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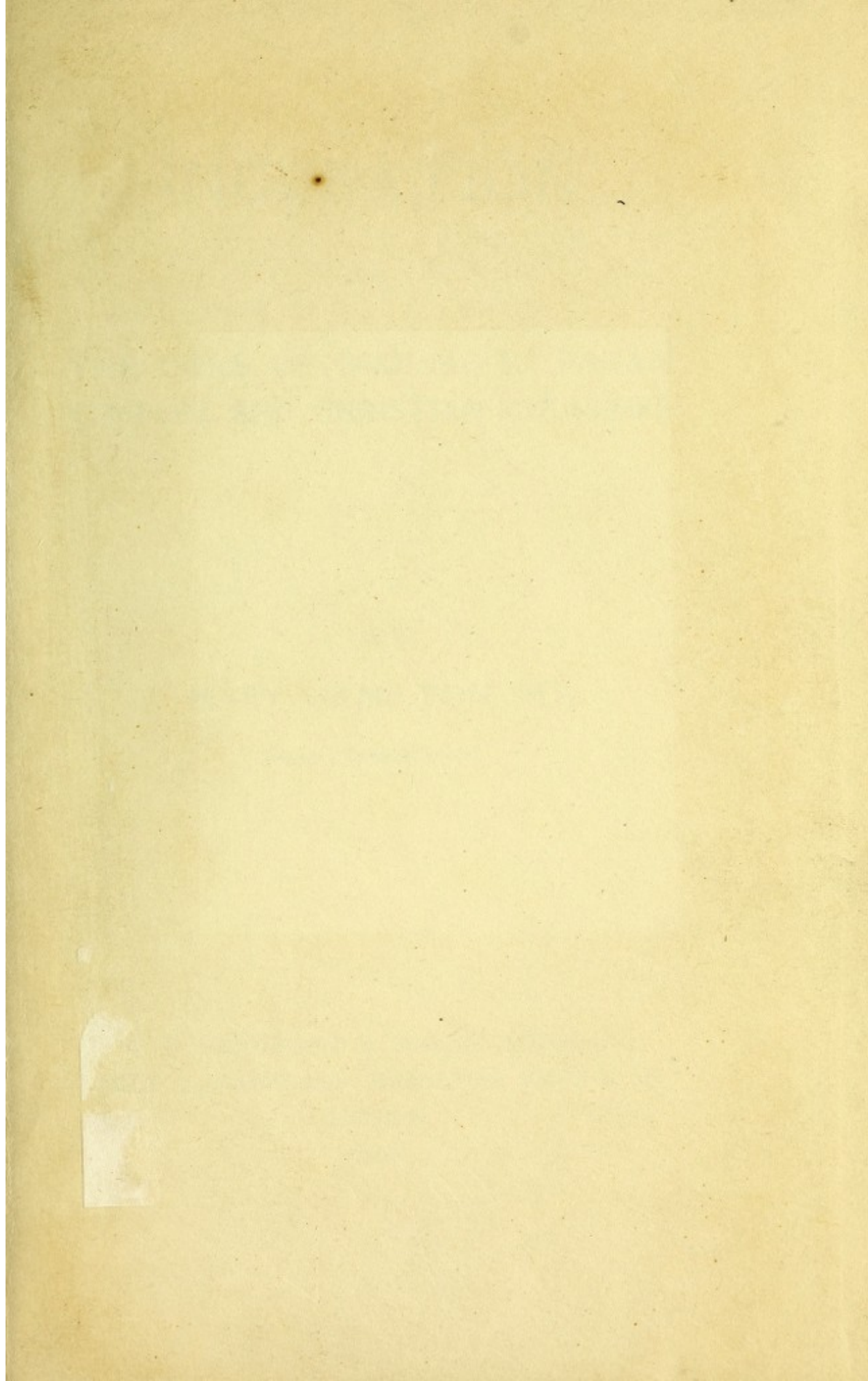


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# INCUBATION

OR

THE CURE OF DISEASE IN PAGAN  
TEMPLES AND CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

BY

MARY HAMILTON, M.A.

Carnegie Research Scholar

W. C. HENDERSON & SON, ST. ANDREWS  
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## PREFACE

THE subject of Incubation, which has hitherto received merely cursory notice from English writers, is of interest to modern readers for two reasons. In the first place, the practice—designated without ambiguity in German as “Tempelschlaf,” *i.e.*, Temple-sleep—is one which, in virtue of its origin, belongs to paganism, but is countenanced and encouraged in the twentieth century by two of the chief sections of the Christian Church. And secondly, it produces results which have much in common with hypnotic cures and the achievements of Christian Science. The aim of the present work is to give an historical sketch of the development of the practice of Incubation from the earliest times down to the present day.

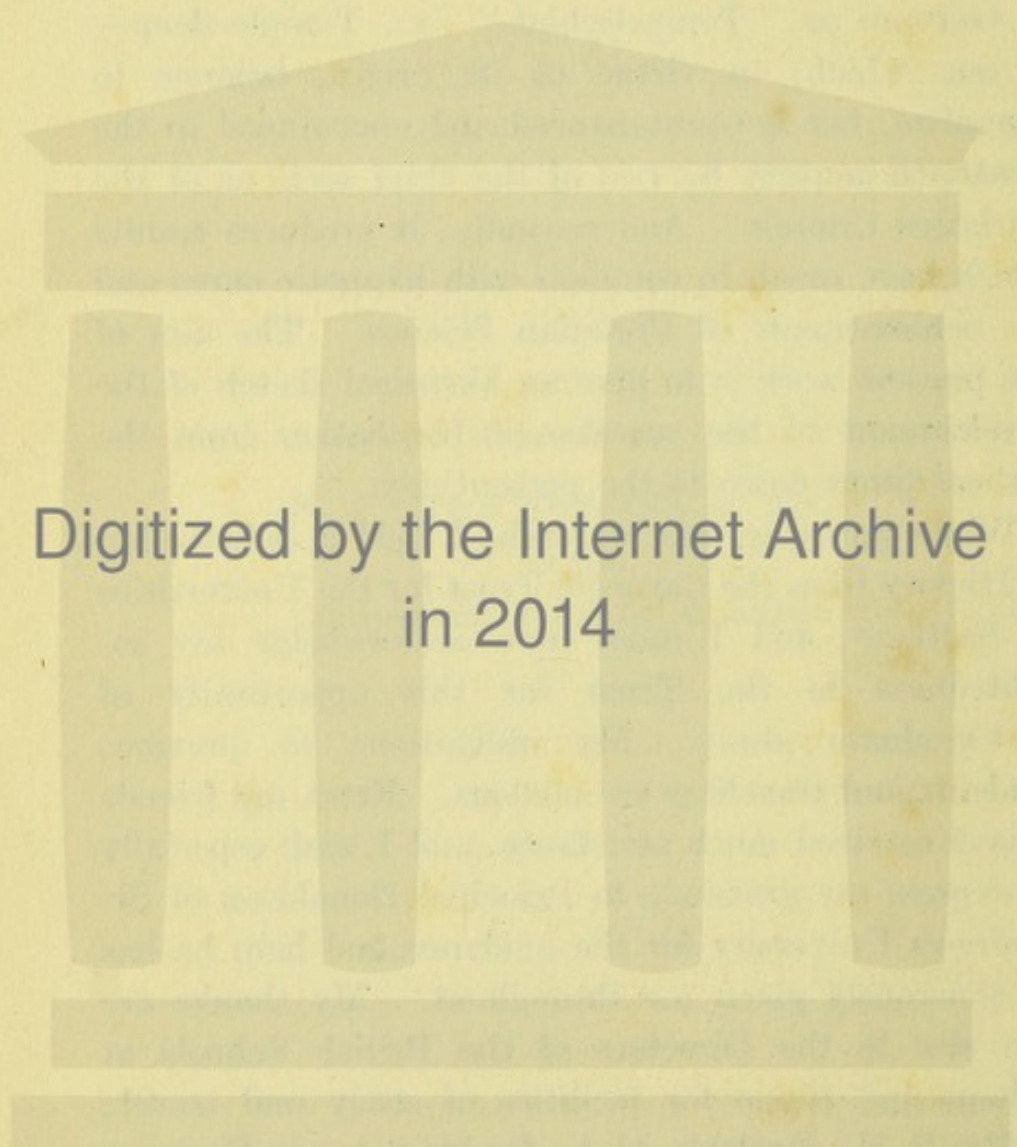
While pursuing this research, I held a Scholarship in History from the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland, and I must here acknowledge my indebtedness to the Trust for this opportunity of post-graduate study. My obligations to previous students and travellers are obvious. From my friends I have received much assistance, and I wish especially to express my gratitude to Principal Donaldson of St. Andrews University for the guidance and help he has so generously given me throughout. My thanks are due also to the Directors of the British Schools at Athens and Rome for facilities of study and travel; to Mr. F. W. Hasluck, M.A., for his notes on Cyzicus; and to Dr. K. F. Kinch for information about the island of Rhodes.

M. H.

St. Andrews

September 1906





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## PART I.

# Incubation in Pagan Temples

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### I. Introduction

IN the ancient science of divination, four working methods were commonly practised. Revelations of the future were deduced from natural portents, from the flight of birds, from entrails of sacrificial victims, or from dreams. It was the fourth way that had, for obvious reasons, the greatest vogue. Belief in the significance of dreams has always been widespread, and the supernatural authority attached to them by the ancients needs no demonstration. From Pharaoh's dream downwards there are recorded many illustrations of the importance with which they were regarded not only by the ignorant and superstitious, but by philosophical thinkers. The philosophy of dreams, as they were regarded in the fourth century B.C., was held to be that in sleep the soul was freed from the body so that it could soar into spiritual regions, and commune with divine beings. Accordingly, memories of what had passed in sleep were to be cherished as divine revelations granted to the soul.

The science of oneiromancy was the subject of much study. Artemidoros of Ephesus has five books of *Oneirocritica*, where he attempts some explications and relates many instances of dreams. Dreams are divided by him into five classes, of which the fifth is the most

important for divination. That is the class of *chrematismoï* or oracles. The division given by Artemidoros is found again in Macrobius, *Somnium Scipionis* (i. 3), where the following definition of an oracle is given:—"It is a case of an oracle when, during sleep, a relative, or other sacred or authoritative person, or a priest, or even a god, declares openly what is going to happen, or not to happen, or what must be done or avoided." Two other kinds of dreams worthy of interpretation are given—the vision, and the *somnium* or dream proper. In the vision, a person sees what is going to happen in exactly the way in which it will take place, and the *somnium* is a dream so complicated and obscured by figures that it cannot be understood without interpretation.

Incubation was the method by which men sought to entice such dreams. Visions, in which a revelation regarding the future was given by a god or a divine messenger, would be precious and greatly to be desired by those who believed in their infallibility. Naturally people would seek for divine guidance in distress and difficulty, and out of their efforts to obtain it arose the practice of incubation. Suppliants approached the god by sacrifices and performance of rites best calculated to win his favour, and then in the place most likely to be visited by the deity, either the temple, or the appointed sleeping-hall, lay down to sleep awaiting a divine visitation.

The gods in whose temples incubation was practised were chthonian deities, heroes who had gone down into the earth and were invested with her powers. Two of the chief faculties of the earth were the power

of sending dreams, and the gift of healing. As a giver of dreams she is apostrophised in the *Hecuba* of Euripides (l. 70):—"O Lady Earth, sender of black-winged dreams." The healing powers of the earth were expressed in the production of herbs that gave life or death, and were transmitted to the chthonian gods who had entered into her.

The combination of these two faculties brought it to pass that the temples of these deities were the centres of medical divination, obtained through incubation. Illness was the most frequent motive for consultation; hence the primary aspect of incubation is medical. But the gods were not consulted solely on account of disease. In any case of difficulty or distress incubation might be tried. Pausanias (iii. 26. 1) relates how the Spartan Ephors during state crises were in the habit of consulting the incubation-oracle of Ino-Pasiphaai at Thalamai. Other instances of non-medical consultation are recorded in the *Orations* of Aristides and elsewhere. The object of the practice was to meet with the deity in sleep, ask questions, and receive answers. The suppliant was not always successful. It might be that no visitation came to him, the dream might be unintelligible, or he might fail to interpret it correctly. Artemidoros, in *Oneirocritica* (iv. 22), gives his views of the instructions sent by gods who have been invoked through incubation. The paragraph is entitled "Concerning Prescriptions."

"You will find the prescriptions of the gods either simple and containing no enigma, for the gods prescribe ointments, plasters, food and drink, by the same names as we use; or when the gods do speak in enig-



mas, their enigmas are quite clear. For example, a woman who had inflammation of the breast thought that she was suckled by a sheep. She was cured by a plaster of the herb sheep's-tongue; the composition of the plant's name showed the connection between the herb and the sheep's tongue. . . . Do not decide your dream from one conjecture, so that you do not fall into error and appear foolish. For example, a man who was ill thought he saw a person called Peison. This was interpreted as meaning great safety and security, and also it was said he would live ninety-five years after the first appearance of Peison. Nevertheless the man who had seen the vision died during the same illness, for Peison had appeared to him carrying sweet oil. Sweet oil is baleful in the case of illness, because of its connection with dead bodies."

Deubner, in his treatise *De Incubatione* (ch. i.) shows the existence of a certain similarity of characteristics in dreams which have come during incubation, as recorded in the ancient writers. The *Orations* of Aelius Aristides relate with great detail the accompanying circumstances and effects of numerous dreams, and these are confirmed by many other cases.

In the second *Sacred Oration* (p. 414), he says of Asklepios: "A voice came to me by night, saying," and (p. 429) "A voice came in a dream."

The hearing of a voice was a common sensation. Plutarch, *De Genio Socratis* (22), relating the experiences of Timarchos at the oracle of Trophonios, says: "A voice of some one unseen spoke to him"; and Pausanias (ix. 39) of the same oracle says: "Some-

times the suppliant has a vision, and at other times he hears something." In Plutarch's *Kleomenes*, he says about the oracle of Pasiphaai at Thalamai: "A voice came from the temple telling." And of Serapis, Arrian (*Anab.* vii. 26) says: "A voice came from the god."

Iamblichus, *De Mysteriis* (iii. 2), speaking of heaven-sent dreams, describes one of the sensations thus: "Then a mysterious and incorporeal atmosphere surrounds them as they lie, such as does not touch their eyesight, but affects their other senses and sensibilities, murmuring in the entrance and penetrating everywhere without touching anything, working wonderful works to rid them of suffering of soul and body."

This atmosphere is mentioned by Plutarch, in *De Genio Socratis*, regarding Trophonios. "He (Timarchos) said he heard faintly a rushing noise coming from above his head and causing a pleasant sound."

A mystical light is often recorded as appearing to the sleepers. In Aristides' *Orations* many instances occur. Telesphoros (ii. 419.10) and Isis (ii. 424.16) both appear to him with shining lights. He sees the throne of Asklepios blazing with fire (ii. 438.25), and while he seems to be walking in the streets of Athens, a bright light descends upon his head—an incident which he takes as a portent of the future (ii. 466.2).

Plutarch, *De Gen. Soc.* (22 p. 590), says "Looking up he saw the earth nowhere, but islands shining with gentle fire."

The god who appears to the dreamer, does so in an abrupt manner, and this is expressed in the word

ἐφίστασθαι. It is used of Asklepios in the inscriptions of Epidauros, of Serapis in the *Alexander* of Plutarch, of Apollo in the *Oneirocritica* of Artemidoros, of Trophonios in the *Vita Apollonii* of Philostratos, and of various other deities.

The disposition of the god is felt to be kind and conciliatory. In an inscription of Epidauros (No. 8) Asklepios is recorded to have smilingly jested with a boy. Plutarch, *De Is. et Osir.* (29), says: "If the name of Serapis is Egyptian, I think it must mean grace and kindness."

The god is said to be of handsome and imposing appearance, and to be youthful. Asklepios, according to an Epidaurian inscription (No. 25) appeared to a woman on the high-road in the form of a handsome man. Plutarch, in *Sulla* (17), says of Trophonios: "They said he appeared like to Olympian Zeus in beauty and stature."

An inscription of Epidauros (No. 17) says: "A young man of handsome appearance put a drug on his toe." Tacitus, in the *Histories* (iv. 83), states: "The Egyptians relate that, in sleep, there appeared to King Ptolemy a young man of remarkable beauty, and supernatural form."

Sweet odours emanate from the deities. Aristides (ii. 403) says: "From the aegis (of Athena) came a very sweet odour." And of Protesilaus, Philostratos, *Heroica* (673, p. 141), says: "From him there came an odour sweeter than autumnal myrtles." The gods disappeared suddenly, which is expressed in the words ἀφανῆς γίγνεσθαι or ἀποπέτεσθαι.

Incubation was a practice of great antiquity. Traces of its primitive beginnings are probably to be detected

in the description which Homer gives of the Selloi or Helloi, "The prophets of Zeus of Dodona, who sleep on the ground and wash not the feet." But the earliest literary evidence of incubation as part of a cult ritual is found in Aristophanes, who, in the *Ploutos*, describes the temple-sleep in an Asklepieion. The temples of Asklepios were the chief centres of incubation, and we shall now proceed to consider in detail the practices therein.

## II. Incubation in the Cult of Asklepios

### EPIDAUROS

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CULT OF ASKLEPIOS.—Asklepios belongs to the Panhellenic, not to the Olympian, circle of deities. His cult was of comparatively late origin, and came first into prominence in historical times. When Zeus was "king of gods and men," Asklepios was no deity, merely a hero. In the epic of heroic times, he figures as a skilled physician. Homer mentions him as a pupil of Cheiron, and instructor of his two sons, Machaon and Podaleirios, who sailed to Troy from Thessaly. From the *Eoiai* and a *Pythian Ode* of Pindar, the oldest genealogy of Asklepios is deduced. His father was Apollo, his mother Koronis, daughter of Phlegyas, who dwelt in Thessaly. Asklepios was entrusted to Cheiron for his education. He proved so apt a pupil that not only did he work wonderful cures, but raised the dead to life again. This power brought on him the wrath of Zeus, and he was smitten by a thunderbolt. Then came his apotheosis, and thereafter he took rank among the chthonian deities, as his most important attribute, the serpent, testifies. But he was distinguished from the other chthonian gods in that he was honoured chiefly, throughout historical times, as the divine physician. He received from his father, Apollo, this special province, the art of healing, which belonged to the chief god of divination. This tradition represents the close connection that existed between divination and the ancient art of medicine, and it is

noteworthy that at Epidauros, Apollo Maleatos was worshipped along with Asklepios.

Asklepios was a wonder-worker, a saviour from troubles and diseases, and, owing to his timely efficaciousness, his cult grew great, so as to surpass all others in the extent of its influence, during the first centuries of the Christian era. From the medical chthonian deity of the ancients, he became the almighty saviour and ruler of all, who is lauded in the *Sacred Orations* of Aelius Aristides.

Thessaly was accepted as the cradle of the cult, and in Thessaly Triikka was the oldest centre, and enjoyed high renown both in ancient times, according to Strabo, and in the historical centuries, for mention of its fame is found in Herondas, Pausanias, and in Isyllos, the poet of Epidauros. From Thessaly, the worship of Asklepios spread into the Peloponnese, and through his amalgamation with original Peloponnesian divinities, there arose a new group of traditions as to his origin, according to which he was appropriated as a native of various parts of the Peloponnese. The Epidaurian legend given by Isyllos in the paeon found during the excavations, makes Phlegyas a man of Epidauros, and that city the starting-point of the cult.

The temples that were erected for the worship of Asklepios were scattered far and wide. Roscher (p. 623) calculates that there were as many as three hundred and twenty, while Thraemer<sup>1</sup> gives evidence for one hundred and eighty-six before the time of Alexander. It is believed that the sick were healed in nearly all of these temples, but three, in

<sup>1</sup> Pauly-Wissowa—*Asklepios*, p. 1677.

particular, were famous for their cures—Trikka, Kos, and Epidauros. Pergamos, too, in later times, was much frequented and rivalled Epidauros in popularity, but the latter always held the position of most distinction as the ancient and favoured sanctuary of the god.

THE TEMPLE AT EPIDAUROS.—The excavations which were begun at Epidauros in 1881 under the direction of M. Kavvadias, have brought to light not only the ruins of the buildings and the plan of the Temple, but many offerings with their dedications and some inscriptions. Thus we can judge both of the establishment and of the methods of treatment pursued therein, as well as of many ritual details. This gain of knowledge would be valuable in any case, but is all the more precious because literary descriptions of Epidauros are very scanty. The brief account given by Pausanias (ii. 27) is the fullest in any ancient writer.

The whole Epidaurian territory was sacred to Asklepios, but his sanctuary was a considerable distance from the city, about two and a half hours' journey. The Temple stands in a plain surrounded by hills, on one of which was the sanctuary of Apollo Maleatos. From the inscriptions we learn that the whole Temple was sacred to Apollo Maleatos and to Asklepios. It is not known whether Asklepios ousted any other god from this salubrious situation, or even whether the worship of Apollo was anterior to the worship of Asklepios there. All the evidence points to the supremacy of Asklepios, and the success of his healing powers is seen in the rapid growth of the Temple, and in the magnificent buildings that have been ex-

cavated. The Temple itself dates from the beginning of the fourth century B.C., and must have replaced an ancient structure, which had proved inadequate to the needs of the progressive cult. The worship of Asklepios is known to have been carried on at Epidauros from the beginning of the fifth century, and from then, if not from earlier times, it was famous for its health-miracles and cures.

At the present day the site of the Temple is attractive. Driving from the village of Ligourio, one reaches in a quarter of an hour the green little plain where the sacred precinct is. High hills, unusually well-wooded, circle round the plain, and prominent on the hill-side to the south-east can be descried the theatre, the finest that Greece can boast. The road passes between the stadium and the Temple and goes on to the theatre. From the higher seats, half-way up the hill, one has a splendid view over the whole temple precinct. Straight in front is the Katagogion, an immense square building, with four court-yards surrounded by little cells, numbering in all one hundred and forty. It was probably used as a caravanserai for the pilgrims at festival times, and belongs to the Roman period. To the left are the gymnasium and the baths, and farther to the north is the Temple itself, of which only the foundations remain. Behind it are the porticos, and to the left the Tholos. This is a circular building attributed to Polykleitos the younger. The purpose for which it was used is a debated question. One sees a maze of circular walls, with two concentric series of columns. The floor was paved with flagstones, and in the centre was a well or pit. Kavvadias<sup>1</sup> believes that

<sup>1</sup> Ἱερον τοῦ Ἀσκληπίου.—See Θόλος.



it was used for rites and sacrifices connected with the ceremony of incubation. What these rites were is unknown, but in one inscription they are mentioned as "the usual proceedings." The Tholos belongs to the fourth century, when building activity was greatest at Epidauros. To the same period are ascribed the temple, the theatre, and the porticos. The stadium was used as early as the fifth century.

The second period of important additions to the Temple was under the Roman Emperors. During the last century of the Republic, the Temple had suffered many depredations. Plundering raids were begun by Sulla, and it is seen from the excavations that buildings were destroyed as well as treasures stolen. But the former splendour was restored after the middle of the second century A.D. Pausanias tells (ii. 27) how Antoninos, a member of the Roman Senate, effected restorations and built many new edifices. To him were owed the Baths of Asklepios and the Temple of the Epidotai, amongst other additions. It is open to doubt whether this Antoninos is the Roman Emperor, Antoninus Pius, who was donor to many temples in Greece and Italy. From a computation of dates, made by Gurlitt in his work on Pausanias, it seems probable that the patron of Epidauros was a private Roman citizen of wealth, piety, and a weak constitution, who had benefited by residence at the Temple.

These restorations and additions were followed by others, and while the Temple was restored after its former design, the additions were of the nature of modern improvements, which were necessitated by the hygienic régime prescribed for the patients. New reservoirs had to be constructed to give a most plentiful

water-supply, for baths were amongst the leading features. It is said that the best idea of the establishment at this later date can be got from a comparison with modern baths, such as Marienbad.

THE INSCRIPTIONS OF CURES.—The fame of the Temple, its grandeur and magnitude, as well as its riches, were due to a deep-rooted faith in the healing powers of the god. This faith must have arisen from experience, and been tested by experience, and is in itself the best evidence that practical assistance was received at Epidauros by those who appealed to the god. The nature of this assistance, which has always been a problem to authorities on the origin of medicine, has been shown under a new light during these excavations, and in particular by the discovery of the stelae of inscriptions containing a list of cures.

These tablets clearly belong to those mentioned by Strabo and Pausanias, for the contents correspond to the descriptions of these writers. Strabo, speaking of Epidauros, says (ii. 53) : "The Temple is always full of patients and of stelae that have been set up with the cures inscribed on them, just as in Kos and Triikka." And Pausanias, also referring to Epidauros (ii. 27) : "Stelae have been erected within the precincts. In ancient times they were numerous, and six were left in my time. On them were inscribed the names of men and women, cured by Asklepios, and also the diseases from which they suffered, and the method of cure. The writing was in the Doric language." And in ii. 36 Pausanias says : "Halike is deserted in our time, but was inhabited once, and the word Halikos occurs in the

tablets of Epidauros, on which are inscribed the cures of Asklepios. I do not know any other writing worthy of note where there is mention of the city of Halike or of the people of Halike.”

The place where these stelae were discovered is a building near the Temple of Asklepios and to the north of it. Kavvadias<sup>1</sup> identifies this building as the Abaton, which is the name given in the inscriptions to the place where the suppliants lay down to sleep in expectation of a divine visitation. The foundations of its walls and pillars were discovered in the excavations of 1883, and it is seen to have consisted of two long colonnades or porticos, closed on the north side by a wall, and open on the south, with an arcade of pillars. The first portico, which runs parallel to the Temple, is of one storey; the second, adjoining it and extending westwards, is of two storeys. Within the first colonnade at the east end has been found an ancient well, 55 feet deep, judged to be the sacred well of Asklepios, which figured so prominently in the cult. It was also within this same portico, and near the well, that were found the inscriptions we now have, and it can be seen from the bases of others which are still preserved in the original position that this was where the tablets, mentioned by Pausanias, had been erected.

The second portico is not on a level with the first owing to the formation of the ground. The lower storey is in basement, while the upper floor adjoins the first portico. The basement was closed by a wall on

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*—See \*Αβατον.

the south, had an entrance-door, and contained stone seats. The upper part was open on the south side with pillars and was divided into two parts lengthwise. Probably the second portico was an extension of the first, and of later date, its construction being necessitated by the growing need for more accommodation.

The only guide to the position of the Abaton is given by Pausanias (ii. 27) where he says: "Beyond the Temple is the place where the suppliants sleep." The site of these two colonnades corresponds to his description, and, in addition, Kavvadias finds other reasons for the identification. He is of opinion that the inscriptions would be set up for public view in the place where the cures had been effected, and that the second well used in the treatment would be a necessary adjunct to the Abaton. Further, the colonnades bear a strong resemblance to a building in the Asklepieion at Athens, which also contains a sacred well, and which is believed by some to be the House of Incubation.

The conclusion to which Kavvadias comes as to the identity of the Abaton has been disputed by Holwerda (*Athen. Mittheil.*, vol. 27). He points out that, presumably from its name, the Abaton was a place of secured privacy, and, therefore, would be closed in all round. According to Pausanias, it was used as a dormitory, and in one inscription it is called the *enkoimeterion*, or dormitory. With reference to the discovery of the inscriptions in the portico, he urges that they would more reasonably have been placed in a building for the reception of patients during the day, when the suppliants to the god

would have time and light to be impressed with the divine wonders, than in the sleeping-hall, which they entered at night-fall, and left at dawn. The well of sacred water would be used for cleansing and purifying rites, but Holwerda submits that there is greater probability that these took place, not in the Abaton, but before the entrance of the patient therein. He refuses to take the resemblance to the Athenian building as a proof, for there is no documentary evidence as to the identity of the Athenian colonnades, and he expresses the belief that this building in the temple at Epidauros was used for the reception of patients during the day. In the inscription of Apellas, the phrase occurs: "I must take a walk in the upper gallery." The only upper storey in the temple buildings suitable for a walk is in these porticos.

The Abaton has, then, still to be identified, and Holwerda finds it in the square building south-west of the temple which Kavvadias describes as the priests' dwelling-house. It consists of a central court round which are small rooms, shut in so as to insure privacy, and dates from the fourth century. In the north-west corner stands an ancient altar, which Kavvadias believes to have belonged to the old temple. No conclusive proof of the identity of the Abaton can be given, but the existence of similar porticos in the same relation to the temples at Athens and Kos is a strong support to the view that the porticos were the scene of incubation.

Leaving the question of the Abaton, we come to the inscriptions<sup>1</sup> found in the porticos. They are inscribed

<sup>1</sup> *C.I.G.* IV. 951-2.

on large stone stelae, and give forty-four cases of cure. The translation of the text is as follows :—

STELE I.

God and Good Fortune.

Cures of Apollo and Asklepios.

1. Kleo was with child for five years. After these five years of pregnancy, she came as a suppliant to the god and slept in the Abaton. As soon as she left it and got outside the temple precincts, she bore a son who, immediately after birth, washed himself at the fountain, and walked about with his mother. In return for this favour, she inscribed on her offering : “ Admire not the greatness of the tablet, but the divine power, in that Kleo was with child for five years, until she slept in the Temple and the god cured her.”

2. *A three-years' daughter.* Ithmonike of Pellene came to the Temple to ask for offspring. She fell asleep and saw a vision. It seemed to her that she asked the god for a daughter, and Asklepios said that she would conceive, and that he would grant her anything else she asked. She answered that she had need of nothing else. But she remained with child for three years, until she returned to petition him about the birth. She fell asleep, and had a dream. She thought that the god asked her if she had not obtained from him all she had asked, since she was enceinte ; she had added nothing about the birth, when he had inquired if she wished anything further, and had said he would grant her it too. But since now she had come to ask him the favour, he would accord it to her. Then she hastened to leave the Abaton, and gave birth to a man-child when she was outside the sacred precincts.

3. A man, whose fingers, with the exception of one, were paralysed, came as a suppliant to the Temple. While examining the temple tablets, he expressed incredulity regarding the cures and scoffed at the inscriptions. In his sleep he saw the following vision. He thought that he was playing at dice near the Temple, and as he was going to cast the dice, the god suddenly appeared, seized his hand and stretched out his fingers. When the god stood aside from him, the patient thought he could bend his hand and stretch out all his fingers one by one. When he had stretched them all out, the god asked him if he would still be incredulous as to the contents of the inscriptions on the tablets. He answered that he would not, and the god said to him : " Since formerly you did not believe in the cures, though they were not incredible, for the future your name will be ' The Unbeliever.' " When day dawned, he left the sacred hall cured.

4. *Ambrosia of Athens, blind of one eye.* She came as a suppliant to the god. As she went round the Temple, she laughed at some of the cures, thinking it incredible and impossible for the lame and the blind to be healed by merely seeing a vision. In her sleep she had a dream. She thought that the god appeared to her, and said that he would cure her, but that in payment she must dedicate a silver pig to the Temple, as a memorial of her senselessness. After saying this, he cut the ball of the injured eye, and poured in some drug. When day came, she left the Temple cured.

5. A dumb boy came as a suppliant to the Temple to recover his voice. When he had performed the preliminary sacrifices, and fulfilled the usual rites, the temple priest who bore the sacrificial fire, turned to

the boy's father and said: "Do you promise to pay within a year the fees for the cure, if you obtain that for which you have come?" Suddenly the boy answered, "I do." His father was greatly astonished at this, and told his son to speak again. The boy repeated the words and so was cured.

6. *Pandaros, a Thessalian*, who had marks on his forehead. He saw a vision as he slept. He thought that the god bound the marks round with a head-band, and enjoined him to remove the band when he left the sacred hall, and dedicate it as an offering to the Temple. When day came, he awoke and took off the band. His face had been cleansed of the marks, and he dedicated to the Temple the band, to which the marks were transferred from his forehead.

7. *Echedoros* received the marks of Pandaros in addition to those which he already had. He had received money from Pandaros to offer to the god at Epidaurus in his name, but he failed to deliver it. In his sleep he saw a vision. He thought the god appeared to him, and asked if he had received any money from Pandaros to place as an offering in the Temple. He answered that he had received no such thing from him, but if he were healed, he was willing to offer to the god an image with an inscription. Thereupon the god fastened the head-band of Pandaros round his marks, and bade him take off the band when he left the Abaton, and wash his face at the fountain, looking at himself in the water. When day came, he left the Abaton, took off the head-band, on which the marks were no longer visible, and saw his face with his own marks and those of Pandaros in addition.



8. *Euphanes, a boy of Epidauros.* While suffering from stone, he fell asleep. He thought that the god appeared and asked him: "What will you give me if I cure you?" "Ten dice," he answered. The god laughed and said to him that he would cure him. When day came, he left the sacred hall cured.

9. A man who was so blind that, of one of his eyes he had only the eyelids left, came as a suppliant to the god. Some of those in the Temple said it was folly to think that he could recover his sight, when one of his eyes had not even a trace of the ball, and its socket was completely empty. As he slept, he saw a vision. It seemed to him that the god prepared some drug, then opening his eyelids poured it into them. When day came, he departed with the sight of both eyes restored.

10. *The Goblet.* A porter was going up to the Temple conveying various utensils, and he fell when he was about a mile distant from it. On getting up, he opened his bag, and saw that the vessels within had been broken. When he realised that the goblet, from which his master was accustomed to drink, was also broken, he was in great distress, and sat down to try to fit the pieces together again. But a passer-by saw him and said: "Foolish fellow, why waste your time repiecing a vessel which even Asklepios of Epidauros could not put to rights again?" The other, hearing this, put the pieces back in the bag and went on to the Temple. When he got there, he opened the bag, and brought the goblet out of it, and it was entirely whole. He related these sayings and doings to his master, who, on hearing them, dedicated the goblet to the god.

11. *Aischines*, while the patients were sleeping, climbed up a tree and tried to see over into the Abaton. But he fell from the tree on to some fencing, and his eyes were injured. In a pitiable state of blindness, he came as a suppliant to the god, and in his sleep was healed.

12. *Euippos* had had for six years the point of a spear in his cheek. As he was sleeping, the god extracted the spear-head, and gave it to him into his hands. When day came, *Euippos* departed cured, and he held the spear-head in his hands.

13. *A man of Torone*, who had swallowed leeches. In his sleep he saw a vision. He thought that the god cut open his chest with a knife and took out the leeches which he gave him into his hands. Then he stitched up his chest again. At daybreak he departed cured, with the leeches in his hand. By his step-mother's treachery he had swallowed them, while drinking a mixture of honey and wine into which she had put them.

14. A man who had stone in the bladder dreamt that he was lying with a boy. He ejected the stone, and departed, holding it in his hand.

15. *Hermodikes of Lampsakos* was paralysed in body. In his sleep he was healed by the god, who ordered him to bring to the Temple as large a stone as he could, when he left the Abaton. The man brought the stone, which now lies before the Abaton.

16. *Nikanor*, a lame man. While he was sitting wide-awake, a boy snatched his crutch from him and ran away. But *Nikanor* got up, pursued him, and so was cured.

17. A man had his toe healed by a serpent. He was suffering dreadfully from a malignant sore in his toe, when the servants of the Temple took him outside and set him upon a seat. When sleep came upon him, a snake issued from the Abaton, and healed the toe with its tongue, and thereafter went back to the Abaton. When the patient woke up and saw that he was healed, he said that he had had a dream that a beautiful youth had put a drug upon his toe.

18. *Alketas of Halika*. This blind man saw a vision. He thought that the god came up to him and opened his eyes with his fingers. The first things he saw were the trees of the Temple. At daybreak he left the Temple restored to health.

19. *Heraieus of Mytilene*. He had no hair on his head, but an abundant growth on his cheeks. He was ashamed, because it made him the object of laughter. He fell asleep, and the god, by anointing his head with some drug, succeeded in producing hair thereon.

20. *Thyson of Hermion*, a blind boy. While wide-awake, he had his eyes cured by one of the dogs in the Temple, and went away healed.

#### STELE II.

21. *Arata*, a woman of Lakedaimon, suffered from dropsy. She remained in Lakedaimon, while her mother went to sleep in the Temple and saw a vision. She thought that the god cut off her daughter's head, and hung up her body in such a way that her throat was turned downwards. Out of it came a huge quantity of fluid matter. Then he took down the body, and fitted the head on to the neck. After she had this dream, she went back to Lakedaimon, where she found

her daughter in good health, and she learned that she had seen the same vision.

22. *Hermon of Thasos*. His blindness was cured by Asklepios. But because he did not send the fees for his treatment to the Temple, he was made blind again. So he came back to the Temple, and in his sleep was again healed.

23. *Aristagora of Troizen*. She had tape-worm, and while she slept in the Temple of Asklepios at Troizen, she saw a vision. She thought that, as the god was not present, but away in Epidauros, his sons cut off her head, but were unable to put it back again. Then they sent a messenger to Asklepios asking him to come to Troizen. Meanwhile day came, and the priest actually saw her head cut off from the body.

