

STUDIA SINAITICA No. X

SELECT NARRATIVES
OF
HOLY WOMEN

FROM

THE SYRO-ANTIOCHENE OR SINAI PALIMPSEST

AS WRITTEN ABOVE THE OLD SYRIAC GOSPELS BY JOHN
THE STYLITE, OF BETH-MARQANŪN IN A.D. 778

TRANSLATED BY

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TRANSLATION

LONDON

C. J. CLAY AND SONS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS WAREHOUSE
AVE MARIA LANE

1900

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In the reign of Licinius, king of the city of Magedo, an only daughter was born to him, and he called her name Penelope. And when she was six years old her father and mother consulted as to how they should shut her up, and in what place there should be a retreat where she might learn letters, until she should come to full stature and arrive at a marriageable age, so that the wedding feast might take place when she should emerge from the retreat. And they proposed to build a castle outside of the city and to surround it with a strong wall; and that Apellianus, her secretary, should mount with ropes by means of the contrivances of an engine of the artificers to her own high window in the castle; and whilst he sat outside there were curtains hung between him and the maiden, [and] he was to teach her letters. Licinius the king agreed on these things with his wife. And they began at once to the work, and he commanded and the artificers came, and he set the men to work immediately. And he appointed three hundred overseers who made the slaves and the builders work and five thousand skillful carpenters to prepare wooden instruments, and two thousand stone cutters, men who were to cut stones from the mountain, and three thousand carts which were to carry the stones. For the king was eager and hurried the workmen to finish the castle in nine months.

But when they had begun the work, the building progressed chiefly through the insistence of the king who was beside them. And when the castle was completed, with its ornamentation, and its beauty, and everything suitable to it, the king desired to have a dedication festival for it; and he sent and invited five neighbour kings, and they came at the appointed time with their armies, and with a great endless crowd accompanying them.

And when the king saw the great crowd, he commanded that five thousand oxen should be slaughtered, and ten thousand sheep; and these kings and their armies enjoyed themselves for thirty days; and at the end of three days every man departed to his home. And the kings and their armies went one by one to his city.

But afterwards the king called for his daughter and said to her, affectionately, “ My daughter, I have built a castle for thee, adorned with all beautiful things; elegant in its loveliness, very wonderful in its aspect, glorious in its appearance, firm in its foundations, and strong in its walls, and superb in its apartments, loftier than all work, an astonishment to its beholders; wonderful in its construction,

impregnable and invincible to men, that cannot be overthrown by giants. Now therefore, my beloved daughter, I wish to shut thee up there in that castle for a fixed term of years, until thou shalt come to full stature, and arrive at thy wedding day. Do not murmur then, my daughter, and let there be no anxiety in thy heart, and let not fear dwell in thy mind For, I have commanded that ninety-eight gods shall mount thither with thee and take care of thee. For I will set up seven gods in each chamber of the castle, that the evil one and his power may not rule there, nor trouble thy childhood. Be not therefore anxious, for, lo! I have made everything that is beautiful for thy comfort: my beloved daughter.” But when the king’s daughter heard these things from her father, she lifted up her voice with weeping, and said to her father with bitter tears, “Thou art shutting me up alive, my father, within the gates of Hades, whence I shall never go out; and I shall never again hear the sweet voice of my mother nor of other women. I shall not see the sun nor the moon, nor shall I contemplate the brilliancy of heaven, nor the stars. My eye shall not delight in the birds of the air, I shall not distinguish between day and night in my prison-house whilst I am in it. I shall raise my [voice] to heaven. Never again shall I walk on the earth, I shall not even need a shoe, except for ornament. Forasmuch as I cannot take a walk, what can it profit me? Affliction and anxiety come upon me from all sides. My father! I shall never again see children like myself, of my own age. Henceforth I renounce all created things. Forasmuch as I shall suffer in Hades and in the grave, whence I shall never go out, truly my beloved parents will weep for me with sobs and even with lamentations,”

And when she had said these things there was great weeping and much mourning in the house of the king. And also the faces of all his servants wore a look of sadness.

But when the queen, the mother of the girl, saw her daughter, and heard these words from her, she rose in haste and went hurriedly to the girl, and threw her arms round her neck, and embraced her weeping. And she said to the king with anxious tears, and with bitterness of heart, I shall not leave my daughter. I will go to the grave with her and be imprisoned in Hades. I will die with her, and I will live with her. And it came to pass, on a certain day in the palace of her father, that at the turn of the day the king dismissed all those who were coming in and going out from his presence; and he led his daughter and went to the castle which he had built; he and his daughter and a great crowd of the

magnates of the city with him. And he took his daughter up to that castle and her thirteen handmaidens with her for her honour and for service. And he took up a throne and her chairs, and a dining-table and a candlestick; and all the vessels for her service with her; and her ornaments, and her trinkets, and her crowns, all of gold, and emeralds, and pearls; eleven changes of raiment of all colours; of linen, and silk, and purple. And afterwards the king and the queen kissed the girl and went out. And they left her in peace, they and the magnates of the city, whilst the slaves and the handmaidens were weeping like people who are mourning and grieving for a dead person at the grave.

Then the king commanded and they shut the outer doors of the castle and he sealed them with his signet ring, and he commanded that they were not to be opened until the time arrived for his daughter to be betrothed to a husband. But the king had made the castle as a pavilion because he feared lest the sun should look upon the girl's beauty and blacken her colour with its heat when he had shut the doors and sealed them he entered the city, and set guards over the castle outside its walls, one thousand five hundred men, that they might keep watch continually by day and by night.

But during all the days of her imprisonment Apellianus her secretary came to teach her letters. And the guards drew him up with the ropes of the machine to the highest window of the castle. And he sat outside and taught her letters, never seeing her face.

