his father-in-law's herds and tended them, being thus instructed in the lessons proper to qualify him for becoming the leader of a people, for the business of a shepherd is a preparation for the office of a king to any one who is destined to preside over that most manageable of all flocks, mankind, just as hunting is a

good training-school for men of warlike dispositions; for they who are practising with a view to learning the management of an army, previously study the science of hunting, brute animals being as some raw material exposed to their attacks in order for them to practise the art of commanding on each occasion of war or of peace,

for the pursuit of wild beasts is a training-school of strategy to be developed against enemies, and the care and management of tame animals is a royal training for the government of subjects; for which reason kings are called shepherds of their people, not by way of reproach, but as a most especial and pre-eminent honour.

And it appears to me, who have examined the matter not with any reference to the opinions of the many, but solely with regard to truth (and he may laugh who pleases), that that man alone can be a perfect king who is well skilled in the art of the shepherd, being thus instructed as to more important matters by experience of the inferior animals; for it is impossible for great things to be brought to perfection before small ones.

Chapter XII

Therefore Moses, having become the most skilful herdsman of his time, and the most prudent provider of all the necessary things for his flock, and of all things which tended to their advantage, because he never delayed or hesitated, but exerted a voluntary and spontaneous cheerfulness in all things necessary for the animals under his charge,

saw his flocks increase with great joy and guileless good faith, so that he soon incurred the envy of the other herdsmen, who saw nothing in their own flocks resembling the condition of his; but they thought themselves well off if they continued as before, while the flock of Moses would have been thought to be falling off if it had not improved, every day, by reason of the vast augmentations that it was in the habit of receiving in beauty from its high condition and fatness, and in number from the prolific character of the females, and the wholesome way in which it was fed and managed.

And when Moses was leading his flock into a situation full of good water and good grass, where there was also a great deal of herbage especially suitable for sheep, he came upon a certain grove in a valley, where he saw a most marvellous sight. There was a bush or briar, a very thorny plant, and very weak and supple. This bush was on a sudden set in a blaze without any one applying any fire to it, and being entirely enveloped from the root to the topmost branch by the abundant flame, as though it had proceeded from some fountain showering fire over it, it nevertheless remained whole without being consumed, like some impassible essence, and not as if it were itself the natural fuel for fire, but rather as if it were taking the fire for its own fuel.

And in the middle of the flame there was seen a certain very beautiful form, not resembling any visible thing, a most Godlike image, emitting a light more brilliant than fire, which any one might have imagined to be the image of the living God. But let it be called an angel, because it merely related (*diepungelleto*) the events which were about to

happen in a silence more distinct than any voice by reason of the marvellous sight which was thus exhibited.

For the burning bush was a symbol of the oppressed people, and the burning fire was a symbol of the oppressors; and the circumstance of the burning bush not being consumed was an emblem of the fact that the people thus oppressed would not be destroyed by those who were attacking them, but that their hostility would be unsuccessful and fruitless to the one party, and the fact of their being plotted against would fail to be injurious to the others. The angel, again, was the emblem of the providence of God, who mitigates circumstances which appear very formidable, so as to produce from them great tranquillity beyond the hopes or expectation of any one.

Chapter XIII

But we must now accurately investigate the comparison here made. The briar, as has been already said, is a most weak and supple plant, yet it is not without thorns, so that it wounds one if one only touches it. Nor was it consumed by fire, which is naturally destructive, but on the contrary it was preserved by it, and in addition to not being consumed, it continued just as it was before, and without undergoing any change whatever itself, acquired additional brilliancy.

All these circumstances are an allegory to intimate the suggestions given by the other notions which at that time prevailed, almost crying out in plain words to persons in affliction, "Do not faint; your weakness is your strength, which shall pierce and wound innumerable hosts. You shall be saved rather than destroyed, by those who are desirous

to destroy your whole race against their will, so that you shall not be overwhelmed by the evils with which they will afflict you, but when your enemies think most surely that they are destroying you, then you shall most brilliantly shine out in glory.”

Again, the fire, which is a destructive essence, convicting the men of cruel dispositions, says, Be not elated so as to rely on your own strength; be admonished rather when you see irresistible powers destroyed. The consuming power of flame is itself consumed like firewood, and the wood, which is by its intrinsic nature capable of being burnt, burns other things visibly like fire.

Chapter XIV

God, having shown this prodigious and miraculous sight to Moses, gave him, in this way, a most visible lesson as to the events which are about to be accomplished; and he begins to exhort him, by divine admonitions and predictions, to apply himself to the government of his nation, as one who was to be not only the author of its freedom, but also its leader in its migration from Egypt, which should take place at no distant period; promising to be present with him as his coadjutor in every thing.

For says God, “I myself have had compassion for a long time on them while ill-treated and subjected to insolence hard to be borne, while there was no man to lighten their sufferings, nor to pity their calamities; for I have seen them all, each individual privately and the whole nation, with one accord turning to address supplications and prayer to me, and hoping for assistance from me. And I am by nature

merciful, and propitious to all sincere suppliants.

But go thou to the king of the country, without fearing any thing whatever; for the former king is dead from whom you fled for fear of his plotting against thee. And another king now governs the land, who has no ill-will against thee on account of any thing, and who has taken the elders of the nation into his council; tell him that the whole nation is called forth by me, by my divine oracle, that in accordance with the customs of their ancestors they may depart three days' journey out of the country, and there may sacrifice unto me."

But Moses, not being ignorant that even his own countrymen would distrust his word, and also that every one else would do so, said, "If then they ask what is the name of him who sent thee, and if I know not what to reply to them, shall I not seem to be deceiving them?"

And God said, "At first say unto them, I am that I am, that when they have learnt that there is a difference between him that is and him that is not, they may be further taught that there is no name whatever that can properly be assigned to me, who am the only being to whom existence belongs.

And if, inasmuch as they are weak in their natural abilities, they shall inquire further about my appellation, tell them not only this one fact that I am God, but also that I am the God of those men who have derived their names from virtue, that I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, one of whom is the rule of that wisdom which is derived from teaching, another of natural

wisdom, and the third of that which is derived from practice. And if they are still distrustful they shall be taught by these tokens, and then they shall change their dispositions, seeing such signs as no man has hitherto either seen or heard."

Now the tokens were as follows. The rod which Moses held in his hand God ordered him to throw down on the ground; and immediately it received life, and crawled along, and speedily became the most powerful of all the animals which want feet, namely an immense serpent, complete in all its parts. And when Moses retreated from the beast, and out of fear was on the point of taking to flight, he was called back again; and when God laid his commands upon him, and inspired him with courage, he laid hold of it by the tail;

and the serpent, though still crawling onwards, stopped at his touch, and being stretched out at its full length again returned to its original elements and because the same rod as before, so that Moses marvelled at both the changes, not knowing which was the most wonderful; as he was unable to decide between them, his soul being overwhelmed with these appearances of equal strangeness.

This now was the first sign. The second miraculous token was afforded to him at no great distance of time. God commanded him to put one of his hands in his bosom and hide it there, and a moment afterwards to draw it out again. And when he had done what he was commanded, his hand in a moment appeared whiter than snow. Again, when he had put his hand a second time into his bosom, and had a second time drawn it forth, it returned to its original complexion, and resumed its proper appearance.

These two lessons he was taught in solitude, when he was alone with God, like a pupil alone with his master, and having about him the instruments with which these wonders were worked, namely, his hand and his rod, with which indeed he walked along the road.

But the third he could not carry about with him, nor could he be instructed as to that beforehand; but it was destined to astonish him not less than the others, deriving the origin of its existence from Egypt. And this was its character. God said, "The water of the river, as much as you can take up in your hand and pour upon the ground shall be dark blood, being both in colour and in power transformed with a complete transformation."

And, as was natural, this also appeared credible to Moses, not merely by reason of the truth-telling nature of the speaker but also because of the marvels that had already been shown to him, with respect to his hand and to his rod.

But though he believed the words of God, nevertheless he tried to avoid the office to which God was appointing him, urging that he was a man of a weak voice, and slow of speech, and not eloquent, and especially so ever since he had heard God himself speaking. For judging the greatest human eloquence to be mere speechlessness in comparison with the truth, and being also prudent and cautious by nature, he shrunk from the undertaking, thinking such great matters proper for proud and bold men and not for him. And he entreated God to choose some one else who would be able easily to accomplish all the commands which he thus laid upon him.

But he approved of his modesty, and said, "Art thou ignorant who it is that giveth to man a mouth, and who has formed his windpipe and his tongue, and all the apparatus of the articulate voice? I am he. Therefore, fear thou nothing. For when I approve, every thing will become articulate and clear, and will change for the better, and improve; so that no one shall hinder thee, but the stream of thy words shall flow forth in a rapid and smooth current as if from a pure fountain. And if there is any need of an interpreter, thou shalt have thy brother, who will be a subordinate mouthpiece for thee, that he may utter to the multitude the words which he receives from thee, while thou utterest to him the words that thou receivest from God."

Chapter XV

Having heard these things (for it was not at all safe or free from danger to oppose the commands of God), he departed and proceeded with his wife and children by the road leading to Egypt, on which he met with his brother and persuaded him to accompany him, announcing to him the oracular commands which he had received from God. And his brother's soul was already wrought up to obedience by divine providence, so that he, without hesitation, agreed to his proposal and readily followed him.

And when they thus arrived in Egypt with one mind and soul, they first of all collected together the elders of the nation in a secret place, and there they laid the commands of God before them, and told them how God had conceived pity and compassion for them, promised them freedom and

a departure from thence to a better country, promising also that he himself would be their guide on their road.

And after these events, they take courage now to converse with the king with respect to sending forth their people from his territories that they might sacrifice to God; for they said, "That it was necessary that their national sacrifices should be accomplished in the wilderness, inasmuch as they were not performed in the same manner as the sacred rites of other nations, but according to a system and law removed from the ordinary course, on account of the special peculiarities of their habits."

But the monarch, who from his cradle had had his soul filled with all the arrogance of his ancestors, and who had no notion in the world of any God appreciable only by the intellect apart from those objects which are visible to the sight, answered them with insolence, saying, "Who is it whom I am to obey? I know not this new Lord of whom you are speaking. I will not let the nation go to be disobedient and headstrong under pretence of fasts and sacrifices."

And then, like a man of cruel and passionate disposition and implacable in his anger, he commanded the overseers of the works to oppress them still more, because they had previously given them some relaxation and leisure, saying that, it was from this relaxation and leisure, that their forming designs of feasting and sacrifice had arisen; for that men who were in great straits did not think of these things, but only those whose life had been spent in much ease and luxury.

Therefore the Jews had now to endure more terrible afflictions than before, and were indignant at Moses and his brother as deceivers, and accused them, sometimes secretly and sometimes openly, and charged them with impiety in appearing to have spoken falsely against God; and accordingly Moses began to exhibit the marvellous wonders which he had been previously taught, thinking that thus he should be able to bring over those who saw them from their former incredulity to believe all that he said.

And this exhibition of prodigies was carefully displayed before the king and magistrates of the Egyptians.

But all the sophists and magicians who were present said, "Why are you thus alarmed? we also are not unpractised in such tricks as these, and we are skilled in an art which can produce similar effects." And then each of them threw down the rod which he held in his hand, and so there was a multitude of serpents which went crawling about that rod which had first been changed.

And that serpent, with the excess of his power, raised himself up on high, and dilated his chest, and opened his mouth, and with the violent impulse of an attractive drawing in of his breath, drew them all towards him as if he had surrounded a large cast of fishes in a net cast around them, and then, when he had swallowed them all, he returned to his original nature of a stick.

So now the marvellous sight thus exhibited to them wrought a fear in the soul of every one of these wicked and malicious men, so that they no longer fancied that what was done was the trick or artifice of men, devised merely for

deceit; but they saw that it was a more divine power which was the cause of these things, to which all things are easy.

But when by the evident might of what was done they were compelled to confess this, they still were not the less audacious, clinging to their original inhumanity and impiety as to some inalienable virtue, and not pitying those who were unjustly enslaved, nor doing any such things as they were commanded by the word of God. And though God himself had declared his will to them by demonstrations clearer than any verbal commands, namely, by signs and wonders, still they required a yet more severe impression to be made upon them, and it was necessary for him to rise up against them with still greater power; and accordingly, those foolish men, whom reason and command could not influence, are corrected by a series of afflictions: and ten punishments were inflicted on the land;

so that the number of the chastisements might be complete which was inflicted upon those who had completed their sins; and the punishment far transcended all ordinary visitations.

And he divided his punishments, entrusting three, those which proceeded from those elements which are composed of more solid parts, namely, earth and water, from which all the corporeal distinctive realities are perfected, to the brother of Moses. An equal number, those which proceeded from the elements which are the most prolific of life, namely, air and fire, he committed to Moses himself alone. One, the seventh, he entrusted to both in common; the other three, to make up the whole number of ten, he reserved for himself.