The next night Aristagora had a dream. She thought the god came from Epidauros and fastened her head on to her neck. Then he cut open her belly, and stitched it up again. So she was cured.

24. *Aristokritos, a boy of Halika*, under a rock. He saved himself from shipwreck, and swam to dry land. The place was surrounded by rocks, and he was unable to leave it. Thereafter his father, after seeking in vain for him everywhere, had recourse to Asklepios on behalf of his son, and slept in the Abaton. He had a dream. He thought that the god led him to a certain place, and showed him that there was his son. He left the Abaton, quarried through the cliffs, and found his son, who had been there for seven days.

25. *Sostrata, a woman of Pherai*, was enceinte for a year. As she was in danger, she came to the Temple, carried on a litter, and slept there. But when she saw no clear vision, she went back home.

However, by the way, near a place called Kornoi, she met a man of fine appearance, who, on inquiry, learned from her attendants their failures. He told them to set down on the ground the litter in which they were carrying Sostrata, and then he cut open the sick woman's abdomen, and brought out from it a great quantity of worms, enough to fill two dishes. Thereafter he stitched her up again, and so the woman was cured. He revealed to her that he was Asklepios, and enjoined her to send the fees for her treatment to Epidauros.

26. A dog cured a boy from Aigina. He had a growth on the neck, and betook himself to the god. When he was wide-awake, one of the sacred dogs there healed him with its tongue.

27. A man had an abdominal abscess. He saw a vision, and thought that the god ordered the slaves who accompanied him to lift him up and hold him, so that his abdomen could be cut open. The man tried to get away, but his slaves caught him and bound him. So Asklepios cut him open, rid him of the abscess, and then stitched him up again, releasing him from his bonds. Straightway he departed cured, and the floor of the Abaton was covered with blood.

28. *Kleinates of Thebes and the lice.* He had lice on his body in great numbers. He came to the Temple, and in sleep saw a vision. He thought that the god stripped him, and making him stand upright, took a brush and with it brushed the lice from off his body. When day came, he left the Temple cured.

29. *Agestratos and his headaches.* He suffered from insomnia on account of headaches. As soon as he came to the Abaton, he fell asleep and had a dream. He

thought that the god cured him of his headaches and, making him stand up, taught him wrestling. When day came, he departed cured, and after a short time, he competed at the Nemean games, and was victor in wrestling.

30. *Gorgias of Herakleion and suppuration.* He had received an arrow-wound in the lung during battle, and for a year and a half discharged so great a quantity of matter as to fill sixty-seven dishes. In sleep he saw a vision. He thought the god extracted the arrow-point from his lung. When day came he departed, holding the point of the arrow in his hand.

31. *Andromache of Epeiros, for the sake of offspring.* In her sleep she had a dream. It appeared to her that the god lifted up her dress and touched her belly. So she bore a son to Arybbas.

32. *Cure of the eyes.* A man became blind of both eyes through a spear-wound which he had received in battle, and retained the spear-point in his face for a year. In sleep he saw a vision. He thought that the god pushed out the spear-point towards his eyelids, and then closed up again the pupils of his eyes. When day came, he departed healed.

[*The following cases, from 33 to 38, are not preserved in entirety on the stone, but are for the most part erased.*]

33. *Thersandros of Halika, a consumptive.* He saw a vision in his sleep . . . . .

34. . . . . It seemed good to the city to consult the oracle at Delphi . . . . The god gave the oracle . . . . the sacred precincts of Asklepios . . . . founded a sanctuary of Asklepios . . . . fulfilled the usual rites.

35. . . . . On behalf of offspring. In her sleep she had a dream. She thought that the god said she would have offspring and asked her . . . . Then she answered . . . . and soon after she bore a son.

36. *A lame man of Epidaurus.* He being lame came to the Temple on a litter. In his sleep he saw a vision. He thought that the god ordered him to climb a ladder on to the roof of the Temple . . . . and above the throne . . . . He came down the ladder a little . . . . At first the god was indignant at the deed, that a lame man should be so bold. At daybreak he departed healed.

37. *Kaphisias* ridiculed the cures of Asklepios, saying that if he had the power . . . . getting the penalty of insolence . . . . of the ox-head carved on the seat . . . . the foot immediately . . . . but later he heard his prayers and healed him.

38. *Kleimenes of Argos*, paralysed in body. He came as a suppliant to the Abaton, and in sleep saw a vision. He thought that the god wound round his body a snake (?) . . . . and took him to a lake, the water of which . . . . while he was lying there . . . . "Many men came for that," said the god, "to the sanctuary" . . . . He would not do such a thing, but would send him away cured. At daybreak he departed cured.

39. *Diaitos of Kyrene.* He had paralysis of the knees. In sleep he saw a vision. He thought that the god ordered his servants to lift him up and take him outside the sanctuary to the front of the Temple. After they had carried him outside, the god yoked his

horses to a chariot, and drove round about the Temple, so that the horses trampled under foot the sick man. And he immediately stood upright. When day came, he left the Temple cured.

40. *Andromeda of Keos*. She desired children, and in her sleep had a vision that a snake came and lay on her belly. And so she bore five sons.

41. Timon was wounded in the eye by a spear, and while sleeping saw a vision. He thought that the god rubbed down an herb, and poured it into his eye. And so he was cured.

42. *Erasippe of Kaphyes*. She had an abdominal swelling, the whole of her body was burning, and she was unable to walk about. As she slept, she saw a vision. She thought that the god touched her belly, and kissed her; then he gave her a bottle containing a drug, and commanded her to drink the drug and vomit it forth, so that the ejected matter filled the napkin. When day came, she saw that the napkin was full of the matter which she had vomited, and so she was cured.

43. *Nikasiboule of Messena*, on behalf of offspring. In sleep she saw a vision. She thought that the god appeared carrying a huge snake, and the snake lay with her. And so she bore two sons within the year.

44. *A sufferer from gout*. As he was walking about in a waking state, one of the geese in the Temple bit his feet, making them bleed, and so he was cured.

According to the orthography and the form of the letters, these inscriptions cannot be anterior to the middle of the fourth century B.C., nor posterior to the third century B.C. But it must not be



inferred that they all relate to contemporary practice. On the contrary, it is probable that the great majority of cases date much farther back than the time of their inscription on the tablets. The case of Aristagora (No. 23) is a proof of this, for her story is related by Hippias of Rhegion, a historian who wrote during the Persian wars. Also the anonymity, which is characteristic of so many of the cases, confirms this view. If particulars of identity had been obtainable, the beneficiaries would not be described as "a man," or "a woman"; such vagueness was undesirable in view of the fact that these cures were to serve the purpose of strengthening faith in the god. Other cases, again, may belong to the time when they were inscribed. For example, in No. 28, the article is used before the name Kleinates, which shows that it deals with an individual known at the time.

In all probability these inscriptions were compiled by the priests, who could draw the subject-matter from the traditions of the Temple, and from offerings deposited by grateful patients, on some of which there would be inscriptions giving the facts, as in case No. 1. Thus the cures might range from oldest traditions to the most recent achievements of the fourth century B.C. The date of the inscriptions is the same as that of the colonnade in which they were found, and this coincidence leads to the belief that the compilation was considered as an opportune addition to the new building, and was carried out by the temple officials to spread abroad the fame of the cult, and to increase faith in the god's healing powers.

INCUBATION AS REPRESENTED IN THE INSCRIPTIONS.—  
A certain uniformity is characteristic of these in-

scriptions. The act of incubation, which the suppliant performs, and the divine response to it present similar features in almost all the cases. The patient, seeking the god's help in his trouble, lies down to rest in the appointed hall, and during the night there comes to him a visitation from the god. In the majority of cases, the god appears in person, and by some simple act, or surgical operation, effects the cure. Next morning the patient leaves the Abaton sound in life and limb, content to have fulfilled the purpose of his visit to the Temple. The variety of troubles, ailments, and disablements in the inscriptions that remain to us, is great. A large proportion of them consists of what are called incurable diseases. Cases of blindness are of most frequent occurrence, and the eyesight is restored by the application of some ointment, or by the mere touch of the god's hand. Paralytics and lame men regain their powers by some similar simple act, while abscesses and other serious internal disorders are set right by divine surgery.

But amongst the cases marked by this uniformity of system, there occur a few of singular characteristics. The uniqueness of the experience of Aristagora (No. 23) gives the story a fabulous air, and it should probably be considered as a tradition of the Asklepios cult, arising from the rivalry between the two temples of Troizen and Epidauros. No. 25 also is peculiar. The cure is not effected at the Temple during incubation. After spending a fruitless night in the Abaton, Sostrata was returning home, when she was accosted by a man of fine presence, who performed an operation there and then, and cured her.

The only other case of a cure performed away from the Temple is No. 21, when the mother, leaving her daughter ill at home, goes to the Temple, and in a vision sees her being treated for dropsy. On her return, she finds that her daughter is restored to health, and that she had seen a similar vision.

One of the inscriptions (No. 10) deals not with a human patient, but with a broken vessel, which is made whole again, and No. 7, instead of relating a cure, tells of a punishment inflicted for seeking to defraud the god. The gift of prophecy which belonged to Asklepios is recorded in No. 24. A man who has lost his son is directed by the god, during incubation, to the place where he should find his son. Prophetic activity ranks far behind the healing powers of Asklepios as a source of his renown; nevertheless the two functions were closely connected in him as in the other chthonian deities, and it is noteworthy that one of these inscriptions records an instance of a prophetic oracle.

In four of the cases, the god did his work by proxy, his agents being some of the sacred animals maintained in the Temple. Two patients, while in a waking state, were cured by temple dogs, and other two by a serpent. At Epidauros, both dogs and serpents were considered sacred to Asklepios and kept in the Temple. Dogs were kept also in the Asklepieion at Athens, at Rome, and at Lebene in Crete, and according to an inscription, dogs were fed on sacrificial cakes at the Temple of Asklepios at the Piraeus. The serpent was the special symbol of the god, and as such was a fitting representative for him in the work of healing. A peculiar kind of harmless yellow snake was found at Epidauros, and it was adopted as an attribute of

the cult. In founding colonies for the worship of Asklepios, one of these serpents was sometimes sent as a representative of the god; for instance, at the foundation of the Temples of Kos, Rome, and Epidauros Limera.

The process which the suppliant to Asklepios had to carry out is stated with marked simplicity in these inscriptions, but it cannot be doubted that it was costly to the patients and was accompanied by rites and sacrifices. No. 5 is the only case where there is mention of these ceremonies, but judging by the temple buildings and the number of priests and servants, we can obtain some idea of their complexity. The usual ceremonies mentioned in No. 5 probably consisted of preparation by the priest through instruction, rites, and sacrifices, all calculated to increase the suppliant's faith, and dispose him to be in an impressionable frame of mind, before incubation. To the particular sacrifices we have no direct clue. At Triikka, it is related in Isyllos, the suppliant sacrificed to Apollo before entering the sacred sleeping-hall, and it is probable that at Epidauros, too, Apollo was approached in worship. When the preliminaries were over, and the suppliant's wish had been granted, he had to pay for the gift of health. The *iatra*, or doctor's fees, required to be disbursed, and they were stringently exacted. Seven of these inscriptions mention them, and Asklepios himself deigned to impress upon his patients that they must be paid. Punishment was inflicted on those who sought to evade payment. Two instances are given of blind men, whose sight had been restored, but was lost again, owing to failure in this respect; they recovered it only when they satisfactorily paid

the full dues. In another case, before the work of healing was done, a promise was exacted that payment would be forthcoming. Probably there was no fixed sum. A distinction would be made between rich and poor patients. It is recorded that a boy was allowed by the god to escape payment altogether.

A similar distinction was made in the thank-offerings dedicated to the god. In some cases these were suggested or demanded by Asklepios in the vision, as in No. 4, when Ambrosia was ordered to dedicate a silver pig. The offering was usually made according to the suggestion of the priests, who would advise it as a means of winning the god's favour or of showing gratitude for benefits received. The Temple was full of these votive offerings, which date from the beginning of the fifth century B.C. They varied from humble earthenware vessels to the most valuable treasures, and even some of the temple buildings were erected as thank-offerings, as, for example, the Baths of Antoninus. The extent and magnificence of the Temple tell of a plentiful revenue, accruing from earliest times, and no small part of this revenue was drawn from health-miracles. Pausanias (x. 38) tells of one, Phalysios of Naupaktos, who through gratitude for eyesight restored, gave two thousand gold staters (£1900) to the Temple of Asklepios.

It is, then, clear that at the Temple benefits were bestowed on men, for which they were willing to pay handsomely. But the manner in which these benefits were conferred is a matter of dispute. The inscriptions relate briefly and simply divine miracles. The patient, after the preliminaries were ended, betook himself to the sleeping-hall, and there was passive in the hands

of the god, who appeared in person and wrought the work of healing. This description of the works of Asklepios is found only in these inscriptions, but they are strongly supported in the *Ploutos* of Aristophanes, which gives a true, satirical picture of the practice of incubation at the beginning of the fourth century B.C.

Ploutos, the god of riches, has been deprived of his sight by Zeus, so that he could not distinguish between the just and unjust, and during incubation his sight is restored by Asklepios.

The following passage narrates his experiences at the Asklepieion, either in Athens, or at the Piraeus (v. 634):—

“*Karion*—As soon as we approached the god with him who then was the most miserable of men, but now blessed and happy above all, first we took him to the water and then gave him a bath.

*Wife of Chremylos*—Truly he was fortunate—an old man bathed in the chilly water.

*K.*—Then we went to the precinct of the god. When our wafers were laid on the altar, the preparatory sacrifices made, and our cake in the flame of Hephaistos, we laid Ploutos down on a couch, as was right, and we all put straight our mattresses.

*W.*—Were many others seeking the aid of the god?

*K.*—Yes, one Neokleides, who is blind, but surpasses in stealing men who can see; and many others suffering from all sorts of diseases.

When the servant of the god put out the lamps, and told us to go to sleep and keep silent if we heard a noise, all of us lay down quietly. I was unable to sleep, for I was distracted by a pot of porridge which stood a little way off from the head of an old woman,

and I longed to creep up to it. Then looking up, I saw the priest carrying off the cake and figs from the sacred table. Thereafter he went round all the altars in turn to see if any cake was left behind. Then he consecrated them into a bag. I, thinking there was great piety in the proceeding, got up and went for the pot of porridge.

*W.*—Didst thou not fear the god, audacious man?

*K.*—Ay, indeed I feared him, lest he should get to the porridge-pot before me, with his chaplets. His priest it was who showed us how.”

Then Karion describes how the god appeared with his daughters, Iaso and Panakeia.

“*K.*—Straightway I covered myself for fear, and he went round examining carefully the ailments in turn. Then a boy brought him a stone mortar and pestle and a medicine chest.

*W.*—Of stone?

*K.*—No, not the chest.

*W.*—But how didst thou see, thou wretch? Thou sayest thou wast covered up.

*K.*—Through my cloak, which had, in truth, not a few holes.

First of all he began to pound the ointment for Neokleides, putting in three heads of Tenian garlic. Then he crushed them in the mortar and mixed them with fig-juice and squills. Then he sprinkled on Sphettian vinegar, and anointed his eyelids, turning them up, so that the pain was greater. Neokleides, screaming and crying, tried to rush away, but the god laughed and said: ‘There now, sit plastered over, so that I may keep you from going and perjuring yourself at the Assembly.’

*W.*—How patriotic the god is, and how clever!

*K.*—Thereafter he sat down by Ploutos, and first touched his head; then took a clean towel and wiped his eyelids. Panakeia wrapped his head and all his face in a purple cloth. Then the god whistled, and two serpents, of prodigious size, rushed out from the Temple.

*W.*—O, ye friendly gods!

*K.*—And these two crept gently under the purple cloth and licked his eyelids round about, it seemed to me. And before you could drink ten measures of wine, lady, Ploutos stood up a seeing man.

I clapped my hands for joy, and wakened my master. The god at once disappeared and the snakes with him into the Temple.

Those who were lying near Ploutos began to congratulate him, you may imagine, and they kept awake the whole night till day dawned.

And I praised the god very highly that he had speedily made Ploutos to see and Neokleides more blind than ever."

The story of Karion confirms the Epidaurian inscriptions. Ploutos goes through preliminary rites and ceremonies, and at night sleeps in the Temple. Then a nocturnal visit is paid by the god, and by the divine touch, with the assistance of two sacred serpents, the patient recovers his sight. Evidently the reputation which Asklepios enjoyed as a worker of miracles, and which is made known in the inscriptions, was so well established as to be a subject for popular satirical comedy at Athens. We thus know that the cures were declared to be miracles, but we do not know to what extent they were miracu-



lous, or what was their connection with the art of medicine.

To judge from the Epidaurian inscriptions and from Aristophanes, the medical art was not practised at the Temple. The god wrought miracles of healing, and the Temple had need only of priests and servants for the accompanying rites. Of these priests we find mention in many of the temple inscriptions. There were the chief priest, and a second one, called the Fire-bearer, of almost equal rank, and the third was a temple-servant, the Zakoros or Nakoros. But apart from these ministers of the cult, would there not be a staff of skilled physicians and surgeons, who were willing to play the part of the divine visitor?

M. Kavvadias<sup>1</sup> takes the view that the medical art was not practised during the first few centuries of the Temple's prosperity. These inscriptions, in his opinion, along with the confirmation of the *Ploutos*, convey to us the method of treatment. He asserts that divine miracles were wrought, miracles such as have occurred at various times in men's experience, and such as do occur at Lourdes and in certain Christian churches. He quotes recent instances of temple miracles at Athens and the Piraeus, where two paralysed girls were cured in visions which came to them during sleep in the churches. Further, he rejects the idea that a comedy was played during incubation, in which a human physician took the part of the god. This might have been carried on by the priests to increase faith and reverence, if the cases treated had been ordinary complaints, but in view of the fact that they are mostly 'incurable'

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, ch. IV.

diseases, such as blindness and paralysis, it would be impossible to maintain that opinion.

This view of the question is opposed by Thraemer.<sup>1</sup> He considers that these inscriptions are not to be taken as statements of the method of contemporary practice. It is impossible to identify the beneficiaries, and the cases should be regarded rather as pious legends, in the same category as the mythological cures of Asklepios, found in Pindar and other writers. The inscriptions would be erected for the edification of the patients, but the treatment they themselves received would be on different lines. He holds that the art of medicine was practised in the temples of Asklepios from the earliest times, and that the methods of later centuries were merely a development of the original treatment, and not a complete transformation, as Kavvadias maintains.

As evidence for his argument, he takes the fragmentary inscription (*C. I. G.* Vol. IV. 954) found at Epidauros and belonging to the third or second century B.C. It was inscribed on a votive offering, and is as follows :—

“ For before coming into thy hands and into those of thy children, O Asklepios, I was prostrate under a baleful disease, with chest trouble and no power in my hands. But thou, O healer, didst persuade me to raise this offering and so live free from disease.”

The fact of the offering being made before the cure shows, for Thraemer, that the day of miracles was past, and as confirmation of this, he takes the passage in the *Curculio* of Plautus, where Cappadox, being in

<sup>1</sup> *Pauly-Wissowa*, p. 1686.

ill-health, spends a night in the Temple of Asklepios. The passage is as follows :—

Cappadox comes out of the Temple, after a night of incubation, and says (v. 216) : “ I am determined to depart now from this Temple, since I see it is the resolve of Æsculapius to do nothing for me and to refuse me healing. My health is waning, my affliction waxing greater.”

After conversation on his symptoms he asks Palinurus : “ Could you make a guess if I were to tell you what I dreamt in my sleep last night ?

*Palinurus*—Oh, I am the only man learned in divination. Why, the interpreter asks me for advice, and all keep by the answer I give them.”

After further talk the dream is told.

“ *Cappadox*—Last night I seemed to see in my sleep Aesculapius seated far away from us. He did not come near me, nor seem to set any value upon me.”

Palinurus advises him thus :

“ Make peace with Aesculapius lest a great evil should befall you, as has been portended in your sleep.”

The Greek play, from which Plautus derived the *Curculio*, was written soon after 303 B.C., and thus the style of incubation would be representative of the beginning of the third century B.C. Thraemer interprets the passage as implying that suppliants to the god did not expect from temple-sleep a supernatural healing but divine counsel. His interpretation can be disputed, for all Cappadox says is that the god did not approach him, or take notice of him. We are not told what would have happened

if he had been successful in obtaining divine aid. It is just as possible that Cappadox was expecting a miracle to be wrought, as advice to be given.

The evidence for this period of incubation is very scanty, and no absolute conclusions can be drawn from it. Fragments of two more of Pausanias' stelae (*C. I. G.* IV. 953, 953a) have been found at Epidauros, but they convey no new information. The inscriptions are to the effect (1) that Alexander of Crete being cured, contributed a mina of silver to the Temple of Asklepios; (2) that a man, blind of one eye, being cured, contributed money to the treasury of Asklepios. The third stele, which is of a different thickness, records the case of a woman, and in it incubation is mentioned, but the particulars cannot be deciphered.

A fourth stele of inscriptions has been recently discovered, and in 1903 was published by M. Kavvadias.<sup>1</sup> It was not found in the Abaton as the other columns were, but near the Propylaea of the Temple. It seems to have been used as the threshold of a doorway, and was probably transported from the Abaton in the Middle Ages. It is in a very imperfect state, broken in two, and only legible towards the end, but its dimensions and the form of the letters are the same as those of the first two stelae. It certainly contained a long list of cures by Asklepios, similar to those of the other columns. Towards the end we can read of a certain Herakleitos of Chios, who came to the Temple, and slept and saw a dream. The rest is indecipherable. Also one Pamphanis of Epidauros had a cankerous sore in

<sup>1</sup> *Mélanges Perrot*, 1903. "Sur la guérison des malades au Hieron d'Epidaure."

his mouth. He slept and had a vision. It seemed to him that the god opened his mouth . . . and cleaned out his mouth. From this he became well.

These fragments that are legible show that this stele also did not relate cures wrought by medical treatment. It was still a question of divine miracles.

INCUBATION IN ROMAN TIMES.—The doubt which exists as to methods of treatment in the early period of the Temple's activity disappears as we approach Roman times. Both from epigraphic and literary evidence we can form a clear idea of incubation as practised in these later days.

One of the fullest accounts is given in the inscription of M. Julius Apellas, found at Epidauros. It dates from the second century A.D., and the text is as follows (*C. I. G.* IV. 955):—

“Cure of M. Julius Apellas; inscribed in second half of 2nd century, A.D., by himself, at Epidauros.

*In the priesthood of Poplius Aelius Antiochus.*

I, Marcus Julius Apellas of Idrias and Mylasa, was sent for by the god, for I was a chronic invalid and suffered from dyspepsia. In the course of my journey the god told me in Aigina not to be so irritable. When I reached the Temple, he directed me to keep my head covered for two days; and for these two days it rained. I was to eat bread and cheese, parsley with lettuce, to wash myself without help, to practise running, to drink citron-lemonade, to rub my body on the sides of the bath in the bath-room, to take walks in the upper portico, to use the trapeze, to rub myself over with sand, to go with bare feet in the bath-room, to pour wine into the hot water before I got in, to wash

myself without help, and to give an Attic drachma to the bath-attendant, to offer in public sacrifices to Asklepios, Epione, and the Eleusinian goddesses, and to take milk with honey. When for one day I had drunk milk alone, the god said to put honey in the milk to make it digestible.

When I called upon the god to cure me more quickly, I thought it was as if I had anointed my whole body with mustard and salt, and had come out of the sacred hall and gone in the direction of the bath-house, while a small child was going before holding a smoking censer. The priest said to me: 'Now you are cured, but you must pay up the fees for your treatment.' I acted according to the vision, and when I rubbed myself with salt and moistened mustard, I felt the pain still, but when I had bathed, I suffered no longer. These events took place in the first nine days after I had come to the Temple. The god also touched my right hand and my breast.

The following day as I was offering sacrifice, a flame leapt up and caught my hand, so as to cause blisters. Yet after a little my hand was healed.

As I prolonged my stay in the Temple, the god told me to use dill along with olive-oil for my headaches. Formerly I had not suffered from headaches, but my studies had brought on congestion. After I used the olive-oil, I was cured of headaches. For swollen glands, the god told me to use a cold gargle, when I consulted him about it, and he ordered the same treatment for inflamed tonsils.

He bade me inscribe this treatment, and I left the Temple in good health and full of gratitude to the god."

In the above inscription the later method of incubation is detailed. It is maintained by Thraemer that this is the only method, and that it was merely an extension and development of the primitive treatment. Kavvadias, on the other hand, distinguishes two separate periods in the cult at Epidaurus. The ancient inscriptions he takes as relating the early methods, which were rendered impossible by the rapid growth of scepticism. People refused to believe any longer in miracles, and as faith is the first essential for the success of the supernatural, new methods had to be devised, if the Temple was to be supported by popular favour as in times past. The work of healing had now to be carried on by medical science and hygienic treatment, while, for evident reasons, the cult had to be preserved. Thus we find a combination of therapeutics and religious worship. The treatment is still by temple-sleep, but now the god does not save by personal action. He points out the way to salvation. Dreams were sent and tokens given to the suppliant, and an interpretation of these had to be made. According to the interpretation the patient pursued what seems to have been in many cases a long and tedious process of cure. The simplicity and reassuring certainty of the ancient inscriptions have disappeared, and instead of all being righted by the laying-on of a healing hand, the patient had to follow out carefully a course of treatment and submit to a strict régime. The usual measures prescribed were hot and cold baths, all sorts of bodily and gymnastic exercises, dietary regulations, frequent bleeding, and the application of drugs and ointments. Such treatment necessitated lengthy residence at the

Temple, so that it became a kind of hydropathic whither crowds flocked in search of health. To the success of the treatment, which in itself was hygienic, the healthy situation of the Temple, and the health-giving waters of the sacred well would largely contribute.

The influence of the priesthood was in these later times of the greatest weight. Practically everything lay in their hands, for their interpretation of the dreams was necessarily accepted as a divine inspiration. They also had it in their power to act on the patient's mind, so that certain dreams came to him, and according to Aelius Aristides, they sometimes asserted that they themselves had received a dream for a certain suppliant which he must act upon. This is a phase of incubation which is dealt with in connection with the Plutonia.

The *Sacred Orations* of Aristides give a graphic picture, with profuse details, of the existence of those who sought health at these resorts. He narrates his own experiences, and although his must have been an exceptional case in respect of duration, he would necessarily follow the ordinary methods of incubation. There is a striking parallelism between parts of his narrative and the inscription of Apellas. The cases were of the same hysterical, dyspeptic nature, and the same methods were pursued. Aristides visited many different temples of Asklepios, where the practices were on similar lines to those of Epidaurus. The details of his experiences and the treatment to which he submitted will be seen from the following résumé of his *Sacred Orations*.



### III. Incubation in the Cult of Asklepios

#### ARISTIDES' ORATIONS

DATE AND METHOD OF WRITING.—The *Sacred Orations* were written several years after Aristides' recovery from his long illness, which lasted 17 years and is calculated to have begun in 144 A.D. He survived the earthquake of 180 A.D., and is supposed to have died about 185 A.D. In four passages of the *Orations*, he mentions that he writes at an indefinite number of years after the cures, and it is supposed that he did so in 175, in the consulship of Salvius Julianus.

§316. "So long after, I cannot give details."

§319. "What I did with the geese, I do not know after the lapse of so many years."

§324. "I cannot give the true sequence of the dreams after the lapse of so many years."

§291. "Now after so many years, and so long a time, visions in dreams force me to put these matters before the world."

This lapse of time would account for his obscurity on many points, and for his disconnected narrative. Only for a few paragraphs of his first *Oration* does he give a continuous sequence of treatment as he carried it out day by day. He devotes more space to what he calls the wonderful parts of his experience, for the details of which he can refer to his notes. For, from the very beginning of his illness, the god had urged him to record the details. At Pergamos (§324) the god urged him to write, saying: "It is fitting for you to discourse like Socrates, Thucydides, and Demosthenes." And

§291: "This was the first of Asklepios' injunctions. And I recorded the dreams, dictating when I was unable to write myself." The vision of §361 was thus dictated, so that the details are exact, according to his notes. §292: "All that happened at Pergamos no man could relate, but if anyone wishes to know the details of our dealings with the god, he must consult my notes and the record of the dreams. He will find there cures of all kinds, conversations, speeches at length, all sorts of visions, prophecies and oracles about all sorts of things, some in prose and others in verse, and an unimaginable number of things calling for gratitude to the god."

But many of these notes had been lost during the years of his restless travel (§291), and in the first year of illness he had been too weak to think of recording.

BEGINNING AND GENERAL CHARACTER OF ILLNESS.—He began to suffer on his journey to Rome. Travelling in winter-time he caught a chill at the first. At the Hellespont he suffered from earache, and a storm causing difficulties of transport with ensuing hardships, brought on fever, asthma, and toothache. Arrived in Rome he had severe internal sufferings, shivering fits, and want of breath. Treatment by Roman doctors only aggravated his sufferings, and he determined to return home by sea. A stormy voyage made him worse. When at last he arrived in Smyrna, which hereafter was his headquarters, the doctors and "gymnasts" gathered round him, and were astonished at the varied nature of the disease—*τὴν ποικιλίαν τῆς νόσου*. They could do nothing but send him to the hot baths between Smyrna and Klazomenai. Here it was that Asklepios, the saviour, first began to make revelations

to him. The first order was to go with bare feet in the severe wintry weather.

At this time the worst of his troubles was want of breath, §292, and choking in the throat, and his nerves were also upset. Indigestion was his constant enemy, accompanied by fever, sleeplessness, and excessive perspiration. He was afflicted also with numberless complications, §303. He gives a detailed account of his symptoms, when he was sure he was on the point of death. Toothache and earache continued to trouble him from time to time, and he seems also to have suffered from rheumatism and lumbago, §357, being unable to endure movement.

§313 gives a detailed account of what seems to be a kind of fit, or convulsion, of the body. According to Sopater, he was an epileptic.

TREATMENT AT PERGAMOS—BATHS, ETC.—After a year and some months at Smyrna, Asklepios sent him to Pergamos. On the first night there, §293, the god appeared to Aristides' attendant under the form of Salbios, a visitor to the Temple, spoke to him about Aristides' writings, and called them Sacred Orations. Then he gave prescriptions for Aristides' cure—such as balsam-juice to be used on leaving a hot bath for a cold one, and soap, a mixture of raisins and other ingredients, also other prescriptions, which Aristides omits in order to come to the wonders of his cure.

He stayed in a gate-house of a priest at the Temple, washed in the sacred well, and anointed in the open-air, all according to the command of the god. He says he would soon have been restored to health, had he

not yielded to the advice of friends and followed their counsels instead of those of Asklepios. Then all went wrong. But when he kept to the orders of Asklepios all was right. His health was bad about the time of the winter-equinox. It was a stormy day. The god ordered him to rub himself over with mud and wash in the well. That night he was told to wrap himself over with mud, etc., and run three times round the Temple. It was a north wind and keen frost. He did as Asklepios ordered, then bathed at the well, and found himself in fine condition. But a companion who imitated him had a paralytic spasm, and could scarcely be restored to health. Another day of winter, he had to cover himself with mud and sit in the temple-hall of Zeus. Another time, he was told to rise from a bed of fever, and clad only in a linen garment, go out and wash in the well. He felt no cold, though the water was icy. The astonishment of the spectators at these baths was very great. Therefore, surely Aristides' was an unusual course of treatment.

River-bathing was ordered from the first, §301. He was confined to bed, in the priest's house, with fever and stomach troubles and countless complications. Asklepios ordered bleeding to the amount of 120 litres, which Aristides interpreted as meaning a large quantity, for all the priests agreed that they had never heard of such an amount. When this bleeding was proceeding, the god ordered a bath in the Kaikos. He rose, took off his woollen wraps, and walked to bathe. The bath gave him an indescribable relief. These cold baths in rigorous weather with a north wind blowing, are a common prescription. He men-

tions one at Smyrna, and a third at Pergamos, when he had long been too weak to leave the house. A crowd of friends looked on with astonishment. The pleasantness of the water was marvellous, for it was a stormy day. After the bath, a delightful heat pervaded his body (§295). Another time at Smyrna, he was sent to bathe in the river. It was the depth of winter, and extra hard wintry weather. A doctor prophesied paralysis for him if he bathed. But "full of heat from the sight of the god," he jumped in at the deepest part and had an agreeable bath. The onlookers cried out the praise of Asklepios. Aristides was renewed in health and vigour by this bath, and often repeated the treatment. §323. A bath in sand was ordered, and he cheerfully complied. §357. A cold bath was given as a cure for rheumatism. It was cold autumn weather and he was unable to move. In a dream he received a message to run ten stades and take a cold bath at the end. He ran the ten stades, against a stormy north wind, had an enjoyable bath in the river, and for a few months after enjoyed good health.

As great a "Paradox" was the journey ordered (§349) at a time when he was greatly troubled with his throat. The doctors had advised the greatest care and gargling. The god made him do a long journey with sand and dust blowing in his face and irritating his throat. At the end he sacrificed to Zeus Olympios in the Temple at his paternal home, and found himself much better in health. Horse-exercise was also ordered by a dream which he had while staying at his native city of Hadriani. He was in a weak state of body, exhausted by digestive troubles. His dream was that he was alone on a raft

in the Egyptian Sea, and Zosimos, his attendant, appeared to him in his difficulties, with a horse on land. Aristides got to land somehow, and mounted the horse. Then he found himself in the schools of Alexandria, and was delighted to hear children reciting verses which he had composed in honour of the god. The interpretation of this dream was that he went in for riding on horseback and benefited greatly thereby.

§314. Once at his father's house at Hadriani, he was alarmingly ill with high fever and severe pain. The doctors could do nothing. He fell asleep and had a dream that he must visit the house of his foster-parents. He arose, mounted a horse, and rode there and back, about a stade. On his return, his ailments had disappeared.

PROPHETIC VISIONS.—§294. At Smyrna, Aristides received a prophecy from the god as to the duration of his illness. Asklepios appeared to him along with the Klarian Apollo, called Kallitekno, of Pergamos, and reckoning on his fingers said, "'Thou shalt have ten years from me, and three from Serapis,' and by the placing of his fingers the thirteen seemed to be seventeen." This vision took place in the fourth year of illness; hence the number seventeen. References to this prophecy are found in three passages of the *Sacred Orations*, and in his *Eulogy to Asklepios*, §38, he says: "To some people the god even foretells times and seasons. And this we ourselves know."

This prophecy of the duration of his illness is one of the few cases of waking vision. The god himself says, "This is not a dream (*ὄναρ*) but a waking vision

( ὑπάρ ).” Occasionally he mentions the fact of sleep. Thus, §349, he was unable to sleep for dyspepsia, but during the day, he says, just enough sleep was granted him to conceive what he did conceive, namely, the dream that he proceeds to relate.

§298. He describes the sensations which a visitation of the god produces. “In this way the absinth was revealed in the most evident manner, and like countless other things, told of the presence of the god. It was as if one thought he could touch and see him when he came; as if one were between sleeping and waking, and wished to behold him, and were afraid he would depart before; as if one were all attention and were listening, sometimes in a dream, sometimes in a waking vision; as if one’s hair were standing on end, and as if one were shedding tears of joy and felt light-hearted;—but what man could describe this state? Those who are initiated can understand and sympathise.”

§274. He distinguishes between waking visions and sleeping. “Each of our days, as each of our nights, has its story, if anyone were willing to recount the events or tell of the providence of the god, how he sometimes made revelations openly in his own person, and at other times in messages conveyed by dreams, when it was possible for me to find sleep.”

§333. He expresses the idea that abstraction is necessary for converse with the god. “Once I heard the following opinion given as to divine converse and intercourse. He said that the mind must be removed from the actual circumstances, and if that were done, it could consort with the god, and by this intercourse would soar above the human state. In this there is

nothing marvellous, neither the fact that superiority produces intercourse with the god, nor that intercourse produces superiority."

One instance where the god seems to have appeared to him in bodily form is §289, also a prophetic vision. Zosimos, his attendant, was at a distance from him and felt ill. Aristides himself was in the greatest extremity, and each was more distressed at the other's illness than at his own. "The god appeared to me and I took hold of his head with one hand after another, begging him to save Zosimos. The god refused. Again taking hold of him in the same way, I begged him to consent. But he refused. A third time I took hold of him and tried to persuade him to consent. He neither refused nor agreed, but kept his head bent neither one way nor the other, and said to me words which are applicable in such cases. I remember them, but think it unnecessary to set them forth. After saying these things, he consented to give his help. One of the things he said was, 'Take care!' The sequel to this vision was that Zosimos recovered unexpectedly from that illness. According to what the god had told me, he had used barley and lentils as medicine. He lived four months longer."