But the girl, the daughter of the king, meditated in the castle when she was six years old, and she was there six years and three months, and at the end of this period the king's daughter saw as in a dream *that the window on the east side of the castle was opened, and she saw that a dove entered from it carrying an olive leaf in its mouth, and it set it on the table in front of her bed and went out. And afterwards she saw again an eagle entering by the same window and carrying in its mouth a wreath adorned with all flowers, and it also set it on that table and went out. And she again saw a raven carrying a wriggling serpent, and it set it upon the table and went out.* **And she saw these things and called out for her [confidante] and they took refuge with each other out of fright.**

But on the morning of the day her secretary came as usual to teach her letters. And she related to him all the signs and wonders which she had seen.

Her teacher said to her, “Do the objects which the birds of heaven laid upon the table remain there until now? But she said to him, “ No, we saw them only in the vision; and they were taken away immediately from before my eyes.” And the teacher was filled with the inspiration of the Spirit, and he said to her: *“Hearken, O daughter of the king! The dove which thou hast seen is the doctrine of the teaching of the Wisdom of God: and the olive-leaf is the grace of the Christ, and it announces the opening of the baptismal font. And the eagle is a great and powerful king, and the wreath which it carried in its mouth, adorned with all flowers, is the vocation which hath called thee to the espousals of the Heavenly Bridegroom, and the perfection which is completed by faith. And the raven is Satan the weak and crafty one, [who is] also the tempter of the righteous; and the serpent which he carried in his mouth is affliction and anxiety, misery and tumult, and persecutions. Therefore hearken, oh queen and daughter of the king to what I tell thee. Thou art called to the city of the great and Heavenly King; and thou shalt be hidden under the shadow of His wings. Thou shalt surely see much affliction upon earth. And thy father and thy mother shall deliver thee up to thine enemies; and thy father himself shall be a persecutor to thee; and shall meditate evil, and not good, against thee. But why do I talk much with thee? For, lo! a man of God shall be sent to thee, an angel of peace from the presence of the mighty King of Heaven, and he will teach thee all that is necessary to thee.”* And when her secretary had said these things to her, he descended from her presence at the time when he was accustomed to do so.

Now at the dawn of day the king said to the queen, “ The day has arrived for the wedding-feast of our daughter. Let us go and see her face; for the day of the marriage is come.”

And the king and queen arose and went both of them to the castle; and the king called his daughter. And she stooped down; and he saw that her face was shining and lovely like the radiance of the sun. Then he was filled with a great joy and said to his daughter, “My daughter, the day of thy wedding has arrived. Tell me therefore, my daughter, that I may tell the time and the place to those who are entering and who are going out; and that I may appoint and make known the date of thy wedding-feast ; and that one of the sons of a king who shall please thee, and shall enliven thy soul, let him be thy betrothed.”

His daughter said to him, “My father, have patience with me for a single week, and I will take counsel with my thoughts; and then after the lapse of a week I

will tell thee.”

And when the king had heard the speech of his daughter, he was persuaded by her, and said, “As thou wilt, my daughter, be it unto thee.”

Then he left her and went into the town rejoicing and with exulting mind. Now after her father had left her and had gone into the city, she drew nigh and spoke to the gods the idols those which had been set up there beside her. And she curtsied before them, and said to them, u If ye be gods, hearken to my voice, [regarding] what I say to you. Give me back an answer and teach me the true thing that will help. My father will constrain me to be given to an husband. But I have accustomed myself to the solitude of widowhood, and to the humility of sterility, and to the desolateness of orphanhood. Verily the wedding-feast of the world leadeth away from the truth and it is an obstacle in the presence of the Lord.”

She said again to the idols, “If ye be gods, tell me beforehand. Shall I be given to a husband, or no?” And she saw that there was no voice, nor any one that listened, nor any who gave her an answer. And she turned herself to the eastern window and she looked at the sky, and she prayed and said, “ Lord of the heaven and of the earth, and of the seas, and of all that creepeth in them, if Thou art God the Almighty, Jesus the Christ, the Son of the Living God, He whom the Galileans have preached, if it is proper for me to make a transitory wedding-feast for myself, and to be given to a mortal man, and a bride- groom who will perish; show me plainly Thy divinity.” And when she had said this she sang praises to God.

On that night she lifted up her eyes, and saw the angel of the God standing beside her, clothed in white. And when she saw him, she was sore afraid, and her mind was perturbed. And when the angel saw that she was afraid, he said to her:

“Peace be unto thee, fear not, for behold! thou hast found mercy and grace before God.

And I have been sent to thee to show thee and to teach thee the things to come. And henceforth thy name shall no more be called Penelope, but Irene, which, being interpreted, is Peace. And thou shalt be a strong tower against all the tricks of the

crafty one; and many men shall find a refuge with thee, and shall repent and believe in God for thy sake; a thousand three hundred and thirty thousand people, men, women and children. And everything that Apellianus thy teacher has said to thee he said well, about those birds which thou hast seen, and what they carried and laid upon thy table. He spoke justly, for the Holy Spirit spake by him and prophesied, and that man is not far from the kingdom of God. For a man of God shall come to thee from Paul the Apostle, a skilful doctor of the church of God. And he shall have a letter on (his person) and he will read it in thy presence, and will teach thee the faith and the religion of God; and he will baptize thee in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Surely an angel of God will accompany him, and will break down the castle, and he will enter thy presence and baptize thee in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And after thy baptism power and strength will be given to thee, with fortitude and the wisdom of God. And thou shalt have purity from guilt, with the remission of sins."

And the angel went up from her to heaven. And afterwards the blessed lamb of the Christ remained rejoicing and exulting in her mind and praising God for all that she had heard from the angel. And she was looking for the arrival of Timothy that she might be baptized by him, and might receive the sign of the Christ. And on the following day there came to her the holy priest Timothy, accompanied by an angel of God, and said to her, "What is thy care, my daughter, [because of which] I am come to thee to-day?"