And first of all he began to bring on the plagues derived from water; for as the Egyptians used to honour the water in an especial degree, thinking that it was the first principle of the creation of the universe, he thought it fitting to summon that first to the affliction and correction of those who thus honoured it.

What then happened no long time after the events I have already mentioned? The brother of Moses, by the divine command, smote with his rod upon the river, and immediately, throughout its whole course, from Ethiopia down to the sea, it is changed into blood and simultaneously with its change, all the lakes, and ditches, and fountains, and wells, and spring, and every particle of water in all Egypt, was changed into blood, so that, for want of drink, they digged round about the banks of the river, but the streams that came up were like veins of the body in a hoemorrhage, and spirted up channels of blood like springs, no transparent water being seen anywhere.

And all the different kinds of fish died, inasmuch as all the vivifying power of the river was changed to a destructive power, so that everything was everywhere filled with foetid odours, from such vast number of bodies putrifying all together. Moreover, a great number of men perished from thirst, and their bodies lay in heaps in the roads, since their relations had not strength to convey those who had died to the tombs;

for this evil lasted seven days, until the Egyptians entreated Moses, and Moses entreated God, to show pity on those who were thus perishing. And God, being merciful in his nature, changed the blood back again to wholesome

water, restoring to the river its pristine clear and vivifying streams.

Chapter XVIII

But again, after a brief respite, the Egyptians returned to the same cruelty and carelessness as before, as if either justice had been utterly banished from among men, or as if those who had endured one punishment were not wont to be chastised a second time; but when they suffered they were taught like young children, not to despise those who corrected them; for the punishment which followed, on the track of the last, was slow indeed to come, while they were also slow, but when they hastened to do wrong, it ran after them and overtook them.

For again, the brother of Moses, being ordered to do so, stretched out his hand and held his rod over all the canals, and lakes, and marches; and at the holding forth of his rod, so immense a multitude of frogs came up, that not only the market-place, and all the spots open to the air, were filled with them, but likewise all the stables for cattle, the houses, and all the temples, and every building, public or private, as if nature had designed to send forth one race of aquatic animals into the opposite region of earth, to form a colony there, for the opposite region to water is earth.

Inasmuch then as they could not go out of doors, because all the passages were blocked up, and could not remain in-doors, for the frogs had already occupied all the recesses, and had crawled up to the very highest parts of the houses, they were now in the very greatest distress, and in complete despair of safety.

Again, therefore, they have recourse to the same means of escape by entreating Moses, and the king now promised to permit the Hebrews to depart, and they propitiated God with prayers. And when God consented, some of the frogs at once returned into the river, and there were also heaps of those which died in the roads, and the people also brought loads of them out of their houses, on account of the intolerable stench which proceeded from them, and the smell from their dead carcases, in such numbers, went up to heaven, especially as frogs, even while alive, cause great annoyance to the outward senses.

Chapter XIX

And when they had a little recovered from this punishment, then, like wrestlers at the games, who have recovered fresh strength after a struggle, that so they may contend again with renewed vigour, they again returned to their original wickedness, forgetting the evils which they had already experienced.

And when God had put an end to the punishments which were to proceed out of the water, he brought up others out of the land, still employing the same minister of punishment; and he now, in obedience to the command which he received, smote the ground with his rod, and an abundance of lice was poured out everywhere, and it extended like a cloud, and covered the whole of Egypt.

And that little animal, even though it is very small, is exceedingly annoying; for not only does it spoil the appearance, creating unseemly and injurious itchings, but it also penetrates into the inmost parts, entering in at the

nostrils and ears? And it flies into the eyes and injures the pupils, unless one takes great care; and what care could be taken against so extensive a plague, especially when it was God who was inflicting the punishment?

And perhaps some one may here ask why God punished the land with such insignificant and generally despised animals, omitting bears, and lions, and leopards, and the other races of wild beasts who devour human flesh; and if he did not send these, at least, he might have sent Egyptian asps, the bites of which have naturally the power to cause death instantly.

But if such a man really does not know, let him learn, first of all, that God was desirous rather to admonish the Egyptians than to destroy them: for if he had designed to destroy them utterly once for all, he would not have employed animals to be, as it were, his coadjutors in the work of destruction, but rather such heaven-sent afflictions as famine and pestilence;

and in the second place, let him also learn a lesson which is necessary to be learnt, and applicable to every condition and age of life; and what is the lesson? This; that men, when they make war, seek out the most mighty powers to gain them over to their alliance, such as shall make amends for their own want of power: but God, who is the supreme and mightiest of all powers, having need of no assistant, if ever he desires to use any instruments as it were for the punishments which he desires to inflict, does not choose the most mighty or the greatest things as his ministers, since he takes but little heed of their capacity, but he uses insignificant and small agents, which he renders irresistible

and invincible powers, and by their means he chastises those who do wrong, as he does in this instance,

for what can be more insignificant than a louse? And yet it was so powerful that all Egypt fainted under the host of them, and was compelled to cry out, that "this is the anger of God." For all the earth put together, from one end to the other, could not withstand the hand of God, no nor all the universe.

Chapter XX

Such then were the chastisements which were inflicted by the agency of the brother of Moses. But those in which Moses himself was the minister, and from what parts of nature they were derived, must be next considered. Now next after the earth and the water, the air and the heaven, which are the purest portions of the essences of the universe, succeeded them as the medium of the correction of the Egyptians: and of this correction Moses was the minister;

and first of all he began to operate upon the air. For Egypt almost alone, if you except those countries which lie to the south of the equator, never is subject to that one of the seasons of the year which is called winter, perhaps, as some say, from the fact of its not being at any great distance from the torrid zone, since the essence of fire flows from that quarter in an invisible manner, and scorches everything all around, or perhaps it is because the river overflows at the time of the summer solstice, and so consumes all the clouds before they can collect for winter;

for the river begins to rise at the beginning of the summer, and to fall towards the end of summer; during which period the etesian gales increase in violence blowing from a direction opposite to the mouths of the Nile, and by which it is prevented from flowing freely into the sea, and by the violence of which winds, the sea itself is also raised to a considerable height, and erects vast waves like a long wall, and so the river is agitated within the country. And then when the two streams meet together, the river descending from its sources above, and the waters which ought to escape abroad being turned back by the beating of the sea, and not being able to extend their breadth, for the banks on each side of the river confine its streams, the river, as is natural, rises to a height, and breaks its bounds;

perhaps also it does so because it was superfluous for winter to occur in Egypt; for the object for which showers of rain are usually serviceable, is in this instance provided for by the river which overflows the fields, and turns them into one vast lake, to make them productive of the annual crops;

but nature does not expend her powers to no purpose when they are not wanted, so as to provide rain for a land which does not require it, but it rejoices in the variety and diversity of scientific operations, and arranges the harmony of the universe from a number of opposite qualities. And for this reason it supplies the benefits which are derivable from water, to some countries, by bestowing it on them from above, namely from heaven, and to others it gives it from below by means of springs and rivers;

though then the land was thus arranged, and enjoyed spring during the winter solstice, and since it is only the

parts along the seacoasts that are ever moistened with a few drops of rain, and since the country beyond Memphis, where the palace of the king of Egypt is, does never even see snow at all; now, on the contrary, the air suddenly assumed a new appearance, so that all the things which are seen in the most stormy and wintry countries, come upon it all together; abundance of rain, and torrents of dense and ceaseless hail, and heavy winds met together and beat against one another with violence; and the clouds burst, and there were incessant lightnings, and thunders, and continued roarings, and flashes which made a most wonderful and fearful appearance. For though the lightning and the thunderbolts penetrated and descended through the hail, being quite a contrary substance, still they did not melt it, nor were the flashes extinguished by it, but they remained as they were before, and ran up and down in long lines, and even preserved the hail.

And not only did the excessive violence of the storm drive all the inhabitants to excessive despair, but the unprecedented character of the visitation tended likewise to the same point. For they believed, as was indeed the case, that all these novel and fearful calamities were caused by the divine anger, the air having assumed a novel appearance, such as it had never worn before, to the destruction and overthrow of all trees and fruits, by which also great numbers of animals were destroyed, some in consequence of the exceeding cold, others though the weight of the hail which fell upon them, as if they had been stoned, while some again were destroyed by the fire of the lightning. And some remained half consumed, bearing the marks of the wounds caused by the thunderbolts, for the

admonition and warning of all who saw them.

Chapter XXI

And when this evil had abated, and when the king and his court had again resumed their confidence, Moses stretched forth his rod into the air, at the command of God. And then a south wind of an uncommon violence set in, which increased in intensity and vehemence the whole of that day and night, being of itself a very great affliction; for it is a drying wind, causing headaches, and terrible to bear, calculated to cause grief, and terror, and perplexity in Egypt above all countries, inasmuch as it lies to the south, in which part of the heaven the revolutions of the light-giving stars take place, so that whenever that wind is set in motion, the light of the sun and its fire is driven in that direction and scorches up every thing.

And with this wind a countless number of animals was brought over the land, animals destroying all plants, locusts, which devoured every thing incessantly like a stream, consuming all that the thunderstorms and the hail had left, so that there was not a green shoot seen any longer in all that vast country.

And then at length the men in authority came, though late, to an accurate perception of the evils that had come upon them, and came and said to the king, "How long wilt thou refuse to permit the men to depart? Dost thou not understand, from what has already taken place, that Egypt is destroyed?" And he agreed to all they said, yielding as far as appearances went at least; but again, when the evil was abated at the prayer of Moses, the wind came from the sea

side, and took up the locusts and scattered them.

And when they had been completely dispersed, and when the king was again obstinate respecting the allowing the nation to depart, a greater evil than the former ones was descended upon him. For while it was bright daylight, on a sudden, a thick darkness overspread the land, as if an eclipse of the sun more complete than any common one had taken place. And it continued with a long series of clouds and impenetrable density, all the course of the sun's rays being cut off by the massive thickness of the veil which was interposed, so that day did not at all differ from night. For what indeed did it resemble, but one very long night equal in length to three days and an equal number of nights?

And at this time they say that some persons threw themselves on their beds, and did not venture to rise up, and that some, when any of the necessities of nature overtook them, could only move with difficulty by feeling their way along the walls or whatever else they could lay hold of, like so many blind men; for even the light of the fire lit for necessary uses was either extinguished by the violence of the storm, or else it was made invisible and overwhelmed by the density of the darkness, so that that most indispensable of all the external senses, namely, sight, though unimpaired, was deprived of its office, not being able to discern any thing, and all the other senses were overthrown like subjects, the leader having fallen down.

For neither was any one able to speak or to hear, nor could any one venture to take food, but they lay themselves down in quiet and hunger, not exercising any of the outward senses, but being wholly overwhelmed by the affliction, till

Moses again had compassion on them, and besought God in their behalf. And he restored fine weather, and produced light instead of darkness, and day instead of night.

Chapter XXII

Such, they say, were the punishments inflicted by the agency of Moses alone, the plague, namely, of hail and thunderstorms, the plague of locusts, and the plague of darkness, which rejected every imaginable description of light. Then he himself and his brother brought on one together, which I shall proceed to relate.

At the command of God they both took up ashes from the furnace in their hands, which Moses on his part sprinkled in the air. Then a dust arose on a sudden, and produced a terrible, and most painful, and incurable ulceration over the whole skin both of man and of the brute beasts; and immediately their bodies became swollen with the pustules, having blisters all over them full of matter which any one might have supposed were burning underneath and ready to burst;

and the men were, as was natural, oppressed with pain and excessive agony from the ulceration and inflammation, and they suffered in their souls even more than in their bodies, being wholly exhausted with anguish. For there was one vast uninterrupted sore to be seen from head to foot, those which covered any particular part of any separate limb spreading so as to become confused into one huge ulcer; until again, at the supplication of the lawgiver, which he made on behalf of the sufferers, the disease became more tolerable.

Therefore, in this instance the two brothers afforded the Egyptians this warning in unison, and very properly; the brother of Moses acting by means of the dust which rose up, since to him had been committed the superintendence of the things which proceeded from the earth; and Moses, by means of the air which was thus changed for the affliction of the inhabitants, and his ministrations were assigned to the afflictions to be cause by the air and by the heaven.

Chapter XXIII

The remaining punishments are three in number, and they were inflicted by God himself without any agency or ministration of man, each of which I will now proceed to relate as well I can. The first is that which was inflicted by means of that animal which is the boldest in all nature, namely, the dog-fly (kynomuia) which those person who invent names have named with great propriety (for they were wise men); combining the name of the appellation of the most impudent of all animals, a fly and a dog, the one being the boldest of all terrestrial, and the other the boldest of all flying, animals. For they approach and run up fearlessly, and if any one drives them away, they still resist and renew their attack, so as never to yield until they are sated with blood and flesh.

And so the dog-fly, having derived boldness from both these animals, is a biting and treacherous creature; for it shoots in from a distance with a whizzing sound like an arrow; and when it has reached its mark it sticks very closely with great force.

But at this time its attack was prompted by God, so that its treachery and hostility were redoubled, since it not only displayed all its own natural covetousness, but also all that eagerness which it derived from the divine providence which went it forth, and armed it and excited it to acts of valour against the natives.