The second sequel was the death of Zosimos, §317. A prophecy had been given to Zosimos that he would live as long as the cow lived in the field. This was interpreted to mean, he must not eat beef. At the time of his death it was said he had sacrificed a heifer, and that this had been fatal to him, along with the chill which caused his death, §290. He had gone off to visit and care for a sick friend against the orders of Aristides, who had been warned by Asklepios in a



dream not to let him go. His death followed from a chill. So the god had really cared for him according to the first vision, and his death was due to his disobedience.

The vision of Athena, §300, is the second instance of a waking vision, clearly stated as such. After the time of the prophecy had been fulfilled, a plague broke out in Smyrna, 162 A.D. Aristides had been in good health, but fell a victim to it, and was in a dangerous state of bilious fever. While lying awake in bed he seemed to have a dream in which Asklepios and Athena appeared. Athena was in beauty and height like Pheidias' statue, and held the aegis, which seemed waxen. She was visible only to Aristides, for when he tried to point her out to his two friends and his attendant present, they could not see her, and began to fear for his sanity. At last they noticed that his strength was being restored, and he communicated to them the words the goddess spoke to him, to the effect that, like Odysseus, he must hold out. "Then the idea came to me to use Attic honey as a medicine, and I got rid of the biliousness." A course of medical treatment followed, with strict diet, of which he mentions goose liver and pork. He made a slow recovery, and was not wholly rid of the fever until the day when one of the best of the younger members of his household died. He recognised the prolongation of his life as a gift from the god who had taken the young life in his place.

This idea of exchange of a soul for a soul and a body for a body finds expression in another passage, when Aristides does not fail to recognise the divine providence in taking another soul in his place, §351.

While at Smyrna he got the news that Philumena, the daughter of his foster-mother, was very ill. He started to visit her, sending on a doctor. On the way he was caught in a severe storm and took refuge in the temple of Apollo, where he was detained for several days by dreams. Besides these dreams, he had, while sacrificing, a vision of a divine deliverer. An augur inquired if the deliverance was for ever, or merely a delay, but no clear answer was forthcoming. Meanwhile the death of the girl was announced, and all recognised that some deity was at work. This was even clearer from the sequel. Aristides had a dream that the father of the girl recorded the oracles about her, and that within her body, as in the case of victims used for augury, was the revelation of her fate. In this record occurred also the name of Aelius Aristides, and a statement that her soul was given for his. She was the sister of the boy whose death was mentioned in the last instance.

Another case of prophecy is recorded, §294, when the god told him he must die three days after. At the same time he gave him proofs of the truth of the oracle and also directions as to how to save himself. These consisted in sacrifices and sacred rites, and the dedication of his ring to Telesphoros.

MEDICAL TREATMENT.—The medical treatment to which Aristides was subjected is subordinated in his record to the wonders. In his *Eulogy to Asklepios*, §38, he says: "Truly the wonderful plays the leading part in the visitations of the god. He makes one man drink gypsum, another hemlock, while another has to strip and wash in cold

water, when you would think he needed heat. I myself have been honoured in this way. He has stopped catarrh and chills by river and sea bathing; he has cured prostration with long walks; when I have been without food for some time he has added purging, and when I have been unable to breathe, I have been told to read and write."

The ordinary hygienic measures ordained by Asklepios were cold water bathing, bleeding, anointing with mud or sand, walking with bare feet, exercise in the open air, and riding.

The medicinal remedies suggested by the god are varied and curious.

§315. He took nuts, figs, and dates, with bread, as emetics, and used for the digestion a compounded drug which Asklepiakos, a doctor, had given him. This was replaced by another of four ingredients which he had to take after food. It was a mixture of Philon, and seemed agreeable to him now when the god had ordered it, though before he could not endure even the smell of it. He says that he cannot recount the numberless drugs the god ordered. He was strictly dieted as befitted a dyspeptic, and various changes were made from time to time.

§297. Absinth with vinegar was prescribed; §283, eggs were ordered and herbs; §288, honey and acorns as emetics. Wine was once forbidden, then allowed in moderation. He was allowed no animal food, except poultry, no vegetables, except lettuce and wild herbs (*cf.* the cure of Apellas), no sweets or fish.

When suffering from toothache he got the following remedy from the god:—"To burn the tooth of a lion, cut it up and use it as a soap, and wash out the mouth

with it. Then add pepper for the sake of heat, and lastly use as a soap Indian corn."

§328. Another cure for toothache he finds in delivering a speech. A dream urges him to exercise oratory at a time when he can scarcely open his mouth for pain. After reading a discourse he finds the pain has vanished.

§487. A curious treatment of a tumour is recorded. Some time before the god had warned him to guard against dropsy. A tumour appeared later in an unaccountable way, and the doctors wished to take drastic measures to remove it. Asklepios bade him bear with it, and Aristides held out against all entreaties for four months. The god meanwhile prescribed such difficult exercise as promenades with bare feet, and riding on horseback. Then his attendant and he had the same dream, to rub on a drug of which one ingredient was salt. This done, the tumour disappeared, to the amazement of the doctors and friends. To complete the cure, egg was rubbed on by order of the god, and it was completely healed.

§311. A sore throat was treated. He had to put on a plaster of cinnamon all round, and with that make a journey of 240 stades. He was able to endure the thirst both ways, and felt just like one going to a bath in the town.

INTERPRETATION OF THE DREAMS.—The method Aristides used to interpret the divine communications is left in obscurity, and the connection between the dream and the conclusion he draws from it is not explained.

§280. "I dreamt that a bone was sticking in my

throat, and I had the idea of having myself bled. I did it and improved in no small degree.”

§300. The vision of Athena suggested Attic honey as a purgative.

§275. “ After this dream I had an idea of taking a bath, yet not quite free from doubt.” He determined, however, to bathe, and suffered severely for it.

§285. A case is given of a second vision sent to explain a doubtful point in the first. He dreamt he was in Smyrna and was eating a fig, when an augur told him there was deadly poison in it. He hastened to take an emetic. When he awoke, he was not sure whether to interpret this dream to mean he should take an emetic or should fast, for there was said to be poison in the other figs also. So he asked the god for a clearer vision. He fell asleep and dreamt he was in the temple at Pergamos, and told Theodotos that he was fasting, whereupon Theodotos tried to dissuade him from it.

§318. He asked the god for a confirmatory sign, for he was doubtful how to act. He had been told before to keep his hands from off cows, and now was ordered to sacrifice an ox. He had scruples about doing so. However, in answer to his appeal, a bright light flashed on to the sacrifice, and he took courage and went on with it.

§298. Sometimes the interpretation of the dream is quite simple, as here, when the drinking of absinth is clearly indicated by the introduction of that drug into the dream.

§333. The sequence is hardly logical when he dreams about Lysias and is freed ( *ἐλύθη* ) from

tertian fever. The benefit may be attributed to the verbal coincidence or to the good action of Lysias.

Or, in §351, he dreams of the *Clouds* of Aristophanes, and next morning rain falls. The event is mentioned as a sequel to the dream, but, though subsequent, may not have been consequent.

DREAMS ABOUT ORATORY.—At times it seems as if his own thoughts were used as material for the dreams and converted into the god's opinions—for example, in the many flattering allusions to his own brilliancy and oratorical powers which occur in the dreams.

§360. He is set beside Plato.

§333. He is given the same place in oratory as Alexander the Great in war.

§§281, 283. He consorts on familiar terms with the Emperors, and favours them with readings.

§324. His practice of oratory was begun at the instigation of Asklepios. He had been commanded in a dream to deliver a speech, though he was suffering from want of breath. A friend told him that he knew of a similar case, where the patient had been cured by the perspiration caused in the attempt to speak. So Aristides made an attempt, and that was the beginning of his orations. He further received encouragement from the orator Rosandros in a dream, in which he recalled Plato and Demosthenes.

§327. His splendid powers as an orator made him think he received direct inspiration from Asklepios. In his speech to Asklepios he acknowledges the gift of oratory received from him.

§309. He delivers a speech at Ephesus, then takes

a cold bath, and says: "The onlookers marvelled no less at the bath than at the speech. Both were from the god."

§328. He had been inspired while in Rome to write a complete paeon to Apollo, though he had had no practice in the art.

§332. He had an inspiration in his sleep for a dedicatory epigram.

§354. His orations were always highly successful. On this occasion he attracted great crowds while his opponent had an audience of seventeen only.

§361. He had a vision about his future glory. He dreamt he was at Athens and a brilliant flash struck his hair from the right side. This was said to signify glory. In the conversation preceding this portent, Aristides had expressed the opinion that true glory for men lay in their written works.

PLACE OF INCUBATION.—There is obscurity as to where the incubation took place. In only a few instances does he mention where he was when the dream came to him.

§307. According to a dream he took up his position between the doors and the gates of the Temple at Pergamos.

§309. Asklepios ordered him to take his rest all over the Temple, in the open air, or by the sacred torch of the god.

§311. He reposed in the shrine of the saviours.

§340. "I lay in the presence of the god and he gave me a wonderful dream"—which he relates.

§353. He passed the night in the Temple under the lamp.

RELATIONS WITH PRIESTS.—Aristides dealt directly with the god himself. The priests had secondary positions, but often figure as counsellors. §298. Aristides was accustomed to relate his dreams to the priest in whose house he stayed at Pergamos. Sometimes a priest had a dream about him.

§312. A priest told Aristides that he was suffering from consumption. A priest came afterwards, and said that he had heard the god saying that Aristides had catarrh and consumption, and that his stomach was cured—this without knowledge of the revelation to Aristides.

§297. A priest had a dream that Aristides should take absinth with vinegar, and Aristides had one to the same effect.

§314. Aristides had been told in a dream to use a royal thing, from a woman. The priest explained that this must be an unguent lately deposited by a noble woman at the feet of Hygeia. He procured it and received great relief in his throat and back.

Other people had dreams about Aristides. Neritos, one of his attendants (§312) told him that he had a dream in which the god told him that Aristides' bones and muscles must be replaced by new ones. When he saw the distress this caused Neritos, he explained that there must take place a great change in Aristides' body, and he told him to recommend the use of olive-oil without salt.

On another occasion (§288) Zosimos has the same dream as Aristides on the same night.

§322. When they were at the famous Temple of Poimanon in Mysia, a farmer who did not know of Aristides dreamt about him.



§334. Epagathos, a faithful and godly old attendant, dreamt that he heard the following words about Aristides—"For him will the mother of the gods care." So Aristides adopted the name of Theodoros, considering himself, his body, life, and power of speech, a gift from the god.

RELATIONS WITH DOCTORS.—There is constant mention of doctors. His attendant Zosimos was skilled in medicine (§290). But Aristides recognised the god as the only authority, and following his counsels against those of the doctors, though at the same time maintaining friendly relations with them.

§286. Aristides had a vision as to the nature of his illness which he related to the doctor, who at once recognised the right diagnosis of the case. He proclaimed Asklepios to be the true healer, and proceeded to consult him on further points.

§311. Aristides mentions a renowned doctor of Pergamos, called Satyros, who told him to stop the bleeding to which he was submitting, and to apply a plaster he gave him. Aristides kept the gift, but refused to stop the bleeding, which the god had ordered. Later on, at Lebedos, he thought he would apply the plaster, and did so, with dire results. The god declared that he had brought on consumption.

§288. The doctors were forced to admire the healing powers of the god, when he made the tumour disappear by applying a drug.

§295. The doctors look on with astonishment at the winter-baths in the river.

MISCELLANEOUS DREAMS.—Aristides became so accustomed to the help of dreams that he consulted the god on all kinds of subjects.

§346. An estate of his was seized by enemies. By the help of the god he gained access to the governor and recovered his property.

§293. He was caught in a storm by sea on his way to Chios. Amid the universal alarm, he called, "O Asklepios," and all were saved. At night the god told him it was fated he should suffer shipwreck, and that was the cause of the events.

§329. He was saved from a storm by the god, who persuaded him to remain at Delos in spite of the wishes of the crew. All recognised the divine providence when a terrible tempest set in.

§323. He was saved from the plague by Athena and Asklepios.

§318. He was saved from an earthquake by being sent to Mt. Atys, which escaped the upheaval in 151 A.D.

§356. He asked for a sign when it was the proper time to approach the governor and present a petition. And he received it.

§338. He was saved from holding office. Severos, the governor, had decided he should be guardian of the peace for a certain town of Mysia. Aristides asked for help to escape this, and got a Delphic verse in answer—"I and the white maidens shall care for that." The white maidens proved to be letters from the Emperors, which freed him from necessity to serve. But Severos determined to give him an honorary position as ruler, and he had again to get the god's help. By the influence of the secretary he was released.

§345. He escaped holding the priesthood of Asia by accepting the priesthood of Asklepios.

Aristides had cause for gratitude in all this varied assistance, and is not sparing in the expression of it. His habitual title for Asklepios is Saviour or Lord.

§37. "Asklepios is he who has guided and directed all, Saviour of the Universe, and guardian of the immortals, or in the language of tragedy, the steersman at the helm."

CONNECTION WITH SERAPIS AND ISIS.—§294. The prophecy of his connection with Serapis was that he had three years to serve with him.

§319. Serapis appeared with Isis and Asklepios, and there was a striking inter-resemblance.

Then after the death of Zosimos, Serapis appeared with a pruning-knife, and proceeded to cut away defilements from round Aristides' face, and to make it seemly. Later came a vision from the chthonian gods that it would be better for him not to grieve so much for the dead. He had another vision of ladders over and under the earth, and saw things unrecountable. He learned the power of the god, how Serapis was able to convey men wherever he wished without chariots or bodies. He knew that he must sacrifice to Serapis, and had (§320) another sign of this when he met two geese as he left the Temple of Isis after sacrificing to the two deities of the Temple.

§319. Isis demanded an offering of two geese. He had difficulty in procuring them as there were only two geese in the place. The owner had been told, he said, by Isis, to keep them for Aristides.

§344. When Aristides was in difficulties about escaping election to office, he received oracles from Isis and Serapis that the affair would be successfully concluded, and that he would be on good terms with his enemies.

## IV. Incubation in the Cult of Asklepios

### ROME AND LEBENE

#### THE TEMPLE OF AESCULAPIUS ON THE TIBER ISLAND.<sup>1</sup>

—To the same period as the Apellas case and the *Orations* of Aristides, that is, to the second century A.D., belong the four inscriptions<sup>2</sup> of cures found on the Tiber Island at Rome. On this island a temple of Aesculapius stood, the most ancient, and also the most important, in the neighbourhood of Rome. Both temple and cult were entirely Greek. The worship of Aesculapius does not seem to have been subjected to any process of naturalisation at Rome. Its adoption was direct from Greece, and the new branch kept the same forms as the parent-stem.

The tradition of the temple's foundation, which is well authenticated, is given by Valerius Maximus, who took it from Livy. In 293 B.C., the Sibylline books advised the summons of the Greek god Asklepios, on account of continued plague. An embassy was sent to Epidaurus, as chief centre of the cult, and they brought back the healer in the form of one of the sacred serpents. As they sailed up the Tiber, the serpent landed on the island, thus choosing the site for the temple.

A similar legend is found in Pausanias (iii. 23. 6), concerning the foundation of another offshoot from Epidaurus—the temple at Epidaurus Limera.

<sup>1</sup> Besnier—*L'Île Tibérine*.

<sup>2</sup> *C.I.G.* 5980.

He relates that a state embassy was sailing from Epidauros to Asklepios at Kos, and touched at Epidauros Limeria. A snake that was on board ship escaped, and went down into the earth not far from the sea. "So on account of this portent as well as dreams, they determined to remain and found a colony there. Where the snake went down into the earth stand the altars of Asklepios, and an olive-grove grows round about."

The Tiber Island, where the serpent is said to have landed, is now called the island of San Bartolomeo, and is reached by the bridge of Quattro Capi. On it stands a little monastery with a garden of orange and myrtle trees, and attached to the monastery is the large hospital of the Fate Bene Fratelli, belonging to the brothers of San Giovanni di Dio. It may be conjectured that the isolation of the site, which makes it admirably adapted for the modern hospital, accounted also for the foundation of the temple of Aesculapius, likewise the resort of the sick. The temple is now replaced by the church of San Bartolomeo, built in the eleventh century. Some relics of the temple are seen in the church. The monolithic columns and two bases of pillars seem to come from antiquity, and in the middle of the altar steps is a well, the peculiar position of which shows that it must have existed before the foundation of the church. In all probability it had been the sacred well of Aesculapius, and was respected by the Christians when they succeeded to the pagans. The most interesting sign that remains of the ancient sanctity attached to the island is the fragment of the original decoration which is still to be seen when the water of the Tiber is low. At the south-east end of

the island, almost at the point, one descends a little wooden staircase at the side of the morgue, and finds there traces of antiquity. To recall the coming of the divine serpent, the island was given the form of a trireme, but the work has been almost wholly destroyed by the swift Tiber floods. Still at this point one sees blocks of tufa going deep down into the sand, and supporting eight layers of travertine. This represents the side of a ship. On it are vestiges of a human bust—some hair and the shoulders are clearly distinguishable—and beside the bust is a staff round which a serpent coils. Aesculapius no doubt was here represented. Farther along is an ox head without ears or horns. Besnier dates the work in the middle of the first century B.C. It is not known to what extent the island was thus decorated, but small traces of stone work have been found at other parts. In the centre of the island stood an obelisk of imperial times, representing the ship's mast. Its fragments are now in the museums.

No sign has been found of the existence of porticos in connection with the temple, but apart from the fact that they are an ordinary adjunct to Asklepieia, their presence is attested by passages from various authors. Livy (ii. 5) mentions temples and porticos on the island, and Plutarch (*Popl.* 8) says: "This island is now sacred for the city. It has temples of the gods and porticos." As in the other temples they would serve as sleeping-places for the suppliants to the god.

The numerous ex-voto inscriptions found at Rome and in the neighbourhood show that Aesculapius was worshipped at different places in the surrounding

district, such as Tibur and Caieta, as well as at Rome. But the introduction of the cult was not followed by striking success. The Roman temple did not prove a rival to the Greek. It seems, on the contrary, never to have risen above a certain level of insignificance. Aristides the Orator, and the Panegyrist of many sanctuaries of Asklepios, makes no mention of the Roman temple, although he visited the city. From the ex-voto inscriptions it appears that its devotees were chiefly slaves and freedmen, the only notable name associated with the cult being that of Antoninus Pius.

The following inscriptions<sup>1</sup> are examples of the dedications on votive offerings given to the Roman Aesculapius :—

A. To the saviour Asklepios, Nikomedes, as thank-offering for life preserved. This fair image of the son of the divine healer, boy new-born, thou hast devised and wrought for mortals, O Boëthos, as a memorial for posterity of thy skilful craft. Nikomedes dedicated it as an offering for deliverance from dire disease, and as a monument of ancient handiwork.

B. To the king Asklepios, as thank-offering for life preserved, Nikomedes, doctor of Smyrna. Such as was the young child who was born to Phoibos of the flowing locks by the daughter of Phlegyas, O healer Asklepios, is the statue of fine work which Boëthos has wrought for thee with his skill. In this temple thy servant has dedicated it to be seen as a thank-offering for life preserved, since by thy counsels he has been rescued from illness—a small gift of thankful praise, such as mortal men give to show their gratitude to the gods.

<sup>1</sup> *C.I.G.* III. 5974.

The above inscriptions were found near Trajan's Baths, and belong, probably, to the second or third century A.D.

In the Tiber Island a small stand of marble, the base of a silver offering, was found with the following inscription on it. The name of the dedicator, Julianus, and the shape of the letters make it probable that it belongs to the time of Augustus. It tells that the object supported by this stand was an image of the organ cured by the god, and runs thus<sup>1</sup>:—To Asklepios, the great god, the saviour and benefactor, saved by thy hands from a tumour of the spleen, of which this is the silver model, as a mark of gratitude to the god: Neochares Julianus, a freed-man of the imperial household.

Many other dedications have been found both in Latin and Greek, and they show, by the messages they convey and by their similarity to the votive offerings of other incubation temples, that the practice was carried on at Rome. They tell us, however, nothing about the method. For this our only guide is found in the four inscriptions of cures belonging to the Tiber Island. The marble slab on which they were written was lost at the time of the Renaissance, but the text is known from copies. The following is the translation from the Greek<sup>2</sup>:—

1. At this time the god made a revelation to Gaius, a blind man, that he should approach the holy altar and there do reverence; then go from the right to the left, and place his five fingers on the altar; then raise his hand and lay it on his own eyes. He could see

<sup>1</sup> Besnier—*L'Île Tibérine*, p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> *C.I.G.* 5980.



clearly, and the people stood by and rejoiced to see these great powers working in the time of the Emperor Antoninus.

2. Lucius suffered from pleurisy and had been despaired of by all. The god made a revelation to him that he should go and lift ashes from the triangular altar, and mix them with wine, and lay them on his side. He was saved, and he offered thanks publicly to the god, and the people rejoiced with him.

3. Julianus suffered from hemorrhage and had been despaired of by all. The god made a revelation to him that he should go and lift from the triangular altar some pine-cones, and should eat them with honey for three days. He was saved, and he came and gave thanks publicly before the people.

4. The god made a revelation to Valerius Aper, a blind soldier, that he should go and take the blood of a white cock along with honey and compound an eye-salve, and with it anoint his eyes for three days. He regained his sight, and went and gave thanks publicly to the god.

The Emperor mentioned is either Caracalla or Antoninus Pius; therefore the date is the second century A.D. The inscriptions are closely allied to the Epidaurian cures. They are inspired by the same spirit, but their method is different from that of the two classes treated above—the ancient miracle cures and the Apellas inscription. The closest parallel to them is found in the two fragmentary inscriptions discovered in the village of Miamú, in Crete. They belong to the sanctuary of Asklepios at Lebene, which was greatly frequented by the Cretans, according to Philostratos (*Vita Apoll.* iv. 34).

LEBENE.—The Lebene inscriptions differ in form. That of Poplios Granios is spaced widely, with title-lines, and is divided into two distinct paragraphs. Inscription I., on the contrary, has its three parts closely connected by a participial construction in a concise form. The explanation seems to be that the inscription of Granios is the original votive inscription, while the other is one of a series collected for the benefit of the Temple visitors, like those at Epidaurus. Remnants of preceding and succeeding inscriptions can be traced on the stele.

#### INSCRIPTION I.<sup>1</sup>

A certain woman (name obliterated) gives thanks to the saviour Asklepios. She had an inflamed ulcer on her little finger, and was cured by the god, who ordered her to burn and grind down an oyster-shell and apply it. Then to anoint the finger with rose-ointment, and mallow with olive-oil. So I was cured. I beheld the great powers of the god in sleep, and he bade me inscribe my visions.

#### INSCRIPTION II.<sup>2</sup>

To Asklepios.

Poplios Granios. According to command.

I had had a cough constantly for two years, and the whole day I was bringing up suppurating matter, when the god took in hand to cure me.

He gave me an herb, eruca, to take after fasting, and Italian pepper to drink; fine meal with hot water, then a powder from the ashes of the altar with holy

<sup>1</sup> *Ath. Mittheil.* XXI.—Zingerle, pp. 67-92.

<sup>2</sup> *Philologus*—1889, II.—Baunack, p. 401.

water; then an egg and pine-resin; next black pitch, next the iris plant with honey, then a quince . . .

The rest of the inscription is fragmentary.

Apart from the mention of publicity which is peculiar to the Roman inscriptions, the form of the two sets is, to all intents and purposes, identical. In brief, there is a combination of rational cure with mystic rites. The god does not cure personally as in the ancient miracles, but gives the patient guidance by dreams. The treatment, however, is not similar to the dietary and hygienic measures of Apellas or Aristides. Mystic medicaments are prescribed and the exact ingredients detailed in the dreams. It is an open question whether the efficacy of these drugs was a negligible quantity, or whether they served some therapeutic purpose. If they were useless paraphernalia, then the cures must be explained as faith miracles. Gauthier, in his *Récherche Historique sur l'Exercice de la Médecine* takes the view that these cures are to be explained independently of hygienic and therapeutic treatment. They would be effected by the powerful influence of the imagination on the nervous system, and by the unlimited confidence which the patients reposed in remedies that they believed to be advised by a god.

The first of the Roman inscriptions may be explained in this way. It is a simple faith-miracle. A blind man recovers his sight through conveying the sacred power of the altar to his eyes by touch. Some of the ancient Epidaurian inscriptions were of the same nature. On the other hand, the first Lebene inscription might be called a semi-rational cure. Ointment is prescribed for an ulcer without ceremonies, and its healing

properties would be intensified by the faith of the patient. The prescriptions for the other cases appear to have a deeper significance. They are not rational cures nor simple faith-miracles. Rather they are tinged with the mysticism of magic rites. A symbolic system is conveyed in the ingredients, which stand in special connection and relationship with the cult.

Deubner<sup>1</sup> proves a close connection between these tokens used as medicaments and the prescriptions given in the papyri dealing with ancient magic, and it seems beyond doubt that these inscriptions of the Asklepios cult express a certain symbolism. The second Roman inscription prescribes ashes mixed with wine for pleurisy, and the second Lebene inscription includes ashes as one of the remedies for the cough. The ashes in both cases were to be taken from the altar, and therein lay their efficacy as a sacred healing medium. Wine, which was to be mixed with the ashes, was much used in the rites of the chthonian gods and the cult of the dead. Frequent mention of it is found in the *Magic Papyri* of Kenyon and Wessely. In the third case, pine-cones are prescribed to be taken from the altar, and thus they would be sacred like the ashes. The fact that they were to be found on the altar makes it probable that they were a usual offering to the god, and they are certainly connected with the cult, for Pausanias (ii. 10), giving a description of the Asklepios of Sikyon, work of Kalamis, says: "The god had in the other hand the fruit of the cultivated pine." Honey, which was to be taken with the pine-cones, was much used along with wine and milk in chthonian worship, and is frequently mentioned

<sup>1</sup> *De Incub.*, ch. II.

in the *Magic Papyri*. The length of the treatment is likewise given in a symbolic way, for the number three had special magic properties.

In the fourth inscription, an eye-salve is prescribed to cure blindness. The ingredients, here too, have a connection with the cult. The blood of a white cock was to be mixed with honey and applied for three days. Honey and the number three both occurred in the previous inscriptions. The cock was, like the serpent, an animal sacred to Asklepios, and it is well known how Sokrates, in the *Phaido*, just before death, says that he owes a cock to Asklepios. White was a favourite colour for sacrificial animals and in magic rites, according to the *Papyri*. A salve, such as this, made of blood and honey, is found in Wessely's *New Greek Magic Papyri*, p. 93. The prescription is as follows: "Invocation. Prayer to the star Aphrodite. The blood and fat of a white dove, raw myrrh and boiled wormwood: make together a salve and sacrifice . . ." The dove was sacred to Aphrodite as the cock to Asklepios, and the use of *collyria* or salves in magic and chthonian rites is of frequent occurrence.

It is clear from the above that a certain intimate relationship must have existed between the rites of ancient magic and the healing art as practised at the centres of incubation in connection with chthonian gods. Another passage from the *Magic Papyri* (43.694) supports this doctrine. It details the ceremonies to be performed when invoking Asklepios before incubation, and the translation is as follows:

"Taking a lizard from the water, leave it in lily oil until it dies. Then cut the ring off from the Asklepios at Memphis from the iron chain and throw it into the

lily oil, and when thou consultest the oracle, take the ring and point it to the north, saying these words seven times : ' Menophoi, O thou who art seated on the cherubim, send me the true Asklepios without any hostile roaming sprite.'

Then take the censer where thou art going to sleep, and offer up three grains of frankincense and turn thy finger round in the frankincense smoke, saying these words seven times : ' Chanaps ; oaeikps ; oaklusiphtha ; O lord Asklepios, appear.' And do thou wear the ring on the forefinger of the right hand."

## V. Incubation in the Cult of Asklepios

### ATHENS AND KOS

THE TEMPLES OF ASKLEPIOS AT ATHENS AND KOS.  
—Athens and Kos were two of the most important centres of the cult of Asklepios, but in neither of the sanctuaries have any clues been found to solve the problem of incubation.

The Athenian Asklepieion has been excavated on the south side of the Acropolis, between the theatre of Dionysos and the Odeon. A short description of the sanctuary is given by Pausanias (i. 21. 4), and this site agrees with his account. The buildings are situated on a long terrace divided into two small terraces. On the eastern terrace one can clearly distinguish the foundations of the temple, to the east a large altar, and behind a long colonnade. This colonnade corresponds to the porticos at Epidauros, and was in all probability the Abaton. Traces of a staircase have been found, so that, as at Epidauros, it was a two-storeyed building. At the east end, next the Dionysiac theatre, a door in the back of the portico leads into a grotto hollowed out in the rock, where there is a sacred well. It is still used as a shrine, and a picture of the Virgin with votive candles is worshipped. The situation of the portico against the Acropolis wall, facing south, made it a salubrious place for the patients who came to sleep there. It can be seen that the colonnade was paved with Hymettian marble, which shows that its date is not

earlier than the fourth century B.C., nor can it have been much later, to judge from the excellence of the masonry. The date of the foundation of the temple cannot be determined, but an inscription (*C. I. A. II.* 1649) gives a lengthy account of the bringing of the god from the Peloponnese, of the foundation of the sanctuary, and of the subsequent alterations. This inscription dates from the beginning of the fourth century B.C., so that it is seen that the temple must have existed in the fifth century B.C.

On the second terrace have been excavated buildings similar in many respects to those on the first, and while Girard<sup>1</sup> takes these to be duplicates, either of earlier or later date, of the Asklepieion, Köhler<sup>2</sup> considers that they form the sanctuary of Themis. In support of his theory Girard brings forward an inscription (*C. I. A. II.* 1. *Addenda*, 489 b) which speaks of an ancient temple and of a later one, but no inscriptions have been found to give conclusive proof.

Nor have we any record of the cures performed in the temple. The only account of treatment is the literary evidence given in the scene of the *Ploutos*, which has been quoted above. The grateful patients may have inscribed their cures as at Epidauros, Triikka, and Kos; at least they agreed with the suppliants at these other temples in the nature of the votive offerings dedicated to the god. An inscription (*C. I. A. II.* 835-6) gives a list of such offerings, and their variety is great, indicating a clientèle from all classes. There were bas-reliefs, statues, images of parts of the body, and hymns in honour of the god.

<sup>1</sup> *L'Asklépieion d'Athènes*, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Athen. Mittheil.* II. 256.



The priest was regarded as a servant of the god, and the temple was not a hospital but a shrine, so that the priest did not figure openly as a doctor. Whether he had skill in medicine is open to discussion. Inscriptions giving a priest's duties make no mention of his share in the cures. In one inscription (*C. I. A. II. 1. Add.*, 453 b) the phrase occurs : τὰς καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν γινόμενας θεραπείας. The reference is to one of the reasons for honouring the priest in whose favour the decree was given. If *θεραπείας* referred to the cures, then it would prove that the priest had a share in them, but the word is used of temple service, such as the priest was bound to give, and such as is described in the *Ploutos* as the duty of the priest.

Kos.—The same dearth of inscriptions dealing with incubation that we have remarked at Athens, is found again in the still more celebrated temple at Kos. It is indisputable that Kos was an incubation centre, although as yet no inscriptions have been found describing the methods. The close connection which existed between Kos and Epidauros would be sufficient guarantee of the fact. In historic times, Kos received an embassy with sacred serpents from Epidauros (*Paus.* iii. 23), and whether Kos was thus a colony of the great Asklepieion, or had before received the cult from Thessaly, this much is certain, that the supremacy of Epidauros was recognised by Kos. One inscription<sup>1</sup> shows that incubation was practised in the island. Beneath the relief of an eagle stand the words, "Hekataios, according to a dream." It was found in the deme Haleis.

<sup>1</sup> Paton and Hicks—*Inscript. of Cos*, No. 348.

The temple of Asklepios in Kos has not yet been completely excavated, as at Epidauros, but during 1902 and 1903 important discoveries were made by Herzog, who was carrying on the work. At the time of his first visit to the island in 1898, he was of opinion that the site of the temple was to be located in the plain to the west of the ancient town. He excavated there and found the ruins of a Roman house. The only clue in ancient writers to the position of the Asklepieion is given by Strabo and Aristides, who speak of it as "in the neighbourhood of the city."

Paton,<sup>1</sup> who visited Kos before Herzog, put forward the surmise that the ancient temple of Asklepios stood near the ruined convent called Παναγία τῆς Τάρσου, which is situated on a hillside near the Turkish village of Kermeti, about half an hour from the town of Kos. Sections of massive pillars and many marbles were found on this site, and on the hill-side above are red-water and medicinal springs. Herzog began to excavate above this convent in October, 1902, and the results of researches have verified Paton's conjecture.

The great temple<sup>2</sup> stands on a terrace on a slope of the hill, and all its visible structure has been of white marble. It is surrounded by porticos, and a marble flight of steps leads down to the lower terrace. On this stand two other temples, a great altar, and a semi-circular fountain, into which flowed a spring of water. Near by is a large open square, which probably served as a resort for the suppliants to the temple. Of these two temples on the lower terrace one is

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> *Rév. Archéol.* 1904. Reinach, p. 127.

supposed to have been the ancient Asklepieion, and the other to belong to the Roman period. The great temple on the higher terrace dates from the beginning of the second century B.C., and inscriptions have been found ranging from 300 B.C. to the third century A.D. The temple was probably destroyed by the earthquake of 554 A.D.

Among the pieces of sculpture already excavated are a fine head of the god, and some serpents. Most of the inscriptions deal with the great games, which were celebrated every four years. Two decrees of the third century A.D. have been found, expressing the gratitude of other cities for the services of doctors who had come to them from Kos. This shows that the medical school of Kos maintained the position of importance to which it was elevated by Hippokrates. In Pliny (*N.H.* 29.4) we read: "The subsequent history (of medicine), strange to say, was enveloped in darkest night until the Peloponnesian War, when it was brought into the light of day by Hippocrates, who was born in Cos, a powerful and famous island, sacred to Aesculapius. It is said that he copied out the inscriptions which it had been the custom for those cured of disease to inscribe in the temple of the god, telling the help they had received, so that thereafter similar treatment might be used; and, as Varro in our day believes, the temple was thereafter burned, and he instituted the medicine which is called clinical." And in Strabo (p. 657): "They say that Hippokrates carried out his dietetic measures in accordance with the cures exposed to view there (at Kos)." In another passage (ii. 53), Strabo classes the votive inscriptions of Kos with those of Epidauros.

As the recent excavations have given us no information regarding these inscriptions, we can only conjecture their nature from the ancient writers. There is no evidence to lead us to believe that miracles, such as are recorded in the Epidaurian inscriptions, were performed also at Kos. Epidauros may have owed its pre-eminence in those early times to the miraculous powers of the divinity. At Kos it would seem that prescriptions were given to those who practised incubation, and those Hippokrates may have studied, thus connecting the divine with the lay medicine, which he developed so greatly that Kos was for long the leading medical school.

## VI. Incubation at the Oracle of Amphiaraos

Amphiaraos ranks among the chthonian deities of prehistoric times. The chief centre of his cult was Oropos, where the Amphiareion is seen to have been a splendid temple, deserving the renown it enjoyed. In central Greece and the Peloponnese Amphiaraos was highly honoured, but, by a curious limitation, his sphere did not extend further. In the east and west Amphilochos, traditionally son of Amphiaraos, took his place and was practically identical with him. In the cult of Amphiaraos his medical powers had special prominence. He was worshipped as a prophetic hero, a giver of oracles and diviner of dreams, and was consulted chiefly with regard to sickness and disease. As a healing god he was honoured from early times to late, and it is evident that he was closely connected with Asklepios, the chief healer. From the cures of Oropos, from a headless statue and a relief, we see that the two gods were portrayed by the same type, and on the relief Hygeia, who figures as daughter of Asklepios, stands by Amphiaraos.

Extensive excavations have been made since 1884 at the sanctuary of Amphiaraos near Oropos. From the ruins that have been found, it is judged that the building belongs to Macedonian or early Roman times. About seventy yards to the east of the temple stood a large colonnade, which is taken to be the sleeping-hall where incubation was practised. In the centre of the colonnade was a large square room. Round the walls of this room have been found stone supports for

benches, forty-five of which are preserved, while there were fifty-three in all. This central part was probably the dormitory mentioned in the inscription (*C.I.G.G.S.* No. 235) which relates many of the temple rules and regulations, and is believed to have been inscribed in the fourth century, between 420 and 350 B.C. The text is given by Wiliamowitz,<sup>1</sup> and the translation is as follows :—

The priest of Amphiaraos shall go to the temple when winter is past until the time for ploughing comes, and shall not leave it for more than three days. He shall remain in the temple not less than ten days each month. And he shall compel the temple servant to attend to the sanctuary according to the rules, and to look after those who come to the temple.