And she said, *"It is well that thou art come, my father and lord, for it is the time that my sins should be remitted, and my transgressions and faults should be blotted out by thy coming, in peace, and that I should obtain salvation in God."* **And when the holy priest Timothy had heard these words he gave thanks, and blessed the oil and the water; and he baptized her in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost; her, and the thirteen handmaidens who were with her, whom her father had given to her for her service. And after she and her handmaidens had been baptized that holy priest taught them the faith and the fear of God. And the angel who was with him was taken away.**

And the blessed lamb of the Christ blessed and praised God without ceasing. And she turned to those senseless idols of the gods and said to them, "I entreated and besought you to tell me the truth, and ye did not tell me. Now therefore, if ye are gods, stand up for yourselves. For the gods who did not

make the heaven and the earth shall perish from beneath the heaven.” And she obtained power and strength and heroism. And she lifted these idols with power, and flung them from the eastern window to the ground below, saying to them, “Stand up yourselves, if you can, and help yourselves by your own power, for ye were not able to do anything to help me.”

But they were greatly smashed by [their] fall from the great height, and they were ground to pieces like salt, and became as dust.

But when the appointed period of seven days had come to an end the king Licinius went to the castle to see his daughter. And he called her and said to her, “My daughter, behold the appointed period of seven days is finished, as thou didst say, according to thy wish, and what dost thou say?”

Then all the great men who were with him said to him, “O king, mayst thou live for ever! Let thy majesty command and bring down the maiden from the castle, and bring her into the city, and there will we delight ourselves with her beauty; and she shall be in the palace of the king.”

Then when she had heard [it], she said, *“After I have entered the palace of the Heavenly King and have dwelt in it; and have delighted in the seal and in the espousals of Jesus the Christ, the Son of the Living God, shall I leave Him and enter a palace of human weeping and full of sin?” “Be it far from thee,” said the nobles to her. “From what thou speakest perhaps thou art a Christian?” She said to them: “Now you certainly know that I am the handmaid of the Christ and the bride of Jesus. For behold all the week that I was baptized these were the days of my wedding-feast and of the joy of my nuptials. Oh! Do ye not see the destruction of your gods, and if they did not help themselves when they were hurled down from above, how can they help you? Truly ye cherish a vain and empty in them. For all the gold and silver that ye possess, which ought to be given to the orphans, and to the widows, and to the needy, and to the oppressed in spirit, ye have called for the goldsmiths, and have given it to them; and by their skill they have made you artificial gods; and ye have worshipped them, and have given to unsavoury demons and to dead idols the adoration which was due to God. They have eyes, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; and there is no breath in their mouth. They that make them shall be like unto them, and every one that trusteth in them. Therefore ye are the oppressors of the orphans and of the widows, and spoilers of the poor and of the unfortunate; and the*

enemies of righteousness; and aliens from God; fornicators and adulterers; deceivers and deniers of God. Repent and turn to the living God. Knows ye the merciful God who is able to kill and to make alive; to bring [down] to Sheol and to bring up Turn ye to God, while there is room, before the day of doom cometh, and ye fall into the judgment of righteousness. Harken to me, my own father, for my word is to thee I know what I say to thee. When thou didst begin to build this castle, thou didst build it with many people there was no end to them and by thy presence which was with them at every moment Thou didst finish it in nine months, with its ornaments and with all its decorations; and thou wert praised amongst men and lauded for thy work. But our adored God made the heaven and the earth and the seas, and all that moveth in them in six days; He made the sun and the moon and the stars, and to all of them He gave names. He created the mountains and the hills and the valleys and the plains. He created every tree whose seed is in itself on the earth. And on the completion of these things He formed man in His own image and in His likeness; and clothed him with brightness and made him lord and ruler over all the brutes and the beasts, and the creeping things and the flying things, and subjected all these creatures to Him; and He created them all by His word ; and that was our Lord Jesus the Christ ; He whom the Jews have crucified; He who has been persecuted by the unjust people, and He was taken, and was scourged, and was crowned with a crown of thorns, and was crucified, and He tasted the vinegar and the gall on the cross ; which sweetened our bitterness ; He died and was buried ; and in three days He rose by the Divine power which dwelt in Him. And He was exalted and taken up to Heaven to His Father. And He sat down on the right hand of Him who sent Him. And the cherubim bear His throne, and the seraphim stand before Him, and He is worshipped by the hosts of Heaven. He it was who in six days created and made everything by His word. This light hath dawned on the earth, and those who are sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death have seen His light. And the truth ran upon the earth; the sick were healed; the afflicted were comforted; even the diseased were cured; the lepers were cleansed; the demons were cast out; the palsied were made whole; the [eyes of the] blind were opened; and the dead were raised up: and souls were saved and the lost were found; and the erring turned back; and the sinners repented; and the righteous rejoiced; and debts were prolonged; transgressions were forgiven; the baptismal font was opened and many were baptized; the impure were made holy, and I the earth rejoiced ; Heaven exulted ; the hosts of heaven sang and shouted, saying, Glory be to God in the highest, and good will to all men ; by the will of the Living God.' (Luke ii) Thou therefore, my father, hast been praised and glorified by men for a small and transitory work; and thou hast not thyself searched and wondered and confessed and

glorified Him who in six days made all these things and created the creatures; nor our Lord Jesus the Christ, He who extended His grace upon the earth; and filled creation with His peace. And to the Living Spirit, who is the Holy Paraclete, who calleth all men to the kingdom of heaven. “

And when the blessed Irene had said these things to her father, Licinius returned her an answer, saying, “ I have had great patience with thy speech, my daughter, on account of thy sweet grace, because for years I have heard thy voice; and sweet to me is the sound of thy sentences. Therefore let us go into the city. And thou hast told me what thou desirest”

Then the king and his nobles led the blessed Irene and went into the city. But the queen her mother followed after her daughter bent in person, and she lifted the dust from beneath the feet of her daughter. And she applied it to her eyes and on her body, saying, “May this dust from beneath the holy feet of my beloved daughter be to me rest and healing, and for the redemption of my life and for the remission of sins, and for the new eternal life.” And all the people who saw her, did likewise. And the king turned round, and saw [it], and commanded that no man should hinder them.