And after the dog-fly there followed another punishment unconnected with any human agency, namely, the mortality among the cattle; for all the herds of oxen, and flocks of goats, and vast flocks of sheep, and all the beasts of burden, and all other domestic animals of every kind died in one day in a body, as if by some agreement or at some given signal; foreshowing the destruction of human beings which was about to take place a short time afterwards as in a pestilential disease; for the sudden destruction of irrational animals is said to be an ordinary prelude to pestilential diseases.

Chapter XXIV

After which the tenth and last punishment came, exceeding in terror all that had gone before, namely, the death of the Egyptians themselves. Not of them all, for God had not decreed to make the whole country desolate, but only to correct it. Nor even of the greatest number of the men and women of every age all together, but he permitted the rest to live, and only passed sentence of death on all the first-born, beginning with the eldest of the king's sons, and ceasing with the first-born son of the most obscure grinder at the mill;

for, about midnight, all those children who had been the first to address their fathers and their mothers, and who had also been the first to be addressed by them as their sons, though they were in good health and in full vigour of body, all, without any apparent cause, were suddenly slain in the flower of their youth; and they say that there was not a single house in the whole land which was exempt from the visitation.

But at dawn of day, as was natural, when every one beheld his nearest and dearest relatives unexpectedly dead, with whom up to the evening before they had lived in one home and at one table, being overwhelmed with the most bitter grief, filled every place with lamentation. So that it came to pass, on account of the universality of the calamity, as all men were weeping altogether with one accord, that there was but one universal sound of wailing heard over the whole land from one end to the other.

And, for a while, they remained in their houses, no one being aware of the misfortune which had befallen his neighbour, but lamenting only for his individual loss. But when any one went out of doors and learnt the misfortunes of others also, he at once felt a double sorrow, grieving for the common calamity, in addition to his own private misfortune, a greater and more grievous sorrow being thus added to the lesser and lighter one, so that every one felt deprived of all hope of consolation. For who was likely to comfort another when he himself stood in need of the same consolation?

But, as is usual in such circumstances, men thinking that the present evils were the beginning of greater ones, and

being filled with fear lest those who were still living should also be destroyed, ran weeping to the king's palace, and rent their clothes, and cried out against the sovereign, as the cause of all the terrible evils that had befallen them.

"For if," said they, "immediately when Moses at the beginning first came to him he had allowed his nation to depart, we should never have experienced any one of the miseries that have befallen us at all. But he yielded to his natural obstinacy and haughtiness, and so we have reaped the ready reward of his unreasonable contentiousness." Then one man encouraged another to drive the Jewish people with all speed out of the whole country, and not to allow them to remain one day, or rather one single hour, looking upon every moment that they abode among them as an irremediable calamity.

Chapter XXV

So they, being now driven out of the land and pursued, coming at last to a proper notion of their own nobility and worth, ventured upon a deed of daring such as became the free to dare, as men who were not forgetful of the iniquitous plots that had been laid against them;

for they carried off abundant booty, which they themselves collected, by means of the hatred in which they were held, and some of it they carried themselves, submitting to heavy burdens, and some they placed upon their beasts of burden, not in order to gratify any love of money, or, as any usurer might say, because they coveted their neighbours' goods. (How should they do so?) But, first of all, because they were thus receiving the necessary

wages from those whom they had served for so long a time; and, secondly, because they had a right to afflict those at whose hands they had suffered wrong with afflictions slighter than, and by no means equal to, what they had endured. For how can the deprivation of money and treasures be equivalent to the loss of liberty? on behalf of which those who are in possession of their senses dare not only to cast away all their property, but even to venture their lives?

So they now prospered in both particulars: whether in that they received wages as it in price, which they now exacted from unwilling paymasters, who for a long period had not paid them at all; and, also, as if they were at war, they looked upon it as fitting to carry off the treasures of the enemy, according to the laws of conquerors; for it was the Egyptians who had set the example of acts of injustice, having, as I said before, enslaved foreigners and suppliants, as if they had been prisoners taken in war. And so they now, when an opportunity offered, avenged themselves without any preparation of arms, justice itself holding a shield over them, and stretching forth its hand to help them.

Chapter XXVI

Such, then, were the afflictions and punishments by which Egypt was corrected; not one of which ever touched the Hebrews, although they were dwelling in the same cities and villages, and even houses, as the Egyptians, and touching the same earth and water, and air and fire, which are all component parts of nature, and which it is impossible to escape from. And this is the most extraordinary and

almost incredible thing, that, by the very same events happening in the same place and at the same time, one people was destroyed and the other people was preserved.

The river was changed into blood, but not to the Hebrews; for when these latter went to draw water from it, it underwent another change and became drinkable. Frogs went up from the water upon the land, and filled all the market-places, and stables, and dwelling-houses; but they retreated from before the Hebrews alone, as if they had been able to distinguish between the two nations, and to know which people it was proper should be punished and which should be treated in the opposite manner.

No lice, no dog-flies, no locusts, which greatly injured the plants, and the fruits, and the animals, and the human beings, ever descended upon the Hebrews. Those unceasing storms of rain and hail, and thunder and lightning, which continued so uninterruptedly, never reached them; they never felt, no not even in their dreams, that most terrible ulceration which caused the Egyptians so much suffering; when that most dense darkness descended upon the others, they were living in bright daylight, a brilliancy as of noon-day shining all around them; when, among the Egyptians, all the first-born were slain, not one of the Hebrews died; for it was not likely, since even that destruction of such countless flocks and herds of cattle never carried off or injured a single flock or a single beats belonging to the Hebrews.

And it seems to me that if any one had been present to see all that happened at that time, he would not have conceived any other idea than that the Hebrews were there

as spectators of the miseries which the other nation was enduring; and, not only that, but that they were also there for the purpose of being taught that most beautiful and beneficial of all lessons, namely, piety. For a distinction could otherwise have never been made so decidedly between the good and the bad, giving destruction to the one and salvation to the other.

Chapter XXVII

And of those who now went forth out of Egypt and left their abodes in that country, the men of age to bear arms were more than six hundred thousand men, and the other multitude of elders, and children, and women were so great that it was not easy to calculate it. Moreover, there also went forth with them a mixed multitude of promiscuous persons collected from all quarters, and servants, like an illegitimate crowd with a body of genuine citizens. Among these were those who had been born to Hebrew fathers by Egyptian women, and who were enrolled as members of their father's race. And, also, all those who had admired the decent piety of the men, and therefore joined them; and some, also, who had come over to them, having learnt the right way, by reason of the magnitude and multitude of the incessant punishments which had been inflicted on their own countrymen.

Of all these men, Moses was elected the leader; receiving the authority and sovereignty over them, not having gained it like some men who have forced their way to power and supremacy by force of arms and intrigue, and by armies of cavalry and infantry, and by powerful fleets, but having

been appointed for the sake of his virtue and excellence and that benevolence towards all men which he was always feeling and exhibiting; and, also, because God, who loves virtue, and piety, and excellence, gave him his authority as a well-deserved reward.

For, as he had abandoned the chief authority in Egypt, which he might have had as the grandson of the reigning king, on account of the iniquities which were being perpetrated in that country, and by reason of his nobleness of soul and of the greatness of his spirit, and the natural detestation of wickedness, scorning and rejecting all the hopes which he might have conceived from those who had adopted him, it seemed good to the Ruler and Governor of the universe to recompense him with the sovereign authority over a more populous and more powerful nation, which he was about to take to himself out of all other nations and to consecrate to the priesthood, that it might for ever offer up prayers for the whole universal race of mankind, for the sake of averting evil from them and procuring them a participation in blessings.

And when he had received this authority, he did not show anxiety, as some persons do, to increase the power of his own family, and promote his sons (for he had two) to any great dignity, so as to make them at the present time partakers in, and subsequently successors to, his sovereignty; for as he always cherished a pure and guileless disposition in all things both small and great, he now subdued his natural love and affection for his children, like an honest judge, making these feelings subordinate to his own incorruptible reason;

for he kept one most invariable object always steadily before him, namely, that of benefiting those who were subjected to his authority, and of doing everything both in word and deed, with a view to their advantage, never omitting any opportunity of doing anything that might tend to their prosperity.

Therefore he alone of all the persons who have ever enjoyed supreme authority, neither accumulated treasures of silver and gold, nor levied taxes, nor acquired possession of houses, or property, or cattle, or servants of his household, or revenues, or anything else which has reference to magnificence and superfluity, although he might have acquired an unlimited abundance of them all.

But as he thought it a token of poverty of soul to be anxious about material wealth, he despised it as a blind thing, but he honoured the far-sighted wealth of nature, and was as great an admirer as any one in the world of that kind of riches, as he showed himself to be in his clothes, and in his food, and in his whole system and manner of life, not indulging in any theatrical affectation of pomp and magnificence, but cultivating the simplicity and unpretending affable plainness of a private individual, but a sumptuousness which was truly royal, in those things which it is becoming for a ruler to desire and to abound in;

and these things are, temperance, and fortitude, and continence, and presence of mind, and acuteness, and knowledge, and industry, and patience under evil, and contempt of pleasure, and justice, and exhortations to virtue and blame, and lawful punishment of offenders, and, on the contrary, praise and honour to those who did well in

accordance with law.

Chapter XXVIII

Therefore, as he had utterly discarded all desire of gain and of those riches which are held in the highest repute among men, God honoured him, and gave him instead the greatest and most perfect wealth; and this is the Wealth(the text here is very corrupt.) of all the earth and sea, and of all the rivers, and of all the other elements, and all combinations whatever; for having judged him deserving of being made a partaker with himself in the portion which he had reserved for himself, he gave him the whole world as a possession suitable for his heir:

therefore, every one of the elements obeyed him as its master, changing the power which it had by nature and submitting to his commands. And perhaps there was nothing wonderful in this; for if it be true according to the proverb, —

for God possesses everything and is in need of nothing; but the good man has nothing which is properly his own, no, not even himself, but he has a share granted to him of the treasures of God as far as he is able to partake of them. And this is natural enough; for he is a citizen of the world; on which account he is not spoken of as to be enrolled as a citizen of any particular city in the habitable world, since he very appropriately has for his inheritance not a portion of a district, but the whole world.

What more shall I say? Has he not also enjoyed an even greater communion with the Father and Creator of the universe, being thought unworthy of being called by the

same appellation? For he also was called the god and king of the whole nation, and he is said to have entered into the darkness where God was; that is to say, into the invisible, and shapeless, and incorporeal world, the essence, which is the model of all existing things, where he beheld things invisible to mortal nature; for, having brought himself and his own life into the middle, as an excellently wrought picture, he established himself as a most beautiful and Godlike work, to be a model for all those who were inclined to imitate him.

And happy are they who have been able to take, or have even diligently laboured to take, a faithful copy of this excellence in their own souls; for let the mind, above all other parts, take the perfect appearance of virtue, and if that cannot be, at all events let it feel an unhesitating and unvarying desire to acquire that appearance;

for, indeed, there is no one who does not know that men in a lowly condition are imitators of men of high reputation, and that what they see, these last chiefly desire, towards that do they also direct their own inclinations and endeavours. Therefore, when the chief of a nation begins to indulge in luxury and to turn aside to a delicate and effeminate life, then the whole of his subjects, or very nearly the whole, carry their desire for indulging the appetites of the belly and the parts below the belly beyond all reasonable bounds, except that there may be some persons who, through the natural goodness of their disposition, have a soul far removed from treachery, being rather merciful and kind.

If, on the other hand, the chief of a people adopts a more austere and dignified course of life, then even those of his subjects, who are inclined to be very incontinent, change and become temperate, hastening, either out of fear or out of shame, to give him an idea that they are devoted to the same pursuits and inclinations that he is; and, in fact, the lower orders will never, no, nor will mad men even, reject the customs and habits of their superiors:

but, perhaps, since Moses was also destined to be the lawgiver of his nation, he was himself long previously, through the providence of God, a living and reasonable law, since that providence appointed him to the lawgiver, when as yet he knew nothing of his appointment.

Chapter XXIX

When then he received the supreme authority, with the good will of all his subjects, God himself being the regulator and approver of all his actions, he conducted his people as a colony into Phoenicia, and into the hollow Syria (Coele-syria), and Palestine, which was at that time called the land of the Canaanites, the borders of which country were three days' journey distant from Egypt.

Then he led them forward, not by the shortest road, partly because he was afraid lest the inhabitants should come out to meet and to resist him in his march, from fear of being overthrown and enslaved by such a multitude, and so, if a war arose, they might be again driven back into Egypt, falling from one enemy to another, and being driven by their new foes upon their ancient tyrants, and so become a sport and a laughingstock to the Egyptians, and have to endure

greater and more grievous hardships than before. He was also desirous, by leading them through a desolate and extensive country, to prove them, and see how obedient they would be when they were not surrounded by any abundance of necessaries, but were but scantily provided and nearly in actual want.