If anyone, either a stranger or a townsman, commit an offence in the temple, the priest shall impose a fine not exceeding five drachmas, and shall take security from the person fined. If he pay the money in the presence of the priest, he shall consign it to the treasury. The priest shall impose a penalty of not more than three drachmas, if any one of the strangers or townsmen in the temple suffers a private injury; and in the more important cases the judgments shall be given where the laws appoint in each case; summons shall be made on the same day in the court of offences in the temple, and, if the accused does not yield, the trial shall be completed on the next day.

All who are about to be treated by the god shall give a preliminary offering of not less than nine obols of standard silver, and shall put it into the treasury in presence of the temple servant. . . . .

<sup>1</sup> *Hermes*, XXI. p. 91.

The priest, when present, shall pray over the sacrificial victims, and shall lay them on the altar; when he is absent, the sacrificer himself shall pray over his own sacrifice; in public sacrifices the priest must officiate. The skin of all animals sacrificed in the temple. . . . .

Anyone is free to sacrifice whatever he wishes, but he must not carry the flesh outside the precincts. Those who sacrifice must give to the priest out of each sacrifice the shoulder, except when there is a festival, and then he shall take a shoulder from the public sacrifices. . . . .

The suppliant goes to sleep . . . . . obedient to the rules. The temple-servant shall write down the name of the sleeper and the name of his city when he pays in the money, and the writing on the tablet shall be exposed to view in the temple for those who wish to see it. In the dormitory, the men and women sleep in different parts, the men in the part to the east, and the women in the part to the west of the altar.

In the above inscription it is unfortunate that the lines dealing with the actual process of incubation are indecipherable. All we learn is about the allotment of the east side for men, and the west for women. The rest deals with rules for the priest's duties, for payment of fees and registration, and for the preliminary sacrificial rites and ceremonies. It is noteworthy that the choice of victim is left to the suppliant—a liberty which is in direct contrast to the express commands and usual distinctions of black and white, male and female, made by most

deities. Pausanias (ix. 19) gives a parallel in the worship of Artemis at Aulis :

“ It is said that at Aulis the Greeks had not a favouring gale, and that when the fair wind did spring up suddenly, every man sacrificed to Artemis whatever he happened to have, male and female animals indiscriminately, and from that time it has continued to be a rule in Aulis that all victims are lawful.”

It is to be calculated from the inscription that the suppliant held a sort of sacrificial feast after the ceremony. Only the shoulder had to be given to the priest; the rest he could keep for himself, but the consecrated flesh must not be taken outside the precincts. Hence the necessity for a Homeric banquet on the sacred ground, at which the pious pilgrim would prepare his own meal, and feast to the glory of the god whose suppliant he was.

A more comprehensive account is given by Pausanias (i. 34) of the ceremonies in connection with the oracle of Amphiaraos. He says that Amphiaraos was worshipped near Oropos, and that his renown was due to his power of prophetic dreams. “ Near the temple is the spring of Amphiaraos, which it is not right to use for purification or for washing the hands. But whoever is cured of disease in consequence of an oracle has to throw silver or gold coins into the water. It is said that Amphiaraos arose from it a god . . . And first, those who came to consult the oracle of Amphiaraos are accustomed to purify themselves, sacrifice to him and to all whose names [are on the altars]. After the completion of these preliminaries, they sacrifice a ram, and spreading its skin down they sleep on it, and await the manifestation of a dream.”



The first point in the rites was the preliminary sacrifice which was considered as an act of purification, and which is found to be a customary prelude to incubation. Mention of it is made in one of the Epidaurian inscriptions (No. 5) when the same word (*προθίεσθαι*) is used. This was followed by a second sacrifice. A ram was offered up just before incubation. Similar sacrifices were made in the rites of Trophonios. There was first a preliminary one, and then on the night before consultation a black ram was sacrificed over the pit of the Agamedes. The black colour of the victim and the position in which the sacrifice was made, showed that the offering was to a hero, not a god. In Pausanias (v. 13) a similar sacrifice to Pelops as a hero is related. After the sacrifice of the ram to Amphiaraos, the suppliant spread the ram skin, and slept on it awaiting the prophetic dream. In Daunia the same ceremonies were performed in connection with the oracles of Kalchas and Podaleirios. Strabo (vi. 284) relates that "shrines of heroes are shown at the hill in Daunia called Drion. There is one of Kalchas at the top of the hill. Those who consult the oracle sacrifice to him a black ram and sleep on the skin." And in Lycophron, with Tzetzes' note, we learn that the men of Daunia slept on sheepskins by the tomb of Podaleirios, and received oracles from him in sleep. In Italy, at the ancient oracle of Faunus, as described in *Aeneid* (vii. 81) and Ovid's *Fasti* (iv. 649), a sheep was sacrificed, the skin spread on the ground, and the inquirer slept on it awaiting the oracle in a dream.

The prevalence of the usage is due to a belief that the skin of a consecrated victim exercised a sanctifying

and protective influence. Other rites, such as the making of shoes from the skins, originated from the same superstition. Frazer, in his *Pausanias*, gives an instance in modern times from Pinkerton's *Voyages* (iii. p. 610), where a Scottish Highlander is said to have passed the night wrapped in a cow's skin, awaiting an oracle.

Further ceremonies in the consultation of Amphiaraos consisted in the observance of abstinence and certain dietary restrictions. Philostratos (*Vita Apoll.* ii. 37) says: "The priests receive the suppliant to the oracle (Amphiaraos), and restrain him from food one day and from wine two days." Fasting is the ceremony of most frequent occurrence in connection with oracles. It produced a certain state of mind which was believed to be conducive to dreams. At Acharaka, the priests left the patients several days without food at the Plutonion, according to Strabo (xiv. 650). Wine was forbidden, as Philostratos explains, because of its disturbing influence on the senses. Another probable restriction was laid on beans. In the *Geoponici* (ii. 35) we find: "And first Amphiaraos abstained from beans on account of his prophetic gift of dreams." And in a fragment of the *Amphiaraos* of Aristophanes: "Thou who revilest that finest of relishes, the bean." The explanation, as given by Plutarch (*Sympos.* viii. 10) is that beans were believed to act in a special way on the mind, so that dreams were checked.

No further details are to be gathered of the rites preceding the consultation of Amphiaraos. After the oracle had been given and the cure effected, it was customary to offer up a model of the healed

part of the body, according to the inscription (*I. G. S.* 303). It is probable that this custom, which was also practised in the temples of Asklepios, arose from a more ancient one, by which, before the healing, an image of the member to be healed was hung up in the neighbourhood of the god's statue, as a sort of guide for the deity. In the inscription of the temple regulations we are told that certain fees had to be paid, and Pausanias mentions the further duty of throwing coins into the sacred well, after cure. This last rite has been widely practised in a thanksgiving for restored health, both in ancient and modern times. Pliny (*Epist.* viii. 18) tells that coins were still to be seen lying at the bottom of the Clitumnian spring; and Suetonius, in his *Augustus* (p. 57), says that all ranks at Rome annually threw money into the lake of Curtius in fulfilment of a vow for the health of Augustus. Seneca (*Quaest. Nat.* iv. 2) gives a reference to Egypt, where at certain festivals the priests threw money into the Nile.

In modern folk-lore water-rites play a large part. Everywhere holy wells are to be found, and various ceremonies connected with these. Cornish people still drop into their holy wells offerings of pins, nails, rags, expecting from the waters cures for diseases and omens from their bubbles as to health and marriage. "At Rome," says Frazer,<sup>1</sup> "there still is the Fontana di Trevi, into which people throw coins in the belief they ensure their return to the city. The spring of St. Morand in Brittany is believed to possess the property of curing fever; patients must resort to it fasting and without speaking. Not many years ago coins were

<sup>1</sup> *Paus.* ii. 475.

thrown into it. Now they are put in the poor's box."

The spring of Amphiaraos, doubtless, proved a good substitute for the commonplace offering box, and after dropping the coins, as required, into it, the suppliant had completed the ceremonies connected with this act of incubation, and was free to depart.

## VII. Incubation as practised at the Oracle of Trophonios

The ceremonies of incubation at the oracle of Trophonios resemble in many respects those of the Amphiareion, but there is one great difference between the two. At the Amphiareion the act of incubation itself was by simple temple-sleep, while the suppliant to Trophonios had to descend into the depth of the earth and there meet with the god. We have evidence that the intercourse which there took place was by means of dreams, so that Trophonios is to be ranked as an incubation-oracle. Celsus (*Apud. Orig.* vii. 35) classes Trophonios with Amphiaraos and Mopsos, who both appeared in dreams, and Tertullian names him among incubation-oracles. Also Plutarch, *De Genio Socratis* (p. 22), supports this view in the account of the sensations experienced by Timarchos when consulting Trophonios. "He said he went down into the shrine and lay a long time without quite knowing whether he was awake or dreaming." Several authors relate the proceedings in connection with a consultation of Trophonios; amongst them the chief are Strabo, Philostratos, and Plutarch, and the fullest account is given by Pausanias (ix. 39).

The oracle of Trophonios was situated at Lebadeia in Boeotia, and the shrine was of mysterious formation, somewhat similar to St. Patrick's Purgatory in Ireland. There was an artificial chasm in the earth, into which the suppliant was let down by a ladder. Once at the bottom, he saw a narrow aperture through which he

had to pass. Pausanias describes the descent thus : " He lays himself on his back on the ground, and holding in his hand barley-cakes kneaded with honey, he thrusts his feet first into the hole, and follows himself, endeavouring to get his knees through the hole. When they are through, the rest of the body is immediately dragged after them and shoots in, just as a man might be caught and dragged down by the swirl of a mighty and rapid river. . . . They return through the same aperture feet foremost." The gaseous exhalations, together with the potions and preceding rites, may be taken as an explanation of the supernatural phenomena, or, at least, of the stupefied state of the suppliant when he issued from the god's abode.

The statue of Trophonios by Praxiteles had the characteristics of Asklepios, according to Pausanias, who also says that Trophonios and Hercyna might be taken for Asklepios and Hygeia. This resemblance, as in the case of Amphiaraos, shows a close connection with Asklepios, and also the prominence of medical powers in the cult. Medical consultations at Lebadeia dated at least from the middle of the fourth century B.C., and as at Epidauros, a sanctuary of Apollo stood near by.

The ceremonies of incubation, given by Pausanias from his own experience, are as follows. First he gives the preliminaries to consulting the oracle :

1. The suppliant must pass a certain number of days in the house of the Good Daimon and Good Fortune.
2. He must submit to purification.
3. He must abstain from hot baths, and must bathe in the river Hercyna.

4. It is probable that fasting was imposed. Tertullian says that fasting was appointed for those who were going to practise incubation at the oracles, and in the *Trophonios* of Kratinos this line occurs: "To take food or indulge in sleep is not allowed." In the same play three kinds of fish are forbidden.

5. He must sacrifice to Trophonios and various other gods.

This was the general sacrifice, which was made also in the case of Amphiaraos, and from which the priest told if the god was propitious.

6. It was followed by the sacrifice of a black ram over the pit, to Agamedes, on the night before consultation. According to the inwards of this sacrifice, the priest decided whether the suppliant might go down to Trophonios or not.

For the significance of the black ram, compare the similar sacrifice to Amphiaraos.

When the sacrificial rites were satisfactorily ended, the real ceremonies of consultation began.

1. On the night of consultation, two boys, called Hermae, thirteen years of age, took the suppliant to the river Hercyna, anointed him with olive-oil, and bathed him in the river.

With this we may compare a ceremony practised at the Charonion of Acharaka, according to which boys and youths, stripped and anointed with oil, took a bull and led it to the mouth of the grotto.

2. The suppliant was taken to the two fountains of Forgetfulness and Memory, wherefrom he had to drink.

The action of certain waters on men's minds was well-known to the ancients. Philostratos (*Vit. Apoll.* ii. 37) confirms this ceremony and adds: "I could

mention many famous oracles among Greeks and barbarians, where the priest, after partaking of water, gives utterance to the sayings from the tripod."

3. The suppliant was shown the god's statue which was hidden from the vulgar gaze, and he did worship to it. The purpose which the ceremony served is clear. The god who appeared to the suppliant would be the same in form as the deity of the statue.

4. The suppliant had to put on a linen tunic, a ribbon girdle, and shoes, such as the natives wore.

Philostratos says that the tunics were of white linen, and Maximus of Tyre (14. 2) says a red cloak was worn over them. Linen garments were considered to be favourable to dreams. Philostratos quotes Apollonios (viii. 7. p. 309) who always wore linen garments and had much intercourse with oracles and deities:—"It is a sign of purity to pass the night under a linen garment, and dreams too bring prophecies of more worth to such as live like me." The ceremony of wearing linen was probably introduced from the Egyptian cult of Serapis, according to Bouché-Leclercq.<sup>1</sup>

Great care was observed in the matter of foot-wear, for shoes came in contact with the holy place and could not be used in ordinary life. Hence, as Frazer<sup>2</sup> points out, in many popular shrines a stock of old clothes and shoes are kept for the convenience of worshippers, who return them after their devotions are over. In the procession at the Andanian mysteries in Messenia,<sup>3</sup> the sacred women were not allowed to wear

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de la Divination*, III. 321.

<sup>2</sup> *Pausanias*, V. 203.

<sup>3</sup> Dittenberger—*Sylloge Inscr. Graec.* 388.



shoes, unless made of felt, or the skins of victims that had been sacrificed.

Then came the descent into the sacrificial cave. Pausanias does not relate what took place during the intercourse with the god. He merely says: "The future is not revealed to all in one and the same way, but to one it is given to see, and another to hear." In the *De Genio Socratis* of Plutarch (p. 22) we find a lengthy account of the sensations of one Timarchus who consulted the oracle, but even the author does not seem to put much faith in his story. It might pass for the wanderings of a chloroform patient.

The last act that Pausanias relates before the descent is the holding of honey-cakes in the hands. These were to be thrown to the serpents at the entrance of the cave to appease them and allow the suppliant to pass in safety. Philostratos also records this proceeding. Honey-cakes were a usual offering to infernal deities. In the *Aeneid* (ii. 42) Aeneas throws them to Cerberus, to allow him to get past, and barley-cakes kneaded with honey were offered to Sosipolis, a native Elean spirit (Paus. vi. 20). The length of time after that act up to the suppliant's return to the upper regions varied, and the actual visions are unknown, but we can judge of the intensity of the experiences by the exhausted and stupefied state of the suppliant, who is said always to have returned in a state of fear and to have lost the power of laughter. Immediately after his return the priests made him relate his vision, and he was compelled to record it on a tablet to be dedicated to the temple. Then still in a state of terror, he was taken back to the house of Good Fortune, where he was allowed to return

to his normal condition. Payment was also demanded by Trophonios. According to an inscription found at Lebadeia (*C.I.G.G.S.* 3055) all who consulted the oracle had to pay a silver coin into the treasury and offer ten cakes of the value of a drachma apiece. The same inscription gives a list of those who had done so.

## VIII. Incubation at the Plutonia and Oracle of Dionysos

THE PLUTONIA.—The worship of Pluto as a medical divinity was a branch of the cult which developed in later times. The god of the lower world was the sender of death, and, consequently, in his hand lay the life of mortals. To him they had to appeal when the dread of approaching death assailed them. This aspect of the worship of Pluto was probably imitated from the cult of the Egyptian god Serapis, and by Serapis Pluto was overshadowed. In Asia Minor his position was best assured. Strabo (xiv. p. 650) gives accounts of three centres of incubation which were called Plutonia or Charonia indiscriminately. After Strabo no other writer mentions them. The natural inference is not that they became extinct as shrines, but that the name of the presiding deity was changed, and that Pluto was supplanted by Serapis whose fame was greater.

The first of these three Plutonia described by Strabo was situated near the city of Acharaka, on the road between Tralles and Nysa, in the valley of the Maiander, where there was a grove and temple of Pluto and Kore, and a remarkable grotto, the Charonion, situated above the sacred grove. The god was consulted by sick people through the medium of priests, who lived in the village near the grotto, and with whom the suppliants lodged. These priests personally conducted the dealings with the deity. They practised incubation for the patients, and prescribed the cures

according to their own dreams. Sometimes the patients were allowed to dream for themselves, but they always had recourse to the priests for the interpretation and for guidance how to act. The wide extent of the priesthood's power is the chief point to be remarked in this section of incubation. Their control over the suppliants was well assured, for they allowed no liberty of incubation, such as we have seen to be the rule in the temples of Asklepios. This new method was due to the influence of Egyptian incubation, and traces of it are found even in the Asklepios cult. Although Aristides usually performed the act personally and independently, he relates in the second of the *Sacred Orations* (p. 466) how his attendant had a visitation in a dream from the god, who gave him instructions for the proper régime which Aristides had to follow. Restrictions similar to those enforced at Acharaka were made in the Temple of Isis at Tithorea. Pausanias (x. 32) says that there was no admission to the shrine except for those whom Isis herself favoured with an invitation in a dream. He adds that the same was done by the nether gods in the cities on the Maiander, and that they sent visions in dreams to whomsoever they wished to enter their shrines.

The second Plutonion in the valley of the Maiander, mentioned by Strabo, was at Limon, where there was a sacred cave said to reach to Acharaka, although many stades distant. It is inferred that the practices here were similar to those at Acharaka.

The third was at Hierapolis. The neighbouring hot baths were connected with the Plutonion according to Strabo, a fact which shows that the consultations were

frequently of a medical nature, so that the baths would form part of the treatment prescribed. The following account is given by Strabo (xiii. iv. 14) of this shrine of Pluto :

“ The Plutonion is a small cavern under a crag of the overhanging hill, large enough to hold a man and of great depth. In front of it is a square enclosure, about sixteen inches in extent. This is full of thick misty vapour, so that the ground can scarcely be seen. The atmosphere is not injurious, if one goes round about the enclosure, for in calm weather the air is pure, and the vapour remains inside the precinct. But death comes at once to any living creature that enters therein. Bulls, that are taken within, fall down and are dragged out dead, and we ourselves have sent in sparrows which fell down at once suffocated.” Here, too, there were special ministers of the cult who acted, most probably, like the priests of Acharaka. Strabo tells that they alone were able to penetrate within the sacred enclosure without succumbing to the vapours, a feat to be attributed either to antidotes or divine providence.

DIONYSOS.—From Pluto to the chthonian Dionysos is a short step. Both belong to the infernal regions, and the two cults have much the same aspect. Dionysos is the symbol of the earth's powers, and is in close association with Apollo. As son of the earth he acts by the chthonian mode of inspiration by dreams. At Eana in Macedonia there was a shrine either of Pluto or Dionysos, where the oracle worked by incubation. We learn this from an inscription of imperial times, given by Heuzey, in the *Mission Archéol. de Macédoine* (Insc. N. 120) :—

“ To the god and lord Pluto, and to the city of Eana, T. Phlaonios Leonas, having seen the god and the temple, dedicated this tablet at his own expense according to a dream through Acherontios, the curator.”

For the suppliant the god was Pluto, but the proximity of Thrace makes a connection with Dionysos very probable, for in Thrace the Dionysian cult was all-prevailing. Here too, evidently, the priests or curators performed incubation for the suppliants.

Similarly at Amphikleia, in Phokis, there was a medical oracle of Dionysos, where the priests practised incubation, and not the suppliants. Pausanias (x. 33) gives the following account of it :

“ (At Amphikleia) rites are celebrated in honour of Dionysos. There is no entrance into the shrine, nor any visible statue. It is said by the Amphikleians that the god prophesies for them, and rescues them from disease. He cures through dreams the diseases of the Amphikleians and their neighbours, and the priest is a prophet, and as a medium gives oracles from the god.”

## IX. Incubation in the Cults of Isis and Serapis

Isis.—In the religion of Egypt Isis figured as chief goddess. She was mother of Horos, the sun-god and ruler of all, and wife of Osiris, while she herself was worshipped as supreme goddess of nature and magic arts. By her possession of deadly and life-giving herbs of the earth, and by her magic spells, she was arbiter of life and death, and thus one of her principal functions was that of healing. A tradition was maintained that Isis was the discoverer of the healing art, and that she appeared in dreams to her patients from the beginning of her activity as a goddess. Diodoros (i. 23) gives the following account of her faculties :—

“The Egyptians say that Isis discovered many health-giving remedies, and was greatly skilled in medical science. Therefore, when she became immortal, she took special pleasure in the healing of mortals, and in sleep gave help to those who sought it, manifesting herself clearly and conferring benefits on those who begged for them. As proof of this they gave not myths, as the Greeks do, but plain facts. They say that almost the whole world is their witness, for men vie with each other in honouring the goddess for her healing visitations. They say that in sleep she appears and gives help to the sick in their diseases, and heals in a marvellous way those who obey her. Many who had been given up by doctors on account of the gravity of their illness have been saved by her, and many who had lost their eyesight, or the use of

some part of their bodies, have been restored to their former state when they have had recourse to the goddess."

If the above account were to be taken literally, it would mean that the activity of Isis as an iatromantic oracle reached far back into the obscure centuries, and that incubation had been an Egyptian practice from early times. The importance of the rôle of Isis in medical science cannot be denied, but Welcker<sup>1</sup> refuses to credit her with the position assigned by Diodoros. He considers that the priesthood established such a tradition at a late date in order to strengthen faith in the new practices of their health-oracles by fortifying them with the assurance of antiquity. He believes that only under the Ptolemies did Isis begin to rank as a goddess of healing, that is, when her cult became connected with the new god Serapis. It may be that then, for the first time, the practice of incubation became general in Egypt, but as a healing goddess Isis had been honoured for many centuries before. In *Ebers Papyrus*, which dates about 1700 B.C., references are found to Isis as a medical divinity. It contains formulæ by which she was to be invoked to save the sick as she had saved her son Horos. A remedy is noted which was "prepared for Ra by Isis herself, to rid him of headache."

Such references as these show that the tradition given by Diodoros was no late invention of the priesthood. Medicine had been a sacred science of long development in Egypt, and the connection of Isis with it as presiding goddess was an article of religious belief. But the origin of Egyptian incubation remains obscure.

<sup>1</sup> *Kleine Schriften*, III. pp. 97-100.



It is possible that it may have been introduced into Egypt from Greece, and adopted as an adjunct to the art already practised. This adoption would involve modifications in the Greek method, for medicine was practised on other lines in Egyptian temples. In Greece, that is in the early times, temple-sleepers expected special personal treatment with remedies for their own particular cases, but the Egyptian priests treated their patients according to fixed and unvarying prescriptions purporting to be of divine origin, and they would continue their original methods, while employing incubation as an accessory. Hence it would seem that there were two stages in the development of incubation. In the first stage, Greek methods were introduced into Egypt, where they developed along national lines. The second stage came by the transference of Egyptian deities to the Greek world, when the practices of Egypt influenced and modified the incubation in Greek cults.

Until about the seventh century B.C., Egypt was a vague geographical expression for the Greeks, but then travellers began to explore, and Egyptian oracles became known. The first was Ammon at Kyrene, and there Isis also was worshipped. The cult of Isis was one of the few foreign cults that flourished in Greece. The goddess was introduced into Athens and Corinth by trading merchants, and there her first temples stood. From an inscription found at the Piraeus, we learn of the erection of a temple to Isis before 333 B.C. This inscription is a decree granting land to the merchants of Citium to raise a temple to Aphrodite, for it was necessary to obtain permission from the Athenian demos, if a foreign god was to have a temple on

Athenian soil. The text is as follows :—“ The people have decided to grant the merchants of Citium the right of acquiring a piece of land to found a temple of Aphrodite, in the same way as the Egyptians have founded the temple of Isis.”

At Corinth there was a similar early introduction of the goddess, and from Corinth the cult was carried to Phlius, but it was not until the time of the Ptolemies that Isis became a popular Greek divinity. The rapid and late growth of her cult was due to her conjunction with the new god Serapis, and together they were worshipped throughout the Greco-Roman world as oneiromantic gods of great healing powers. They were the only two prophetic deities of Egypt that were successfully hellenised.

SERAPIS.—An Alexandrian god, like his city he was Greco-Egyptian by nature. Bouché-Leclercq<sup>1</sup> describes him as “ a Greek body haunted by an Egyptian soul.” Various traditions strive to explain the origin of the god, which is somewhat obscure, and the account of his dual nationality. Tacitus and Plutarch agree in saying that the worship of Serapis began under the Ptolemies. They give the story that an unknown god appeared to Ptolemy I. in a dream, and told him to seek his image in the Pontus. Ptolemy heard that at Sinope there was a statue of Zeus-Hades which corresponded to the description. The Sinopians were compelled to yield the statue, and it became at Alexandria that of the new god Serapis. Thus Serapis would be a Greco-Alexandrian deity. But critics assert that Serapis must be an Egyptian god, the Asar-Hapi of Memphis,

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* iii. 378.

while Krall, in *Tacitus und der Orient*, reconciles the two theories by saying that Zeus-Hades was taken from Sinope by Ptolemy I. and then confounded with the Egyptian Asar-Hapi.

A passage in the *Anabasis Alexandri* of Arrian seems to contradict this account. In Book vii. 26 we find the following:—"The king's chronicles state that Peithon, Attalos, Demophon, and Peukestes, also Kleomenes, Menidas, and Seleukos, sleeping in the temple of Serapis (at Babylon), asked the god if it were best for Alexander to be brought to the temple and to supplicate the god to heal him. And a voice came from the god saying that they should not bring him to the temple, for it would be better for him to remain where he was. These things his comrades reported, and Alexander died not long after, for that was after all for the best." The story, if correctly rendered, would imply that there was a temple of Serapis at Babylon, where incubation was practised in the time of Alexander. Some critics, amongst whom is Welcker, take it as a simple anachronism on the part of Arrian, but Krall asserts that the god designated in the passage is Bel-Zipur, a Baal of Babylon. This Baal was identical with Zeus-Hades of Sinope, who became Serapis. And thus the god who played a part in the death of Alexander afterwards became the Serapis of Alexandria, so that there is no real contradiction of the theory.

Serapis was presented to the world as an iatromantic deity, working through incubation. His attributes and function were highly complex. According to Bouché-Leclercq, "under his name were collected the débris of numerous divine personalities worn out by time."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* iii. 378.

He rose to be supreme as Zeus, and he is lauded by Aelius Aristides for the universality of his benefactions, for he benefited the soul by bestowing wisdom, according to that writer, and the body by bestowing health, while his readiness to grant requests made him so widely popular.

It was to his power of medical divination that Serapis owed the great fame he enjoyed. In this respect, as well as in his attributes and position in the theogony, he bears a close resemblance to Asklepios, and Isis is his accompanying goddess, as Hygeia figures along with Asklepios. The connection of the Isio-Serapic cult with that of Asklepios is shown in many ways. The deities are seen together on coins, their temples are in close proximity, inscriptions unite their names, and dreamers, such as Aristides, receive joint visitations from them.

The temples of Isis and Serapis grew to surpass in number and fame those of any other god. Aristides mentions forty-two in Greece alone, and traces of the cult have been found in many distant countries. To this great vogue of the Isio-Serapic cult is to be attributed the extent to which the practice of incubation spread in the Greco-Roman world during the first centuries of the Christian era. The custom was of primitive origin as we have seen, but what we deal with now is the later growth, and it is to be remarked how the features of this later growth show the influence of Egypt. The two most prominent characteristics which distinguish late from early incubation are the secrecy observed and the use of the priest as a medium of communication with the god. Egyptian priests had their own way of making the god speak, and the hellen-

ised oracles of Egypt carried on Egyptian methods in Greece. From the sanctuaries of the Egyptian gods they spread into Greek cults. The practices at the Plutonia in Asia Minor have already been noted, and in turn Egyptian influence is plainly marked, when we compare the two. The most magnificent Serapeum in Egypt was at Alexandria, but we have no account of its healing work. Strabo speaks of the sanctuary at Kanobos, one hundred and twenty stades from Alexandria, in the following passage (xvii. 1. 7) :—

“ At Kanobos is a temple of Serapis, which is venerated with deep reverence, and which brings to pass cures so that even most distinguished men believe and themselves practise incubation, or do so through others. Some inscribe the cures, and others the virtues of the oracles of the place.”

We note here, as always in the later incubation, the position of the priest as intermediary between the suppliant and the god, for, judging by the practices at other temples of Serapis, we conclude that the intermediaries mentioned in the passages must be members of the priesthood, appointed for the purpose. This view is confirmed by what we know of the customs at Memphis, where stood the oldest Egyptian temple of Serapis. An inscription given by Egger in the *Révue Archéologique* (1860) proves the existence of an incubation-centre there. It is as follows :—“ I, Aristylles, dedicated this lamp-lighter, considering that I fare ill at the god's hands, for though I have followed the dreams of the temple, I have not been able to obtain health from him.”

An account of dreams given at this oneiromantic oracle of Memphis is found in a papyrus (Letronne,

*Papyri Grecs du Louvre*) where a Greek, who had long been in the service of the temple, has written a kind of journal. It dates from about 164 A.D., and the writer is supposed to belong to the guild of professional mediums, who practised incubation for the suppliants, and who were called Katochoi. They were an institution at Memphis, and traces of their existence are found at other oracles. Pausanias (x. 33) speaking of the iatromantic oracle of Dionysos at Amphikleia says :—

“ He communicates cures to the Amphikleians and their neighbours in dreams. The priest acts as the god’s mouthpiece and gives oracles as a katochos.” The word is used to express the idea of a person possessed or inspired by a divinity so that his state and function were similar to that of a modern medium. Such were the priests at the Plutonia, and in the temple of Asklepios it has been noted that the priests sometimes acted in this way.

The only full account which Pausanias gives of the Isio-Serapic cult in Greece is in connection with the temple of Isis at Tithorea. It was the chief sanctuary of Isis in Greece, and it is to be inferred that Serapis shared in the worship, for inscriptions have been found at the place, attesting the sale of slaves to Serapis. The following in his description (x. 32) : —

“ About forty furlongs from the temple of Asklepios is an enclosure and shrine of Isis, the noblest of all the sanctuaries made by the Greeks for the Egyptian goddess. For the Tithoreans deem it unlawful to dwell round about it, and there is no admission to the shrine save for those whom Isis herself has favoured with an invitation in a dream. The same thing is

done also by the nether gods in the cities on the Maiander. They send visions in dreams to whomsoever they wish to enter their shrines.

In the territory of Tithorea, festivals are held twice a year in honour of Isis, one in spring and one in autumn. Two days before each festival, the persons who are free to enter the shrine clean it out in a certain secret way, and whatever remains they find of the sacrificial victims, which were cast in at the previous festival, they always carry to the same spot and bury there. The distance of this spot from the shrine we judged to be two furlongs. That is what they do to the sanctuary on the first day. On the next day the hucksters set up booths of reeds and other improvised material, and on the last of the three days they hold a fair for the sale of slaves and all kinds of cattle, also garments and silver and gold. After noon they betake themselves to sacrificing. The richer people sacrifice oxen and geese, the poorer folk sacrifice geese and guinea fowl. But it is against the custom to use swine, sheep, and goats for this sacrifice.

Those whose duty it is to burn the victims and bring them into the shrine must wrap the victims in bandages of linen, either common or fine linen; the mode of dressing them is the Egyptian.

All the animals sacrificed are led in procession. Some convey the victims into the shrine, others set fire to the booths in front of it and depart in haste.

They say that once, when the fire began to burn, a profane fellow who had no right to go down into the shrine, rashly entered it out of curiosity. The whole place seemed to him full of spectres, and scarcely had

he returned to Tithorea and told what he had beheld when he gave up the ghost.

I have heard a similar story from a Phoenician. He said that the Egyptians hold a festival for Isis at the time when she is in mourning for Osiris. At that time the Nile begins to rise, and it is a common saying amongst the natives that it is the tears of Isis that cause the river to rise and water the fields. At that season, I was told, the Roman governor of Egypt bribed a man to go down to the shrine of Isis at Coptus. The man who was thus sent returned from the shrine, but after he had told all that he had beheld, he, too, immediately expired. Thus it appears to be a true saying of Homer that it is ill for mankind to see the gods in bodily shape."

In the above passage the prominence of Egyptian ways is noteworthy. Admittance to the shrine was a special privilege, regulated nominally by the goddess who would act through her servant the priest. Sacrifices were offered in the Egyptian fashion, and the secrecy of the shrine, as well as the punishment consequent on profane curiosity, was in accordance with Egyptian ideas. The same idea of mystery is found in another passage of Pausanias (ii. 13), where he tells how at Phlius, while the statues of Dionysos and Apollo were open to view in their temples, the image of Isis was only to be beheld by priests.



The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the car was the cold air. It was a relief after the heat of the car. I took a deep breath and looked around. The street was empty, and the buildings were old and weathered. I felt a sense of solitude and peace. I walked slowly, enjoying the quiet. The sun was low in the sky, casting long shadows. I saw a few people in the distance, but they were far away. I felt like I was in a different world. The air smelled fresh, and the sounds of the city were muted. I was alone, and I liked it. I walked until I found a small cafe. I went inside and ordered a coffee. The barista smiled at me. I sat at a small table and looked out the window. The view was beautiful. I saw the ocean in the distance. I felt a sense of awe. I had found a special place. I sat there for hours, watching the world go by. I felt like I was part of something big. The coffee was good, and the atmosphere was perfect. I was in luck. I had found what I needed. I smiled and looked at the coffee. It was just what I needed. I took a sip and felt the warmth. I was home.

## PART II.

# Incubation in Christian Churches during the Middle Ages

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### I. Introduction

It is probable that Christianity in supplanting paganism found the work comparatively easy so far as the Olympian gods were concerned. Their aloofness from the practical affairs of man tended to alienate their worshippers, and it was a simple matter to cast off allegiance. A harder task awaited the new religion when it sought to dispossess the chthonian deities whose general beneficence and gifts of healing had bound them closely to the people. Worshippers were attracted and their devotion intensified by tangible benefits conferred and help given in times of stress. The faith thus practically engendered and rewarded proved a stubborn barrier to the onward march of Christianity. Paganism made its last stand in the temples of Serapis and Asklepios, and their powers of resistance were due to the cures performed under their auspices in the name of the god.

In this struggle for supremacy over the ancient deities, the followers of Christ met the pagans on their own ground and adopted their tactics. Temples were replaced by churches, where Christ was worshipped as

the Benefactor, the Saviour, and the Healer of mankind. These became centres for health-cures, wrought by Christ through some one of His saints, whose personality varied according to the district, and miracles of healing were performed in such great numbers as to ensure the popularity of the churches.

It is this side of Christian work which shows most clearly the influence of paganism. Many of the ancient customs were retained because they were found to be the best means to the end, but they were covered with a transparent mask of Christianity. It was no longer the deified heroes, known as chthonian gods, that were honoured as miracle-workers, but Christian saints, who had been pre-eminently virtuous men, and after death had received the semi-deification of sainthood. Still there was no great gulf between the two types of agents. The methods were so similar, as will be shown later, that we are led to regard the saints as successors of the heathen gods. This point of view receives strong support from Deubner.<sup>1</sup> He traces a connection between St. Cosmas and St. Damian, the chief doctor-saints at Constantinople, and the Dioscuri, who formerly had an incubation-temple in the same place, and with whom St. Cosmas and St. Damian were confounded by Greek clients. In Egypt St. Cyrus and St. John supplanted, according to the chronicler, a local demon Menuthes, who is identified by some with Isis. It is no far-fetched conclusion to suppose that the similarity in ideas and practices of such churches and temples arose from a Christianising of the pagan shrines and the retention of the former methods in order to suit the customs of the clientèle.

<sup>1</sup> *De Incub.* ch. iv.

Owing to the indefiniteness of the records with which we have to deal, the question of chronology is left in a somewhat vague state. Roughly speaking, the first ten centuries of the Christian era form the epoch of the miracles which are detailed afterwards. The majority belong to the sixth and seventh centuries, but there are similar instances in the tenth and in the third and fourth centuries, so that in point of time the practices were continuous. There is no gap, but rather an overlapping between the two periods. While the Catholic Church sought to enforce unity, she could not check the tendency to local variations. In the narratives of the saints' works, God is acknowledged as chief over all, and as the source of the miracles, but since prayer was made to the saint as intercessor, he naturally became identified with the deity, and his was the prominent place as protector and patron. Local characteristics and superstitions figured in religion as much as in the times when each district had its own patron—Zeus, Athena, or Artemis.

The great difficulty which the student of religious practices encounters is the legendary character of the chronicles from which he has to draw his information. It is impossible to take any particular story as the basis of a theory. It may really be a tradition concerning some heathen god which has been transferred to the saint; or even if the story has been founded on historical events occurring in Christian times, yet by reason of exaggeration and amplification it may be unreliable. The most trustworthy chronicles are, of course, those of personal experiences, but here again inaccuracy arises from the subjectivity of the writer's point of view. He does not profess to write a statis-

tical or exhaustive account of the saint's doings. He gives a series of narratives, selected according to his personal opinions and aims. This subjectivity is most evident in the account of St. Fides by Bernard of Angers.<sup>1</sup> He relates only a few instances to illustrate the medical side of her work, preferring the stories which show how quick she was to punish wrongdoers. Prominence is given by all writers to cases of conversion, and to the care which the saints bestowed on men's souls as well as on their bodies.