And when the blessed one had entered the city the magnates and the patricians and the patrician ladies came out to meet her, and they did obeisance to her, because they saw that she was lovely. But the plebeians and the poor people could not see her because of the great crush ; for they were longing greatly to see her ; and were running to the high places and standing, and studying her beauty from thence. And everyone who saw her was filled with great joy, as if they had already beheld the face of an angel.

And when she came to enter by the door of her father’s palace, a certain **vicious demon met her, and said to her, “ What is there between me and thee, thou handmaiden of Jesus ? Get thee out of this city, for no Christian can dwell in it” But the blessed Irene said to that demon, “ Who art thou ? and what is thy name ? “ The demon said, “ Nargium is our name. And I guard this city, and many people are mine. I am the first charioteer of the gods; and I rejoice in quarrels, and exult in slaughter. And I excite disputes, and I rejoice in the shedding of blood. I supply the wizards, and enchain many**

by means of them. I am the father and the originator of all evils. I am the rock of adamant on which all the souls of the wicked shall be dashed Now I have made known to thee my power and my courage. Therefore get thee away from the city, lest thou be angry, and I go to thy father, and ruin thee also,”

Irene answered, “I say to thee, vile demon, and rabid imp, In the name of our Lord Jesus the Christ, it is not lawful for thee to be in this city, nor to ruin nor to hurt any one of its inhabitants. Therefore begone! lest I destroy thee in the name of Jesus.”

But he, when he heard the glorious name of Jesus, fled in fear and trembling, and went out of the city astonished. And as he was going out, he approached the king and whispered in his ear, saying to him, “If thou art mine, Licinius, be strong and of good courage; for thy daughter is mixed up with the error of the Christians’ And when he had said this, he went out of the city shaking and howling. And at the dawn of day the king called to the queen and said to her, “What shall we do, for our daughter is mixed up with the error of the Christians ? “

The queen said, “Why dost thou think that our daughter is certainly in error? Be it far from her! let it not be! for our daughter has not erred and does not err.”

The king said, “She confesses the Christ and denies the gods, does she not surely err?”

The queen said, “But the gods who did not make the heaven and the earth, how are they gods? I also say let them perish from beneath the sky. I disown them and those who worship them. Peace be to our daughter, and glory be to the Christ, who hath called her to immortal life.”

Then the king was terribly angry, and he commanded that they should put the queen out of the palace ; and that she should remain out of it But one of the maidens ran and told Irene, “Thy father hath chased thy mother away because of thee.” But when she heard it she said to the handmaiden, “Fear not, for beside me my father has the strength of an ant”

And the blessed one rose in haste, and went to the palace of her father, that she might enter his presence with all speed. But many of the magnates and of the king's servants prevented her and tried to persuade her not to do so, for they said to her, "Do not shew thyself today to thy father; because he is growling like a lion to destroy thee." But when the blessed one heard it she laughed again and said: "As my Lord and my God Jesus liveth today and at this moment I will see him! "

Now when they heard a knock at the king's door, they went in and made it known to the king, saying, "Thy daughter is standing without and desires to enter thy presence and see thee." When the king had heard it, he commanded her to enter. And the holy Irene entered and stood before her father. And when he saw her, he bent his head down, and gazed on the ground in the anger of his mind. For he could not bear to look at her in the wrath of his heart. When Irene saw it, she said, "Why art thou of sad countenance to-day, my father, and not as usual. Thou hast one only daughter ; and lo ! she is standing before thee. Whereabouts in the palace is the queen, my mother and mistress dwelling ? Is she well ? "

But he did not answer her a word. Irene said, "Whence hath this anxiety [come] to thee, my father? And I do not know my own parent by reason of his sad countenance."

And the king said, "Would that I had not begotten thee, my daughter! then I would not have fallen into this anxiety on thy account I made a famous castle for thy sake; and I adorned it with all beautiful things; and I surrounded it with a strong wall; and I placed guards over it and I set up ninety-eight gods in it for thy glory and that they might protect thee. And I gave a table and a candelabrum and a throne and all the vessels for thy service of wrought gold, and crowns of emeralds and gold, also pearls. I made thy dresses of all colours, of fine linen and of silk, and of spun gold, and all of them were beautiful. And hast thou repaid me for them, my daughter ? "

Irene said, "But what evil have I done to thee, my father?"

The king said, "Is it a little thing to me, this anxiety and wrong which thou hast caused to me and hast repaid me [with] ? Thou hast confessed the Christ, and hast believed in Jesus, and hast denied the gods'

Irene said, “That is not a wrong to thee, my father, that I have believed in the Christ nor again is it an anxiety to thee that I confess Jesus. I am hurting thee in nothing. For I rely on the Lord Jesus that thou also wilt- soon confess and believe in the Christ And I know not why thou art anxious.”

The king said: “ My beloved daughter Penelope, is it thy wish that I should not be anxious?” “Yes,” said Irene. “Sacrifice to the gods,” said the king.

Irene said, “My father, do not twist thy tongue, nor call me Penelope; do not change my name, for it is not Penelope.”

“ And what is thy name ?” said the king to her.