Therefore, turning aside from the direct road he found an oblique path, and thinking that it must extend as far as the Red Sea, he began to march by that road, and, they say, that a most portentous miracle happened at that time, a prodigy of nature, which no one anywhere recollects to have ever happened before;

for a cloud, fashioned into the form of a vast pillar, went before the multitude by day, giving forth a light like that of the sun, but by night it displayed a fiery blaze, in order that the Hebrews might not wander on their journey, but might follow the guidance of their leader along the road, without any deviation. Perhaps, indeed, this was one of the ministers of the mighty King, an unseen messenger, a guide of the way enveloped in this cloud, whom it was not lawful for men to behold with the eyes of the body.

Chapter XXX

But when the king of Egypt saw them proceeding along a pathless track, as he fancied, and marching through a rough and untrodden wilderness, he was delighted with the blunder they were making respecting their line of march, thinking that now they were hemmed in, having no way of escape whatever. And, as he repented of having let them go, he determined to pursue them, thinking that he should

either subdue the multitude by fear, and so reduce them a second time to slavery, or else that if they resisted he should slay them all from the children upwards.

Accordingly, he took all his force of cavalry, and his darters, and his slingers, and his equestrian archers, and all the rest of his light-armed troops, and he gave his commanders six hundred of the finest of his scythe-bearing chariots, that with all becoming dignity and display they might pursue these men, and join in the expedition and so suing all possible speed, he sallied forth after them and hastened and pressed on the march, wishing to come upon them suddenly before they had any expectation of him. For an unexpected evil is at all times more grievous than one which has been looked for, in proportion as that which has been despised finds it easier to make a formidable attack than that which has been regarded with care.

The king, therefore, with these ideas, pursued after the Hebrews, thinking that he should subdue them by the mere shout of battle. And, when he overtook them, they were already encamped along the shore of the Red Sea. And they were just about to go to breakfast, when, at first, a mighty sound reached them, as was natural from such a host of men and beasts of burden all proceeding on with great haste, so that they all ran out of their tents to look round, and stood on tip-toes to see and hear what was the matter. Then, a short time afterwards, the army of the enemy came in sight as it rose over a hill, all in arms, and ready arranged in line of battle.

Chapter XXXI

And the Hebrews, being terrified at this extraordinary and unexpected danger, and not being well prepared for defence, because of a scarcity of defensive armour and of weapons (for they had not marched out for war, but to found a colony), and not being able to escape, for behind was the sea, and in front was the enemy, and on each side a vast and pathless wilderness, reviled against Moses, and, being dismayed at the magnitude of the evils that threatened them, began, as is very common in such calamities, to blame their governors, and said:

“Because there were no graves in Egypt in which we could be buried after we were dead, have you brought us out hither to kill and bury us here? Or, is not even slavery a lighter evil than death? Having allured the multitude with the hope of liberty, you have caused them to incur a still more grievous danger than slavery, namely, the risk of the loss of life.

Did you not know our simplicity, and the bitterness and cruel anger of the Egyptians? Do you not see the magnitude of the evils which surround us, and from which we cannot escape? What are we to do? Are we, unarmed, to fight against men in complete armour? or shall we flee now that we are hemmed in as by nets cast all around us by our pitiless enemies — hemmed in by pathless deserts and impassable seas? Or, even, if the sea was navigable, how are we to get any vessels to cross over it?”

Moses, when he heard these complaints, pardoned his people, but remembered the oracles of God. And, at the same time, he so divided and distributed his mind and his speech, that with the one he associated invisibly with God,

in order that God might deliver him from otherwise inextricable calamities; and, with the other, he encouraged and comforted those who cried out to him, saying: "Do not faint and despair. God does not deliver in the same way that man does.

Why do you only trust such means of deliverance as seem probable and likely? God, when he comes as an assistant, stands in need of no adventitious preparations. It is his peculiar attribute to find a path amid inextricable perplexities. What is impossible to every created being is possible and easy to him above."

Thus he spoke to them while yet standing still. But after a short time he became inspired by God, and being full of the divine spirit and under the influence of that spirit which was accustomed to enter into him, he prophesied and animated them thus: "This army which you behold so splendidly equipped with arms, you shall no more see arrayed against you; for it shall fall, utterly and completely overthrown, so that not a relic shall be seen any more upon the earth, and that not at any distance of time, but this very next night."

Chapter XXXII

He then spoke thus. But when the sun had set, immediately a most violent south wind set in and began to blow, under the influence of which the sea retreated; for, as it was accustomed to ebb and flow, on this occasion it was driven back much further towards the shore, and drawn up in a heap as if into a ravine or a whirlpool. And no stars were visible, but a dense and black cloud covered the whole of the heaven, so that the night became totally dark, to the

consternation of the pursuers.

And Moses, at the command of God, smote the sea with his staff. And it was broken and divided into two parts, and one of the divisions at the part where it was broken off, was raised to a height and mounted up, and being thus consolidated like a strong wall, stood quiet and unshaken; and the portion behind the Hebrews was also contracted and raised in, and prevented from proceeding forwards, as if it were held back by invisible reins. And the intermediate space, where the fracture had taken place, was dried up and became a broad, and level, and easy road. When Moses beheld this he marvelled and rejoiced; and, being filled with joy, he encouraged his followers and exhorted them to march forward with all possible speed.

And when they were about to pass over, a most extraordinary prodigy was seen; for the cloud, which had been their guide, and which during all the rest of the period of their march had gone in front of them, now turned back and placed itself at the back of the multitude to guard their rear; and, being situated between the pursuers and the pursued, it guided the one party so as to keep them with safety and perfect freedom from danger, and it checked and embarrassed the others, who were hastening on to pursue them. And, when the Egyptians saw this, they were entirely filled with disorder and confusion, and through their consternation they threw all their ranks into disorder, falling upon one another and endeavouring to flee, when there was no advantage to be derived from flight.

For, at the first appearance of morning, the Hebrews passed over by a dry path, with their wives, and families,

and infant children. But the portions of the sea which were rolled up and consolidated on each side overwhelmed the Egyptians with their horses and chariots, the tide being brought back by a strong north wind and poured over them, and coming upon them with vast waves and overpowering billows, so that there was not even a torchbearer left to carry the news of this sudden disaster back to Egypt.

Then the Hebrews, being amazed at this great and wonderful event, gained a victory which they had never hoped for without bloodshed or loss; and, seeing the instantaneous and complete destruction of the enemy, formed two choruses, one of men and the other of women, on the sea shore, and sang hymns of gratitude to God, Moses leading the song of the men, and his sister that of the women; for these two persons were the leaders of the choruses.

Chapter XXXIII

And when they had departed from the sea they went on for some time travelling, and no longer feeling any apprehension of their enemies. But when water failed them, so that for three days they had nothing to drink, they were again reduced to despondency by thirst, and again began to blame their fate as if they had not enjoyed any good fortune previously; for it always happens that the presence of an existing and present evil takes away the recollection of the pleasure which was caused by former good.

At last, when they beheld some fountains, they ran up full of joy with the idea that they were going to drink, being deceived by ignorance of the truth; for the springs were

bitter. Then when they had tasted them they were bowed down by the unexpected disappointment, and fainted, and yielded both in body and soul, lamenting not so much for themselves as for their helpless children, whom they could not endure without tears to behold imploring drink;

and some of those who were of more careless dispositions, and of no settled notions of piety, blamed all that had gone before, as if it had turned out not so as to do them any good, but rather so as to lead them to a suffering of more grievous calamities than ever; saying that it was better for them to die, not only once but three times over, by the hands of their enemies, than to perish with thirst; for they affirmed that a quick and painless departure from life did in no respect differ from freedom from death in the opinion of wise men, but that that was real death which was slow and accompanied by pain; that what was fearful was not to be dead but only to be dying.

When they were lamenting and bewailing themselves in this manner, Moses again besought God, who knew the weakness of all creatures, and especially of men, and the necessary wants of the body which depends for its existence on food, and which is enslaved by those severe task-mistresses, eating and drinking, to pardon his desponding people, and to relieve their want of everything, and that too not after a long interval of time, but by a prompt and undeferred liberality, since by reason of the natural impotency of their mortal nature, they required a very speedy measure of assistance and deliverance.

But he, by his bountiful and merciful power, anticipated their wishes, sending forth and opening the watchful,

anxious eye of the soul of his suppliant, and showed him a piece of wood which he bade him take up and throw into the water, which indeed had been made by nature with such a power for that purpose, and which perhaps had a quality which was previously unknown, or perhaps was then first endowed with it, for the purpose of effecting the service which it was then about to perform:

and when he had done that which he was commanded to do, the fountains became changed and sweet and drinkable, so that no one was able to recognise the fact of their having been bitter previously, because there was not the slightest trace or spark of their ancient bitterness left to excite the recollection.

Chapter XXXIV

And so having appeased their thirst with double pleasure, since the blessing of enjoyment when it comes beyond one's hopes delights one still more, and having also replenished their ewers, they departed as from a feast, as if they had been entertained at a luxurious banquet, and as if they were intoxicated not with the drunkenness which proceeds from wine, but with a sober joy which they had imbibed purely, while pledging and being pledged by the piety of the ruler who was leading them;

and so they arrive at a second halting place, well supplied with water, and well shaded with trees, called Aileem, irrigated with twelve fountains, near which were young and vigorous trunks of palm trees to the number of seventy, a visible indication and token of good to the whole nation, to all who were gifted with a clear-sighted intellect.

For the nation itself was divided into twelve tribes, each of which, if pious and religious, would be looked upon in the light of a fountain, since piety is continually pouring forth everlasting and unceasing springs of virtuous actions. And the elders and chiefs of the whole nation were seventy in number, being therefore very naturally likened to palm trees which are the most excellent of all trees, being both most beautiful to behold, and bearing the most exquisite fruit, which has also its vitality and power of existence, not buried in the roots like other trees, but situated high up like the heart of a man, and lodged in the centre of its highest branches, by which it is attended and guarded like a queen as it really is, they being spread all round it.

And the intellect too of those persons who have tasted of holiness has a similar nature; for it has learned to look upwards and to soar on high, and is continually keeping its eye fixed on sublime objects, and investigating divine things, and ridiculing, and scorning all earthly beauty, thinking the last only toys, and divine things the only real and proper objects worthy of its attention.

Chapter XXXV

But after these events only a short time elapsed, when they became oppressed by famine through the scarcity of provisions, as if one necessary thing after another was to foil them in succession: for thirst and hunger are very cruel and terrible mistresses, and having portioned out the afflictions between them, attacked them by turns; and it so fell out that when the first calamity was relaxed the second came on, which was most intolerable to those who had to

bear it, inasmuch as having only just fancied that they were delivered from thirst, they now found another evil, namely famine, lying in ambush to attack them;

and not only was their present scarcity terrible, but they were also in despair as to the supply of necessary food for the future; for when they saw the vast and extensive desert around them, so utterly unproductive of any kind of crop, their hearts sank within them. For all around were rugged and precipitous rocks, or else a salt and brackish plain, and stony mountains, or deep sands reaching up and forming mountains of inaccessible height; and moreover there was no river, neither winter torrent nor ever-flowing stream; there were no springs, no plant growing from seed, no tree whether for fruit or timber, no animal whether flying or terrestrial, except some few poisonous reptiles born for the destruction of mankind, and serpents, and scorpions.

So then the Hebrews, remembering the plenty and luxury which they had enjoyed in Egypt, and the abundance of all things which was bestowed upon them there, and contrasting it with the universal want of all things which they were now experiencing, were grieved and indignant, and talked the matter over with one another, saying:— “We left our former abodes and emigrated, from a hope of freedom, happy only in the promises of our leader; as far as his actions go, we are of all men the most miserable.

What will be the end of this long and interminable journey? Everyone else, whether sailing over the sea or marching on foot, has some limit before him at which he will eventually arrive; some being bound for marts and harbours, others for some city or country; but we alone have

nothing to look forward to but a pathless desert, and a difficult journey, and terrible hopelessness, and despair; for as we advance, the desert lies before us like an ever open, vast, and pathless sea which widens and increases every day.

But Moses having raised our expectations, and puffed us up with fine speeches, and filled our ears with vain hopes, racks our bodies with hunger and does not give us even necessary food. He has deceived this vast multitude with the name of a settlement in a colony; having first of all led us out of an inhabited country into an uninhabitable district, and now sending us down to the shades below, which is the last journey of life."

Chapter XXXVI

Moses, being reviled in this way, was nevertheless not so much grieved at their accusations which they brought against himself, as at the inconstancy of their own resolutions and minds. For though they had already experienced an infinite number of blessings which had befallen them unexpectedly and out of the ordinary course of affairs, they ought, in his opinion, not to have allowed themselves to be led away by any specious or plausible complaints, but to have trusted in him, as they had already received the clearest possible proofs that he spoke truly about everything.

But again, when he came to take into consideration the want of food, than which there is no more terrible evil which can afflict mankind, he pardoned them, knowing that the multitude is by nature inconstant and always moved by

present circumstances, which cause it to forget what has gone before, and despair of the future.