Although it is impossible to assert the exact extent of the medical department in the Christian churches' work, yet there is sufficient proof that the custom of incubation was a widespread and popular one during these later centuries, as it had been in former times. It can be traced throughout Europe, and in Asia Minor and Egypt, flourishing in all parts as did the cult of Serapis. The number of churches at Byzantium, in which this custom was carried on, is large, for this city where the Dioscuri and Amphiaraos had healed the sick was made the metropolis of saints. We know of six churches of St. Cosmas and St. Damian; the famous church of St. Michael stood at Sosthenium, a suburb; the churches of St. Cyrus and St. John, and of St. Therapon, were all situated at Byzantium, and all were famous for health-cures through incubation. St. Cosmas and St. Damian were worshipped in many parts of the world. Especially renowned were their churches at Rome and at Kaufburg in the country of the Suevi, and throughout Gaul various of their relics were cherished. St. Cyrus and St. John, another pair of medico-saints, had their chief church near

<sup>1</sup> *St. Fides*—Ed. A. Bouillet.

Alexandria, a great centre for the healing of the sick. St. Michael's cult pervaded all Europe. We know of incubation in connection with it both at Rome and Byzantium. In Asia Minor, too, the archangel was popularly worshipped, and at Seleucia in Isauria we find St. Thekla working through incubation. In Gaul various saints were cherished as patrons and physicians. Gregory of Tours tells of incubation in connection with St. Martin<sup>1</sup> at his church in Tours, and with St. Julian<sup>2</sup> at Arvernus; and we have records of St. Fides<sup>3</sup> at Conques in Rouergue, and of St. Maximinus<sup>4</sup> at Trèves. In Britain, too, there are traces of the practice of incubation. Bede tells how St. Peter appeared to Archbishop Laurence at Cambridge, in the church of St. Peter and St. Paul, which had been built by Aedelbert in 613, and was of high authority in the land. The passage<sup>5</sup> is as follows:—

“When Laurence was about to leave Britain, he bade a bed be prepared that night in the church of the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul, in which after many tears and prayers to the Lord on behalf of the state of the church, he laid his limbs to rest, and the blessed chief of the apostles appeared to him.”

This is clearly a case of incubation where the suppliant wishes to consult about a difficulty. Also, we read<sup>6</sup> that in the same church a paralytic was cured as he slept at the tomb of St. Letard, who was buried there. Thus from Britain to Asia Minor, in Gaul,

<sup>1</sup> *De Virtutibus B. Martini.*

<sup>2</sup> *De Virtutibus S. Juliani.*

<sup>3</sup> *Liber Miraculorum S. Fidis.*

<sup>4</sup> *Acta Sanct. mai. vii. p. 19.*

<sup>5</sup> *Eccles. Hist. ii. 6.*

<sup>6</sup> *Acta Sanct. febr. iii. p. 470.*

Germany, Italy, Greece, and Egypt, the practice of incubation was prevalent.

The methods of the later period of pagan incubation are found to a great extent unchanged at the shrines of Christian saints. The prominence given to vigils and prayers is noteworthy. Fasting was often combined with them, as they were performed at the tomb or before the image of the saint. The rites by which pagan suppliants were prepared for incubation went on the same lines, and produced a similar state of mind. Three kinds of incubation must be distinguished. First, there is incubation in the voluntary sense, when the suppliant, after some preliminary ceremonies, lies down in the church with the intention of sleeping and receiving a visitation from the saint whom he has invoked. Second, when the suppliant falls asleep, sometimes, it is stated, by chance, and at other times the saint is said to send sleep to him, and while asleep he has a vision which gives him the help or guidance required. This may be termed involuntary incubation. Third, when the suppliant, by fasting, vigils, and prayers, gets into a certain soporific state of mind and has a divine visitation. This third class figures largely at the shrines of saints; but whether the cures are to be attributed to self-suggestion, hypnotism, or divine interference is an open question.

Miracles brought about in these three ways are performed by the saint at his shrine or in his church. The methods are not naturally exclusive. The practices were carried on side by side in the same place and in the name of the same saint, and it is often difficult to distinguish in which state the miracle has happened. Ancient writers laid no stress on such

differences, and did not seek to draw the distinctions or to mention if the suppliant were sleeping when he was cured. Some cases, however, are always found to correspond to the ancient types of paganism.

As in the heathen temples, the visions are of two distinct classes. First, there are visions during which the patient is healed by the saint : either an operation is performed or a healing hand is sufficient, and the sick man wakes up cured. Second, the celestial visitant appears and gives directions for the cure. He may prescribe a remedy or order a certain mode of action. A third kind of miracle which frequently occurs may be included in the first class, but owing to its indefinite nature it is unimportant for our subject. The patient is often said to be healed merely by presence in the holy church. These are the instantaneous cures which are characteristic of modern miracle centres such as Lourdes.

The first class of miracles contains cases which form remarkable parallels to the narratives of the Epidaurian inscriptions. For example, the cure of the dropsical woman in the *Encomium of St. Therapon* (§20), which is given in detail further on, recalls forcibly the works of Asklepios. Also, in the miracles of St. Cyrus and St. John (No. 62), an incubation patient, passing the night in the church near Alexandria, describes a scene which resembles the story of Karion in the *Ploutos* of Aristophanes. The majority of visions belong to the second class. Prescription-cures were the chief feature of the later pagan period, and the predominance was continued in the Christian churches. It is noteworthy that the remedies have in most cases a clear symbolic signifi-



cation. As in the temples of Asklepios sacred ashes were ordered to be taken from the holy altars, so the suppliant to St. Therapon or St. Cyrus had to cure himself by the application of wax from the church candles or lamps.

The general character of the diseases cured is the same as that given in the pagan records. The accounts are not exhaustive, so that statistics would be useless, but the prominence of blindness, lameness, and paralysis is striking. The saints are not baffled by "incurable" diseases, but these are rather their speciality. A special feature of Christian churches was the cure of demoniacs. People with certain symptoms resembling those of epilepsy or lunacy were believed to be possessed by evil spirits, and were taken to the holy church, where the demons would be driven out by the Saviour. The belief in actual demoniac possession was so firm that writers say they saw the evil spirits leaving the man when the saint drove them forth. Whether we identify demoniacs with lunatics, or hold with antiquity that there was a special irruption of otherwise bodiless spirits, the fact to be dealt with is that Christian churches became an asylum for people so afflicted. The *Canons of the Fourth Council of Carthage* (90-92) show that the cure of demoniacs was a regular practice in the churches. The exorcists were bound to lay their hands on them each day, while they lived in the church and had to sweep it out daily.

The temples of Asklepios and Serapis became, as we have seen, health-resorts where crowds of invalids and valetudinarians stayed, waiting for restoration of health, during an indefinite period which sometimes extended to years. Some churches of the saints

developed into similar establishments. It is clear from many of the records that sick and infirm people came for a sojourn at the church with the intention of waiting till they were cured. The length of their stay might be weeks, months, or years. Such a system of residential patients implies the maintenance of a large establishment. Hospices and baths adjoining the churches are frequently mentioned in the narratives, and great crowds came to invoke the saints, filling the hospices and sacred buildings. The presence of demoniacs, too, must have necessitated further accommodation. We read of a demoniac chained to a staircase in the church along with many others, waiting for divine aid.<sup>1</sup> In these establishments, which must have resembled the temple buildings at Epidaurus, with the church as centre, servants, attendants, and religious officials would have many duties to fulfil, and in the more important churches their numbers must have been great. Mention of attendants on the sick and the demoniacs is made occasionally, and church officials figure in some of the stories. The priests or monks had naturally the important rôle, taking the part of the pagan priests. The absence of scepticism in the records, all of which are written by devotees, prevents us from gauging the extent of their duplicity or getting any clue to their contrivances. The question of the genuineness of the miracles must be left aside.

The stories show us the priests discharging three functions. First, they are caretakers and attendants of the sick and insane. Second, they act as intermediary priests, praying for the afflicted and by their intercession obtaining healing for them. Likewise

<sup>1</sup> *St. Maximinus*, §7.

they perform the usual church services. Third, they are exorcists of demons. At the church of St. Maximinus this function is prominent. The "Brothers" act as exorcists and pray for the departure of evil spirits. Presumably similar work was done at the church of St. Therapon, where demoniacs were taken in charge.

## II. St. Cosmas and St. Damian

Cosmas and Damian<sup>1</sup> suffered martyrdom at Aegae in Cilicia in the third century A.D. According to the tradition, they were doctors of Arabian race who travelled over the world curing the sick and preaching Christianity. In the consulship of Diocletian and Maximianus in 287 A.D., they were put to death and buried at Aegae. Soon afterwards their bodies were transferred to the neighbourhood of Cyrus in Syria. The chief church of these saints was at Constantinople. It was already famous in 516 A.D. Procopius relates that Justinian was cured in this church, which he thereafter restored. It was built in the time of Theodosius Junior, and was situated in the Zeugma or Ceraticum.

Gregory of Tours<sup>2</sup> gives a brief résumé of the saints' powers and methods in the following passage :—

“ The twins, Cosmas and Damian, doctors by profession, after they became Christians, dispelled the infirmities of the sick merely by the merit of their virtues and by the intervention of their words. After suffering various tortures, they joined the immortals and showed many miracles to men below. Any man who prayed, inspired by faith at their tombs, at once received medical treatment. Some say that they appeared in vision to the sick and told them what to do. If these carried out the advice, they went away cured. I have heard many particulars, but I think it

<sup>1</sup> *Acta Sanct.* iv. Sept. p. 438-499.

<sup>2</sup> *Lib. in Gloriam Martyr.* §97.

would be tedious to give them, and I consider that what I have said is sufficient. All who prayed in faith departed healed."

The miracles of St. Cosmas and St. Damian which are recorded were wrought in the church at Byzantium. The author is unknown, and the date of the writing cannot be ascertained, but it belongs to either the sixth, fifth, or fourth centuries A.D. The resemblance between these miracles and the Epidaurian cures is so great that an attempt has been made to trace a connection between the saints and the pagan god Asklepios, who was worshipped at Aegae. But St. Cosmas and St. Damian are localised as miracle-workers at Byzantium and not at Aegae, so that if any connection exist, it must be with some Byzantine god. Deubner<sup>1</sup> connects them with the Dioscuri who healed through incubation at Byzantium. Hesychios Miles (15 *F.H.G.* iv. 149) says:—"The temple of the Dioscuri, Castor and Pollux, (was constructed by Byzas) on the altar of Semestri and at the confluence of the river, and in it release from suffering came to men." Dreams are not here mentioned, but in a scholium on Persius (ii. 56) we find:—"In the temple of Castor and Pollux, interpreters of dreams are usually kept to expound purely and clearly men's visions." Thus the temple must have been used for incubation. Further in the same passage we read:—"When the Romans were suffering from a pestilence, Castor and Pollux told the people in dreams by what remedies they would be cured."

The temple at Byzantium was in all probability used for rich people, like the temple at Rome. Further,

<sup>1</sup> *De Incub.* p. 76.

Deubner shows that the Greeks who came to Byzantium were apt to consider St. Cosmas and St. Damian as their own gods, Castor and Pollux. A Greek is healed in the church of the saints, converted by them, and shown his error in believing that he was being cured by Castor and Pollux. This relationship between the pagan and Christian twin-doctors can only be suggested, for there is no positive proof that St. Cosmas and St. Damian took up and carried on the work that the Dioscuri had been doing in Byzantium. As we study the miracles in detail, we see the deep imprint of paganism in the practices. The theory was Christian. The saints, Cosmas and Damian, were considered as subordinates of the most high God, with whom they interceded for men, and whose will they carried out. Repeatedly in the miracles they are described as the servants of God, and their powers of intercession are frequently mentioned. This theory of relationship to the Supreme Power is illustrated in an extract from the life of St. Theodore (§73), Bishop of Galatia, where the worship of Cosmas and Damian was popular. Theodore fell ill one day, and when despairing of recovery, he had a vision of St. Cosmas and St. Damian. They promised to intercede for him with the King, when he explained his grief at having to leave his flock so soon. On their return, the saints brought with them a youth like an angel of surpassing glory, who said that the Lord and King was pleased to grant longer lease of life. He then departed, and St. Cosmas and St. Damian told Theodore to rise and care for the souls of others. Another cure, in which God was the central figure, overshadowing the doctor-saints, was wrought for a

man who had an ulcer in his finger (§204). He went to the church at Byzantium seeking for healing, and there "God manifested Himself invisibly to him," through the prayers and intercessions of Cosmas and Damian. The ulcer gradually healed.

In the great majority of cases the saints appear alone as agents of God when invoked. Particulars of the visions are scanty, but in a few cases the appearance of the visitant is described. Naturally the dreamer saw them in the semblance of their images (§§73, 219), or in the guise of some acquaintance. "Cosmas came one day clothed in a cloak, in the likeness of Gaudiosus, a monk" (§188). This monk, afterwards Bishop of Scythia, was known to the patient, and, he adds, "I knew him well, since it was not an illusion, nor was I sleeping."

Here is a clear case of a vision which came to the patient—*ἔπαρ*, *i.e.*, in a waking state. In other cases the word "invisible" is used of the action of the saints in healing. "The saint laid a hand on his and thus invisibly healed him" (§192), and "God manifested Himself and declared Himself invisibly to him" (§204). The belief in a divine invisible presence accounts for these statements. But the most frequent visitation was that which came in sleep to a suppliant practising incubation. The church was the regular and official place for this incubation. "Cosmas and Damian appeared to her in the church according to their custom in a vision" (§198), and "Since miracles of this kind were performed every day, constant crowds of sick people came to the church," *i.e.*, at Byzantium (§192).

A man with a fistula on the thigh was, after

long suffering, advised to go to the church of Cosmas and Damian. They appeared to him at his home and said, "Come to us. Thou wilt be healed." He obeyed, and his cure followed (§175).

In some cases presence at the church was not essential either for a visitation or a cure. The recovery of St. Theodore through the help of the saints (§73) took place at his home; Justinus (§185) is visited and cured in Scythia; a Phrygian woman (§219) has visitations from the saint, and receives medical treatment. This last story is remarkable in several respects. Constantine, a soldier of Constantinople, married in Phrygia while at the wars. His wife suffered from an ulcerated breast. Constantine was a devout worshipper of St. Cosmas and St. Damian, and spoke of their healing powers to his wife. By night she had a visit from them, and they promised to cure her. When she awoke and described the apparition to her husband, he recognised them from her description which tallied with his images of St. Cosmas and St. Damian. A second and third time the visitation was repeated, and active measures were taken for her cure. During the second visit they asked the woman her symptoms, and told her to open her mouth. One of them put his finger in, and blood flowed out. In the morning she was cured. The third time they appeared they told her to anoint herself with wax from the light over her head, and she would suffer no ill thereafter.

The medical treatment which these two saints gave was either of an active nature—ranging from mere touch to a surgical operation; or it took the form of a prescription. In the above story both kinds of treatment figure. Instances of simple touch are found in



§§ 192 and 209. "The saints laid their hands upon the man and cured him." A more complicated process is the surgical operation in §225, where the resultant scar is given as proof of the authenticity of the tale.

Sometimes these accounts of miraculous feats of surgery performed on a sleeping patient by divine hands have a strong flavour of tradition, but although the details cannot be guaranteed, they are interesting for two reasons. First, they show that a certain surgical activity was commonly attributed to the saints; and secondly, they form an interesting parallel to the ancient cures in the Epidaurian inscriptions. One of the most curious of these stories is attached to the church of St. Cosmas and St. Damian in the Via Sacra at Rome. An official of the church had his whole leg consumed by cancer. While sleeping, he saw Cosmas and Damian approaching him with ointment and instruments. A curious conversation took place between the saints. One asked the other where they could get flesh to fill up the space made by the amputation. The other recalled the fact that an Ethiopian had that day been buried in the cemetery. They went and brought the dead man's hip to give to the sick man, and his hip they conveyed to the cemetery. The patient woke up well and whole. He told his story, and when they went to the cemetery, they found that the Ethiopian had the patient's hip instead of his own. Another operation (§189) was performed on a dropsical man. The fluid was allowed to run out, and then his body was healed up again.

The second form of medical treatment was the prescription of remedies by the saints. The following are a few examples of their dietetic measures. A man

with hemorrhage was told to cease eating flesh and to eat cakes made with flour (§195). A woman (§198) received a prescription of herbs for a pain in her breast. She had to drink laser mixed with pennyroyal. She was cured, but the writer adds, "The virtue of the saints cured the disease, and she made use merely of the names of the herbs." The belief, therefore, was that the power of the prescription did not lie in the healing properties of the remedies, but that the cure was wrought by faith.

The relations existing between the lay-doctors and the churches, as centres of healing, were characterised by a spirit of rivalry. In almost every case the uniform statement is made that the doctors of medicine had been consulted, but that their skill had been of no avail. The sick man then had recourse to the divine healers, and in so doing met with opposition from the regular practitioners. Sometimes the doctors are involved in the cures. A woman with an ulcerated breast (§216) refused to allow her doctor to perform the operation, and said she would consult St. Cosmas and St. Damian. He laughed and told her she would return in a worse state of health. But she went in faith. The doctor then had a vision of the saints, who told him to go to the church and cut the woman's breast at the place they indicated, and then to apply a medicament which they gave him. He obeyed, in contrast to his former mockery, but found that the operation had already been performed, so that he had only to apply the medicament. Again we read (§194) of the doctors being summoned to the church to cure an internal disease. Their efforts were unavailing, and then Cosmas and Damian allowed the man to recover,

whereupon he gave thanks to the saints for his recovery, amidst the discomfiture of the doctors. One patient takes his doctor with him to the church as nurse-attendant (§209). The saints appeared to him, and said they would cure his charge. This they did by mere touch. Another case (§216) occurs where the saints appeared to the doctor as intermediary, and another prescription (§195) is given not to the sufferer but to some person who was probably a church-official.

The victories of the saints over demons receive special comment. Evil spirits were regarded as the originators of diseases, and in healing men the saints routed the demons. A youth (§192) was reduced to debility by a demon and "prayed night and day at the church to be released from the demon." The saints set him free. An ulcerated breast (§216) is attributed to a demoniacal attack, and similarly a church official is said to suffer from various diseases sent by a demon (§225).

Sick people who visited the church were accustomed to await healing for weeks or months. No mention is made of hospices or accommodation for the sick, but the church must have resembled other establishments where cures were given, for St. Cosmas and St. Damian often tarried some time before they had pity on the suppliants. One man (§175) lay for a year in the church, and another (§225) spent seven months there before the healers came to him. Funds must have been forthcoming for the maintenance of this hospital. The mercenary aims of the saints are not obtruded on our notice, although gifts acted as spurs to the healers. A man, suffering from arthritis (§149), promised Cosmas and Damian a waxen offering and recovered his health.

He forgot his promise, but was reminded by a return of his sufferings. He then fulfilled his vow, and at once was cured. More efficacious was the action of a woman who had a paralysed arm. She offered up a wax offering and received healing straightway.

At the church of the saints at Kaufburg in the country of the Suevi, donations are a prominent feature in the miracles. These incidents are, however, of later date. The church was begun in 1496, and the first entry dates 1628. Promises and vows were made in almost every case, and were various in nature—masses, services, candles, tapers, images, and money. A story is given of two men who were both ill. While one promised a gold ducat and received healing, the other made no offering and was not cured.

### III. St. Therapon

The miracles of St. Therapon are recorded by a writer whose identity is unknown. Deubner,<sup>1</sup> reasoning from the style of writing, assigns the *Encomium* to the beginning of the seventh century A.D. It thus would belong to the same period as the miracles of St. Cyrus and St. John by Sophronios. In two passages (§§10, 28) we find a topical reference in which the martyr is entreated to help the Christians at this time of stress. "Have pity now on the Christians hard pressed round about by the heathen, or, rather, share their troubles and save the city in which thou hast come to dwell" (§10). Byzantium was besieged by land and sea in 626 A.D., and the Persian king was at Chalcedon. There is every probability that this was the crisis to which the writer refers, and the *Encomium* may date from this year. The account is a contemporary history. The stories are not drawn from tradition or historical data, but from present-day events. One miracle (§24) was witnessed by the writer himself along with many other people, and his aim throughout is to relate occurrences for which he can vouch. The general character of his work is thus summed up (§1):—"Great is the collection of stories before me, for from all quarters I have poured into my ears tales which do not mislead or attract the mind by a fine, narrative style, but which derive their credibility from the personal nature of the experiences. For our subject does not concern dead affairs, the antiquity of which permits the recorder to deal with what is past and gone in a

<sup>1</sup> *De Incub.*, p. 120.

persuasive rather than truthful manner. The miracles which we record have been wrought on living men." In addition to the two sources already mentioned, some of the stories may have been derived from records in the church. The Italian demoniac (§12), who was cured, had his experience inscribed on wax tablets, in all probability according to a custom of the place.

The church where the relics of St. Therapon reposed was in Byzantium, but its exact site cannot be located. Therapon had been a Cyprian monk, then bishop, and had been buried in the island. But on the invasion of the Saracens, his relics were conveyed for safety to Byzantium, and placed in the church of the Mother of God (§10).

Among the many churches of the Virgin at Byzantium, there was a famous one in the district of Blachernae, and evidence points to this as the site of the church of St. Therapon. A vague clue is given in the story of the demoniac (§12). While sleeping somewhere in the district of Blachernae, he had a vision telling him to go to the church of the Mother of God, called Elaia. His cure, which took place there, is attributed to St. Therapon. The account is as follows:—  
“A certain man of Italian nationality, Florinus by name, was possessed by a legion of demons, and was going to hurl himself down from the wall of Blachernae on to the ground. He was stopped by some people who noticed his state of perturbation, and he was put under guard. When three hours had passed, he seemed to be rid of the demons, for his trouble was abating. Later he spoke sensibly to his guards, and when released from his bonds, lay down quietly and was at

rest. About midnight a vision came to him giving this message : 'Go to the church of the Mother of God called Elaia. For there you will be healed of your affliction.' When day came, he ventured to tell the vision, and he was conveyed by those whom he told of it. He had only stepped on the basement of the church when his body was wrenched and twisted, and he had a violent convulsion. Then he gave an unintelligible shriek, and was much enraged against those who held him. Lastly, he fell down prone on the floor, and remained speechless for several days. As he fell down, the horrible demons were put to flight by the visitation of the martyr, just like a pig by a blow, and as they departed, they had the appearance of smoke in the air. So he was completely cured of his trouble, and gave glory to Him who had wrought the cure through the saint. He remained for several days, and received in vision the assurance of his cure. Then rejoicing he set forth for his own people, and wrote on wax tablets the celebration of his trouble and his release."

On analysing this story, we find that Florinus has converse with the saint three times. The first time he had been taken by his rescuers to a certain place, where he passed the night and had an incubation-vision. Thence the same people, obeying the instructions of the vision, took him to a "house of prayer," where he was cured by the saint. Thirdly, he had another vision assuring him of his cure. The name Elaia is unknown. The most plausible conjecture is that his rescuers were servants of the church, where it was usual to deal with demoniacs, and that all took place within the sacred precincts of the church of the

Virgin where St. Therapon was worshipped. The chapel called Elaia would thus be part of the great church of the Mother of God at Blachernae. This church became one of the famous centres of health-miracles at Byzantium. "All who were physically distressed or troubled in soul, or were wasted by periodic and violent fevers, and who betook themselves to this divine hospital, were first rid of their spiritual affliction, and so received physical perfection. For such I take to be God's method of healing. First he cures the sick man's soul, by which it is right that the body be trained, then to the body too he gives perfection, so that the completion be not faulty in any respect, but that the individual may again enjoy perfection, as from nature or a remodelling" (§19). This statement of the divine method in healing men's bodies is in accordance with the records of other saints. The aim of the martyr was "to perfect souls day by day and bring bodies to perfection, so that through him believers might attain to the perfect man" (§1).

The practice of incubation at the shrine of St. Therapon, as related in the *Encomium* was of similar character to that at other churches. There are the usual two classes of miracles. First, the cases in which the cure is performed by the martyr, and, secondly, the cases in which the martyr appears and gives certain instructions for the cure. To the first class belongs the story of the dropsical woman (§20), which is similar to some of the Epidaurian inscriptions and to one of the cures of St. Cosmas and St. Damian (§189). "A woman suffering from dropsy was laid down in the place. She saw the holy man opening up her toes; then she awoke, for she had been asleep when she



was treated by the martyr. On awakening, she at once bent down to her feet, and saw below water mixed with pus and blood flowing from her feet like a stream. When this was once fully discharged, her body was free from disease and the dropsy had left her." Then the writer comments on the number of cases which received like treatment from St. Therapon, and which he has not space to recount. Thus the relative proportion of the two classes of miracles cannot be determined. A dumb and paralysed man (§21) also receives personal treatment from the saint. He had a vision of the saint anointing him with sacred ointment. On awakening he found himself cured. Another man who had an ulcer thought he was cured in sleep by the application of a salve. He saw the saint and awoke healed in the morning.

Only one instance of the second kind of vision is related (§16). A decarch of military rank, whose body was terribly distorted, had recourse to the saint and remained in the church for several days. Then he heard an "unseen voice" telling him to have himself anointed with olive oil "by an official of my church." This was done, and the man was straightway healed. The mention of a church-official acting as ministrant to the sick is noteworthy. The use of the word "unseen" points to an incubation-vision, for it occurs in other cases of the same kind. For example, in the miracles of St. Cosmas and St. Damian (§§192, 202) the epithet "invisible" is applied to the miracle-worker; and when Timarchus consults the oracle of Amphiaraos,<sup>1</sup> he is addressed by "some one not seen."

Other remarkable cases of miracles given in the

<sup>1</sup> *De Gen. Soc.*, 22, p. 591.

*Encomium* are the following. Theodoros (§16), a paralytic, lay in the church for thirty days. "He saw the wonder-worker giving him bread and a goblet full of pure wine. He was rising up, as it seemed, to receive it, and leapt up; in truth, he started up shouting and praising God." It is clearly implied that this cure was effected during incubation. The expression τὸ δοκεῖν—as it seemed—is in direct opposition to ἐν ἀληθείᾳ—in truth—*i.e.* a sleeping vision opposed to the waking state.

Prolonged presence in the church often preceded the miracle of healing. A woman, suffering from cancer (§17), remained in the church continuously for forty days, fasting and lying on the ground. Then she was freed from the disease by the saint, in a mysterious manner, the writer says. A gradual cure was wrought on Anastasios (§15), who had a withered hand. "He reached the haven of peace (*i.e.*, church of St. Therapon), and fixed his hopes upon the saint. For nine days his soul was calm, and so full and perfect did his body become, that when the feast of the Nativity drew near, he was able to work with both his hands."

The length of the patient's stay in the church was variable. One man with a bent body (§19) had to stay some time in the "healing-house of the martyr" before he was cured, while a second man suffering from the same complaint did not require to be long in attendance upon the saint (ὅν πολλῶν προσεδριῶν ἰδέθη) but at once on entering he had pity shown to him, and departed healed.

The writer records one miracle of which he was a witness (§24). A man had been beaten by soldiers until he was half-dead. Late in the evening he was

taken to the church, and all who saw him, amongst whom was the writer, despaired of his recovery. "But the martyr cured him during the night, and, when day came, sent him away healed, while we, seeing what had been done, were filled with wonder."

One case of punishment (§22) is found in the *Encomium*. "Occasionally the saint gave affliction instead of health for the sake of salvation. For example, a woman came to the church to pray. She found there a little child possessed of an evil spirit which was being expelled from him. The woman thought it was a jest and laughed. The saint sent the demon into her, and for five days she was possessed, then she was cured."

#### IV. St. Thekla

St. Thekla<sup>1</sup> was worshipped at Seleucia, chief town of Isauria. Her life and miracles are recorded in two books by Basil, Bishop of Seleucia, who was a special protégé of the saint. She herself was of literary tastes, and the citation of a line of Homer by a patient won her favour so that she was willing to heal him (mir. 24). Naturally she encouraged Basil in his literary work. She appeared to him (mir. 16) when he was becoming negligent, and by look and gesture showed him how pleased she was with what he had already written. At other times (mir. 27) she would appear to him by night, and show him certain books that would help him in his work. This relationship and the impressionable nature of the man forcibly recall Aristides the Orator who received similar patronage from Asklepios.

Basil first gives an account of the life of Thekla, and of her connection with St. Paul. She settled in Seleucia, where Sarpedon, a Greek demon, had a strong hold on the people. She fought against his influence, and by her miracles gained the supremacy. After a life of usefulness the end came thus (Bk. I. p. 122) :—“ Living she sank down and entered into the earth. Thus glory was given to God through her, and the earth was rent for her. In that place the holy altar has been set up, and for all suffering and for all infirmity she sends forth from thence sources of cures so that the place is a medical centre for all people.”

<sup>1</sup> Basilios—*De Vita ac Miraculis divae Theclae.*

In Thekla we recognise the Christianised Greek chthonian god. A human being, after a life of special sanctity and beneficence, is shielded from ordinary death and enters into the earth, thereupon becoming deified. Thus it was with Amphiaraios, who, like Thekla, was believed to send forth his healing powers from the earth. Sarpedon, whom Thekla replaced, was also a chthonian god, associated with Apollo at Seleucia, according to Diodoros (32. 10. 2). Thekla did not succeed in completely suppressing Sarpedon, for mention of his activity is found in some of the miracles. The cure of Oba (mir. 2), a heathen woman with a lame foot, was first attempted by Sarpedon, then achieved by Thekla. The conversion of the patient follows. Aristarchos, a sophist (mir. 26), is despaired of by all, but cured by Thekla. He is, however, not converted from his impiety, but persists in giving the honour to Sarpedon, who had told him to have recourse to the martyr. For this ingratitude he apparently receives no punishment.

A noteworthy point in St. Thekla's work is the absence of mercenary motives. No mention is made of payment exacted, or even of voluntary offerings, except in mir. 8, where it is stated that quantities of birds of various kinds were kept in the open temple-court. Among them were swans, geese, pigeons, and Egyptian birds, which had been dedicated to the saint as votive-offerings. It must be supposed that more valuable contributions were sometimes given, although not exacted, for the powers of St. Thekla proved more than once of inestimable benefit to the community as well as to individuals. When the whole city (mir. 9) was afflicted with a disease of the eyes, and no remedy

could be found, the saint appeared by night to some one in the church, and ordered all to use the water of her sacred fountain. This effectually cured the city. Another time all the animals of the town were seized with a mysterious disease. Thekla caused a fountain to spring forth near a little chapel sacred to her. By drinking this water the sick were cured. The sacred water again appears as a remedy in mir. 22, when a horse is cured of paralysis by a draught.

It is unquestionably a fact that incubation was practised at the shrine of St. Thekla. It was the custom of the martyr to appear by night to suppliants who had come to her church to sleep (mir. 24). Alypios, whose life was despaired of by doctors, had recourse to St. Thekla, and was saved in the following way:—"The martyr appeared by night to him, as is her custom with the sick, in her own semblance, and asked from what disease he was suffering and what he wanted." His answer in a verse of Homer—"Thou knowest, and why should I tell one who knoweth?"—conciliated the saint and she smiled, delighted both with the man and the verse. Giving him a small pebble from her hand, she told him to fasten it on his neck as a charm against disease. Alypios clasped it in his hand, but when he awoke his hands were empty. Then he thought he had merely had a dream. But the fulfilment came, for his son entered, a short time after, with a pebble of exactly the same description, which he had picked up by the way. His father seized it in both hands, and was cured of the disease from which he had so long suffered.

Several of the miracles make express mention of the fact that the vision appeared to the suppliant in sleep,

but there is also a case of a waking vision. The martyr (mir. 3) comes to the man when he is awake—  
*ὑπάρ οὐκ ὄναρ.*

A cure by touch is described once (mir. 27). It is a personal experience of the author. He was suffering from ear-ache, and thought he would be prevented from speaking at the saint's festival which was approaching. But by night she appeared to him, took hold of his ear, and pulled it. Thus he was cured.

The apparitions of St. Thekla seem more usually to have conveyed prescriptions of remedies. A woman (mir. 2) was ordered to rub herself with dust taken from the holy shrine, and Aristarchos (mir. 26) was told to anoint himself with the oil of the church-lamps. The sacred symbolism of the medicaments is evident.

## V. St. Michael

The cult of St. Michael was one of the most widespread in Europe and Asia Minor. No comprehensive record of the archangel's miracles exists, but attached to several of his chief churches are legends and tales which show that incubation had a prominent place in his worship. At Constantinople there were churches of St. Michael from the fourth century A.D. The most celebrated of his shrines stood at the ancient Sosthenium, which came to be called Michaelium. Constantine the Great was advised in a dream to build it. The story of the apparition of St. Michael to Constantine is given by Nicephorus Callistus.<sup>1</sup> The place got the name of Sosthenium from the Argonauts, who had been fighting against Amycus, king of that district. They had suffered defeat, when a man with eagle's wings appeared to them and prophesied victory. The prophecy was fulfilled, and in gratitude they raised a shrine and statue at the spot in honour of the apparition.

This was the shrine which Constantine visited. While he slept there, he had a vision of a man in the likeness of the statue, who declared himself St. Michael. When the Emperor awoke, he resolved to raise a church and altars to St. Michael, thus ousting the original pagan god. The identity of the latter cannot be positively asserted. The name was given to indicate a saviour god. Maury<sup>2</sup> comes to the con-

<sup>1</sup> Niceph. Call.—*Eccles. Hist.* vii. 50.

<sup>2</sup> *Rév. Archéol.* vi. p. 150.



clusion that the deity was either Apollo Jasonios or Serapis, but he has no sure grounds of proof. The utmost that can be asserted is that the god was of the nature of great medical divinities, and that incubation was practised at the shrine up to the time of Constantine.

The temple, thus Christianised, became famed for apparitions of the archangel, and incubation remained a practice of the place. Nicephorus proceeds to tell how "anyone incurring sore misfortune, inevitable danger, terrible suffering, or incurable disease, found most speedy relief, on praying there to the god. It was believed with good reason that the holy Archangel Michael appeared there, and made the place one of healing. Therefore the men of old called it Michaelium."

A similar account of the cures performed there is given by Sozomenus,<sup>1</sup> who adds a particular example—the case of Aquilinus, a contemporary of his own. Aquilinus was suffering from a form of yellow fever, and doctors were powerless to effect a cure. He was unable to take food for a long time. "When nearly dead, he ordered his servants to take him to the house of prayer, saying that either he would die there, or be rid of the disease. A divinity appeared to him by night as he lay there, and ordered him to mix with his food a drug made of honey, wine, and pepper. This cured the man of his disease. And yet, according to the terms of their profession, the hot potion seemed to the doctors to be opposed to the man's symptoms."

The opposition to the divine healing methods on the part of the doctors is to be noted. Another case, given

<sup>1</sup> *Eccles. Hist.*, ii. 3.

by Sozomenus, tells of the conversion of a doctor who, although he was a Christian, did not believe in the power of the Cross. He had a disease of the feet, and when he was in the church, a vision of the Cross came to him and he was cured. Thus he was convinced of its power. The former instance is a case of incubation, where the deity gives a prescription of medicaments, which effect the cure, not because of their own power to heal, but through the divine virtue. The second case does not mention incubation, although probably the vision came in that way.

In Asia Minor the chief church of St. Michael was at Chonae or Colossae<sup>1</sup> in Phrygia, where the archangel made several apparitions, according to the traditions of the church. Miracles were frequently wrought there, but no account of them is preserved. We know of the existence of a sacred fountain beside the church, which is always found in the cult of St. Michael. Similarly the church on Mt. Tumba,<sup>2</sup> now Mt. St. Michel, in the north of France, was renowned for miracles of healing, in which a sacred fountain figured. Blind, lame, and deaf men, as well as demoniacs, were restored to full possession of their powers at this church.

Another legend of an apparition of St. Michael is connected with the church on Mt. Garganus<sup>3</sup> in Apulia. The archangel appeared and claimed the cave at the top of the mount as sacred to himself. It is believed to have been the site of the ancient oracle of Kalchas. There a church was built in the sixth century. Near

<sup>1</sup> *Acta Sanct.* Sept. vii., §xiv.

<sup>2</sup> *Acta Sanct.* Sept. vii., §xxiii.

<sup>3</sup> *Acta Sanct.* Sept. vii., §xvii.

by flowed the sacred fountain, to which a glass drinking-vessel was attached. By drinking from it fever patients were cured. In countless other ways, we are told, the sick were healed, but details are totally missing. This church on Mt. Garganus was a favourite resort of pilgrims, on whom were wrought many miracles, especially at the Feast of the Saint. An account of such a pilgrimage is given by Cavaglieri, writing about 1680. The miracles were still continued at that date, for he states that "Almighty God does not cease to honour the church of St. Michael with miracles" (§20).