Then she said : “ *Irene is my name, for by that name my betrothed and my God called me when I was in that castle which thou didst build for me.*”

But when the king heard it he was extremely angry, and said, “ I renounce this child, artful for evil and not for good, and would that thou hadst never been ! Then the king commanded his magnates to take her away to the circus ; and to bind her with ropes and throw her down and cause chariots with horses to run over her ; that she might die by the trampling of horses and the wheels. And the servants of sin led her at once and bore her to the circus. And with weeping and bitter tears they brought her near the place in which there was to be an end to her life. And after these things the king arose and went out of the palace to go to the circus and see the death of his daughter. And one of the noble horses who were there who had been made chief of the stable, cut the ropes of his halter and destroyed the stall in which he was standing and ran straight on the king and bit him and he fell down and died. And it seized his right arm and carried it away from his shoulder, and he fell and died And it returned and stood in its stall where it had been standing. And suddenly there was much mourning and weeping in the king’s house. But as for that horse to it was given the speech of man, for the glory of God. And it spoke and said thus: “*Blessed art thou, Irene, handmaid of God, and blessed art thou among women. Thou hast been delivered into the hands of the wicked upon the earth, and in heaven thine espousals and their adornment are prepared. Thou hast wept upon earth, and in paradise thou shalt be embraced by the sweetness of heaven. Here thou art afflicted, but thou shalt be made splendid beyond the splendour of light Thou art hated by*

many upon earth, but thou shalt stand and be glorified beside Jesus thy betrothed. Blessed be thou and blessed be thy soul."

Now when the horse had said these things, they led the horses and brought them down to the circus. But that horse remained apart from them; because by reason of its strength they were unable to bring it down with its companions; and because they were afraid that it might kill them, like the king. Now it had happened to the blessed Irene that they had bound her with ropes according to the commandment of the king, and all the horses came and knelt down and did obeisance before her. And all the people were amazed at this wonder. And suddenly her fetters were loosed from her ; and they saw it and glorified God. And in that hour the servants of the king came and said to her, " A horse has bitten thy father and he is dead; and behold ! he is thrown on the ground, and his arm is taken off."

And she said: " Fear not, he is not really dead, but is sleeping and this that has happened was for the glory of God. Ye also shall see [it,] and believe in God." And when the great crowd heard that the king was dead, grief and sorrow overspread their mind ; and they came and fell down before the feet of the blessed one, and did obeisance to her; and they persuaded her saying, " Lady, take pity on thy father who is dead ; and it is grievous to thee, for his hand, too, has been taken away, and thrown aside."

And the blessed Irene came and stood over the corpse of her father. And all the people wondered ; for they left off their mourning for the dead king, and were amazed at the speech of the horse and at the loosening of its bonds.

The holy Irene said : " Bring the hand that was cut off close to the place from which it was cut and make it touch the place." And they did accordingly. Then Irene turned to the East, and lifted up her eyes and her hands to heaven. And she prayed, with weeping and sobs, to God, saying, "*God the Father in heaven, who hast established the foundations of the earth; Thou Rock that never movest, and fortress that never dost capitulate, Sun of Righteousness and path of life, and Way of salvation, who sittest on the right hand of Him who sent thee, O Lord, my God and my betrothed, Jesus the Christ, Son of the Living God, Thou who callest sinners to repentance, that they may turn to the knowledge of the truth and not perish, Merciful and Pitiful One, hearken to my voice, and look on the humble estate of Thy*

handmaiden. May Thy strong power come from heaven on this dead man and raise him up, that this crowd may see these things and believe and glorify Thy holy name; and know that Thou art the Lord of the heaven and of the earth, and the Redeemer of all men who believe in Thee."

And when she had finished her prayer, the soul of that dead man entered into him, and he lived, and arose, and sat up. And his daughter turned and saw him; and she went up to him and took him with her hands and set him up, saying to him: " Rise, my father, by, the power of Jesus." And he arose and walked to and fro, his hand that was cut off being quite whole, and not a blemish being on his body.

And when all the people saw it, they cried saying, "Great is the God of Irene and there is none but Him." And they believed, and turned to God : and three thousand people were baptized on that day.

Then Licinius the king took his daughter by the hand, blessing God and saying, "Great is the triumph of thy victory, my daughter! and great thy promise in heaven. Thou art called the possession of Jesus, and the inheritance of the Christ ; O most fortunate of children ! consolation and faith of parents ! Children like thee, my daughter, are able to save their fathers from a painful death ! Behold ! I also am henceforth a Christian, and a servant of Jesus. And henceforth I renounce this kingdom of the world that passeth away, and I look for the kingdom of heaven that passeth not away ; and I leave this kingdom to him who wishes to inherit it. And . I will take thy mother, my daughter, and I will go to the castle that I have built for thee ; and I also will see Jesus as thou hast seen Him ; and I will know Him like thee; and I will be His own and will seek refuge in Him. For I am unable to be king inasmuch as I have confessed Jesus and have been called a Christian ; lest the neighbouring kings come upon me and destroy me from life. For I know and I believe that inasmuch as I have believed in Jesus, they will not be able to hurt me."

Then the king took the queen, and they went away to the castle, and were there confessing the Christ. Then the blessed one remained in the city doing miracles, and signs of cures. And she taught the word of truth and instructed many; and baptized them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

After these things Zedekia the king heard what had become of king Licinius, and of the deeds which his daughter had done: and he was astonished. And he took a great and countless army, and went to Magdu, the city of king Licinius : and when he entered it and alighted in it, he called the magnates of the city, and asked them, “Where is your king?” And they returned him an answer and said, “ He is dwelling in the castle which he had built for his daughter, he and his wife.” The king said, “And his daughter, is she with him?” The magnates said, “No, my lord.” The king said, “And where doth she dwell ? Is she in the city ? “

They said, “She dwells with Apellianus her teacher.” And then the king sent to seek Apellianus the teacher. And he came, and stood in his presence. “ Tell me, said the king, thou old man, is the maiden, the daughter of king Licinius, with thee ? “ “ Yes, my lord the king,” said Apellianus. “What is her mind?” said the king, “and what are her meditations ? dost thou not know ? “ “ Her thoughts and her meditations, said Apellianus, “are mine and those of all who fear God. For from evening till evening she partakes of an ounce of bread, and drinks a sixth part of a hemina of water. She knows not a table, nor is she acquainted with a bed, and neither by night nor by day does she cease from the praise of God, and her eye is never done with tears.”