Therefore, as they were all in the extremity of suffering, and expecting the most fearful misery which they fancied was lying in ambush for them and close at hand, God, partly by reason of his natural love and compassion for man, and partly because he desired to honour the commander whom he had appointed to govern them, and still more to show his great piety and holiness in all matters whether visible or invisible, pitied them and relieved their distress.

Therefore he now devised an entirely new kind of benefit, that they, being taught by manifest signs and displays of his power, might feel reverence for him, and learn for the future not to be impatient if anything turned out contrary to their wishes, but to endure present evils with fortitude, in the expectation of future blessings.

What then happened? The very next day, about sun-rise, a dense and abundant dew fell in a circle all round about the camp, which rained down upon it gently and quietly in an unusual and unprecedented shower; not water, nor hail, nor snow, nor ice, for these are the things which the changes of the clouds produce in the winter season; but what was now rained down upon them was a very small and light grain, like millet, which, by reason of its incessant fall, rested in heaps before the camp, a most extraordinary sight. And the Hebrews marvelled at it, and inquired of the commander what this rain was, which no man had ever seen before, and for what it was sent.

And he was inspired, and full of the spirit of prophecy, and spoke to them as follows: "A fertile plain has been granted to mortal men, which they cut up into furrows, and plough, and sow, and do everything else which relates to agriculture, providing the yearly fruits so as to enjoy abundance of necessary food. But it is not one portion only of the universe, but the whole world that belongs to God, and all its parts obey their master, supplying everything which he desires that they should supply.

Now therefore, it has seemed good to him that the air should produce food instead of water, since the earth has often brought forth rain; for when the river in Egypt every year overflows with inundations and irrigates all the fields, what else is that but a rain which is showered up from below?"

That other would have been indeed a most surprising fact if it had stopped there; but now he wrought wonders with still more surprising circumstances; for all the population bringing vessels one after another, collected what fell, some putting them upon beasts of burden, others loading themselves and taking them on their shoulders, being prudently eager to provide themselves with necessary food for a longer time.

But it was something that would bear to be stored up and dispensed gradually, since God is accustomed always to give his gifts fresh. Accordingly, they now prepared enough for their immediate necessities and present use, and ate it with pleasure. But of what was left till the next day they found not a morsel unhurt, but it was all changed and fetid, and full of little animals of the kind which usually cause

putrefaction. So this they naturally threw away, but they found fresh quantities of it ready for food, so that it fell out that this food was carried down every day with the dew.

But the holy seventh day had an especial honour; for, as it is not permitted to do anything whatever on that day (and it is expressly commanded that men are then to abstain from every work, great or little), so that they were not able to collect food that day, instead of food for one day, God rained upon them a double quantity, and ordered them to collect what shall be food enough for two days. And what was then collected remained sound, no portion of it becoming spoiled as it had before.

Chapter XXXVII

I will also relate a circumstance which is more marvellous than even this one; for, though they were travelling for forty years, yet during all this long period of time they had an abundant supply of all necessary things in their appointed order, as is the case in clubs and messes which are regularly measured out with a view to the distribution of what is required by each individual. And, at the same time, they learnt the value of that long-wished for day;

for, having inquired for a long time what the day of the creation of the world as, the day on which the universe was completely finished, and, having received this question from their fathers and their ancestors undecided, they at last, though with great difficulty, did ascertain it, not being taught only by the sacred scriptures, but also by a certain proof which was very distinct; for, as that portion of the manna (as has been already said) which was more than was

wanted on the other days of the week was spoiled, still that portion which was rained down on the day before the seventh not only did not change its nature, but was dispensed in a twofold quantity.

And the use was as follows. At dawn they collected what had been showered down, and then they ground or pounded it; and then they roasted it and made every sweet food of it, like honey cheesecake, and so they ate it, without requiring any exceeding skill on the part of the preparers of the food.

But they also had no scarcity of, nor any great distance to go for, the means of making life even luxurious, as if they had been in a populous and productive land, since God had determined out of his great abundance to supply them with plenty of all things which they required even in the wilderness; for, in the evenings, there was an uninterrupted cloud of quails borne to them from the sea, which overshadowed the whole camp, flying very near the ground so as to be easily caught. Therefore, the Hebrews, taking them and preparing them as each individual liked, enjoyed the most exquisite meat, pleasing themselves and varying their food with this necessary and delicious addition.

Chapter XXXVIII

Accordingly, they had a great abundance of these birds, as they never failed. But, a second time, a terrible scarcity of water came upon them and afflicted them; and, as they again speedily began to despair of their safety, Moses, taking his sacred rod with which he had wrought the signs in Egypt, being inspired by God, smote the precipitous rock.

And the rock being struck this seasonable blow, whether it was that there was a spring previously concealed beneath it, or whether water was then for the first time conveyed into it by invisible channels pouring in all together and being forced out with violence, at all events the rock, I say, was cleft open by the force of the blow and poured forth water in a stream, so that it not only then furnished a relief from thirst, but also supplied for a long time an abundance of drink for so many myriads of people. For they filled all their water vessels, as they had done before, from the fountains which were bitter by nature, but which, by divine providence, were changed to sweet water.

And, if any one disbelieves these facts, he neither knows God nor has he ever sought to know him; for, if he had, he would have instantly known, he would have known and surely comprehended, that all these unexpected and extraordinary things are the amusement of God; looking at the things which are really great and deserving of serious attention, namely, the creation of the heaven, and the revolutions of the planets and fixed stars, and the shining of light — of the light of the sun by day and that of the moon by night — and the position of the earth in the most centre spot of the universe, and the vast dominions of the different continents and islands, and the innumerable varieties of animals and plants, and the effusion of the sea, and the rapid courses of the ever-flowing rivers and winter mountain torrents, and the streams of everlasting springs, some of which pour forth cold and others hot water, and the various changes and alterations of the air and climate, and the different seasons of the year, and an infinite number of other beautiful objects.

And the whole of a man's life would be too short if he wished to enumerate all the separate instances of such things, or even to detail fully all that is to be seen in one complete portion of the world; ay, if he were to be the most longlived man that has ever been seen. But all these things, though they are in truth really wonderful, are despised by us by reason of our familiarity with them. But the things to which we are not accustomed, even though they may be unimportant, still make an impression upon us from our love of novelty, while we yield to strange ideas concerning them.

Chapter XXXIX

And now, as they had gone over a vast tract of land previously untravelled, there appeared some boundaries of habitable country and some suburbs, as it were, of the land to which they were proceeding, and the Phoenicians inhabited it. But they, hoping that a tranquil and peaceable life would now be permitted to them, were deceived in their expectation;

for the king of the country, being afraid lest he might be destroyed, roused up all the youth of his cities, and collected an army, and went forth to meet them to keep them from his borders. And if they attempted to force their way, he showed that he would proceed to repel them with all his forces, his army being fresh, and now for the first time levied and marshalled for battle, while the Hebrews were wearied and worn out with their long travelling and with the scarcity of meat and drink which had in turns oppressed them.

But when Moses had learnt from his scouts that the army of the enemy was marshalled at no great distance, he chose out those men who were in the flower of their youth, and appointed one of his subordinate officers, named Joshua, to be their general, while he himself went to procure a more powerful alliance; for, having purified himself with the customary purification, he rode up with speed to a neighbouring hill, and there he besought God to hold his shield over the Hebrews and to give them the victory and the mastery, as he had delivered them before from more formidable dangers and from other evils, not only dissipating the calamities with which they were threatened at the hands of men, but also all those which the transformation of the elements so wonderfully caused in the land of Egypt, and from those which the long scarcity inflicted upon them in their travels.

And just as the two armies were about to engage in battle, a most marvellous miracle took place with respect to his hands; for they became by turns lighter and heavier. Then, whenever they were lighter, so that he could hold them up on high, the alliance between God and his people was strengthened, and waxed mighty, and became more glorious. But whenever his hands sank down the enemy prevailed, God showing thus by a figure that the earth and all the extremities of it were the appropriate inheritance of the one party, and the most sacred air the inheritance of the other. And as the heaven is in every respect supreme to and superior over the earth, so also shall the nation which has heaven for its inheritance be superior to their enemies.

For some time, then, his hands, like the balances in a scale, were by turns light, and by turns descended as being heavy; and, during this period, the battle was undecided. But, on a sudden, they became quite devoid of weight, using their fingers as if they were wings, and so they were raised to a lofty height, like winged birds who traverse the heaven, and they continued at this height until the Hebrews had gained an unquestionable victory, their enemies being slain to a man from the youth upward, and suffering with justice what they had endeavoured to inflict on others, contrary to what was befitting.

Then Moses erected an altar, which from the circumstances that had taken place he named the refuge of God, on which he offered sacrifices in honour of his victory, and poured forth prayers of gratitude to God.

Chapter XL

After this battle he considered that it was proper to reconnoitre the country into which the nation was being led as a colony (and it was now the second year that they had been travelling), not wishing that his followers should (as is often the case) change their designs out of ignorance, but that they should learn by accurate report, what the nature of the country really was, availing themselves of the positive knowledge of the inhabitants, and should then consider what was best to be done;

and accordingly he chose out twelve men, to correspond in number to the twelve tribes, one out of each tribe to be the leader of it, selecting the most approved men, with reference to their excellence, in order that no quarrels

might arise from any one party being better or worse off than another, but that they might all, by the agency of those to whom the matter was entrusted, be equally instructed as to the state of affairs among the inhabitants, if only the spies who were sent out brought a true report.

And when he had selected the men he spoke to them as follows: "The inheritance which is before us is the prize of those labours and dangers which we have endured hitherto, and are still enduring, and let us not lose the hope of these things, we who are thus conducting a most populous nation to a new settlement. But the knowledge of the places, and of the men, and of the circumstances, is most useful, just as ignorance of these particulars is most injurious.

We have therefore appointed you as spies, that we, by your eyes and by your intellects, may see the state of things there; ye, therefore, must be the ears and eyes of all these myriads of people, that thus they may arrive at an accurate comprehension of what is indispensable to be known.

"Now what we wish to know consists of three points; the number of the inhabitants, and the strength of their cities, whether they are planted in favourable situations, whether they are strongly built and fortified, or the contrary. As to the country, we wish to know whether it has a deep and rich soil, whether it is good to bear all kinds of fruits, both of such plants as are raised from seed and of fruit-trees; or whether, on the contrary, it has a shallow soil; that so we may be prepared against the power and numbers of the inhabitants with equal forces, and against the fortified state of buildings and cities by means of engines and machines, for the destruction of cities. "And it is indispensable to

understand the nature of the country, and whether it is a good land or not; for to encounter voluntary dangers for a poor and bad land is an act of folly;

and our weapons, and our engines, and all our power, consist solely in our trust and confidence in God. Having this preparation we will yield to no danger or fear, for this is sufficient with great superfluity of power to subdue otherwise invincible strength, which relies only on bodily vigour and on armies, and on courage, and skill, and numbers; since to that too we owe it, that even in a vast wilderness we have full supplies of everything, as if we were in well-stocked cities;

and the time in which it is most easy to come to a proper understanding of the good qualities of the land is the spring, the season which is now present; for in the season of spring what has been sown is coming to perfection, and the natures of the trees are beginning to propagate themselves further. It will be better, therefore, for you to enter the land now, and to remain till the middle of the summer, and to bring back with you fruits, as samples of what is to be procured from a prosperous and fertile country."

When they had received these orders, they went forth to spy out the land, being conducted on their way by the whole multitude who feared lest they might be taken prisoners and so be put to death, and lest in that way two great evils might happen to them, namely, the slaughter of the men who were the eye of each tribe, and also ignorance of what was being done by their enemies who were plotting against them, the knowledge of which was most desirable.

So, taking with them scouts to examine the road and guides to show them the way, they accompanied them at their first setting out. And when they approached the borders of the country they ran up to the highest mountain of all those in that district, and from thence they surveyed the land, part of which was an extensive champaign district, fertile in barley, and wheat, and herbage; and the mountain region was not less productive of vines, and all kinds of other trees, and rich in every kind of timber, full of dense thickets, and girdled by rivers and fountains so as to be abundantly well watered, so that even from the foot of the mountain district to the highest summit of the hills themselves, the whole region was covered closely with a net-work of shady trees, and more especially the lower ridges, and the deep valleys and glens.

They also surveyed all the strongest cities, looking upon them in two points of view; first, with reference to their advantages of situation, and also to the strength of their fortification; also, when they inquired respecting the inhabitants, they saw that they were very numerous indeed, and giants of exceeding tallness with absolutely gigantic bodies, both as to their magnitude and their strength.

When they had seen thus much they waited to get a more accurate knowledge of everything: for first impressions are not trustworthy, but require the slow confirmation of time. They also took great care to gather specimens of the productions of the land, though they were not as yet ripe and solid, but only just beginning to be properly coloured, that they might show them to all the multitude, for which reason they selected such as would not be easily spoiled;

but what above all things astonished them was the fruit of the vines, for the branches were of unrivalled sizes, stretching along all the young shoots and branches in a way that seemed almost incredible. Therefore, having cut off one branch, and having suspended it on a stick by the middle, the ends of which they gave to two young men, placing one on one side and one on the other, and others succeeding them as bearers of it as the former bearers got tired, for the weight was very great, they carried it so, the whole body of the spies not at all agreeing with respect to some points of necessary importance.