## VI. St. Cyrus and St. John

A eulogy<sup>1</sup> of St. Cyrus and St. John, with an account of seventy of their miracles, was written by Sophronios, patriarch of Jerusalem. He himself died about 640 A.D., and in his narrative he often mentions as his intimate friend Bishop John of Alexandria, who held the see from 610-620 A.D. Sophronios left Egypt about 619, on the invasion of the Persians, therefore his work must date in the second decade of the seventh century. Further, at a certain date the relics of the saints were transferred to Rome to save them from the depredations of the Saracens. In the codex which records an account of the transference, the date is given as the reign of Honorius and Arcadius. This is evidently an error for Heraclius and Pope Innocentius, for at the time Sophronios wrote, it is certain that the relics of the saints were treasured at Menuthes, a village near Alexandria, and were worshipped there by all nations, as he often says. In 634, Egypt was occupied by the Saracens, and to this year the transference, which cannot be disputed, may be assigned. Thus the working of miracles at Menuthes cannot have continued long after Sophronios compiled his narratives.

He expressly states (§31) that he writes a contemporary, not an ancient, history. "We do not give a record of ancient miracles or an account of things which were done a long time before, so that we are not shielded by a lapse of time, and infidels cannot repudiate our stories. Nay, we write what has been

<sup>1</sup>Sophronios. *In Laudem SS. Cyri et Johannis. Spicil. Rom.* iii.

done in our own time, some of which things we ourselves have seen, and some we have heard from others who saw them. Also, the majority of those who were afflicted and cured still survive in our time, and behold the light of the sun, and are witnesses to our truth, and themselves relate with their own mouths these things for the glory of God and the honour of the saints. Some have gone to heaven and have been freed from the troubles of this life, after themselves telling their experiences to many, and leaving as trusty witnesses of our narratives those who saw and heard."

The miracles which he had to draw upon were, he tells us (§31), like an unbounded sea, in which the seventy which he gives were but drops of water. This huge mass of material was not found in written records, for in §1 he says :—" On account of a disease of the eyes I had recourse to the martyrs Cyrus and John, and stayed at their church. While beholding the multitude of cures, I was anxious to find records to tell of the works of the martyrs and to proclaim abroad some of their precious miracles. But I found nothing of this kind, except only two small homilies of Cyrillus, the great champion and herald of truth, and I was stimulated by an irresistible impulse."

While claiming the originality of first-hand narratives for his miracles, Sophronios allows that there is a parallelism between them and those of Cosmas and Damian. In §30 he mentions, after relating the cure of a paralytic, that a similar miracle was said to have been performed by Cosmas and Damian, the co-doctors and co-martyrs of Cyrus and John. Similarly the cures of a paralytic, a dumb woman, and a Jewish

woman were found identical in the works of both. Sophronios gives his explanation thus :—“ No one need be surprised if the saints perform the same miracles, for from one source, namely, Christ our God, Cyrus and John, and Cosmas and Damian, drew their cures, and each has and honours one Master, Him who grants us the cures through them and works the many wonders.” But a great similarity in attributes and methods, as well as acts, would suggest that Cyrus and John were initiated in imitation of the great medical brothers, Cosmas and Damian, who, as healers of the sick, had priority of time as well as of name.

The bodies of Cyrus and John had first reposed in the church of St. Mark. It is not known whether this church was at Alexandria or at Canopus, where the saints suffered martyrdom. In the reign of Theodosius Minor (§24), Bishop Cyrillus transferred them to the village of Menuthes, near Canopus, where a mighty demon had appeared, by name Menuthes. She was a woman in form, and began to prophesy and cure disease, or rather, says Sophronios, to tell lies and cause diseases by phantasies. Thus dreams had their part in the practices of Menuthes as a goddess of healing. She belonged, therefore, to the category of Greek medical divinities, who cured disease through incubation, and gave oracles. The connection with Isis has been suggested by Deubner.<sup>1</sup> An inscription<sup>2</sup> speaks of an Isis of Menuthes, and Strabo<sup>3</sup> mentions the practice of incubation carried on near Canopus in the worship of Serapis. An intimate connection must have existed between the cults.

<sup>1</sup> *De Incub.* p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> *C.I.G.* iii. 4683b.

<sup>3</sup> Strabo, xvii. 1, 17.

This demon, Menuthes, was working ravages among the Christian flock, and Cyrillus prayed for its destruction. By night as he slept an angel appeared, and told him to transfer the martyr from St. Mark's Church to the shrine of the holy evangelists, which the governor Theophilos had built in the village of Menuthes, where the heathen goddess was worshipped. Cyrillus, judging that the angel referred to the pair of saints as united together, transferred both Cyrus and John. Installed in the church at Menuthes, they put the demon to flight and left her shrine desolate. Her temple and altar were buried in the sand, and no mention is made of any resistance to the triumphant Christians.

As in the supplanting of the heathen idol, so in their work of healing, the saints were considered as representatives and subordinates of the Supreme Power. In mir. 1 they are called "the only helpers after God," and in mir. 4 "the mighty-doctors of the city to whom the Saviour had given their powers." In mir. 36 the saints promise the patient to intercede with God for his recovery, if he obeys them, and in mir. 42 they explain:—"We are not masters of the healing art . . . Christ is dispenser and guardian . . . we offer intercession for all alike, and Christ decides whom we shall cure."

Thus in many cases a condition of cure is conversion to Christianity. Mir. 12 relates how a rich man, Julianus, was paralysed by a magic potion. He was a heretic, and for this double infirmity, moral and physical, the martyrs effected a cure. His father appealed to Cyrus and John, and they visited the sick man often by night, telling him to join the Church of Christ.

He was obstinate in refusing, but as his sufferings always increased, he yielded at last and confessed his error. Then he was healed.

Two cases are given (mir. 37 and 38) where the patient joins the Christian Church and is cured, but reverts to his former heresy. The saints are not tricked, but renew the illness, and the second cure is given only on condition of fidelity. Converts to Christianity were apparently the chief aim of their work. Their unmercenary nature receives frequent comment, and they share with Cosmas and Damian the epithet *anargyroi*. Men come to them after long and expensive treatment by lay doctors, to whom they have given all their money. Then they have recourse to the saints, "doctors who demand no fees" (mir. 6). A rich man and a poor one (mir. 24) are cured alike by Cyrus and John, "powerful doctors who need not money, nor cure the sick for gold." In mir. 69 the case of a blind Roman is given, who had no money to pay doctors and, therefore, "sought a doctor who would be skilled in medicine and yet not require money, and not only that, but who would support the patient." This he found at the church of Cyrus and John, where, as he lay at the door, he would be supported by the charity of visitors to the church. This practice of free cures was naturally detrimental to the prosperity of the lay doctors, and their opposition to the saints was only to be expected. The lay practitioners and the divine physicians formed rival camps, and the former mocked at the latter, refusing to believe in the efficacy of the divine power of healing.

In mir. 15 Sophronios says that he will relate the cure, so that the doctors cannot mock at the powers



of the saints, saying that some Hippokrates or Galen worked the cure ; and mir. 30 tells of a doctor who was a Christian, but refused to believe in the powers of the saints, asserting that they cured by medical art and not by a divine virtue. The story of his confession is then given. In the majority of cases we are told that the patient has first been treated by the lay doctors, but that they have been unable to cure him. For example, Theodoros has visited his doctors of the city. " But as he went, so he returned, having gained nothing except the knowledge of their incapability. He knew that none of them were of any avail against his disease, and giving up hope of being released and saved by them, he turned to the martyrs Cyrus and John, who are the real helpers powerful to save, and he lay down in their shrine, awaiting their help " (mir. 27).

Although cures were performed at the church of Cyrus and John from unmercenary motives, voluntary offerings were naturally accepted. Thanksgiving in this practical manner cannot have been uncommon, although little mention of it is made in this account by Sophronios. In mir. 29 a rich woman is cured, and we are told that she gave many oblations in token of her gratitude. A rich man from Palestine was restored to health. " He departed joyfully to make a temple for the saints at Charagmata, his native city, as he had promised, dedicating it to his saviours " (mir. 58). The speediness of his cure is exceptional, and the saints, or temple officials, unmercenary though they were, may have been influenced by the munificent promise, which had evidently been made to them beforehand. In mir. 48 a Theban receives healing

and is told to go to his native town, plant a vine in the name of the saints, and share it with them. He had to bring their share to the temple each year to be divided among the sick.

Offerings in money and kind would be necessary, for the church must have been a costly establishment to maintain, and we may conjecture from its prosperity that, though not exacted, they were forthcoming, and that, as in other churches, patients when cured did not fail to show their gratitude according to their means. Sophronios does not give any consecutive account of the establishment that was maintained at the church, but stray phrases in the miracles throw some light upon this point. We read in mir. 9 of "the multitudes of rich people who lay at the shrine of the martyrs where all sorts of diseases were cured"; and of the baths of the saints which often figure in the cures, as in mir. 47 and 52. In mir. 37 the suppliant had to sleep in "the holy sacristy of the church, where all the visitors stay who cannot find another place on account of the crowd of sick who are within." The church was the place for incubation, and the sick people lay on mattresses or low couches, which are often mentioned as *Stromnai* or *Stromata*. The work which a crowd of sick people involved was increased by the length of time they remained in the church before receiving the cure. A few, such as the rich man in mir. 58, were cured at once, but it is more usual to find that the patient stayed months and years before the saints had pity on him. We find that this variation gives rise to complaint. A man, in mir. 42, was cured on the night of his arrival. Three women complained that they had been waiting

a year. Why cure the newcomer and not them? The answer of the martyrs has already been given—that Christ decides whom they should cure. In mir. 48 the man dwelt at the church for two years, and mir. 69 gives the case of a blind man who remained for eight years at the temple-door and then recovered sight. A reason is given for delay in curing. The lapse of time would attract the attention of more people, and a greater number would be informed by the miracle (mir. 41).

It stands to reason that there must have been a regular staff of attendants, members of the priesthood, probably, who were kept busily employed in caring for the sick. Only once do we find express mention of them. In mir. 56 we are told that the patient gave no little trouble to those who had the task of caring for the sick people in the church. Further, we often find mention of an *oikonomos*, the head official of the church, and of a deacon, his subordinate, who would both be under the bishop. Servants were also necessary for menial tasks. In mir. 49 a man has tried to defraud the church of offerings entrusted to him to deliver. A demon is sent into him as punishment, and he is kept as a temple servant, and has to clean out the church twice daily.

The record of miracles by Cyrus and John leaves no room for doubt that incubation was practised in the worship of the saints. In the majority of the cases we find special mention of the fact. The patient is often described as sleeping before the tomb of the saints when the vision appears, as in mir. 42; or it is said that the saints led him to sleep (mir. 21) so that he might have a vision. And sometimes, as in

mir. 34, the suppliant, after weeping and praying the greater part of the night, is sent to sleep by the saints in order that they may visit him. Further, in mir. 62, we have a close parallel to the vision of the incubation patient in the *Ploutos* of Aristophanes. While passing the night in the church, he saw the martyrs going through the lines of sick people and approaching each individually and giving cures to each. It was a custom for women who desired offspring to betake themselves to the Asklepieia, and a similar custom seems to have prevailed at the shrine of these saints. For a woman, praying for her son, says (mir. 34), "Other women who have not children and have recourse to thee, bear offspring."

The visions which came to the sick in the church of St. Cyrus and St. John were of two kinds. First, those in which the saints appeared and performed the cure. Second, those in which they prescribed a remedy, which the patient on awakening applied. The former class contains few cases. No surgical operations are performed. A demoniac (mir. 14) had a vision of the saints as he slept in the church, and was told by them to rise and go home, for they had driven away the evil spirits. Cases which belong to this class generally contain a statement to the effect that they are exceptional. A blind man (mir. 69) had his sight restored thus:—"They touched his eyes and did not order him to use medicaments." Similar statements are the following:—"They did not perform this through a vision, or give orders as was their custom to do, but when they had decreed that the boy should be cured, his cure was performed openly" (mir. 41). "Nor was he bidden do something, as are all sufferers who

stay in the temple because of their diseases; neither did he eat anything, or bring anything out by his mouth; he only saw the saints after his recovery, and they said, 'See, we have rescued you from your sufferings, and you no longer suffer as you have done up to now.' "

In the first class comes the case of a woman (mir. 33) who, when on her way to the church of St. Cyrus and St. John, fell from her ass and broke her bones. She recognised this to be the work of an evil spirit, and determined to continue her journey to the shrine. When she arrived, the saints appeared to her by night as doctors. She said to them that it was hard that they who were healers of the sick should cause her this disaster when she was in good health. He who seemed to be master and leader, viz., Cyrus, smiled and said to his pupil to come and free her. The pupil struck her on the cheek. She thought that some one had really struck her, but on returning to consciousness, found the vision fled and herself healed. In this case sleep is not expressly mentioned, but the word *ὑπάρ*, really, implies its opposite *ὄναρ*, so that it is an incubation vision.

Another kind of visitation is a compromise between the two classes. The saints appear, and are supposed themselves to give the remedy to the sick person. One man received a dried fig to eat, during a sleeping vision, but on awakening he was surprised to find he had no fig in his hand. However, one was discovered in the bed. This he ate, and was cured. Elpidia (mir. 25) was given a myrtle in wine to drink. After she awoke, she drank it, and was cured. Isidoros (mir. 4) was visited, not in a dream but in a waking vision,

by the martyrs, and given a piece of lemon, which cured him. Punishment was given to Mennas (mir. 39) in sleep, and he awoke to find himself racked with pain and "as if he had been really (*ὑπάρ*) beaten, he had weals which testified to the martyr's will."

The second class of miracles is by far the greater, and the divine prescriptions which are detailed show much variety. As we have previously noticed, especially in the miracles of St. Cosmas and St. Damian (§198), the medicaments were not considered as powerful to heal in themselves, but as a means for conveying the virtues of the saints. A demoniac (mir. 57) is freed from the evil spirit by applying a prescription given to him by the saints. The prescription was to anoint his body with roasted calf's flesh, pounded down among wine. "The evil spirit did not flinch before the medicament; it was the decree of Cyrus and John that it feared." The remedies prescribed were, then, merely symbols, and of these symbols sacred wax and sacred oil are the most frequently used. Fifty per cent. of the prescriptions contain one or other of these sacred emblems. A plaster is prescribed for scrofula (mir. 1) to be made of sacred wax mixed with bread. Again for indigestion (mir. 1) oil and wax were to be taken from the church. For a broken leg (mir. 3), for deformities of the limbs (mir. 7, 22, and 50), for gout (mir. 36), oil and wax from the temple lamps had to be used as an ointment. A wax-salve (mir. 70) made from one of the candles on the sacred tomb is prescribed for a disease of the eyes.

In other prescriptions we find various ingredients. A plaster made of honey and sisamos mixed with

biscuit (mir. 6) is given for a fistula on the thigh, and again for the same complaint, citron leaves (mir. 61). A case of cataract (mir. 51) is cured by the application of Bithynian cheese with wax. Biscuit is prescribed for dropsy (mir. 20). A woman fell and hurt her hand (mir. 9), and was told to sponge it with mareotic wine and apply fish-flesh. For lameness (mir. 43) salted quail is given as an ointment; for paralysis (mir. 55) roasted figs mixed with wine; and green leaves cured liver-complaint (mir. 61). A man who had been poisoned (mir. 68) was saved by a concoction of lentils, which was used as a plaster and was also eaten. Baths were frequently prescribed (mir. 9, 47, 52). Holy water cured cataract and paralysis (mir. 2 and 39). A dumb Phœnician (mir. 64) was told in sleep by the martyrs to drink water. "They did not give the order in words, for he could not hear, but by nods and showing of the liquid." He awoke, drank the water, and was cured.

The appearance of the martyrs in the visions is often described. Cyrus had been a monk (*In Laudem* §11) and appeared habitually in monk's attire, while John, who had been a soldier, usually wore a military cloak. This statement is confirmed by several of the visions, which give further details in some individual cases. At times both martyrs appear as monks, and the gentleness of their demeanour is remarked. They came as "monks in shining garments, and looked gently and mildly at the patient" (mir. 21), and sometimes they appeared as priests (37 and 38). To Sophronios himself (mir. 70) they came as monks. Cyrus resembled the spiritual father and master of Sophronios who was in the temple at the time, and John was like

one Peter of Alexandria, Prefect of the Pretorians, and wore a military cloak. They returned after a few days, both wearing monks' stoles. Cyrus, as the older, was leader, and John was his subordinate.

Three instances are given in which the suppliant refuses to believe that what he has seen is a real vision of the saints, but declares it to be an evil phantasy, and therefore does not carry out the instructions conveyed to him. In each case the orders of the saints bordered on the ridiculous, and this comic element may account for the incredulity with which the suppliant received the vision. One man who was suffering from headache (mir. 18) was told to go to a certain door of the church and strike the first person whom he met. The order was given three times before he obeyed. A soldier met him and returned the blow by a heavy stroke of his stick on the man's head, thus curing him. Theodoros (mir. 27) was told to swallow an asp, but he also refused to believe in the good faith of the vision. The third time the saints varied their command, and told him to eat whatever he found at the fountain. He did so, and in the cucumber, which he found there, was hidden an asp. He swallowed half, without being aware of its presence, and it rid him of the poison.

The experiences of an incredulous doctor are given in mir. 30. He became paralysed, and as a last resource betook himself to the saints. As he slept, they came by night and reproached him for his stupidity, commanding him to take the pack-saddle of an ass and carry it on his shoulders. At mid-day he was to go round the temple saying, "I am stupid and mad." He thought it was a phantasy and not a genuine dream, but it was repeated a second time, and a bell was added



to his decorations. A third time he prayed for healing, and the same answer was given. He then was convinced of the genuineness of the apparition, and was cured on fulfilling the saints' commands.

Twice the saints are said to appear not in a dream but in a waking vision. In the one case, they gave the patient a piece of lemon (mir. 4); in the other, Zosimos, a paralytic (mir. 52), prayed for three days, and then was told to go and wash in the bath. His bearers left him on the mattress at the side of the bath. "Then Cyrus appeared to the sick man in the form of a monk, not in a dream, as he appears to many, but in a waking vision, just as he was and is represented. He told the patient to rise and plunge into the warm water. Zosimos said it was impossible for him to move, but when the order was repeated, he slid like a snake into the bath. When he got into the water, he saw the saint at his side, but when he came out, the vision had vanished."

Healing by a mysterious method is brought about for a cancer patient (mir. 19). Stephanis stood before the shrine, weeping and praying, and suddenly she was healed of her disease, by the touch of "visible hands," and not by unseen medicaments by which it was the custom of the saints to heal the sick. There were many witnesses of this cure, for it was daytime. From their report Sophronios learned the story.

The saints appeared at other places besides their church. Sometimes they visit people at their homes, to bid them come to the church (9 and 29). They are supposed to be ubiquitous (mir. 60) and to know all things. They rescued from drowning a steward of their church by making the winds to cease (mir.

8). For the curing of disease, however, the church was the centre, and there the prescriptions and instructions were issued in dreams.

Many instances of the punishments which were meted out to wrong-doers are given by Sophronios. A rich woman of Alexandria (mir. 29) had blasphemed against the saints, and while doing so one day, she bent down and could not rise up straight again. The saints appeared to her in sleep, and said they would cure her if she came to their church. She did so, and in spite of her former unbelief she was cured. The saints had their reward in the many valuable offerings she gave them, with a generosity the more remarkable as her benefactors were also believed to be the first cause of her trouble. Theodoros (mir. 31) was struck blind for acting sacrilegiously in the church, but his sight was restored after three days. A heathen (mir. 32) pretended to be a Christian, but did not deceive the saints when he sought a cure for paralysis. In a vision he was reproached with intent to defraud, and then he took the sacrament in insincerity, seeking still for healing. A demon seemed then to possess him, and he was taken home to die. Another heathen, who was blind, received his sight (mir. 38) after a profession of Christianity, but then foolishly confided to a temple-servant that, when he returned home, he would go back to the faith of his fathers. The same night the martyrs appeared, and told him to take a bath, after which he became blind again. He promised then to remain faithful, and his sight was restored. Two Egyptians (mir. 49) who were bringing offerings from two women to the church, appropriated to themselves the gifts, which were a sum of money and a pig. On returning

home, the one became paralysed and the other a demoniac. They went back in penitence to the church, and while the one was cured on paying up the money, the other was not freed from the evil spirit, but was kept as a servant in the church.

## VII. St. Julian, St. Martin, St. Maximinus, St. Fides

ST. JULIAN.—At Arvernus was a church built to guard the tomb of St. Julian. Miracles of healing were wrought there by the martyr, bringing widespread fame to the church. Near by, on the spot where Julian had been wounded, flowed a sacred fountain, the waters of which possessed healing properties. Blind men, fever patients, and demoniacs were restored to health by drinking of it. In the church itself cures were performed on paralytics, lame and blind men, and all kinds of sufferers.

Gregory of Tours<sup>1</sup> gives an account of some of these miracles which took place in his own time. The narrative is a contemporary one, and not without personal touches. He himself was cured of a headache (§25) by the water of the fountain; and his brother (§24) when suffering from a fever, held vigils at the tomb, and then asked that dust from the tomb be hung round his neck. When this was done the fever left him. The story is similar to a case of incubation in which a prescription for cure is given, proving to be the necessary remedy. The difference is between voluntary incubation and vigils, and is not so great as it appears, for the patient's mind has been prepared in the same way to be receptive of visions. A great number of the cures related by Gregory belong to the vigil class; others, again, were performed in sleep.

<sup>1</sup> *De Virtutibus S. Juliani.*

Another relative of Gregory was benefited by the saint (§23). His uncle, who afterwards became bishop, got a thorn in his foot and could not extract it. He prostrated himself at the saint's tomb, and then after his vigils returned to bed and slept. On awaking he rose up without pain and found the splinter in the bed. He considered this as a miracle wrought by St. Julian, and it was his custom to display the scar in order to demonstrate the saint's power.

Gregory gives one story of a sleeping vision with full details (§9). It is a case of involuntary incubation. The following is his account:—"Fedamia, a paralysed woman, who could not move any limb without pain, was brought by her relatives to the holy church that she might receive alms from donors. She passed the Sunday night in the portico which adjoins the holy church, while the devout faithful celebrated holy vigils, and she slept a little while lying on her couch. Then she was seized and chidden by a man in a vision. He asked why she was absent when the others were holding nocturnal services to the glory of God. Her answer was that she was weak in all her limbs, and could not walk into the church. It seemed as if she were carried by the man who had spoken to her, and taken to the tomb, while she spoke in her sleep. A quantity of chains seemed to fall on to the ground from her limbs. The sound awoke her, and she felt that she had regained full power of her limbs. Then she rose from her couch, and to the astonishment of all entered the church crying out thanks. Some say she was accustomed to tell the appearance of the man who had spoken to her. She said he was tall in stature, brightly clothed, of great elegance, and of

a cheerful countenance. He had yellow hair, was quick in gait, free in voice, bland of address, and his skin shone with a whiteness surpassing the lily's, so that of the many thousands of men she had seen, none was like to him. It seemed probable to many that the blessed martyr had appeared to her. The woman was cured after eighteen years of illness."

ST. MARTIN.—In the town of Tours, the church of St. Martin was a centre of health-miracles. Gregory<sup>1</sup> gives some account of the works of the saint, mentioning one or two instances of personal experience. The majority of his stories are not cases of voluntary incubation, but all types of miracles are given without particular distinctions being made. The case of Veranus (Bk. ii. §4) is one of incubation. He had suffered from severe gout for a year, when he was taken by his master to the shrine and deposited at the feet of the saint. He lay there for five days, and on the sixth day fell asleep. In sleep he had a vision, and awoke completely cured.

St. Martin is found to act in conjunction with St. Julian.<sup>2</sup> A blind woman came to the church of St. Martin and lay prostrate for three days. Then in a dream she received a message from the saint, who said to her, "If you desire to receive your sight, go to the Church of St. Julian."

The activity of St. Martin was not confined to his church at Tours. He was worshipped at a small chapel called the *Cellula Condatensis*, and there also he healed the sick. Vinastis, a blind man (ii. §23), had been in the habit of giving alms to the poor at this chapel.

<sup>1</sup> *De Virtutibus B. Martini.*

<sup>2</sup> *De Virtutibus S. Juliani.* §47, p. 583.

and of praying before the sacred couch. While praying he fell asleep. A man appeared to him in a vision, and told him to go to the church of St. Martin and there he would find full healing. He did so, and recovered his sight. Another man (iii. §23), who had been deprived by fever of speech and hearing, lived for six years on alms at this Cellula. One Sunday night while sleeping he saw the whole floor flooded with light, and had a vision of a man in priest's garments, who touched him, laid the cross on his forehead, and said, "The Lord make thee whole. Rise, hasten to the church and give thanks to thy God." Afra (ii. §31) received her cure partly at home and partly at the church. She had lost the use of her limbs through fever. An old man appeared to her by night, and touched all her limbs gently. In the morning she found her feet and one hand cured. Another day, she was instructed, during sleep, to go to the holy church of St. Martin. At midnight, when she was keeping vigil, the other hand was healed.

No detailed description is given of the appearance of St. Martin in the visions. Sometimes he is an old man, again he is dressed in black garments, and has white hair (§40); in §56 he wears purple and carries the cross; again he is dressed as a priest and carries the cross (iii. §23); on another occasion he appears smiling, with a happy countenance, carrying his usual armour.

One case is given (ii. §56) which resembles the Epidaurian inscription where the woman is cured on her way home from the temple. The Christian woman had paralysis of the fingers, and visited the church, but was not successful in finding healing. On her way

home, she slept a night near the river le Cher, and as she slept, a man clothed in purple and bearing the cross appeared to her, and said, "Now thou wilt be healed in the name of the Saviour Jesus Christ." Then he took her hand and put his fingers between hers. She awoke to find herself cured.

ST. MAXIMINUS.—Near the town of Trèves stood a monastery, built by Constantine the Great, who dedicated it to St. John the Evangelist. Its widespread fame was derived from the miracles which God showed unto men through his servant St. Maximinus.<sup>1</sup> In the fourth century, Maximinus had been bishop of Trèves, succeeding Agricius about 332 A.D. The date of his death is given as 349, and he was buried in the church of this monastery. Gregory of Tours<sup>2</sup> writes of him thus:—"Near the town of Trèves, in the outskirts, rests St. Maximinus, the mighty advocate of that people with the Lord, and at his tomb glorious miracles are often witnessed." He then proceeds to relate the punishment of a man who committed perjury over the tomb of the saint in the beginning of the seventh century.

Two records of these miracles are extant. The first belongs to the eighth century, and is by an anonymous writer. The second is written by Sigehardus, a monk of the ninth century. They show that incubation was a practice in the church at Trèves, and in the worship of St. Maximinus.

Charles Martel (§12 p. 24) was seized with fever, and lay at death's door, when a vision appeared to him. The apparition declared himself to be St. Maximinus,

<sup>1</sup> *Acta Sanct.* Mai., vii., p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *De Gloria Confessorum.* Ch. 93.



and bade the sufferer go to his tomb at Trèves for healing. Charles had himself conveyed to the tomb, and there fell asleep. A second time the apparition came to him, saying, "I have supplicated the Lord for you that you may be saved." The king awoke from sleep and found himself in excellent health. He showed his gratitude to the saint by bestowing gifts on the church.

The saint appeared in vision at other places besides his church. A man, who was staying at the house of Wenilo, a servant of the church (§21 p. 30), suffered agony with erysipelas in the foot. For two days and nights he did not cease calling upon St. Maximinus for succour. The pain grew less on the third night, and he fell asleep. Then St. Maximinus appeared and asked him why he had so lamented. On hearing of his sufferings, the saint told him to send for some oil from the lamp which hung before the altar, and with it anoint his foot. The man awoke, called Wenilo, and sent him to fetch the oil. After anointing himself with it, he was cured of the disease. This is an ordinary case of a sleeping-vision during which a prescription of the usual symbolic nature is given.

St. Maximinus, as patron-saint, was ready to save those who called upon him. Once during a terrific storm (§14 p. 24) a ship was in danger of being wrecked, when one Ibbo prayed to St. Maximinus to help them. Thereupon he had a vision of a man bright as the sun, who went over the sea before the ship and said, "Be not afraid." The storm ceased, and all were saved. Prayers and vigils at the tomb brought healing also. A priest (§22 p. 30) whose eyes were affected, found himself cured in the morning

after a night passed in prayer at the tomb. A blind man (§8) came from Beneventum to Trèves because of advice given him by St. Peter in a vision. He recovered his sight after prayer at the tomb. A woman with a withered foot (§10) was healed during the night after persistent prayer. Therafter mention is made of the frequency with which such miracles were performed on blind men, lepers, paralytics, and other diseased people.

Especially was St. Maximinus noted for the cure of demoniacs. On his feast-days great numbers of men and women were freed from evil spirits. Some were cured at once on entering the church, and the most difficult cases did not baffle the saint. King Pepin sent one of his clerks all over the country to get release from an evil spirit, but he sought in vain until he came to St. Maximinus, who cured him at once. Mention is made in several passages of the 'Brothers' or monks who worked at the church amongst the sick and demoniacs. They prayed for the patients (§§11, 15), their prayers were heard and healing given. We read of "those who are occupied with the sick-beds in the open air" (§7 p. 26), whose duties included the care of demoniacs, kept in bonds under strict surveillance. The church seems to have been used as a sort of asylum for the insane, who were kept there until some miracle released them from the evil spirit. The Brothers acted as exorcists and tried to drive out these spirits. Two women who were possessed (§6 p. 26) came to the church, but the Brothers could effect nothing. They were then taken to the holy crypt, where they at once fell asleep, and when they awoke the spirits had left them. Another demoniac (§7)

managed to escape his guards and break loose. He descended to the crypt where he was met by one of the church officials. The latter seized a rod which lay in the crypt and struck the madman with it. He fell asleep as if tamed by the blow, and woke up cured.

Several instances of signal punishment of wrongdoing and impiety are given. A Duke Gisilbertus (§13 p. 28) oppressed the Brothers, who appealed against him to their patron-saint. He appeared in a vision to the Duke and upbraided him, beating him on the side and shoulders. Then he disappeared. When the Duke awoke, the marks of the blows were visible. The beating had the desired effect. The Duke went to Trèves, restored stolen property, and gave many gifts. Rusticus (§15 p. 24) was punished for audacious scepticism. When he entered the church he saw the lamps moving of themselves, and said, "Verily ye are cheats, who say that St. Maximinus works these, while ye do it by your own devices." Straightway he was possessed of an evil spirit and brought near to death. Then he was taken to the tomb, and through the prayers and supplications of the servants of God, he received full healing.

ST. FIDES.—The worship of St. Fides,<sup>1</sup> a virgin martyr, was carried on in her church at Conques in Rouergue, where her tomb was famous for miracles. When twelve years old, 303 A.D., she had suffered martyrdom at the town of Agen, whence her body was stolen and conveyed to the monastery at Conques. According to a narrative poem, this transference was a recent event in

<sup>1</sup> *Liber Miraculorum Sancte Fidis.* Ed. A. Bouillet.

883 A.D. Pilgrimages to Conques then took place from all quarters. The account of the saint's miracles is written by one of these pilgrims, Bernard of Angers, who wrote about 1012 A.D. He professed to have collected the most remarkable of the miracles, and without being able to go into chronological details, he vouched for the truth and accuracy of his stories. Some of them he received verbally from the beneficiaries. This was the case in the first miracle he relates, and also in the ninth. The latter was wrought on a blind girl, while Bernard was sojourning at the church. She had been holding a vigil at the tomb, when suddenly she was able to see. A further personal touch is the cure of the writer's brother (iii. 13). He was released from great pain after the invocation of Bernard to St. Fides on his behalf. Besides these instances, other chronological facts are given to the effect that certain events took place three years before, or some other short space of time. The miracles are thus contemporary history of the tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh.

The church was renowned for the healing of the sick. Pilgrims came especially for the feast-day of the saint, and passed the night in vigil and prayer before the golden image of St. Fides, while the monks chanted a solemn devotional service. Then on the following day the image was carried round in procession, and during its passage many wonders were wrought. Some of these are narrated by Bernard (ii. 4 20). The dumb were made to speak, the blind to see, and the paralytics to walk, as the image passed along through the country. All the year round, cures took place in the church. The treatment of the sick was a daily pro-

ceeding. One night just before Bernard's arrival, eleven sick people were restored during different visions. But Bernard does not seek to give prominence to this curative phase of the saint's work (i. 9). He devotes himself rather to relating the punishments which befell those who sought to defraud St. Fides in any way, or he narrates the more unusual works, such as the resuscitation of men and animals, or the release of prisoners from captivity.

It is, however, with the medical aspect that we have to deal, and while there is a paucity of detail in Bernard's Book, yet we have a number of instances where the saint was said to visit the patient in sleep, and either give a prescription for the case, or herself perform the work of healing. So the church at Conques may be considered to be another centre of Christian incubation, and that practice to belong to the worship of this saint.

As we have hitherto found in Christian incubation, prayers and vigils have the prominent part, and sleep or a quiescent state usually comes unsought. Voluntary incubation is also found. The story of a Norman (iii. 6) is an example of this. He had lost his sight while sleeping in the open air, and he determined to visit various oracles of the saints. Rome was reached, and at the shrine of some saint whose identity is not given, prayer was offered up. In sleep he received the answer that he must go to St. Fides for cure. Not knowing where the church of the saint was situated, he neglected the warning. For two years he remained at home blind, and then bethought himself of St. Fides. At Conques he prayed first, and thereafter sought sleep. In the vision which came to him, two lovely birds

seemed to fly towards him and fix two candles in his eyes. On awakening, he went to the altar and prayed again. As he rose, a sudden pain shot through his head, and blood gushed from his eyes. Then his sight was restored, and in gratitude he offered up a ducat to the saint. The following is another case of cure in the church. A soldier (iv. 10) was wounded in the arm and lost the use of it. He went to Conques, and held vigils before the tomb; then he fell asleep. In sleep he heard a voice telling him to rise up and make the sign of the cross. After a third telling, he arose astonished, and raised his hand. Then he awoke, and recognised that he was cured.

The first miracle that Bernard relates contains a somewhat similar cure, which was told him by the beneficiary himself. Witbert had his eyes put out by a cruel master, as he was returning from the feast of St. Fides at Conques. A dove or a magpie picked up the eyes all streaming with blood, and carried them back to Conques. Witbert remained blind for a year, but the day before the vigil of the saint's feast, as he slept, he had a vision of a fair young girl who told him she was St. Fides, and bade him go to Conques, and buy two candles, one of which was to be placed on the altar of the Saviour, and the other on her own. That done, he would regain his sight. He obeyed, and then lay down before the golden image of the martyr. About midnight he thought he saw bright gems like laurel berries being fixed in his eyes. Then he slept, and when he awoke his sight was restored, and his eyes were in their sockets.

Whenever, as in the above story, the appearance of the heavenly visitor is described, it is that of a young

girl about ten years old, clad in golden armour and of great beauty. So she appeared to Gerbert, a soldier, (i. 2) whose eyes had been torn out. He remained eight days and nights in the country without food, wishing to starve to death. On the last night a maiden of great beauty appeared to him, and seemed to put in his eyes with her fingers. When he awoke, he was still blind, but he resolved to go to Conques. He stayed at the hospice there, and after praying at the church for several days, he recovered his sight.

Blindness is the infirmity which is cured most frequently according to Bernard's account. A blind girl (i. 9), along with her mother, passed the night in the church holding vigils, and together with them were many others similarly engaged. In the first watch the girl recovered her sight, to the astonishment of all.

The visitations of St. Fides were not confined to the church. Many cures are related which were performed elsewhere, and the beneficiary afterwards made a pilgrimage to the church to show gratitude by prayers and gifts. A soldier (ii. 7) received a gash with a sword on the face, so that the bones were visible and the face was divided up. He resolved to go to St. Fides, and while he slept by night after his resolve, the saint appeared to him in her beauty, and laid a healing finger on his face, and put her palm under his chin, so that the face closed and healed up. He awoke, and found his face perfectly healed. Gerald, another soldier, (iv. 17) was wounded in the side, and through neglect the wound putrefied. While sleeping by night he thought he lay before the altar of St. Fides on the floor, and St. Fides came to him carrying a

rod in her hand. She touched the sore with the rod, and the blood gushed forth, covering the floor. She told him to give thanks to the Saviour and praises before her own tomb. When he awoke, he recalled the words of the "holy physician" (*sancta medica*), and found that the wound had been opened and the poison expelled, so that his cure was effected.

St. Fides figures as a patron saint. She came to help her devotees in distant parts, when they were in distress, and she sent swift punishment on all who sought to injure them or herself. Her protecting influence was dominant, and she was a respecter of persons. A certain soldier who worshipped her (iii. 23) brought three dumb men at different times to the church, and they received the gift of speech by his intercession. She gave special care to the soul as well as to the body. Gerbert (i. 2) was forced to remain in the church and serve her, leading a virtuous life, instead of returning to his former occupations. Especially do we remark that this saint prized gifts. She demanded rings and other precious gifts (i. 18) from her suppliants, and would not be cheated of her dues.



and in the year 1771, the British East India Company  
 was the first to establish a permanent settlement  
 in the city of Calcutta. The British government  
 had been engaged in a long and costly war  
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## PART III.