And when the king heard it, he was greatly astonished. And at the dawn of day he sent Euphorba with ten chief men to king Licinius, to that castle, and they said to him, “ O king, live forever ! Come to our city and receive us, as is thy good custom. What is this that thou hast done ? Art thou making a trial of us? Come to thine own palace.”

But when the magnates had said these things to Licinius the king, he said to them, “ Go ye and say to the king who sent you, ‘O noble king, live for ever! My kingdom is given unto thee.’”

Now when king Zedekia heard these things, he went into the palace of king Licinius; and he took his kingdom and inherited everything that he possessed. And on the following day king Zedekia sent his secretary and his great men for the maiden Irene, because of the honour [due to] her father. And the Hyparch and the magnates who were with him went to the house of Apellianus, to Irene ; and they said to her, “ daughter of a king! behold the king seeks thee.” And she arose with great joy, and went, and entered the king’s presence, and

stood before him. And when the king saw her, he said, “Peace be to thee !” But she did not answer him a word. And after a little while she said to him, “Why didst thou call for me?” The king said, “Let us sit and talk about the peace of the city.”

Irene said, “I will not sit with iniquitous people, nor will I enter into the assembly of the sinners; nor will I sit upon the seat of the scorers.” “Am I then a sinner and an iniquitous man ?” said the king. Irene said, “Truly every one who is a pagan is wicked and iniquitous’

But when the king heard [it] he was exceedingly wroth, and was filled with threatenings : and he said, “Irene, sacrifice to the gods!” Irene said, “In vain art thou disturbed, O king! Satan, thy father, excites thee and inflames thee against me. But I do not fear thy threats ; because I have believed in Jesus. And He saves me from all thy wiles, and all thy hateful counsels concerning me are useless.” And the king commanded them to dig a pit thirty cubits wide and thirty cubits deep, and to throw wild beasts into it, and snakes, and scorpions, and asps, and serpents, and vipers, and all the stinging things of Satan. And the servants of wickedness did accordingly.

And the king commanded them to bring the blessed Irene, and to carry her and throw her into that pit. And the servants of sin led her and carried her thither. And they said to her, weeping, “Why dost thou not sacrifice, O daughter of the king, and live ? but thou hast made this choice for thyself to die a grievous death.” But she said, “Be silent, for ye know not what ye are saying.”

And that blessed one looked down into the pit and saw all the reptiles that were in it, and she said, “How shall I go down?” And they said, “The king has commanded that thou shalt be thrown head downwards into it”

Then Irene lifted up her hands and raised her eyes I upwards, weeping; and she prayed to Jesus, saying, “O Lord the Christ, behold, for Thy sake I bear these things. And I go down into this pit [leaning] on the power of Thy divinity. Show Thy favour to me, O Lord, and let the iniquitous people and their father, Satan, be ashamed.”

And she made the sign of Jesus between her eyes, and on her breasts, and threw

herself head downwards into the midst of the pit. And when she reached the bottom, all these reptiles ran away from before her, and stuck to the walls of the pit ; and had stuck [to them] and died. And the blessed Irene opened her mouth and prayed, saying, *“I confess to thee, O Lord, whose are the heaven and the earth, that Thou art from everlasting to everlasting. Thou hast created all men, O Lord, upon the earth. Thou didst send our Lord Jesus the Christ, Thy Son, and Thy Beloved, for the redemption of the world ; and He came and was born of Mary the Virgin ; and He conquered all the power of the enmity of Satan ; and frustrated all his wiles ; and He gave strength and power to those men who worship Him and believe in Him, that they should tread on the wild beasts, and the scorpions, and the serpents, and the vipers, and on all the stinging things of the enmity of Satan. And Thou hast today shown Thy grace towards the weakness of Thy handmaiden. And Thou hast slain all these evil reptiles by Thy strong power and Thy swift commandment. And Thou hast saved me by the help of Thy favour. I confess to Thee and I give Thee glory that Thou hast not overlooked my low estate. And Thy grace has come to my help. And Thou hast kept me as the apple of the eye.”*

And she was in the pit for fourteen days, and she took no nourishment. But she was fed by the Holy Spirit. And it was told to the king that all these evil reptiles had died ; and had stuck to the walls in dying. And the king and his magnates were greatly astonished when they heard it. And on the following day the king called her and said to her, “ Irene, sacrifice to the gods ! Behold, thou hast killed all the reptiles, and thou art alive.”

Irene said, “O many headed Satan! is this thy question with me? But I ask thee, O son of deceit, tell me.” She said, “Has the weak power of thy gods done any enchantments like these? or is there any power like this that they have killed evil reptiles? except the power of Jesus ?”

But when the king heard this, he was filled with rage and said, “ Bring me hither two carpenters and two saws.” And they brought [them] to him as he had said. And he commanded them to squeeze the lamb of the Christ in the press of the carpenters, and to saw her in twain. And the servants of sin did according to the commandment of the king; and they squeezed her in the press. And they placed a saw above her head; and the carpenters lifted them up to saw her; and the saw became blunted, and did not hurt the body of the maiden. When the judge saw that the saw did not touch her body, he commanded that

there should be a tall engine, and that they should tie her there to stakes, and saw her in twain. And the engine came ; and they tied the blessed one to it, and they placed the saw above her head. And they let go the saw, and in that hour the saw was cleft in twain; and the carpenters fell from the engine; and they also were cleft and died. And the king saw that the two carpenters were dead, and that the saw was cleft And he turned towards all the people and said, “ They have made the engine idiotically, and they have let the saw go suddenly, and it was cleft, and the engine is fallen, and they are dead. It has befallen them well ; for it was not right for them to meddle with a matter that was too difficult for them, and that they knew nothing about, I am free from their mistake and from their blood.” And he commanded that there should be a saw double the size of the one which was cleft And they squeezed the blessed one again into the carpenter’s. press; and began again to saw her. And that saw was melted like wax.