Accordingly, there were a great many contest between them even before they returned to the camp, but not very serious ones, in order that there might not be seditions between them from any of them adhering very contentiously to his own opinion, or from different persons giving different accounts, but they became more violent after their return;

for some of them brought back formidable stories of the strength of the different cities, and the great populousness and opulence of each of them, exaggerating and making the most of everything in their description so as to cause excessive consternation among their hearers; while others, on the contrary, disparaged and made light of all that they saw, and exhorted their fellow countrymen not to faint but to persevere in their design of colonising that country, as they would subdue the natives with a mere shout; for that no city whatever would be able to resist the onset of so mighty a power attacking it with its united force, but would be overwhelmed with its might and submit at once.

Moreover, each of the spies infused into the souls of his hearers some portion of his own spirit, the cowardly spreading cowardice, and the indomitable and bold diffusing confidence united with sanguine hope.

But these last made but a fifth part of those who were frightened out of their senses, while they, on the other hand, were five times as numerous as the high-spirited; and the small number of those who displayed any courage, is often beaten down by the vast number of those who behaved in a cowardly manner, as they say was the case at this time also; for they who maintained the better side of the question were only two, while those who made the contrary report were ten; and these last so entirely prevailed over the two former, that they led away the whole multitude after them, alienating them from the two, and binding them wholly to themselves.

But about the country itself they all brought back the same report with perfect unanimity, praising the beauty both of the champaign and of the mountainous district. But then they further cried out, "But what is the advantage to us of those good things which belong to others, when they are guarded by a mighty force, so that they can never be taken from their owners?" And so, attacking the two who brought the opposite report, they were very near stoning them, preferring to hear pleasant rather than useful things, and also preferring deceit to truth.

At which their leader was indignant, and he was also at the same time afraid lest some heaven-inflicted evil might descend upon them, since they so obstinately persisted in despairing and in disbelieving the word of God, which

indeed took place. For of the spies, the ten who brought back cowardly tidings all perished by a pestilential disease, with those of the multitude who united in their feelings of despondency, and only the two who had agreed and counselled the people not to fear but to persevere in the plan of the colony were saved, because they were obedient to the word of God, on which account they received the especial honour of not being involved in the destruction of the others.

This was the reason why they did not arrive sooner in the land which they went forth to colonize; for though they might, in the second year after their departure from Egypt, have conquered all the cities in Syria, and divided the inheritance amongst themselves, still they turned aside from the direct and short road, and wandered about, using one long, and difficult, and pathless line of march after another, so as to be incessantly toiling both in soul and body, and enduring the necessary and deserved punishment of their excessive impiety:

accordingly, for eight and thirty years more, after the two years which I have already mentioned as having elapsed, the life of a complete generation of mankind did they wander up and down, traversing the pathless wilderness; and at last in the fortieth year, they with difficulty came to the borders of the country which they had reached so many years before.

And at the entrance to this country there dwelt other tribes akin to themselves, who they thought would cheerfully join them in the war against their neighbours, and would co-operate in everything necessary for the

establishment of the colony; and if they hesitated to do that, they thought that at all events they would range themselves on neither side, but would preserve a strict neutrality, holding up their hands;

for in fact the ancestors of both nations, both of the Hebrews and of those who dwelt on the skirts of the country, were brethren descended from the same father and the same mother, and moreover were twins; for it was from two brothers, who had thus increased with numerous descendants, and had enjoyed a great productiveness of offspring, that each of their families had grown into a vast and numerous Nation.(the brothers are Jacob and Esau, Jacob being the father of the Israelites and Esau of the Edomites.) But one of these nations had clung to its original abodes; but the other, as has been already mentioned, having migrated to Egypt by reason of the famine, at this subsequent period was now returning,

and one of the two preserved its respect for its kindred though it had been for such a length of time separated from it, still having a regard for those who no longer preserved any one of their ancestral customs, but who had in every respect departed from their ancient habits and constitutions, thinking that it became those who claimed to be of civilised natures, to give and yield something to the name of relationship.

But the other utterly overturned all notions of friendship and affection, giving in to fierce, and unfriendly, and irreconcilable dispositions, and language, and counsels, and actions; and thus keeping alive the ill-will of their original ancestor to his brother; for the first founder of their race,

though he had himself given up his birthright to his brother, yet a short time afterwards endeavoured to assert his claim to what he had abandoned voluntarily, violating his agreement, and he sought to slay his brother, threatening him with death if he did not surrender what he had purchased. And now the whole nation after the interval of so many generations, renewed the ancient enmity between one individual and another.

Therefore Moses, the leader of the Hebrews, although he might with one single effort, aye with the mere shout of his army, have subdued the whole nation, still, by reason of the aforesaid relationship did not think fit to do so; but desired only to use the road through their country, promising that he would in every respect observe the treaties between them, and not despoil them of territory, or cattle, or of any booty, that he would even pay a price for water if there should be a scarcity of drink, and for anything else that they might require to buy, as not being supplied with it; but they violently rejected their peaceful invitations, threatening them with war, if they heard of their crossing over their borders or even of their setting foot upon them.

But as the Hebrews received their answer with great indignation, and prepared at once to oppose them, Moses stood in a place from whence he would be well heard, and said, "O men, your indignation is reasonable and just; for though we, in a peaceable disposition, have made them good and friendly offers, they have made us an evil reply out of their evil and perverse disposition.

But it does not follow that because they deserve to pay the penalty for their cruelty, therefore it is desirable for us

to proceed to take vengeance upon them, by reason of the honour due to our own nation, that we may show that in this particular we are good and different from wicked men, inasmuch as we consider not only whether such and such persons deserve to be punished, but whether also it is proper that they should receive their punishment from us."

On this he turned aside and led his army by another road, since he knew that all the roads in that district were surrounded with garrisons, by those who were not in danger of receiving any injury, but who were out of envy and jealousy would not allow them to proceed by the shortest road;

and this was the most manifest proof of their sorrow, which they felt in consequence of the nation having obtained their liberty, namely when they rejoiced when they were enduring that bitter slavery of theirs in Egypt; for it follows of necessity that those men to whom the good fortune of their neighbours causes grief, do also rejoice at their evil fortune, even if they do not admit that they do so;

for they had already related to their neighbours, as to persons in accordance with themselves, and cherishing the same thoughts, all the misfortunes and also all the agreeable pieces of good fortune which had happened to them, not knowing that they had proceeded to a great degree of iniquity, and that they were full of unfriendly, and hostile, and malicious thoughts towards them, so that they were like to grieve at their good fortune, but to rejoice at any thing of a contrary tendency.

But when their malevolence was fully revealed, the Hebrews were nevertheless restrained from coming to open war with them by their ruler, who thus displayed two most excellent qualities at the same time; namely prudence and a compassionate disposition; for to take care that no evil should happen to any one is the part of wisdom, and not to be willing even to repel one's own kinsmen is a proof of a humane disposition.

Therefore he passed by the cities of these nations; but a certain king of the neighbouring country, Canaan by name, when his spies reported to him that the army of the Hebrews, which was making in his direction was at no great distance, thinking that it was in a state of confusion and disorder, and that he should be able easily to conquer it if he were to attack it at once, proceeded forth with the youth of his nation well armed and equipped, and marched with all speed, and put the van of their host to flight as soon as he encountered them, inasmuch as they were not arrayed or prepared for battle; and having taken many prisoners, and being elated at the prosperity beyond his hopes which he had met with, he marched on thinking that he should defeat all the others also.

But the Hebrews, for they were not dismayed at the defeat of their advanced guard, but had rather derived even more confidence than they had felt before, being eager also to make amends by their eagerness for battle for the loss of those of their number who had been taken prisoners, exhorted one another not to faint nor to yield. "Let us rise up," said they; "let us at once invade their land. Let us show that we are in no wise alarmed or depressed, by our vigour

in action and our confidence. The end is very often judged of by the beginning. Let us seize the keys of the country and strike terror into the inhabitants as deriving prosperity from cities, and inflicting upon them in return the want of necessary things which we bring with us out of the wilderness.”

And they, at the same time, exhorted one another often with these words, and likewise began to dedicate to God, as the first fruits of the land, the cities of the king and all the citizens of each city. And he accepted their views and inspired the Hebrews with courage, and prepared the army of the enemy to be defeated.

Accordingly, the Hebrews defeated them with mighty power, and fulfilled the agreement of gratitude which they had made, not appropriating to themselves the slightest portion of the booty. And they dedicated to God the cities with all the men and treasures that were in them, and, from what had thus taken place, they called the whole country an offering to God;

for, as every pious man offers unto God the first fruits of the fruits of the year, which he collects from his own possessions, so in the same manner did the Hebrews dedicate the whole nation of this mighty country into which they had come as settlers, and that great spoil, the kingdom which they had so speedily subdued, as a sort of first-fruit of their colony; for they did not think it consistent with piety to distribute the land among themselves, or to inherit the cities, before they had offered up to God the first fruits of that country and of those cities.

A short time afterwards, having found a copious spring of water which supplied drink to all the multitude, and the spring was in a well and on the borders of the country, drawing it up and drinking it as though it had been not water but pure wine, they were refreshed in their souls, and those among the people who loved God established choruses and dances in a circle around the well, out of their cheerfulness and joy, and sang a new song to God, the possessor and giver of their inheritance and the real leader of their colony, because now at the first moment of their coming forth from the direction in which they had so long been dwelling in to the inhabited land which they were ordained to possess, they had found abundant drink, and therefore they thought it right not to pass this spring by without due honour.

For this well had been originally cut not by the hands of private individuals, but of kings, who had laboured in rivalry of one another, as the tale went, not only in the discovery of the water, but likewise in the digging of the well, in order that by its magnificence it might be seen to be a royal work, and that the power and magnanimity of those who built it might appear from the beginning.

And Moses, rejoicing at the unexpected blessings which from time to time were presenting themselves to him, advanced further, dividing the youth of his people into the vanguard and the rearguard, and placing the old men, and the women, and the

A few days afterwards he entered the country of the Amorites, and sent ambassadors to the king, whose name was Sihon, exhorting him to the same measures to which he

had previously invited his kinsman. But he not only replied to these ambassadors when they came with great insolence, but he very nearly put them to death, and would have done so if the law with respect to ambassadors had not hindered him; but he did collect an army and made against them, thinking that he should immediately be able to subdue them in war.

But when he encountered them he then found that he had to fight not men who had no experience or practice in the art of war, but men skilful in all warfare and truly invincible, who only a short time before had done many and important valiant achievements, displaying great personal valour, and great wisdom, and excellence of sense and virtue. Owing to which qualities they subdued these their enemies with great ease and defeated them with great loss, but they took no part of the spoil, desiring to dedicate to God the first booty which they gained;

and, on this occasion, they guarded their own camp vigorously, and then, with one accord and with equally concerted preparation, rushed forward in opposition to the enemy as he advanced and charged them, availing themselves of the invincible alliance of the just God, in consequence of which they had the greatest boldness, and became cheerful and sanguine combatants.

And the proof of this was clear; there was no need of any second battle, but the first was also the only one, and in it the whole power of the enemy was frustrated for ever. And it was utterly overthrown, and immediately it disappeared for ever.

And about the same time the cities were both empty and full; empty of their ancient inhabitants, and full of those who now succeeded to their dominions over them. In the same manner, also, the stables of cattle in the fields, being made desolate, received instead men who were in all respects better than their former masters.

This war struck all the Asiatic nations with terrible consternation, and especially all those who were near the borders of the Amorites, inasmuch as they looked upon the dangers as being nearer to themselves. Accordingly, one of the neighbouring kings, by name Balak, who ruled over a large and thickly inhabited country of the east, before he met them in battle, feeling great distrust of his own power, did not think fit to meet them in close combat, being desirous to avoid carrying on a war of extermination by open arms; but he had recourse to inquiries and divination, thinking that by some kind of ruse or other he might be able to overthrow the irresistible power of the Hebrews.

Now there was a man at that time very celebrated for his skill in divination, dwelling in Mesopotamia, who was initiated in every branch of the soothsayers' art. And he was celebrated and renowned above all men for his experience as a diviner and prophet, as he had in many instances foretold to many people incredible and most important events;

for, on one occasion, he had predicted heavy rain to one nation at the height of summer; to another he had foretold a drought and burning heat in the middle of winter. Others he had forewarned of a dearth which should follow a season of abundance; and, on the other hand, plenty after famine. In

some instances he had predicted the inundations of rivers; or, on the contrary, their falling greatly and becoming dried up; and the departure of pestilential diseases, and ten thousand other things. From all which he had obtained a name of wide celebrity, as he was believed to have foreseen them all, and so he had attained to great renown and his glory had spread everywhere and was continually increasing.