# The Practice of Incubation during Modern Times

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### I. Introduction

In Greece at the present day it is not uncommon for the devout suppliant to have recourse to incubation as a means of approaching the powers of Heaven. The antiquity of the practice, which is a relic of the country's much-prized past, gives it a firm standing, and the success often attached to it ensures its wide popularity among a credulous and impressionable people. In Italy, too, the custom, introduced in pagan times from Greece, still prevails, as we shall see, to a considerable extent in the south, where Greek influence was strongest. Modern incubation is a clear survival of the ancient usage. The essential identity of the two practices has already been shown in the section dealing with the mediæval saints, and incubation at the present day is a direct continuation of the custom of the Middle Ages. Sixteenth century travellers attest the existence of the practice after the records of the saints have stopped, and the modern tourist may acquire first-hand knowledge of this ceremony by witnessing in person the act of incubation at some festival of the Church.

As in the early centuries of Christianity, the local saints figure most prominently, and acting as the agents of God they sometimes obscure the Deity. The Panagia, or Virgin, holds the first place of power and influence, playing the part of the pagan goddesses. She has most often the attributes and character of Isis, but Aphrodite and Demeter also appear in her. Then there are numerous patron saints, possessed of special powers, to whom the peasants betake themselves when in trouble. Those churches which are fortunate enough to possess the relics of a saint have a clear claim upon that saint's beneficence. Other local saints show their origin in their names, which are slightly varied forms of the names of certain pagan gods or goddesses, or are derived from the functions which they are supposed to perform. For example, St. Artemidos is worshipped in Keos, and St. Dionysios in Naxos. This suggests at once Artemis and Dionysos, and the connection seems established when we find that the pagan attributes have been transferred to the saints. Dionysos was born in Naxos, according to tradition, and the island was one of the chief centres of his worship. Now the modern Naxiotes<sup>1</sup> relate a Christian myth, explaining how the first wine was made by St. Dionysios. Artemis<sup>2</sup> was worshipped as the Child Rearer, and St. Artemidos is the protector of ailing children in the islands. They are often brought to some church of his, and left there under his care. St. Therapon, the Healer in Mytilene, shows his function in his name—*Θεραπέω*, I heal—and St.

<sup>1</sup> *Archaeological Journal*, vol. 43. Bent—*Survival of Mythology in the Greek Islands*.

<sup>2</sup> Frazer—*Pausanias*, iii. p. 448.

Akouphos of Cyprus<sup>1</sup> cures deafness—*Ἀκουφος, κώφωσις*, deafness.

Saints such as these have been created and are now supported by the Greek Church for the same reason that many pagan customs were retained under different forms in the new religion. The people required substitutes for the old gods, and most important for them were the local deities. Their place was taken by the Saints and the Madonna, whose powers are as varied as were those of their predecessors. Some have a particular department of good work in which they are supreme. St. Nicholas, for instance, presides over the sea, and to him as their patron sailors make their vows and offerings before and after a voyage. Many of the saints show their beneficence in all kinds of distress, if they are petitioned in the fit and proper way. The chief practical help which a patron saint can give is in healing the sick, and it is with their therapeutic work that we have now to deal.

When a devout Greek is so ill that doctors are of no avail, or when he disdains human medical skill, he begs the aid of the Madonna or of one of the saints, and his means of doing this is the act of incubation. The modern practice is essentially the same as that which we have described at the shrines of the saints in the early centuries of Christianity. Briefly, the patient passes a night in the church, and during sleep he has a vision of some heavenly personage. In the morning he awakes cured. He believes himself that his disease comes from some supernatural agent, and must be overcome by supernatural means.

The nature of these cures is much debated. There

<sup>1</sup> Polites—*Δέλτιον*, 1883, p. 1.

can be no doubt that people, through all the centuries, have been cured, and still are being cured of disease in ways which are independent of ordinary medical treatment. While making allowance for much trickery and exaggeration which naturally are introduced into a practice so adapted for deception, we cannot set aside all health-miracles with the explanation that they were manipulated by the priests. It is more in accordance with the facts to relegate the cures to the same category as hypnotic or magnetic cures, the miracles of Notre Dame de Lourdes, or de la Salette, and the faith-cures of modern Christian Science. The nature of the diseases has remained in the same general type throughout the three periods. Blindness, paralysis, and insanity are the chief afflictions which are successfully treated in these so-called miraculous ways. The cures are of a psychological, rather than physiological, character, and whatever is effected must be through the influence of mind on matter. The modern cures by hypnotism are proof of the possibilities of the power of mind-influence, or the power of suggestion. Suggestion, whether emanating from the hypnotiser or from some material cause or object, resolves itself into self-suggestion, and the final action is that of the patient's own mind on his body. The preliminary rites and ceremonies of the pagans, and the devotions which precede the Christian cures, serve as a means of magnetising the patient's mind so that it acts on his body. The ancient miracles of Epidauros must be set apart as unique in a class by themselves, but in the other cures the presence of a supernatural agent is not sufficiently definite to warrant belief. Hypnotism or magnetism can claim similar cures, without ascribing to them any

miraculous elements. The difference is only in the method of obtaining the cure, and one of the methods is incubation.

Incubation at the present day is practised in two ways. The suppliant may go to the church independently, on any day of the year, and pass one night or several nights in the church, performing whatever rites and ceremonies he individually may think proper and pleasing to the particular saint whose help he invokes. Or he may take part in some annual panegyris or festival on the saint's day, and along with the other pilgrims pass the night in the church. Each church has one or two days, the feast of its patron saint, set aside for its panegyris, and if it is an incubation centre, then that practice is performed as part of the celebrations. The belief prevails that the Virgin and the Saints are more accessible on their feast days. They are thought to descend to earth then, and confer favours on their suppliants. Naturally it is at their churches that they alight in their descent from heaven. The festivals are thus the popular occasions for all supplications to be offered, and, where the saint is famed for healing powers, crowds of sick people throng his church seeking to reach him through incubation.

Cases of independent incubation are of frequent occurrence in Greece and Asia Minor. Attached to them is a simplicity which distinguishes them from the ceremonies at festivals. An instance of the simple, ancient incubation was witnessed by Le Bas<sup>1</sup> in the church of the Maritza Monastery in the north of the Peloponnese. Entering the church, he found there a

<sup>1</sup> *Révue Archéologique*—1844—I. p. 283.

woman with her baby in her arms. Her bed was laid before the altar, and she had come to pass the night, hoping that the Virgin would appear to her in a dream, and tell her of a cure for the sickness of the child.

Parallel cases will be found in the particulars of the various churches which I give later from first-hand knowledge. In primitive country churches, such as the barn-like buildings which I visited in Boeotia, Arcadia, and Argolis, the practice is this simple temple-sleep. Thither the peasants resort when in distress, either bodily or mental. Especially lunatics are taken to the churches for cure. The frequency of this treatment for insanity in the Middle Ages has already been discussed. The same idea as to actual possession by a demon still prevails, and the priest exorcises the patient with the Cross, the Scripture, or some other symbol of the divine power, seeking thus to overcome the evil spirit which has entered into the patient's mind. Often the lunatic is left in the church for a long period. Sometimes, as in the Middle Ages, he is kept chained to a pillar, while his relatives pray for him, and the priest reads the Scripture in order to expel the demon.

One feature of the practice of incubation is the use of sacred emblems. I have already shown how it developed in the early Christian Church. Any relics of a saint, or holy dust, water, or oil, played a large part in the cures, and amulets sanctified in some way by the saint were much used. The same belief in mediums of the divine power is current to-day. Numerous instances of it can be seen in the everyday life of Greeks or Italians, and of all superstitiously religious peoples, but at festivals where incubation is

practised it is especially evident. Sacred pictures, the most precious of which are attributed to the hand of St. Luke, take the first place as efficacious healing influences. As a rule they have been discovered in a miraculous way. The Madonna or a saint has appeared to some individual in a vision and has instructed him to dig for the picture, which, when brought to light, has been found to possess miraculous powers of healing. Such, for example, are the pictures which I afterwards describe at Tenos, Mytilene, and Megaspelaion. Bodies, bones, and any relics of saints are other most powerful mediums. In Corfu, incubation before the shrine containing the body of St. Spiridion is believed to give effective healing. The skull of St. Seraphim at Dobo in Boeotia has "wondrous power in driving away all kinds of evil."<sup>1</sup> Near Canea, in Crete, is the monastery of St. Eleutherios,<sup>2</sup> where a piece of the true Cross, enclosed in an iron crucifix, is cherished. Any demoniac who kisses it is said to be completely cured. It is a common custom to use earth or oil from the sacred building, and commonest of all is the use of holy water. The sanctuaries of Asklepios had sacred wells, which played, as we have seen, a prominent part in the cures. Healing centres at the present day also have such springs and wells, which are sometimes identical with those of the pagan temple, and sometimes have been discovered in a miraculous vision which invests them with therapeutic powers. Throughout Greece holy wells are found attached to almost every church or monastery where incubation is practised. They are especially numerous

<sup>1</sup> Leake—*Northern Greece*, ii. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Pashley—*Travels in Crete*, i. 8.



in Cyprus and Crete. Ten miles east from Hierapetra in Crete are the fountain and cave where St. Paul preached and baptised. The water still cures sore eyes.<sup>1</sup> At festivals these springs are much frequented, and their use is combined with the other methods of healing. The festivals are in this respect, and also in their other chief characteristics, reproductions of the ancient gatherings which the pagan Greeks held periodically in honour of their various gods. The days set apart are times of holiday and rejoicing for all concerned. Dancing and feasting goes on in the villages, after due worship has been paid to the saint. The ceremonies and services are attended punctiliously and reverently, and devotion is particularly deep on the part of those who have some favour to ask. They prepare themselves in that way for incubation. At night the special suppliants sleep in the church and await divine revelations while the others are merry-making in the village. Each little church has its feast-day, when the neighbouring peasants visit it. The large churches hold great festivals, to which come pilgrims from all parts. The panegyris of Tenos, which I describe later, is the greatest festival of the Greek Church. Pilgrims flock to it from Egypt and Turkey. In the same way, the games at Epidauros in honour of Asklepios were attended by pilgrims from all countries. The names on the votive tablets show how the god distributed his favours far and wide. At Epidauros, too, the suppliants spent the day in pious preparation and the night in incubation. Then when they awoke in the morning, some were found to be cured. When the festival was over, the votive offer-

<sup>1</sup> Pashley—*Travels in Crete*, ii. 260.

ings were given, according to the discretion of the donors. To-day nothing is demanded, but it is a work of piety to give to the Church as much as one's means allow. The amazing quantity of votive offerings to be seen in the churches attests the faith and gratitude of the people.

Another point of resemblance exists between the temples of Asklepios and the modern healing churches. The Asklepieia developed in many instances into health resorts, where sick people stayed for lengthy periods, worshipping and practising incubation, in hope of cure. Some of the Greek churches encourage similar courses. In particular I mention afterwards the Iatrisa in Laconia and the church at Balukli, near Constantinople. Round about Parnassos also the practice is prevalent. Sick people come to the high-lying village of Arachova, and visit the church every day to pray, and sometimes pass a night in incubation. Cures take place occasionally after a stay of this description. The Jerusalem monastery near Daulia on Parnassos receives sick people in this way. They reside in the monastery, and give their services to the monks, until they can go away restored to health.

I now give particulars of various incubation centres in Greece and Italy, with details of the practice as it is carried on in modern times.

## II. Italy, Sardinia, Austria

The south of Italy is a land of superstition. In the churches, which are regarded as the dwellings of those miracle-workers, the Madonna and Saints, traditions and practices of pure paganism are upheld. This Magna Graecia, where Isis, the giver of health to the sick, was once popularly worshipped, is now pervaded by the cult of the Madonna as Healer. The two divinities, the Egyptian mother-goddess and the Christian Madonna, bear the closest resemblance to each other in attributes and powers. Like the Panagia in Greece, the Madonna of the Roman Church succeeded to the position of Isis, and this inheritance accounts, to some extent at least, for the prominence given to the healing power of the Madonna in the south. Countless churches have special shrines of the Madonna as Healer. Proof of the faith which her powers inspire is seen in the array of votive offerings which adorn the walls, altars, and pillars. To take an example—in the church of Santa Chiara in Naples, there is a humble altar on the left as you enter, dedicated to Santa Maria della Grazia. Insignificant and devoid of beauty as it is, to some it has been the chief attraction in this magnificent church, for here they can have access to the Gracious Madonna. Prayers for health and other special favours are heard at this shrine and are fulfilled. The grateful beneficiaries then give some votive offering in token of their thankfulness. At this altar these take the form either of an image of the Madonna, or of a representation of the act or process of deliver-

ance. There are several models of the Virgin hanging round the altar, and about fifty small pictures, crude representations of the healing of the sick. The general type is a brilliantly-coloured daub, portraying a sick person in bed, one or two relatives, as mourners, in tearful attitudes at the bedside, and above a heavenly visitant, ready to perform the act of healing. Most often the pictures are of sick children with their parents.

Other votive offerings commonly seen in the churches of Italy represent the part of the body that has been healed. In the church of La Gancia at Palermo, the altar of the Madonna is hung round about with numerous offerings. Among the most prominent are legs, feet, arms, modelled in pink wax flecked with several red spots, to indicate wounds. Many long dark plaits of hair hang among the limbs, and the wall is adorned with pictures of invalids in bed, of railway collisions, shipwrecks, assassinations, and burning accidents, in all of which the Madonna has appeared as Saviour. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the survival of the pagan custom of *ex-voto* gifts as seen in these offerings. Identical offerings have been found in many pagan temples. Representations of parts of the body and plaits of hair were among the most common gifts to the deity.

In the neighbourhood of Naples the cult of the Isis-Madonna is especially popular. All the year round, devotees may go to the churches, practise incubation there, and offer prayers in hope of receiving favours, but success is believed to be most certain at festival times. Each church has at least one day in the year when pilgrimages come to it, and processions and festal per-

performances after the ancient style are held. One of the most interesting and most elaborate of these festivals is held at the church of the Madonna of the Baths near Scafati.<sup>1</sup> During Ascension week it is visited by great numbers of pilgrims, amongst whom are many sick people. These invalids, cripples, paralytics, etc., come with the purpose of sleeping in the church, as near as possible to the Madonna's picture. As in the temples of Isis, they hope to get revelations in dreams and thus obtain healing. Other methods of cure are tried. One hour distant from the church are the famous baths. On Ascension Day the priests begin bathing and baptismal ceremonies, for which so many make the pilgrimage. The waters are believed to possess healing powers, and miraculous cures are said to occur frequently.

Another Madonna church, the goal of popular pilgrimage in the neighbourhood of Naples, is the Santa Maria of the Bow, near the village of St. Anastasia. The feast days occur three times a year, at Easter and Pentecost, and on 8th September. The cult originated four hundred years ago, and the Madonna became famous for her miracles of healing, punishment of wrongdoing, and preservation in time of danger, such as plague and earthquake. The present church is a large domed building. The interior is covered with the usual style of votive offerings, memorials of people who have been at the point of death, and have been cured by the Madonna's intervention. Records of the chief miracles of healing are kept in the church. Sanmartino<sup>2</sup> in his official pamphlet gives the names

<sup>1</sup> Trede—*Heidentum in d. röm. Kirche*, iii. 95.

<sup>2</sup> *Dell' antico ed illustre Santuario di S. Maria dell' Arco*.

of over a hundred cases of cure. Lame and blind children and adults have been cured by presence in the church before the sacred image. The miraculous picture of the Madonna and Child is kept in the innermost sanctuary, and is spoken of in rapturous rhetoric by the priest. On some of the walls crutches and bandages are seen fixed up as offerings, telling of actual cure. To the right of the great altar are piles of little coffins, offered by grateful parents whose children have been restored to health by Santa Maria. In 1629, it is recorded that a child who had died was resurrected in the church. His coffin is still pointed out, high up among the others. Demoniacs, also, are said to be cured. To them is applied the sacred oil from one of the church lamps. Usually in the Isis-Madonna cures some medium is employed, and simple incubation does not suffice, although it precedes the cure. Hence the prominence of sacred pictures in the churches, or of some other sanctified symbol.

Besides the churches which are the scene of popular festivals, there are scattered throughout the south of Italy many smaller churches, where incubation is often practised in a quiet and unceremonious way by a chance pilgrim at any season of the year. Anyone who is in a state demanding miraculous help may have recourse to one of these churches, and may choose the way he deems best for obtaining it. Incubation is one of the favourite means in vogue among the half-Greek inhabitants of Calabria and the south. By passing a night before the shrine, they hope to win the favour of the Madonna or the Saint, who will be more ready to come to their help there than in their own homes.

The Cathedral in the little town of Amalfi is one

example of a church of this description. It is dedicated to St. Andrew, and a statue of the saint, said to be the work of Michael Angelo, though the execution belies it, stands in the crypt. This crypt is the ancient chapel under the cathedral, and in it the actual incubation takes place. The statue of St. Andrew stands in the centre, and at his feet is a little locked shrine, in which a miraculous stone is kept. On certain feast days, three or four times a year, the shrine is unlocked, and a high dignitary of the church examines the stone to see if its miraculous powers are in working order. Occasionally the stone responds to the priest's test and exudes a drop of oil. Similar miraculous oil has been found at Heraclea.<sup>1</sup> In the metropolitan church there stands the tomb of St. Glyceria. Oil drops from the marble of the tomb in a miraculous way, and is used for healing purposes.

At Amalfi the oil, when found, is of the greatest sanctity, and is used to benefit the sick who come to the crypt. There they often pass the night, and in sleep have a vision of the saint. In the morning they are cured by a touch of the miraculous oil. Votive pictures are hung up here as in the other churches. One records an attested case of incubation during 1902. It is the picture of a boy, over whom a butcher's cart is passing. The horse is galloping madly, and the boy is directly under the wheels. On 27th June, 1902, Umberto Cassese, a native of Nola, aged 13, fell out of the cart in Amalfi, and the wheel went over him, injuring his face and body to a terrible extent. He was carried into the crypt, in this mangled condition, and having slept there one night, in the morning he

<sup>1</sup> Dallas and Covel—*Voyages and Travels in the Levant*, p. 275.

was quite cured after a touch of the miraculous oil. He left the church with full powers of limb and body.

All superstitions regarding sacred oil, water, amulets, etc., are encouraged by the Church in the south of Italy, and the natural disposition of the people, ever ready to believe in the miraculous, receives support from the priesthood. It is a source of profit for them to have credulous and superstitious worshippers, and great trade is done in precious relics and charms. But apart from such adjuncts, the ancient practice of incubation stands out clear in Italy. It is otherwise in Sicily. The influence of miraculous pictures, curative hot-springs, and wonder working amulets has caused incubation to disappear. Trede<sup>1</sup> professes to have found the practice at Marsala. The church of St. John has been built over the tomb of the Cumaean sibyl, and the place might well serve as the seat of an oracle. But in recent years the church has fallen into disrepair and has now been entirely shut up. Houel<sup>2</sup> describes the church, and says that on St. John's Eve people went to consult the oracle. In the middle of the church two staircases descend to the grotto, where there is a well. The suppliants drink the water, and after a cry, Echo answers, and they take this as the oracular response.

The leading idea of incubation is that the saints descend to earth to help and heal, particularly on their feast days. This belief is also traceable in many of the curious practices which are kept up in outlying districts. St. John the Baptist is thought to be especially ready to help in this way. On the eve of his

<sup>1</sup> *Heidentum*, iii. p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> *Voyage Pittoresque*, i. 17.



festival it is believed that he sends abroad mysterious beneficent virtues into the waters and flowers, and those who duly perform the rites and ceremonies may benefit therefrom. In certain villages of Calabria Citeriore<sup>1</sup> they say that on St. John's Eve the sick go down to the sea-shore, where there is a small chapel. In it they pass the night, and at dawn strip and rush to the sea, returning to perform certain sacred rites. They believe that on that day the water is endowed with special medicinal power by the influence of St. John.

Similar practices are common in Sardinia. In the village of Bóttida,<sup>2</sup> on the same evening, those who wish to ask a favour from St. John go on their knees for thirty metres to his chapel. Arrived at the door, they say in a loud voice: "St. John, I have come for the favour you know of." Then they rise up, go down to the stream, always in devout silence, and there plunge in. After this mystic ablution, they return home, still observing the rigorous rule of silence. At Gavoi, another village of Sardinia, silence is also enforced. Suppliants go at night to seek favours, and pass the night in the chapel in prayer.

The Sardinians celebrate numerous festivals throughout the year, at which the peasants' costumes provide the most wonderfully picturesque spectacle. Processions with dancing and music are the chief part of the programme, and the pilgrims sleep either in the church porches or in the churches. Sick people come for healing, and practise incubation at several of the festi-

<sup>1</sup> *Archivio per lo studio delle tradizioni popolari*, vol. 12. *Usi e costumi di Nuoro*—F. Valla.

<sup>2</sup> *Archivio*, *op. cit.*

vals of the island. In particular, the practice is carried on at the feast of St. Cosmas and St. Damian, celebrated at their church between Founi and Mamoiado; at the feast of S. Francesco, on 5th May, near Nuoro; during the novena of the Madonna Gounari near Nuoro, in August; and at the feast of S. Efsio Pula near Cagliari, at the beginning of May.

The same idea of the healing god entering into nature prevailed amongst the ancient Germans.<sup>1</sup> They believed in only one healing god, Wotan-Odin. He had no intermediary priests, and was worshipped on the open hills in sacred places called Odinsäcker. The cult was of the simplest, the forerunner of the open-air treatment. Odin was the god of light and warmth dispelling disease and demons. Sick children were laid out for his cure on the roof-tops. Men and women made pilgrimages to the hills, in search of healing. Water-cures were also patronised. Baths drove out demons. The suppliants offered sacrifices and went in silence, barefoot, before dawn. Money offerings were also given. Coins were dropped into the sacred well for the water-spirits.

Survivals of these ancient customs are still to be found. At Mariazell, in Styria, incubation is practised at the present day. The church, a large building with four towers, is visited by 200,000 pilgrims each year. The attraction is a miracle-working image of the Virgin, carved in lime-tree wood. It was given to the place in 1157, and now is enshrined in the inner sanctuary amongst rich silver offerings. The sick pilgrims come to worship it, and sleep either in the church

<sup>1</sup> Hopf—*Heilgötter u. Heilstätten des Altertums*, p. 54.

or in the open-air near the church. Miraculous healings, performed in the name of the Madonna, frequently take place, and there is a special spring of water for the cure of sore eyes.

### III. The Festival at Tenos

The church of the Evangelistria, our Lady of the Annunciation, at Tenos is the scene of the chief annual festival of the Greek Church, celebrated on the day of the Annunciation, 25th March (o.s.). A second great festival takes place on 15th August, Assumption Day, at the same place. The sanctity which attaches itself to these festivals is not derived from the antiquity of the church or from old religious traditions belonging to the place. As a sacred island Tenos is yet in its childhood. Still, the close proximity of Delos, the centre of the pagan religion, gives support to its claims to sanctity, for it seems as if some transference of sacred associations had been effected. Delos, where a wealthy town once flourished, with the mighty temple of Apollo among other smaller temples, whither from all parts used to come the greatest pilgrimage of the Greeks in their greatest days, where the theatre and stadium were scenes of splendid festivities, is now a little deserted island, and the ruins of its temples are being brought to light by excavators. Across a narrow stretch of the blue Aegean lies the gleaming white town of Tenos, with the church of the Virgin prominent in the background. In the faith of the modern Greeks this church takes the place of Apollo's temple in Delos. It is the Mecca of Greek religion, and every devout Greek desires to visit it once before death.

The pilgrimages at these two festivals are the greatest in importance and multitude of any that are organised by the Greek Church. Their popularity is widespread,

for pilgrims come to Tenos from Egypt, Asia, and Turkey, as well as from all the islands, and countries of the mainland. Yet a century ago Tenos was unknown in the religious world. The origin of the great sanctity now possessed by the island, and of the foundation of the church, belongs to the year 1821, when the War of Independence was begun. Some people still believe that a mysterious connection exists between the success of the war and the Madonna of Tenos, and regard her as a Liberator of Greece.

It began with the common story of a dream and a sacred picture, which accounts for the foundation of so many Greek churches. In that year, one of the islanders, while sleeping, had a vision of the Panagia. She told him to go to a certain place outside the town and dig until he found her picture. He obeyed, but found nothing. His vision was confirmed the following year by a nun. Three times the Panagia appeared to her in sleep, and gave a similar command. The repetition of the message persuaded the chief priest that it was of divine origin, and he instituted a search for the sacred picture. On the site designated in the visions were found the ruins of a chapel of St. John and a deep well, which now provides the holy water of the church. The chapel of St. John had been burned in 1200 by the Saracens, and it is probable that it stood on the site of an ancient temple, for many old marbles were found during the excavations. Thus the site had long been sacred. Here the Bishop built a small chapel, which is now the crypt of the larger church, and is known as the Chapel of the Well or of the Discovery. It was finished in 1823, and just as the building was almost completed, one of the work-

men found the long looked for picture. It was much destroyed, for during the excavations, it had been cut in two, and had previously been burned, so that it presented a black and charred appearance. Still, they welcomed it as a masterpiece by St. Luke, though they could distinguish only the heads of the Panagia and the Archangel Gabriel. From the time of its discovery miracles were attributed to it. Plague was raging on the island, and by means of the picture many cures were wrought, and the plague was stamped out. The picture was believed to be sent from heaven by the direct agency of the Panagia for the benefit of the Teniotes and of all the world. The rational explanation of its presence is not hard to seek. Like the well, it had belonged to the ancient church of St. John. The discovery of the picture gave new impetus to religious zeal and to liberality, and the building of the large church was begun. This is the church of the Evangelistria, which to-day is the richest in Greece. Built of marble quarried on the island, it has an imposing square frontage, with a tall campanile, and a wide double stairway leading to the entrance door. Inside are many rich adornments and votive offerings of the greatest value and others of the humblest description.

The sacred picture lies on one of the many shrines which stand in the church. It is enclosed in a glass case and only the heads, little black objects, of the Madonna and the Archangel are visible. All the rest is covered with silver and precious stones, so that the effect is of the greatest richness. In front of the church and at the two sides are large square courts, surrounded by wide porticos, which are used as

sleeping-places for the pilgrims. The little chapel of the well is the holy of holies. Over the door is an inscription telling that this was the place where the discovery was made. Entering, one finds it a long narrow crypt. On the left, near the door, is the spot, marked by a shrine, where the picture was found. Farther up is the sacred well. Other shrines stand along the walls, and at the top is an altar of the Madonna. Several crypts open off this chief chapel. They are used for various ceremonies, such as the baptism of the numerous babies brought to the festival. Many of the crypts provide a lodging place for family parties of pilgrims. The whole establishment of the church is necessarily large, for the pilgrimages bring multitudes of people. In former years the average was 45,000, but this year only about 15,000 people came. The decrease was not due to waning popularity, but to the fact that many were detained at home by the parliamentary elections which were then being held.

The whole week of the Annunciation is a festal time in Tenos. Every day boats bring their loads of pilgrims. Steamers come from Athens, Egypt, Smyrna, and Constantinople, and little caïques convey the neighbouring islanders. The chief events take place on the eve and the day of the Annunciation. By that time all have arrived, and the little village of Tenos is transformed into a busy metropolis. The pilgrims wear gala attire, and the gay costumes of the peasants who throng the courtyards make a bright and attractive picture amid the white marble of the buildings. The approach to the church is by a narrow flagged street, the Sacred Way of Tenos. At the festival it is lined

with booths, where one can buy all sorts of curios and souvenirs. In the central court of the church are other booths, presided over by priests. For small sums they sell silver Madonnas or crucifixes; or if gratitude for health restored has to be expressed, one can have silver eyes, hearts, legs, and arms in any quantity. These festive scenes, however, may be witnessed in other parts of Greece at the time of local festivals. The chief interest attached to this gathering at Tenos lies in the healing of the sick, which is the special feature of the pilgrimage. The sacred picture exercised from the beginning miraculous curative powers, the belief in which is deep-rooted in the minds of the Greeks. They still show the love of processional display which gives rise to such pilgrimages, and they keep also the impressionable minds of their forefathers, who had recourse to the temples of healing gods in times of sickness. All devout sufferers appeal to the Madonna of Tenos to help them. If they cannot leave home, they make some vow in order to entice her help away from the church, or they may send their relatives to the festival to intercede for them there, as the Madonna is believed to be more accessible at her church and on her feast-day. Those who at all are able join the pilgrimage, and, as the boats unload, many invalids are dragged on shore and conveyed up the Sacred Way.

On the morning before Annunciation Day this year, the pilgrims could be seen making their way to the church. Among them were cripples, armless and legless, half-rolling up the street; blind people groping their way along; men and women with deformities of every kind: one or two showing the pallor of death on their faces were being carried up on litters. These



evidently were coming to Tenos as a last resource, when doctors were of no avail. Other pilgrims were ascending after their own fashion, according to vows they had made. One woman toiled laboriously along on her knees, kissing the stones of the way, and clasping a silver Madonna and Child. Last year her daughter had been seized with epilepsy, and she vowed to carry in this way this offering to the Madonna of Tenos if she would cure her daughter. The girl recovered and the mother now with thankful heart was fulfilling her part of the bargain.

The eve of Annunciation Day is the time when the Panagia is believed to descend among the sick and work miraculous cures upon them. Then all the patients are gathered together in the crypt or in the upper church. The Chapel of the Well is the popular place for incubation. There is more chance of miraculous cure there than in the church. The little crypt can accommodate only a comparatively small number, but they are packed together as tightly as possible. From the entrance up to the altar, they lie in two lines of three or four deep, with a passage down the middle large enough for only one person. Down this narrow way two streams of people press the whole evening. They worship at the shrines along the wall, purchase holy earth from the spot where the picture was discovered, drink at the sacred well, and are blessed by the priest at the altar. The cripples and the sick desiring healing have been engaged all day in such acts of worship; they have received bread and water from the priests in the upper church, paid homage to the all-powerful picture, offered their candles to the

Madonna, and all the time sought to endue themselves with her presence. Now at night, still fixing their thoughts on her, and permeated by this spirit of worship, they settle down to sleep in order that she may appear to them in a dream.

The atmosphere of the crypt with such a crowd ever present can be imagined, and it is no wonder that a kind of stupor seemed to be the general state of the people who were lying awaiting cure. Later on they fell asleep. The usual kinds of diseases were represented among the pilgrims. The general type remains the same as in the inscriptions of Epidauros. Blind men and cripples, paralytics and epileptics, and deformed people of every kind, were the most prominent. Insane men and women were also brought for cure. As I passed through the Chapel of the Well, a demoniac woman was standing by the shrine of the Discovery. She became suddenly violent and burst out upon the bystanders. Her raving was calmed by one of the priests, who silenced her by holding up the crucifix before her.

In the upper church similar scenes on a larger scale were being enacted. Those who had been unable to find room in the crypt were installed for the night round the various shrines in the great church. Some were lying face downwards on the floor, seeking to inhale the sacred air coming from the crypt below. They believed it to be specially beneficial for the eyesight, but nothing except religious enthusiasm could have distinguished it from poisonous gases.

The idea at the root of the whole performance is simply the ancient act of incubation. The Panagia would visit them, her true followers and worshippers, as

they lay piously in the church whither she was wont to come on her feast-day. She would appear to them in a vision, give them her blessing, and in the morning they would joyously awake and find themselves cured. Disappointment, of course, awaits the vast majority, but on the evening of the vigil all are filled with hope. They know the precedents of former years, how such things have happened to some fortunate people among the pilgrims every year. Usually eight or nine miracles take place, and lists of them are published for distribution, but this year the officials of the church decided to stop printing the list, because it has been said that it was used as an advertisement, and reflected unfavourably upon the disinterestedness of the church.

The church records contain accounts of the miracles which now amount to many hundreds. They are practically all of the type I have described—cure during a vision while incubation was practised. For example, the case of a man from Moldavia is on record. He had become paralysed during a night-watch, and the doctors could effect no relief. He was taken to the Chapel of the Well, and when asleep he thought he heard a voice telling him to arise. He awoke, thought it was a dream, and fell asleep again. A second time he heard a voice, and saw a white-robed woman of great beauty entering the church. In his fear he rose and walked about. His recovery was so complete that he could walk in the procession round the town the following day.

Tenos has always been especially famed for the cure of blindness. The records show a great preponderance of miracles on blind men, and at the present-day festivals one sees how many sightless people are led

up for incubation. Also, the number of votive eyes exceeds that of other parts of the body. This year one of the miracles that took place was a cure of blindness. On the Friday morning I saw a blind man, a Greek, who was totally unable to see. He spent the day in acts of devotion to the Panagia, and all night he lay in the Chapel of the Well along with the other pilgrims. As he slept, he dreamt that the Panagia came to him, and blessed him, touching his eyes with her hand. Then he awoke, and found that his eyesight had been restored, and he could see as other men.

Mediums of cure, such as holy water or sacred earth from the crypt, are often used. The records tell of one Nicholas, from Asia Minor, who injured an eye while working at marble. He went to the church, worshipped the picture, and descended to the crypt. While bathing his eye with holy water, a piece of marble fell out and he was cured. A woman of Tenos, who was blind, heard of the miracles wrought by the picture, and went to the church full of faith. She there recovered her eyesight by special favour of the Virgin. It is a custom of the pilgrims to kiss the glass case which covers the picture, and then to rub the glass with a small piece of cotton-wool. This serves thereafter as an amulet, and is believed to have great curative powers, especially for the eyesight. An Athenian had lost the sight of both eyes, and came to Tenos in search of cure. He lay in the church before the picture, and near him was an insane woman. She said that she saw sweat running off the picture. The man told her to wipe it, and then anoint his eyes. She did so, and they were both cured. Other cures have been wrought with

the sacred oil from the church lamp. Pilgrims often dip their handkerchiefs in the oil, and keep them as charms against sickness.

The morning after the night of incubation is a time of rejoicing for the favoured few, but it is the saddest sight of all to see the cripples, and paralytics, and the other sufferers being conveyed down the Sacred Way, which they had ascended in hope so short a time before. Still, one more chance of cure remains. At 10 a.m. on Annunciation Day a great procession takes place. The Archbishop and priests start from the church, and make the round of the town, bearing the holy picture. First comes the Archbishop, and behind him one of the chief priests, who carries the precious burden. As they descend the stairway in front of the church, on all the steps are lying cripples and sick people, who wish the holy men to cure them by passing over. The Archbishop carefully plants a foot on each as he goes down. This carpeting of human bodies extends for some distance down the Sacred Way.

The belief which is cherished in the benefits accruing from a pilgrimage to Tenos is clearly visible in the multitude of votive offerings which adorn the church, and in the flourishing state of the church finances. No compulsory charge is levied on pilgrims who receive benefit in the church. As in the temples, it is left to their own discretion. One sees the humblest offerings and the very richest, given according to the means of the donor. The fine marble well which stands in the court was the gift of a grateful Turk. Inside the church are quantities of silver votive offerings. The number of these gets so great that regularly they are melted down, and used for the upkeep of the

church. Poor girls offer up their hair, the long plaits which have been their chief pride. Money also is collected, and all the pilgrims contribute to some extent, if they wish for blessing to come to them from the pilgrimage.

#### IV. The Greek Islands

MYTILENE.—In the Greek islands many of the most primitive customs are prevalent at the present day. The isolation of the inhabitants prevents them from becoming quickly modernised. Tenos, with its great festival, I have already described. In Mytilene<sup>1</sup> a similar panegyris is held. In former years its importance was as great as that of Tenos, but the latter has now taken the first place in church festivals, and the renown of the Madonna of Lesbos has faded. Still pilgrims to the church of Ayassos come in crowds on Assumption Day, and many cures are performed.

Ayassos is situated on the slope of Mt. Olympos in the south-east of the island. The church is large, and round about are little cells for the lodging of pilgrims. A wooden picture of the Virgin is the centre of attraction. On the eve of the feast-day the pilgrims pass the night in the church, lying on mattresses and rugs. In the morning the picture is carried round amongst them as they lie there. The priest steps on the people as he carries the picture, and extends to them healing virtue. In the church is a large collection of votive offerings for recovery from sickness.

In other parts of Mytilene also, miraculous cures are performed.<sup>2</sup> St. Therapon, whose name denotes healing powers, is a patron saint of the island. Newton,<sup>3</sup> in the middle of last century, visited a

<sup>1</sup>De Launay—*Chez les Grecs de Turquie*, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup>*British School Annual*, 1895-96. Rouse—*Lesbos*.