And the believing woman laughed at their tortures and [their] sawing; and her body was not hurt, and her colour was not changed : and she gave glory to God.

And when the king saw that it profited nothing, he commanded them to bring a great saw, and to bring a huge stone of five hundred pounds [weight] and they put it on her breast; and that they should saw her feet off from her knees. And the servants of sin did accordingly; and they sawed off the feet of the blessed one.

But she was singing praises to God with joy and with a loud voice. And she did not feel the pain. And when the king saw that the feet of the blessed one were cut off, he laughed, and said, “ Irene, where is thy God ? let Him come now and deliver thee from my hands, if He can.” Irene said, “ By the life of Jesus who has redeemed me and is redeeming me, for there is no grace for thee.”

And the king was enraged and blasphemed God ; for the bystanders were afraid to weep openly in his presence but they wept in secret and murmured, saying, “ Bitter are the punishments of the king and iniquitous are his commandments.” For they took pity on the beauty of the maiden and on her youth.

And suddenly the air was aflame, and there were fearful thunderings and fierce

lightnings ; and terrible noises and mighty voices, like none that had ever been before. And darkness overspread the earth, and the earth trembled ; and a voice of the trumpeting of angels came from the sky I . And when the king saw it, he feared greatly, and said, “ Let us flee to the city ! let every man flee to his house!” And the king fled and those who were with him to get into the city. And the blessed one remained with her feet cut off, and that stone lying on her breasts. The king said, “ Lift it away. Now we will see if the Christ will come to deliver her.” And when they had lifted it, and all the people had fled, one of the harlots remained beside her whose name was Curica. She said to the blessed one, “I will not leave thee, thou handmaid of the Christ! with thee I will die, and with thee I will live in life eternal”

But as for the king and the great men who were with him who had fled, that they might go into the city, they imagined that he had gone before them ; justice was behind them bringing (him) to them. And they had come unwillingly, and stood beside the blessed one, and then they knew that God had come near on her behalf. And when the king saw that harlot beside her, he commanded, and they beheaded her with the sword. And when she was dying the handmaid of the Christ said, “Pray for me, that I may not be separated from thee.” And Irene sealed her in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And she stretched out her neck and received joyfully the crown of martyrdom by the sword. And suddenly God cast fear upon the king and upon his great men, and they arose affrighted and were silent in astonishment ; and were unable to walk hither or thither. Then two angels came down from heaven by the commandment of God, beside the virgin of the Christ, and they loosed her from her bonds, and rolled away the stone from her breasts; and took up her feet which had been cut off, and brought them close to the places from which they had been severed. And the blessed one was healed and arose sound in body. And they went up to heaven.

And the handmaiden of the Christ sang praises to God without ceasing. And she ran and reached the city before the king. But a current of air followed the king and his magnates, it- was very cold by reason of the hail which had come; and it slew three thousand men of these pagans, but it did not hurt the king ; because he was kept for the wrath to come.

And the people who were left cried out, saying, “*Truly great is the God of Irene,*

and there is none but He.” And they called on the Lord, saying, “Have mercy upon us, O God ! according to Thy grace, and blot out our sins in Thy compassion. Forgive us our iniquity in Thy pity, because our hope is in Thee ; and in Thee we take refuge.” And on that day eight thousand souls believed. And the king called the damsel, and said to her, “ Lo ! thou hast killed three thousand people with thine enchantments, and thou hast snatched away eight thousand from the gods. When they saw that thy feet were healed they believed in thy God. Now approach and sacrifice, lest thy life vanish miserably from the world.”

Irene said, “O furnace of falsehood of error, son of Satan ! art thou not ashamed and dost thou not fear God ? Thou hast not laid to heart the coldness of the air which occurred. And did not trembling dwell in thy heart at the death of thy wicked comrades ? and didst thou not fear Him who saved thee from a death like theirs I ? For thou didst not escape from that death because of thy righteousness, but that the crown of my martyrdom might be plaited and adorned by thy hands.”

And when the king had heard (this) he was filled with a great rage, and he called the Eparch, and said to him, “ Wilt thou not say by what kind of death I shall slay that [woman] of hateful name ? ” The Eparch said, “ Let them carry herto where there is a mill ; and let them bind her against the spoke of the wheel ; and let them fix iron hooks on the ends of the spokes, and let the water on to the wheel. And when the force of the water shall strike on the wheel and it shall revolve, the hooks will take away from her sides, and thus the disappearance of her life from the world will be very grievous.” And the servants of sin did thus, and they fixed wood against the wheel, and bound the virgin of the Christ to it. And they let out the water at the wheel, and at once the water became hard as stone, and did not move. And the wheel did not tremble, and the body of the blessed one was unhurt. But the king and the magnates who were standing round him were amazed.

And the blessed Irene laughed and said to them, mocking, “ O mistaken people ! Ye have made instruments of torture after your own pleasure by your commandment, and they do not obey you. And in vain do ye weary yourselves therefore do what is incumbent on you that... of fortitude, and my heroism may be made known to you and to many.” But the king and his magnates said to her, “ Irene, why dost thou not sacrifice to the gods ? ” And she said, “ Because

of the hour of the trumpet which will bring you to life.”

Then she said, “When I have truly seen dogs encompassing me, and the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me, as David has said, ‘The wicked walk every side, like the vile exaltation of the sons of Edom, and their words are softer than oil, yet are they javelins; their tongue is as a sharp sword; and their poison is like that of cruel vipers. They have compassed me like hornets, they are quenched as the fire of stubble. Their sword shall enter into their heart, and their bows shall be broken/ O hypocrites! hearken and understand, that the prophecy has said these things against you.’”