So this man, Balak, now sent some of his companions, entreating him to come to him, and he gave him some presents at once, and he promised to give him others also, explaining to him the necessity which he was in, on account of which he had sent for him. But he did not treat the messengers with any noble or consistent disposition, but with great courtesy and civility evaded their request, as if he were one of the most celebrated prophets, and as such was accustomed to do nothing whatever without first consulting the oracle, and so he declined, saying that the Deity would not permit him to go with them.

So the messengers returned back to the king, without having succeeded in their errand. And immediately other messengers of the highest rank in the whole land were sent on the same business, bringing with them more abundant presents of money, and promising still more ample rewards than the former ambassadors had promised.

And Balaam, being allured by the gifts which were already proffered to him, and also by the hopes for the future which they held out to him, and being influenced also by the rank of those who invited him, began to yield, again alleging the commands of the Deity as his excuse, but no

longer with sincerity. Accordingly, on the next day he prepared for his departure, relating some dreams by which he said he had been influenced, affirming that he had been compelled by their manifest visions not to remain, but to follow the ambassadors.

But when he was on his road a very manifest sign met him in the way, showing him plainly that the purpose for which he was travelling was displeasing to God, and ill-omened; for the beast on which he was riding, while proceeding onwards in the straight road, at first stopped suddenly,

then, as if some one was forcibly resisting it, or standing in front and driving it back by force, it retreated, moving first to the right and then to the left, and could not stand still, but kept moving, first to one side and then to the other, as if it had been under the influence of wine and intoxication; and though it was repeatedly beaten, it disregarded the blows, so that it very nearly threw its rider, and though he stuck on did still hurt him considerably;

for close on each side of the path there were walls and strong fences; therefore, when the beast in its violent motions struck heavily against the walls, the owner had his knee, and leg, and foot pressed and crushed, and was a good deal lacerated.

The truth is, that there was, as it seems, a divine vision, which, as the beast, on which the diviner was seeking, saw at a great distance as it was coming towards him, and it was frightened at it; but the man did not see it, which was a proof of his insensibility, for he was thus shown to be inferior to a brute beast in the power of sight, at a time

when he was boasting that he could see, not only the whole world, but also the Creator of the world.

Accordingly, having after some time seen the angel opposing him, not because he was desiring to see so astonishing a spectacle, but that he might become acquainted with his own insignificance and nothingness, he betook himself to supplications and prayers, entreating to be pardoned, on the ground that he had acted as he had done out of ignorance, and had not sinned of deliberate purpose.

Then, as he said that he ought to return back again, he asked of the vision which appeared to him, whether he should go back again to his own house; but the angel beholding his insincerity, and being indignant at it (for what need was there for him to ask questions in a matter which was so evident, which had its answer plain in itself, and which did not require any more positive information by means of words, unless a person's ears are more to be trusted than his eyes, and words than things), said, "Go on in the journey in which you have set out, for you shall do no good to those who have sent for you, and you must say what I prompt you, without any thoughts of your own, finding utterance, as I will guide the organs of your speech in the way that shall be just and expedient, for I will direct your words, predicting all that shall happen through the agency of your tongue, though you yourself understand nothing of it.

Chapter L

But when the king heard that he was now near at hand, he went forth with his guards to meet him; and when they met at first there were, as was natural, greetings and salutations, and then a brief reproof of his tardiness and of his not having come more readily. After this there were feastings and costly entertainments, and all those other things which are usually prepared on the occasion of the reception of strangers, everything with royal magnificence being prepared, so as to give an exaggerated idea of the power and glory of the king.

The next day at the rising of the sun, Balak took the prophet and led him up to a high hill, where it also happened that a pillar had been erected to some deity which the natives of the country had been accustomed to worship; and from thence there was seen a portion of the camp of the Hebrews, which was shown to the magician from this point, as if from a watch tower.

And he when he beheld it said: "Do thou, O king, build here seven altars, and offer upon every one of them a bullock and a ram. And I will turn aside and inquire of God what I am to say." So, having gone forth, immediately he became inspired, the prophetic spirit having entered into him, which drove all his artificial system of divination and cunning out of his soul; for it was not possible that holy inspiration should dwell in the same abode with magic. Then, returning back to the king, and beholding the sacrifices and the altars flaming, he became like the interpreter of some other being who was prompting his words,

and spoke in prophetic strain as follows: "Balak has sent for me from Mesopotamia, having caused me to take a long journey from the east, that he might chastise the Hebrews by means of curses. But in what manner shall I be able to curse those who have not been cursed by God? For I shall behold them with my eyes from the loftiest mountains, and I shall see them with my mind; and I shall never be able to injure the people which shall dwell alone, not being numbered among the other nations, not in accordance with the inheritance of any particular places, or any apportionment of lands, but by reason of the peculiar nature of their remarkable customs, as they will never mingle with any other nation so as to depart from their national and ancestral ways.

Who has ever discovered with accuracy the first origin of the birth of these people? Their bodies, indeed, may have been fashioned according to human means of propagation; but their souls have been brought forth by divine agency, wherefore they are nearly related to God. May my soul die as to the death of the body, that it may be remembered among the souls of the righteous, such as the souls of these men are."

Chapter LI

When Balak heard these words he was grieved within himself; and after he had stopped speaking, not being able to contain his sorrow, he said: "You were invited hither to curse my enemies, and are you not ashamed to offer up prayers for their good? I must, without knowing it, have been deceiving myself, thinking you a friend; who were, on

the contrary, without my being aware of it, enrolled among the ranks of the enemy, as is now plain. Perhaps, too, you made all the delay in coming to me by reason of the regard for them, which you were secretly cherishing in your soul, and your secret dislike to me and to my people; for, as the old proverb says, what is apparent affords the best means of judging of what is not visible."

But Balaam, his moment of inspiration being now past, replied: "I am exposed in this to a most unjust charge, and am undeservedly accused; for I am saying nothing of my own, but whatever the Deity prompts me to say. And this is not the first time that I have said and that you have heard this, but I declared it on the former occasion when you sent the ambassadors, to whom I made the same answer."

But as the king thought either that the prophet was deceiving him, or that the Deity might change his mind, and the consequence of a change of place might alter the firmness of his decision, he led him off to another spot, where, from an exceedingly long, and high, and distant hill, he might be able to show him a part of the army of his enemies. Then, again, he built seven altars and sacrificed the same number of victims that he had sacrificed at first, and sent the prophet to look for favourable omens and predictions.

And he, as soon as he was by himself, was again suddenly filled by divine inspiration, and, without at all understanding the words which he uttered, spoke everything that was put into his mouth, prophesying in the following manner:— "Rise up and listen, O king! prick up thy ears and hear. God is not able to speak falsely as if he

were a man, nor does he change his purpose like the son of man. When he has once spoken, does he not abide by his word? For he will say nothing at all which shall not be completely brought to pass, since his word is also his deed. I, indeed, have been brought hither to bless this nation, and not to curse it.

There shall be no labour or distress among the Hebrews. God visibly holds his shield over them, who also dissipated the violence of the Egyptian attacks, leading forth all these myriads of people as one man. Therefore they disregarded auguries and every other part of the prophetic art, trusting to the one sole Governor of the world alone. And I see the people rising up like a young lion, and exulting as a lion. He shall feast on the prey, and for drink he shall drink the blood of the wounded; and, when he is satisfied, he shall not turn to sleep, but he shall be awake and sing the song of victory."

Chapter LII

But Balak, being very indignant at finding that all the assistance which he expected to derive from divination was turning out contrary to his hopes, said: "O man, neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all; for silence, which is free from danger, is better than unpleasant speeches." And when he had said this, as if he had forgotten what he had said, owing to the inconstancy of his mind, he led the prophet to another place, from which he could show him a part of the Hebrew army; and again he invited him to curse them.

But the prophet, as being even more wicked than the king, although he had always replied to the accusations which were brought against him with one true excuse, namely, that he was saying nothing out of his own head, but was only interpreting the words of another, being himself carried away and inspired, when he ought no longer to have accompanied him but to have gone away home, ran forward even more eagerly than his conductor, although in his secret thoughts he was oppressed by a heavy feeling of evil, yet still desired in his mind to curse this people, though he was forbidden to do so with his mouth.

So, coming to a mountain greater than any of those on which he had stood before, and which reached a very long way, he bade the king perform the same sacrifices as before, again building seven altars, and again offering up fourteen victims, on each altar two, a bullock and a ram. And he himself did no longer, according to his usual custom, go to seek for divination and auguries, since he much loathed his art, looking upon it as a picture which had become defaced through age, and had been obscured, and lost its felicity of conjecture. But he now, though with difficulty, understood the fact that the designs of the king, who had hired him, did not correspond with the will of God.

Therefore, turning to the wilderness, he saw the Hebrews encamped in their tribes, and he saw their numbers and their array, and admired it as being like the order of a city rather than of a camp, and, becoming inspired, he again spoke.

What, then, said the man who saw truly, who in his sleep saw a clear vision of God with the ever open and sleepless

eyes of his soul? "How goodly are thy abodes, O army of Hebrews; they tents are shady as groves, as a paradise on the bank of a river, as a cedar by the waters.

A man shall hereafter come forth out of thee who shall rule over many nations, and his kingdom shall increase every day and be raised up to heaven. This people hath God for its guide all the way from Egypt, who leads on their multitude in one line.

Therefore they shall devour many nations of their enemies, and they shall take all their fat as far as their very marrow, and shall destroy their enemies with their far-shooting arrows. He shall lie down to rest like a lion, and like a lion's whelp, fearing no one, but showing great contempt for every one, and causing fear to all other nations. Miserable is he who shall stir up and rouse him to anger. Blessed are they that bless thee, and cursed are they that curse thee."

Chapter LIII

And the king, being very indignant at these words, said: "Having been invited hither to curse my enemies, you have now prayed for and blessed them these three times. Fly, therefore, quickly, passion is a hasty affection, lest I be compelled to do something more violent than usual.

Of what a vast amount of money, O most foolish of men, of how many presents, and of how much renown, and celebrity, and glory, hast thou deprived thyself in thy madness! Now you will return to thy home from a foreign land, bearing with thee no good thing, but only reproaches and (as it seems likely) great disgrace, being ridiculed and

despised for that knowledge on which you formerly so greatly prided yourself.”

And Balaam replied: “All that I have hitherto uttered have been oracles and words of God; but what I am going to say are merely the suggestions of my own mind: and taking him by the right hand, he, while they two were alone, gave him advice, by the adoption of which he might, as far as possible, guard against the power of his enemies, accusing himself of the most enormous crimes. For why, some one may perhaps say, do you thus retire into solitude and give counsel suggesting things contrary to the oracles of God, unless indeed that your counsels are more powerful than his decrees?”

Chapter LIV

Come, then, let us examine into his fine recommendations, and see how cunningly they were contrived with reference to the most certain defeat of those who had hitherto always been able to conquer. As he knew that the only way by which the Hebrews could be subdued was by leading them to violate the law, he endeavoured to seduce them by means of debauchery and intemperance, that mighty evil, to the still greater crime of impiety, putting pleasure before them as a bait;

for, said he, “O king! the women of the country surpass all other women in beauty, and there are no means by which a man is more easily subdued than by the beauty of a woman; therefore, if you enjoin the most beautiful of them to grant their favours to them and to prostitute themselves to them, they will allure and overcome the youth of your

enemies.

But you must warn them not to surrender their beauty to those who desire them with too great facility and too speedily, for resistance and coyness will stimulate the passions and excite them more, and will kindle a more impetuous desire; and so, being wholly subdued by their appetites, they will endure to do and to suffer anything.

“And let any damsel who is thus prepared for the sport resist, and say, wantonly, to a lover who is thus influenced, “It is not fitting for you to enjoy my society till you have first abandoned your native habits, and have changed, and learnt to honour the same practices that I do. And I must have a conspicuous proof of your real change, which I can only have by your consenting to join me in the same sacrifices and libations which I use, and which we may then offer together at the same images and statues, and other erections in honour of my gods.

And the lover being, as it were, taken in the net of her manifold and multiform snares, not being able to resist her beauty and seductive conversation, will become wholly subdued in his reason, and, like a miserable man, will obey all the commands which she lays upon him, and will be enrolled as the slave of passion.”

Chapter LV

This, then, was the advice which Balaam gave to Balak. And he, thinking that what he said to him did not want sense, repealed the law against adulteries, and having abrogated all the enactments which had been established against seduction and harlotry, as if they had never been

enacted at all, exhorted the women to admit to their favours, without any restraint, every man whom they chose.

Accordingly, when licence was thus given, they brought over a multitude of young men, having already long before this seduced their minds, and having by their tricks and allurements perverted them to impiety; until Phinehas, the son of the chief priest, being exceedingly indignant at all that was taking place (for it appeared to him to be a most scandalous thing for his countrymen to give up at one time both their bodies and souls — their bodies to pleasure, and their souls to transgression of the law, and to works of wickedness), undertook a bold and impetuous action, such as was becoming to a young, and grave, and virtuous man.