<sup>3</sup>*Travels and Discoveries in the Levant*. I. app., p. 349.

little chapel of St. Therapon near Acherona, and found that it was the custom for the sick to remain there three or four days. The priest performed mass for them, and they passed the time in prayer and sleep. When health was successfully recovered, the patient, on leaving, hung up a rag from his clothing on a tree near the chapel. Newton saw the bush covered with old shreds of clothes. At the present day the chapel and tree are scenes of similar rites. It is believed that here was the site of the Asklepieion, St. Therapon the Healer taking the place of Asklepios.

The hanging of rags on a tree or bush as a token of a malady left behind, or as a sign of the suppliant's desire for cure, is a widespread custom. It arises from the belief that an evil can be transferred from oneself to an inanimate object, by the agency of a rag. Disease is regarded as something hostile and concrete that must be expelled. Travellers have noted the custom in various parts of Greece and Asia Minor. It forms part of a curious religious rite at Tekekiöi in Upper Macedonia.<sup>1</sup> On St. George's Day a pilgrimage is made to a sacred stone. Near the stone is a thorn tree which is adorned with rags of all colours, left by sick people who have been cured there. In Athens, mothers bring their children to the church of St. Marina, undress them there, and leave behind the clothes, thinking to leave also the disease. In Samothrace, Conze<sup>2</sup> has noted the survival of many old superstitions in connection with the numerous little churches which are built on ancient sacred sites, and amongst

<sup>1</sup> *Jour. Hellen. Studies*, V. 21, Evans—*Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult.*

<sup>2</sup> *Reise auf thrak. Meeres.*



these customs is preserved that of hanging on the rocks near the church parts of the clothing of sick people who desire healing.

These offerings are to be distinguished from the ex-voto which are dedicated after release from disease. Clothes are sometimes offered up after the god has granted the cure. Amongst the Chaldeans,<sup>1</sup> in the Tugari country, a woman, when ill, makes a vow to offer up one or more dresses upon recovery. When she gets well, she takes the gifts to the church, and hangs the clothes up there.

The transference of disease to an inanimate object is believed to be effected also by means of threads. They are used especially for fever cases. In the little church of St. John at Athens, numerous examples can any day be seen. It is a rectangular building enclosing a column which projects through the roof. Great sanctity is attributed to this pillar, and on it waxed threads, black, red, and white, are fixed in great numbers. They are stuck there by people who have prayed to the saint to cure some friend or relative of fever. The legend relates that St. John himself instituted the custom before he died, in order that the cure of fevers, which he had carried on in life, might be continued by him after death. In Karpathos<sup>2</sup> a priest ties a red thread round the neck of a fever patient. His friends take it off in the morning and tie it to a tree, thinking thereby to transfer the disease.

The custom is found also in Crete.<sup>3</sup> Two first-born children, called Maria, bind a thread on the neck of

<sup>1</sup>Ainsworth—*Travels in Asia Minor*, ii. 225.

<sup>2</sup>Frazer—*Golden Bough*, iii. 26.

<sup>3</sup>Polites—*Δέλιον*, 1883, p. 1.

the fever-patient. Then one takes it off and fastens it round a tree, while the other asks her what she is binding. She answers that it is the fever of the patient. Three times question and answer are repeated, and thereafter they depart and expect a complete recovery.

In the north of Mytilene there is another church to which pilgrimages are made. This is the church of St. Michael at Mandamádos.<sup>1</sup> The panegyris is held at Easter, and many people come to receive healing from the Archangel. The church has square courtyards surrounded by the little cells which are usually found where incubation is practised. At the festival time they are filled with pilgrims. Sick people visit the church at other seasons also. Two monks and a nun care for the sick. The attraction is a little black image of St. Michael, made of plaster. It is invested with miraculous powers of healing the sick. When Mr. Rouse visited Mandamádos, there were two votive coins fixed on its forehead. This practice of offering money to the deity by sticking coins on his statue was in vogue amongst the ancients. Lucian<sup>2</sup> tells of a Cretan statue round which obols were lying, while to its limbs were fixed silver coins and plate, the thank-offerings of people who had been cured of fever.

In the monastery of Zambika on Rhodes, Newton<sup>3</sup> saw people sticking gold coins on to the faces of saints during the Easter festival. Also in Mytilene, at St. Michael's monastery near Acherona, he saw a picture of the Panagia to which was affixed a Turkish coin,

<sup>1</sup> *British School Annual*, 1895-96. Rouse—*Lesbos*.

<sup>2</sup> *Philopseudes*—Ed. Frankfort, p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> *Travels in the Levant*, i. 182.

and attached to the picture was a little silver hand with a list of names of persons who had been cured. This is a modern parallel to the list of Epidaurian cures.

Coins are often used in this way as a means of consulting an oracle. At Chalchis in Euboea, coins are applied to the sacred picture in the church of St. Paraskevi.<sup>1</sup> If they stick firmly, the wish of the consultant is granted; if they fall, he will be disappointed. Similarly, Wheler<sup>2</sup> saw in Corfu a miraculous picture of the Madonna which is consulted by people who wish to be informed of their friends' safety. If these are alive, the money sticks to the picture, but drops down if they have died. By either way the priest acquires the coins.

THE CYCLADES.—The inhabitants of the lesser Cyclades keep up many of the ancient superstitions and beliefs, and seek to obtain cures of diseases by the primitive methods. Incubation is a common practice, and often attached to it are other rites and ceremonies. In Seriphos,<sup>3</sup> the monastery of St. Michael is visited by the sick. Bent tells of a woman who was cured after remaining there for forty days. She was believed to be under the influence of the Nereids, who figure prominently in the superstitions of the islanders. They are held responsible for ailments of children who fall ill without clear cause. A common cure for a sick child, who is believed to have been struck by the Nereids, is to take him to the church and leave him there, so that the saint may

<sup>1</sup> Rodd—*Customs and Lore of Modern Greece*, p. 154.

<sup>2</sup> *Journey into Greece*, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> J. T. Bent—*The Cyclades*, p. 13.

overcome the evil spirit. In Melos<sup>1</sup> the child is stripped and left on a marble altar. The cure is heroic, but if the child dies, it is believed to be the working of God's will, and not the fault of the treatment. In Keos and Andros children are taken to the church, stripped there, and then dressed in new clothes which have been blessed by the priest.

The church of St. Katharine, on Kimolos,<sup>2</sup> has a precious picture of the Panagia as Leader, which is credited with the faculty of curing insanity. Bent, when visiting the church, saw a madman who had been brought to pass the night in the church. His friends were zealously praying to the Virgin for him, but no improvement in his condition could be observed.

CYPRUS.—The island of Cyprus is famous for the great number of springs to which are attributed healing virtues. Beside them has often been built a small chapel dedicated to a saint. Thither pilgrims resort and pass the night, after due devotions to the saint. At the same time they seek to benefit themselves by using the holy water.

Near Ammochostos,<sup>3</sup> for example, is one of the best-known of these springs. The large Byzantine church of St. Barnabas has a little chapel beside it, in which is the grave of the saint, and also a mineral well much frequented by sick people. The water is believed to have great healing properties. It comes up through the floor of the chapel, where the patients sleep. When they depart cured, they hang part of their clothing on the walls as a votive offering.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 47.

<sup>3</sup> Ross—*Inselreisen*, iv. 18.

At the monastery of Hagios Neophytos incubation is practised at the present day. The monastery<sup>1</sup> stands in a well-watered valley on the slope of the Pano-Orodhes and is surrounded by olive and orange groves. On the opposite side of the valley is a small chapel where the sick pilgrims, who come in great numbers, practise incubation. This chapel, which is approached by a staircase built on the face of the cliff, was originally the cave-dwelling of the Saint who gives his name to the monastery. One can see a coffin-shaped bed excavated in a recess of the rock. Into this bed the pilgrims climb, and turn round thrice. At the foot of the cliff is a holy well with healing properties.

CORFU.—Each of the Ionian Islands has its special saint who acts towards the inhabitants as protector and healer. In Kephallenia St. Gerasimo is all-powerful, in Zante St. Dionysios, and in Corfu St. Spiridion.

The town of Corfu contains a large church dedicated to St. Spiridion,<sup>2</sup> whose tomb is there. His body lies in a silver sarcophagus. A hideous mummy can be seen. It is believed to be the body of the saint in a state of miraculous preservation. Many superstitions are still attached to this mummy-saint. On his festival day, 25th December, the sick are laid in the street, so that the procession may pass over them, and they may be cured. When they come to the church to practice incubation, and are unsuccessful in obtaining a cure, the priest says that the saint is away from his chapel, out on the sea helping sailors in distress. As a proof, when he returns from this mission of mercy,

<sup>1</sup> Hogarth—*Devia Cypria*, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Tuckerman—*The Greeks of To-Day*, p. 304.

they display sea-weed and other signs of his voyage which he has brought back.

South of the town of Zante is a small chapel which contains the bones of St. Dionysios.<sup>1</sup> He continues to work miracles, as he did in his life-time. He either appears to sick people in his church, sends dreams to sleeping suppliants, or cures by a touch of the relics. He has three feast-days, when he is most ready to hear supplications and confer favours. At the December festival parents often pass the night with their sick children in the church. They seek to coax the saint with offerings, and each December he receives a new pair of shoes. The old pair is cut into pieces, which are distributed as amulets of great curative powers.

RHODES.—On the north-west coast of Rhodes is situated the village of Kremastos. An annual festival is held there on Assumption Day and on the ninth day after that date. It is the most important feast of the Virgin held in the island at the present time.

In the first half of the nineteenth century the great panegyris of Rhodes was held at Lindos in the south, and health-miracles were performed there. To-day one can still see in the church of the Panagia votive offerings which attest the fact. But about forty years ago a murder was committed during the riotous festivities, and the priests resolved to discontinue the festival at Lindos and transfer it to the monastery of Spous, about two hours distant from the town. At Spous the festival did not flourish long. Disorderly proceedings again made it impossible to continue the celebrations,

<sup>1</sup> Schmidt—*Die Insel Zakynthos*.

and from that time the panegyris of the Panagia has been held at Kremastos.

Every year great crowds attend. Not only do islanders come, but from the mainland also pilgrims assemble, and amongst them are Turks and Jews, who seek to be cured by the Christian Panagia. The church has been re-built lately, and, as at Tenos, rooms are provided round about for the accommodation of the pilgrims. They sleep either in these rooms or in the church, and twice daily worship the sacred picture, which is possessed of miraculous powers. In some cases a long stay of several months is made before the feast day, when the pilgrim hopes to have his devotion rewarded.

The miracles are of the same nature as at Tenos, and an official list of them is kept at the church, where the votive offerings also show the nature of the cures. I shall take one example of a miracle which occurred three years ago. A deaf and dumb man stayed at the church for four months, duly performing the religious rites. On the feast day he was cured. During his sleep on the previous night he saw in a dream a darkly-dressed woman, who told him he would be cured the next day. At the feast he suddenly cried out: "Glory to God," and so found he had recovered his speech.

## V. The Mainland of Greece

ARGOLIS.—In the little country chapels scattered throughout Argolis, incubation is occasionally practised, and miracles of healing are wrought at the time of the panegyris. East of Tiryns is a Mt. St. Elias. On the top of it stands a small chapel, to which a pilgrimage is made on 20th July, the saint's day. Sick people join the pilgrimage, and ascend to the church to spend the night in hope of receiving divine healing. Near Nauplia is a large church of the Annunciation, where incubation is practised. The festival, on 25th March, is largely attended, particularly by blind people, for eyesight has often been restored by the Panagia on that day. In the same district there is another church to which sick people, and especially lunatics, are taken. It is a small white monastery of the Virgin, half-way up the Larisa, the acropolis of Argos. The festival is held on the 20th November, and the sick pass the night in the church. Those who are fortunate enough find themselves cured in the morning.

ARCADIA.—The Panagia has another white monastery on the side of a rocky mountain in Arcadia, between Tripolis and Mantinea. On the 15th August the festival takes place, and hundreds of sick people make the pilgrimage each year, but out of the crowd only seven or eight receive healing.

ACHAIA.—The largest and richest monastery of Greece is situated in the north of Achaia, two hours'



ride from the town of Kalavryta. It derives its name of Megaspelaion from the huge cavern in which it is built. The situation is romantic and picturesque. Standing on the face of a precipice 300 feet high, the monastery looks down from a great height on a narrow ravine of remarkable beauty. A miraculous picture brings pilgrims to this remote place. They come to worship it at the festival on 15th August, and the sick practise incubation in the chapel. The picture was discovered by Euphrosine, a princess of Constantinople, who lived in the village on the opposite side of the valley. Crudeness is its chief characteristic as a work of art, but like the similar picture at Tenos, it is attributed to St. Luke. Euphrosine found it in the cavern beside a well, where now there is a small shrine of the Virgin, with a picture suspended above. The miraculous picture itself stands in a special shrine in a corner on the right-hand side of the church. It is surrounded with silver and precious stones, and only the black heads of the Madonna and Child are visible. At the time of my visit, a long silver arm was suspended above, the votive-offering of some sick person who attributed his cure to the Panagia.

The number of people who come to this monastery is not large, for there is no accommodation for crowds. After performing due devotions and worshipping at the picture-shrine, the sick suppliants go to pass the night in a side-chapel, which is entered by a separate stairway. It is divided into an inner shrine and an outer room, where the patients sleep. There is not space for more than half-a-dozen people, and rarely more than three or four come at the same time. During the night those suppliants who are favoured with a

vision see the Virgin before them. She blesses them, and in the morning they wake up cured. The monks say that especially paralytics and people with nervous affections are successfully cured.

PHOCIS AND BOEOTIA.—Another great monastery of Greece is that of St. Luke of Stiris<sup>1</sup> in Phocis. On 25th June the panegyris of the saint is held, and a large gathering from all parts assembles at the monastery. Amongst them are many sick people, who sleep during the night in the church where is the tomb of the saint. St. Luke Stiriotes lived in the ninth century, and wrought many miracles during his lifetime. After his death his relics continued to work miracles, and a monastery and church were built in his honour at the tomb.

In the 17th century, Spon and Wheler visited the monastery, and they relate that cures were frequent and successful. The place of incubation in their day was a covered room dedicated to St. Sopito between the large church and a smaller chapel of the Virgin. Now incubation is practised at the tomb in the church. St. Luke is noted for the cure of demoniacs, who recover their reason while practising incubation at his tomb. Lepers and blind people also are frequently cured. A small sarcophagus is shown in the church as the original tomb of the saint, and on each side of it is a marble slab which miraculously exudes ointment. This ointment is believed to be possessed of great therapeutic virtue.

The neighbourhood of Mt. Parnassos has several other churches where the custom of incubation is preva-

<sup>1</sup> Schultz and Barnsley—*Monastery of St. Luke at Stiris.*

lent. At the Jerusalem monastery near the village of Daulia, on the slopes of the mountains, sick people, who have been given up as incurable, go to reside, and sleep every night beside the sacred picture. During the day they serve in the monastery, dedicating themselves to the Panagia, until she sees fit to cure them. Sometimes their devotion is rewarded and they depart with health restored.

In the little village of Arachova, perched 4,000 feet up in the valley of Delphi, the church of St. George is the scene of many miraculous cures. It is a large building with a campanile, and inside are the ordinary shrines and pictures. A screen shuts off the east end of the church. It is covered with pictures of various saints, and most prominent among them is a glaringly new picture, in a rich gilt frame, of St. George killing the dragon. This crude work of art is highly prized by the natives on account of the imposing frame. It is the votive offering of a Russian, who came a paralytic to Arachova in July, 1905. He spent several weeks praying and sleeping in the church, and departed completely cured. The festival of St. George is held on 23rd April. They have three days of dancing and feasting, and at night all suppliants bring their rugs and sleep round the shrines in the church. Every year many of the sick are found to be cured when morning comes.

LACONIA.—Near Sparta is the ruined Franco-Turkish fort of Mistra. Half way up the citadel, which rises to 2000 feet, is the large church of the Pantanassa. Its tall campanile looks down on the lovely valley of the Eurotas. This church was visited by Pouqueville<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Travels in the Morea*, p. 88.

in the beginning of last century. He tells how the sick were brought daily and laid at the door of the church, so that the worshippers passing by might indicate to them the remedies which would restore them to health. Only melancholia and insanity were thus cured miraculously, for these maladies were attributed to the devil's influence.

Regular incubation is now practised in the church. The sick frequent it in great numbers, and are cared for by the nuns who dwell in the church. These nuns say that the sick people, when sleeping in the church, have a dream of the Madonna, and when they awake they are found to be cured of all disease. In connection with the church is a sacred well, the waters of which are believed to be curative. A votive picture, which hangs to the right of the altar in the church, represents this well. A man lies asleep or dead. Above him is the fountain at which many people are drinking, while others are pouring water from it on the man's breast.

Throughout Laconia there are other centres of incubation. At the village of Anavryti near Sparta is the monastery of the Panagia Phaneroméne. The story of its foundation is the usual one of a discovered picture. In obedience to a command conveyed in a dream, a monk dug and found this picture. Now he keeps the monastery, and flourishes on the proceeds of the festival. It is held on 9th February, and sick people come to pass the night in the church. Cures of disease take place after they have thus practised incubation.

In Cynuria, at the church of the Panagia Elone, there is a yearly festival, also frequented by sick people.

They drink from the sacred fountain, and sleep in the church. Some miracles are wrought each year.

The largest monastery in Laconia is the Hagioi Tesserakontes, near Therapne. The festival on March 22nd is a great event in the district, and pilgrims come from long distances to attend it. Incubation is practised in the church, and miracles of healing are performed on blind people, cripples, and paralytics especially.

Another centre of cures is the church of the Panagia Iatrissa (the Doctor Madonna) which stands on the ridge of Mt. Taygetos, one day's ride from Sparta. It is a little chapel, and has a court with cells all round it. In these cells the invalid pilgrims stay. Many consumptives come, and combine ancient and modern methods of cure. They practise incubation and pray regularly to the Panagia in the church, and at the same time they have open-air treatment, breathing the fine mountain air. After a summer spent thus, they are often cured, and the Panagia receives the credit. It is noteworthy that on the other side of the ridge there is a regular sanatorium for consumptives.

BALUKLI.—A similar health resort exists for the Greeks of Constantinople at the church of St. Mary-at-the-Well, at Balukli. It stands half a mile from the Silivri Kapusi, and was built by Justinian the Great out of materials left over from the building of St. Sophia. The holy well was discovered in the time of Leo the Great, and has been famous since that date for miraculous cures. It is in the crypt below the church, and is reached by a flight of steps. Cups are provided, and the water is cool and good. The crypt

is a primitive Kurhaus for those who come to Balukli in search of health. The groves of trees and the pleasant country make it a favourite resort. The visitors drink the holy water, frequent the church at the time of prayers, and occasionally sleep for a night in it. Then cure sometimes comes to them. A special crowd attends at the festival time on the Friday of Greek Easter week.

## VI. Cyzicus

The district of Cyzicus in the north of Asia Minor shows many relics of paganism. Shrines of heroes and gods, now chapels of saints, are scattered over the country. The worship of the Archangel Michael is prevalent, and we have already seen that incubation is a part of his cult. In pagan days, also, it would seem that incubation was a common practice of the district. Near Mihallitch, half-way between Brusa and Cyzicus, a votive tablet,<sup>1</sup> referring to the subject, was found. It is an ex-voto to Zeus Hypsistos of the thunderbolt. Above is Zeus, sceptre in left hand and thunderbolt in right, and the eagle at his feet. Before him is a lighted altar, and to the left stands Hermes with a caduceus on his right shoulder. Between the gods is a high triangular object, probably an offering. Below is a man lying down. He must be the dedicator, and in his dedication he says that he makes the offering at his own expense, according to command—which is the usual formula for a command given in a heavenly vision. His position points to the fact that he received the command in a dream. Zeus Hypsistos was worshipped as a healer, and probably he saved the man's life when he was in danger of being struck by a thunderbolt.

If we may infer from this tablet that incubation was practised at this place, it is of importance for the subject, because at the present day there is a church of

<sup>1</sup> Le Bas et Waddington—*Voyage en Asie Mineure*, p. 274.

St. Michael in the neighbourhood where the practice is regularly carried on. This is the church of the village of Ulubad on the river Rhyndakos. Nothing is known of Ulubad before Byzantine times when it was called Lopadion, but it may be identified with the Heroes' Fort on the Rhyndakos. The church is small and insignificant, and is dedicated to the Archangel Michael. It is said to have been built two hundred years ago, and was visited in the middle of last century by Macfarlane<sup>1</sup> who found incubation going on when he entered. Before the altar screen two little children were lying stretched on mattresses. The boy had fallen from his horse and injured his knee-cap. The little girl was suffering from intermittent fever. They lay there all day and all night without any change for the better. The father of the boy explained that want of money prevented him from sending his child to a doctor at Constantinople.

At the present day similar ceremonies are performed. The festival is held on 6th September, and pilgrimages are then made to the church. The holy well is much used for ablutions, and special homage is paid to a sacred picture of the Madonna. A copy of this picture is lent out occasionally for the benefit of sick people who are unable to come to the church. A special feature of this church at Ulubad is the cure of insanity. Madmen are often brought there by their relatives, and left chained to a beam, in the hope that the Madonna or St. Michael will restore their mental equilibrium. If no cure is vouchsafed, then the case is given up as hopeless.

Another centre of incubation is the church of Syké,

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey and its Destiny*, i. 410.



a large village one hour west of Mudania, on the site of Caesarea Germanica. The church stands on the crest of a hill overlooking the sea and the island of Kalolimno, and is dedicated to the holy Taxiarchs. St. Gabriel, however, does not appear in practice. Only St. Michael is worshipped. The church is said to have been built in the 8th century by Constantinus Porphyrogenitus. Covell<sup>1</sup> visited it in the 17th century and found that miraculous cures of disease were effected at that time in the church. Macfarlane saw this church at the same time that he visited Ulubad. He learned that health miracles through incubation were commonly performed, and the church was especially noted for the cure of demoniacs. The priest told him that the friends of an insane man had to bring him on a mattress, and lay him before the altar, leaving him two or three days and nights under the care of the saints and priests. They ascribed the cure, which was sometimes successful, to the sanctity which pervaded the atmosphere, and to the calming influence of a picture of St. George of Cappodocia which they usually hung up in front of the patient. At the time of Macfarlane's visit no sick people were in the church, but a patient was expected, and the mattresses, which were hired out, were being aired in preparation. The church was said to be patronised by Turks also, and cures were sometimes wrought on insane Mohammedans. At the present day it is both affirmed and denied that Turks come to the church for cure, but, if true, it is not without parallel. Turks come to the Greek festival at Tenos, and the marble fountain, which stands in the court and is used for purifications, was the votive

<sup>1</sup> *Voyages and Travels in the Levant*, Add. MSS. Brit. Mus. 22914.

offering of a Turkish officer who was cured of paralysis when worshipping the sacred picture.

The pilgrimage to Syké is held on 6th September, and people join it from all parts of the country, even from Constantinople. The church is frequented by the sick at other times also, but the cure does not come in one night. The patients have to make a prolonged residence on fasting diet, usually for forty days, in the western chapel, but the period is variable. As in the Middle Ages, the priest reads the Scriptures to them and to the lunatics, who are kept in a side room. A door with a grating leads from the church into this room, where the maniacs are kept chained up.

A third church of this kind in the district is the Panagia Phaneroméne at Kapu Dagh. The village replaces the ancient Dindymene. A festival is held on 22nd May, but incubation is practised all the year round. As at Syké, the ordinary period of stay in the church is forty days, but a man at the church asserted this year that he had himself looked after a chained lunatic for three months. The cure is effected by placing the sacred picture, a large and heavy one of the Madonna, in the patient's hands while the priest reads the gospel. The picture is said to produce contortions in the patient but not to hurt him. This treatment is especially efficacious for lunacy. One informant said that he himself had seen a bent woman of thirty-three years made straight by this treatment. She was also hump-backed, but was not cured of that. The son of a Turk was cured of blindness, and the father comes every year to give thanks, but does not become converted to Christianity.

Ghemlek, on the Sea of Marmora, is the modern

town on the site of Cius, an ancient city of Bithynia. At the church of the Panagia Phaneroméne there incubation is now practised. Sick people come at any time of the year, and remain in the church for the usual period of forty days, observing a fasting diet. A miraculous picture of the Virgin is believed to effect the cures.

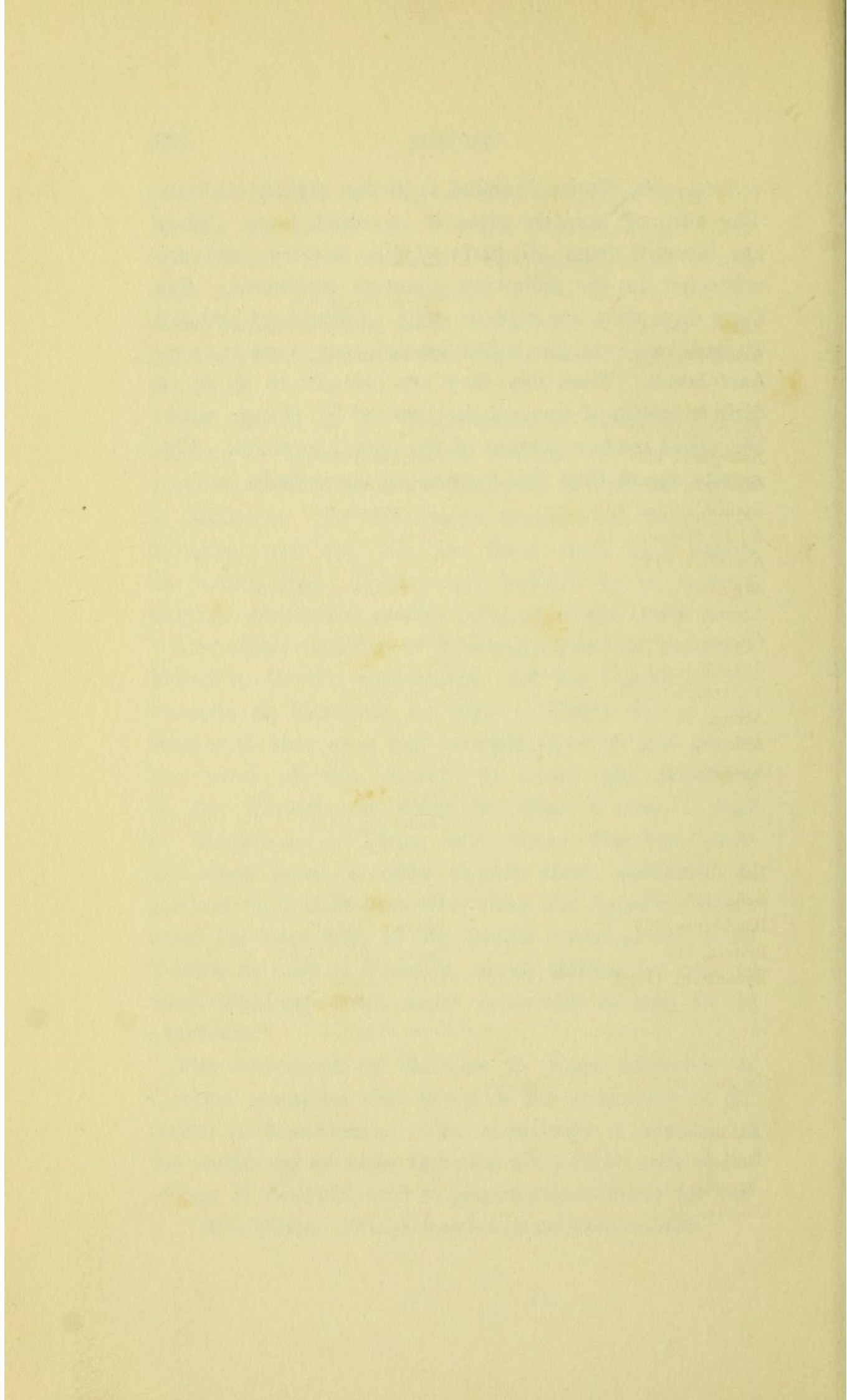
The church of the Assumption at Isnik possesses another of these miraculous pictures of the Virgin. Isnik is situated on Lake Isnik, on the site of Nicaea in Bithynia. To this church lunatics are frequently brought, and are left for three days and nights on fasting diet. If they are inclined to be violent, they are chained to marble columns in the south aisle.

Two other churches of this neighbourhood are mentioned in Covell's manuscript. Of the church of the Panagia at Montania he says: "There was a poor man with sore eyes had brought his bed and lay in the nave of the church to make his devotions to the Panagia in order to effect a cure." And at Trepejick: "There are more Greekes there and they boast a little church there dedicated to Michael as it hath been ever since the Apostle's time; upon his feast day, all the people round about, some Turkes as well as Greekes, repair thither for cure of most diseases which there especially is said to be effectually."

The treatment of lunatics in these churches of Cyzicus resembles that given in the monastery of St. Naum in Macedonia.<sup>1</sup> The monastery is situated at the south end of Lake Ochrida, six hours south of the village of Ochrida, and it provides hospitality for tra-

<sup>1</sup> M. A. Walker—*Through Macedonia to the Albanian Lakes.*

vellers. St. Naum founded it in the eighth century. The cure of lunatics gives it its chief fame. They are brought from all parts of the country, and are subjected to the following rigorous treatment. For forty days they are kept in strict confinement and fed on bread and vinegar, administered once every twenty-four hours. Each day they are brought to sit for a certain length of time on the tomb of St. Naum, while the priest reads a portion of the gospel to them. The monks assert that this treatment never fails.



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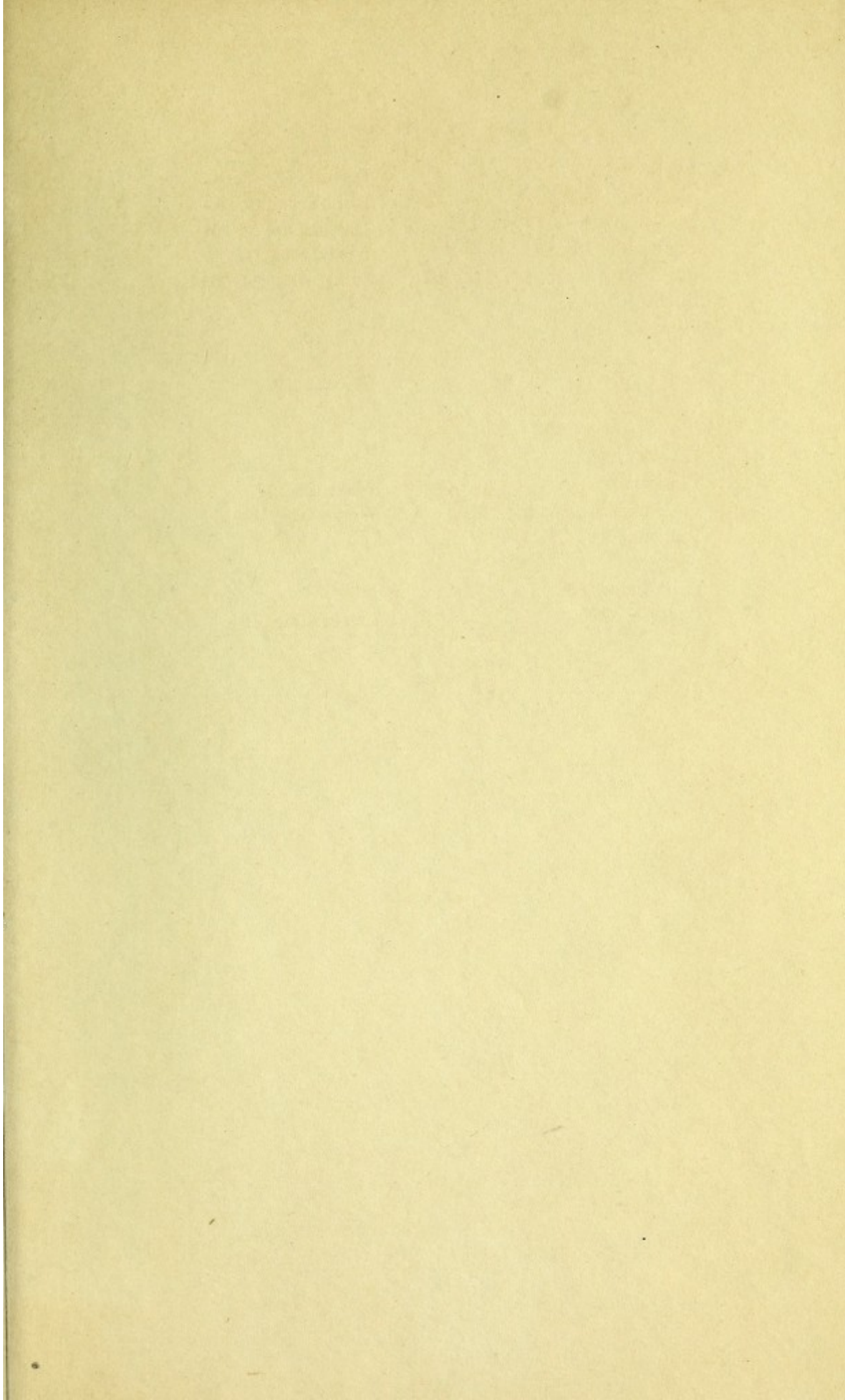
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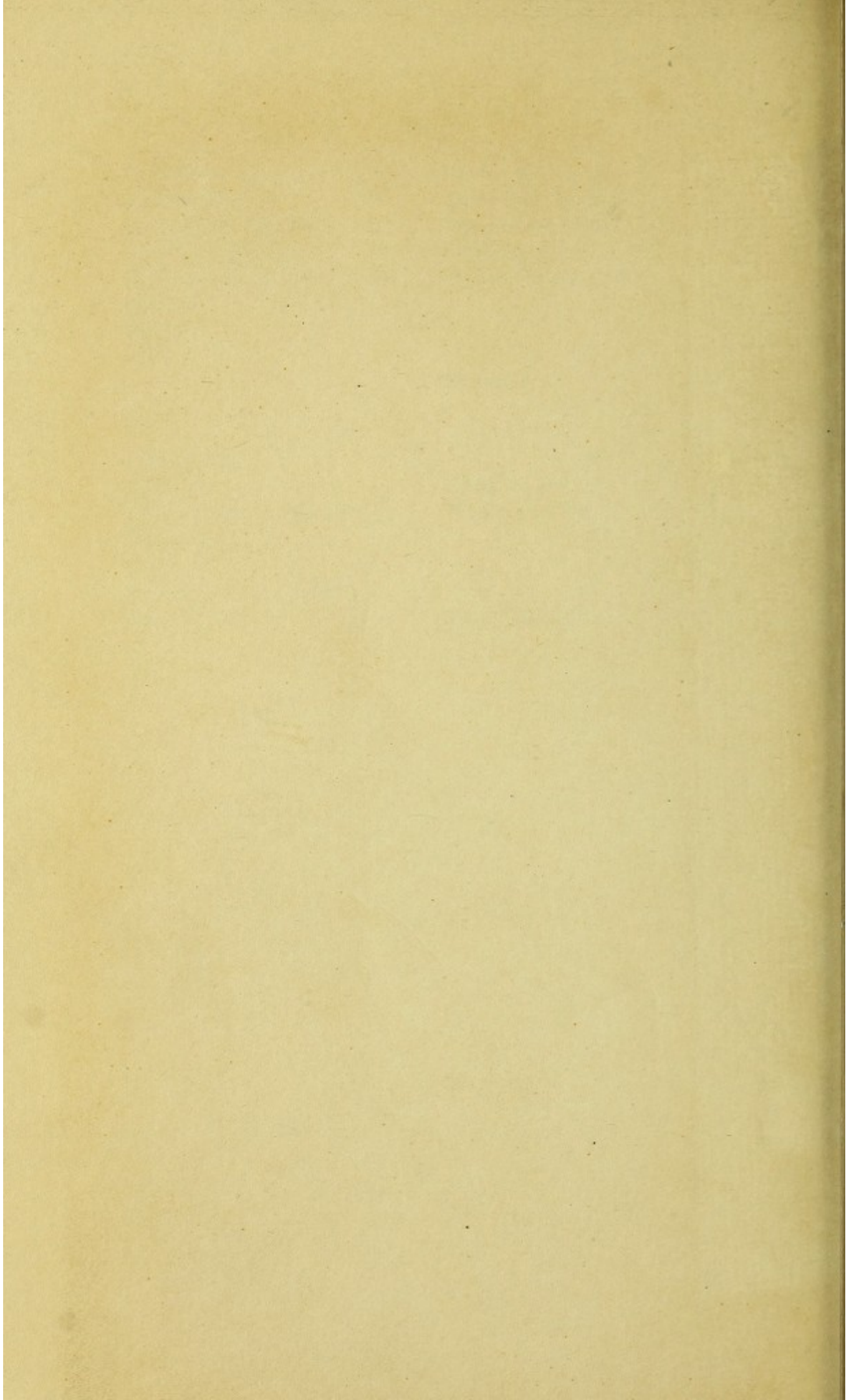
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