For when he saw a man of his nation sacrificing with and then entering into the tent of a harlot, and that too without casting his eyes down on the ground and seeking to avoid the notice of the multitude, but making a display of his licentiousness with shameless boldness, and giving himself airs as if he were about to engage in a creditable action, and one deserving of smiles — Phinehas, I say, being very indignant and being filled with a just anger, ran in, and while they were still lying on the bed, slew both the lover and the harlot, cutting them in two pieces in the middle, because they thus indulged in illicit connections.

When some persons of those who admired temperance, and chastity, and piety, saw this example, they, at the command of Moses, imitated it, and slew all their own relations and friends, even to a man, who had sacrificed to idols made with hands, and thus they effaced the stain which was defiling the nation by this implacable revenge

which they thus wreaked on those who had set the example of wrong doing, and so saved the rest, who made a clear defence of themselves, demonstrating their own piety, showing no compassion on any one of those who were justly condemned to death, and not passing over their offences out of pity, but looking upon those who slew them as pure from all sin. Therefore they did not allow any escape whatever to those who sinned in this way, and such conduct is the truest praise;

and they say that twenty-four thousand men were slain in one day, the common pollution, which was defiling the whole army, being thus at once got rid of. And when the works of purification were thus accomplished, Moses began to seek how he might give an honour worthy of him who had displayed such permanent excellence to the son of the chief priest, who was the first who hastened to inflict chastisement on the offenders. But God was beforehand with him, giving to Phinehas, by means of his holy word, the greatest of all good things, namely, peace, which no man is able to bestow; and also, in addition to this peace, he gave him the perpetual possession of the priesthood, an inheritance to his family, which could not be taken from it.

Chapter LVI

But when none of the civil and intestine evils remained any longer, but when all the men who were suspected of having either forsaken the ways of their ancestors or of treachery had perished, it appeared to be a most favourable opportunity for making an expedition against Balak, a man who had both planned to do, and had also executed an

innumerable host of evil deeds, since he had planned them through the agency of the prophet, who he hoped would be able, by means of his curses, to destroy the power of the Hebrews, and who had executed his purpose by the agency of the licentiousness and incontinence of the women, who destroyed the bodies of those who associated with them by debauchery, and their souls by impiety.

Therefore Moses did not think fit to carry on war against him with his whole army, knowing that superfluous numbers are apt to meet with disaster in consequence of those very numbers; and also, at the same time, thinking it useful to have stations of reserve, to be assistants to those of their allies who appeared likely to fail; but he selected a thousand picked men of the youth of the nation, selected man by man, out of each tribe, twelve thousand in all, for that was the number of the tribes, and he appointed Phinehas to be the commander in the war, as he had already given proof of the happy daring which becomes a general; and after he had offered up sacrifices of good omen, he sent forth his warriors, and encouraged them in the following words: —

“The present contest is not one for dominion or sovereignty, nor is it waged for the sake of acquiring the property of others, though these are the objects for which alone, or almost invariably, wars take place; but this war is undertaken in the cause of piety and holiness, from which the enemy has alienated our relations and friends, being the causes of bitter destruction to those who have been brought under their yoke.

It is therefore absurd for us to be the slayers of our own countrymen, for having offended against the law, and to spare our enemies, who have violated it in a much worse degree, and to slay, with every circumstance of violence, those who were only learning and beginning to sin, but to leave those who taught them to do so unpunished, who are, in reality, the guilty causes of all that has taken place, and of all the evils which our countrymen have either done or suffered.”

Chapter LVII

Therefore being nerved by these exhortations, and being kindled and filled with noble courage which was indeed in their souls already, they went forth to that contest with invincible spirit as to a certain victory; and when they engaged with the enemy, they displayed such incredible vigour and courage that they slew all their enemies, and returned themselves unhurt, every one of them, not one of their number having been slain or even wounded.

Any one who did not know what had taken place, might have supposed, when he saw them returning, that they were coming in, not from war and from a pitched battle, but rather from a display and field-day of exercise under arms, such as often take place in time of peace; and these fielddays are days of exercise and practice, while the men train themselves among friends to attack their enemies.

Therefore they destroyed all their cities, razing them to the ground or else burning them, so that no one could tell that any cities had ever been inhabited in that land. And they led away a perfectly incalculable number of prisoners,

of whom they chose to slay all the full-grown men and women, the men because they had set the example of wicked counsels and actions, and the women because they had beguiled the youth of the Hebrews, becoming the causes to them of incontinence and impiety, and at the last of death; but they pardoned all the young male children and all the virgins, their tender age procuring them forgiveness;

and as they had taken a vast booty from the king's palace, and from private houses, and also from the dwellings of all kinds in the open country (for there was not less booty in the country places than in the cities), they came to the camp, laden with all the wealth which they had taken from the enemy.

And Moses praised Phinehas their general, and those who had served under him for their good success, and also because they had not been covetous of their own advantage, running after booty and thinking of nothing, but appropriating the spoil to themselves, but because they had brought it all into the common stock, so that they who had staid behind in the tents might share in the booty; and he ordered those men to remain outside the camp for some days, and the high priest he commanded to purify both the men themselves, and those of their allies who had returned from fighting by their side, of bloodshed;

for even though the slaughter of the enemies of one's country is according to law, still he who kills a man, even though justly and in self-defence, and because he has been attacked, still appears to be guilty of blood by reason of his supreme and common relationship to a common father; on which account those who had slain enemies were in need of

rites of purification, to cleanse them from what was looked upon as a pollution.

Chapter LVIII

However, after no long lapse of time he divided the booty among those who had taken a part in the expedition, and they were but a small number, giving one half among those who had remained inactive at home, and the other half to those who were still in the camp; for he looked upon it as just and equitable to give the share of the advantages gained, to those who had shared in the contest, if not with their souls, at all events with their bodies; for as the spectators were not inferior to the actual combatants in their zeal, they were inferior only in point of time and in respect of their being anticipated.

And as the smaller body had received each a larger share of the booty, by reason of their having been the foremost in encountering danger, and the larger body had received each a smaller share, by reason of their having remained at home; it appeared indispensable that they should consecrate the first fruits of the whole of the booty; those therefore who had remained at home brought a fiftieth, and those who had been actually engaged in the war, brought and contributed a five hundredth part; and of ten first fruits Moses commanded that portion which came from those who had borne a part in the expedition, to be given to the high priest, and that portion which came from those who had remained in the camp, to the keepers of the temple whose name were the Levites.

And the captains of thousands, and centurions, and all the rest of the multitude of commanders of battalions and companies willingly contributed special first fruits, as an offering for their own safety, and that of those who had gone out to war, and for the victory which had been gained in a manner beyond all hope, giving up all the golden ornaments which had fallen to the lot of each individual, in the apportionment of the booty, and the most costly vessels, of which the material was gold. All which things Moses took, and, admiring the piety of those who contributed them, dedicated them in the consecrated tabernacle as a memorial of the gratitude of the men; and the division of the first fruits was very beautiful;

those which had been given by the men who had borne their share in the war, he distributed among the keepers of the temple as among men who had only displayed one half of virtue, namely eagerness without action; but the first fruits of those who had warred and fought, who had encountered danger with their bodies and lives, and thus had displayed perfect and complete excellence, he allotted to him who presided over the keepers of the temple, namely to the high priest; and the first fruits of the captains, as being the offerings of chiefs and rulers, he allotted to the great ruler of all, namely to God.

Chapter LIX

All these wars were carried on and brought to an end before the Hebrews had crossed Jordan, the river of the country, being wars against the inhabitants of the country on the other side of Jordan, which was a rich and fertile

land, in which there was a large champaign fertile in corn, and also very productive of herbage and fodder for cattle;

and when the two tribes who were occupied in feeding cattle saw this country, the two tribes being a sixth part of the whole Hebrew host, they besought Moses to permit them to take their inheritance in that district, where in fact they were already settled; for they said that the place was very suitable for cattle to be kept, and fed, and bred in, inasmuch as it was well watered and full of good herbage, and as it produced spontaneously abundant grass for the feeding of sheep.

But as he thought that they claimed a sort of right, by some kind of pre-eminence, to receive their share and the honours due to them before their time, or else that they preferred this petition by reason of their being unwilling to encounter the wars which were impending, as there were still many kings who were making ready to attack them, and who were the possessors of all the country inside the river, he was very indignant at their request, and answered them in anger, and said,

“Shall you then sit here and enjoy leisure, and yield to indolence at so improper a time? and shall the wars which still threaten us, afflict all your countrymen, and your relations, and your friends, and shall the prizes be given to you alone, as if you had all contributed to the success? And shall battles and wars, and distresses, and the most extreme dangers await others?

But it is not just that you should enjoy peace, and the blessings that flow from peace, and that the rest should

endure wars and all the other indescribable evils which they bring with them, and that the whole should only be looked upon as an adjunct of a part; while, on the contrary, it is for the sake of the whole that the parts are thought worthy of any inheritance at all.

Ye are all entitled to equal honour, ye are one race, ye have the same fathers, one house, ye have the same customs, a community of laws, and an infinite number of other things, every one of which binds your kindred closer together, and cements your mutual good will; why then when you are thought worthy of equal shares of the most important and most necessary things, do you show a covetous spirit in the division of the lands, as if you were rulers despising your subjects as masters looking disdainfully on your slaves?"

You ought to have derived instruction from the afflictions of others; for it is the part of wise men not to wait till misfortunes come upon themselves. But now, though you have domestic examples in your own fathers, who went and spied out this land, and in the calamities which befell them, and all who participated in their despondency (for they all perished except two), and when, therefore, you ought to take care and avoid resembling them in any respect whatever, still, foolish-minded men that ye are, ye are imitating their cowardice, as if by such conduct you would be more strongly fortified against capture; and you check and damp the eagerness of those who are desirous to display their manhood and valour, relaxing and depressing their spirits;

therefore, while you are hastening to do wrong, you are also hastening to incur punishment. For justice is always a long time before it can be put in motion, but when it is once put in motion it makes great haste and speedily overtakes those who flee from it.

When, therefore, all our enemies are destroyed, and when there is no other war which can be expected or feared as impending, and when all those in our present alliance have been, on examination, found to be without reproach nor liable to any charge of desertion or treachery, or of any misconduct which could possibly tend to our defeat, but shall be seen to have endured steadfastly from the beginning to the end, with their bodily exertion and with all eagerness of mind, and when the whole country is cleared of those who have previously inherited it, then rewards and prizes for valour shall be given to all the tribes with perfect fairness.

Chapter LX

So they, bearing this rebuke with moderation, as being genuine sons of a very kindly disposed father (for they knew that Moses was not a man to behave insolently because of his power and authority, but one who cared for all of them, and honoured justice and equality, and who hated wickedness, not so as to reproach or insult the wicked, but so as to be constantly endeavouring by admonition and correction to improve those who were susceptible of improvement), said to him, "Very naturally you are indignant, if you imagine that we now are anxious to desert the alliance and to obtain our allotments before the proper

time;

but you must know that we are not alarmed at any undertaking that calls for valorous and virtuous exertion, even though it may be most laborious. And we judge that the task of virtue is to obey you who are such a brave and wise ruler, and not to fear to encounter dangers, and to be willing to bear our share in all future expeditions until all our business is brought to a fortunate conclusion.

“We, therefore, as we have agreed before, will remain in our ranks and cross over Jordan in complete armour, giving no soldier any excuse for lagging behind. But our infant children, and our daughters, and wives, and mothers, and the bulk of our cattle, shall, if you have no objection, be left behind, after we have made houses for our children and wives, and stables for our cattle that they may not be exposed to any incursion of the enemy, and so suffer injury from being taken in unwallled and unprotected dwellings.”

And Moses answered with a mild look and even still gentler voice, “If you speak the truth and behave honestly, the allotments which you have asked for shall remain assured to you. Leave behind you now, as you desire, your wives and children, and flocks and herds, and go yourselves across Jordan in your ranks with the rest of the soldiers in full armour, arrayed for battle, as if you were prepared to fight at once, if it should be needful.

And hereafter when all our enemies are destroyed, and when, peace being established, we have made ourselves masters of the whole country, and have begun to divide it among ourselves, then you also shall return to your families

to enjoy the good things which belong to you, and to possess the region which you have selected.”

When Moses had said this, and given them this promise, they were filled with cheerfulness and joy, and established their families in safety as well as their flocks and herds in wellfortified and impregnable strongholds, the greater part of which were artificial. And taking their arms they marched forth more cheerfully than any of the rest of the allied forces, as if they alone had been going to fight, or at all events to fight in the first ranks as the champions of the whole army, for he who has received any gift beforehand is more eager in the cause in which he is engaged, since he thinks that he is repaying a necessary debt, and not giving a free gift.

I have now, then, given an account of what was done by Moses while invested with kingly power. I must now proceed to relate in order all the actions which he performed in accordance with virtue, and also successfully as a chief priest, and also in his character as a lawgiver; for he also exercised these two powers as very closely connected with his kingly authority.