The king said, “ Irene, come, go up the ascent of the mill-wheel, till my mind takes counsel and my intelligence devises tortures that are more bitter than these for thee.” And when she had gone up, he commanded that she should be bound in the prison-house. And the servants of sin carried her and shut her up in the prison-house. And suddenly God cast contentions into the minds of all the citizens, and excited them against the king. And they raised a persecution against him, and the patricians and the plebeians of the whole city were assembled, and they said to him, “ As for thee, what art thou doing in our city ? and why dost thou sit in a palace which is not thine own ? Get thee out of our city, for thou art not our king. Long live our king Licinius ! “ Then they stoned him and put him out of their city, and he went to his city. And in seven days he died, and Severon his son reigned after him. And twenty days after the death of his father, he assembled a great army, about a hundred thousand fighting men. And he purposed in his mind that he would go to the city of Magdo, and lay it waste, and avenge by its means the insult [done] to his father, and his death. For he went to that city filled with anger and rage, and he threatened concerning it that he would swallow it like a dragon. For when those citizens had heard [of it] fear fell upon them, and they said to Irene, “ My lady, perhaps it is for thy sake that our city is desolate and we are dying ” ; and they closed the gates of the city, and none might go out and none might enter for fear of the king ; for there were a hundred thousand fighting men with him, besides many others who were allied with him, for they came because of the spoiling of the city. And when the blessed one saw that the citizens were disturbed and were weeping, she said to them, “ Peace be to you. Fear not I will go out and go on to meet him.”

But they said to her, “We implore of thee, lady, we shall die and our city will be laid waste ; but thou shalt not go out to any place; and thou shalt not go near him, lest he slay thee.”

But a certain faithful man was there, whose name was Alexander. He said to the citizens, *“You are making a mistake by too great haste. This is she who has slain all that bad vermin by the power of God ; and she has also raised up her father, and she has brought down an angel from above by her prayer; and she has done many signs. Does she fear the rustle of the wing of this locust? For are not his threats weak beside the strength of this valiant woman ? Fear not therefore.”* **But when they heard these words, they opened the gates of the city and allowed her to go out.**

And she went and reached the king’s presence. And she saw his numerous troops surrounding him. And she turned to the east and raised her hands and her eyes aloft. And she prayed and said, *“O Lord God ! whose are the heaven and the earth, as Thou didst hear the voice of Elisha the prophet, and didst strike the people with a Kings phantom, show the wonder here also, and hearken to the voice of the prayer of Thy handmaid and show the power of Thy might this day, and strike this people with a phantom, and keep the light of day, from their eyes, because they are going to lay waste an innocent city; and they threaten to destroy the life of many persons.”* **And when she had finished her prayer, the Lord smote that people with a phantom. And as for the king, his limbs were loosened, and his chiefs beheld that their light was taken from them. He said to Irene,** *“Irene, now I know that the power of God accompanies thee. Pray for us to thy God, and we shall see the light.”*

And she bent the knee and prayed to God, and their eyes were opened, and they saw the light And their limbs also which had been loosened, were healed. And the king and his great men entered the city, and the great army that was with him ; and the blessed Irene. And in the morning he assembled the whole city and said to them persuasively, *“ Peace be unto you. Fear not, there will be no trouble to any man in your city. There is quiet and peace between me and you.”*

And the next day the king said, *“ Call Irene to me. And they called her and brought her. And they said,* **“ Lo ! she is standing before thy majesty.”** *The king said,* **“ Irene, I have forgiven the fault of the city, but I will not forgive thee,**

because thou wert the hateful cause of the stoning of my father; and he was stoned, and he died. Now if thou desirest that I should not requite at thy hands the contumely and the blood of my father, sacrifice to the gods.”

Irene said, “Thou art cursed by God [thou] and thy counsel. But do not thou trifle, but turn to the counsel of thy father, Satan. And what he advises, do it to me quickly and without delay, that thou also mayest know the power of God that is in me.”

And the king was wroth with a very great wrath. And he commanded concerning her that she should be kept in the prison-house. And they carried her to the prison house. And the king said to his great men, “With what torture ought we to kill her?” And they said to him what Satan had sown in their hearts, “Let thy majesty command them to bring three hundred of the best nails, and let them be fixed under her feet. And let sand be dropped into a sack and let her carry it on her shoulders. And let them put a muzzle in her mouth and let one of the soldiers lead her and conduct her for five miles, and make her return [for] five. With this torture she will sacrifice or die.”

And whilst she was in the prison, our Lord Jesus the Christ appeared to her, and a host of angels. And He said to her

“Irene, fear not, for I am with thee; and my Father, with the Holy Spirit, are helping with thy struggle. And all the armies of heaven are helping with thy conflict. And even the bones of the righteous fathers delight in thy victory.”

And our Lord set His seal upon her, and ascended up to heaven with His holy angels.

And Irene was in the prison-house for fourteen days. And at the end of fourteen days the king called her and said to her, “Irene, sacrifice to the gods. Hearken to my voice, that thou die not very badly.”

But she answered him not a word. And when the king saw that she gave him no answer, he was filled with a great anger. And the king commanded, [saying,] “Bring me three hundred nails, and fasten them under her feet, and load her with a sack of sand, and thrust a muzzle in her mouth; and let a soldier lead

her like a beast” And the servants of sin made her run five miles, and made her return five miles. But the blessed lamb of the Christ did not feel the pain in her feet, and the suffering did not reach her heart. And when they brought her into the city, many of the pagans were laughing at her and saying, “Where is Jesus ? Is He not coming to save her now ? “

But the blessed one saw an angel who was standing before her. And he held a rod of iron and struck it on the earth saying thus : “ The engulfing of the enemies of righteousness to-day.” And when the blessed one came and arrived at the place where she had seen the angel standing, the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the servants of sin, and many pagans. And the nails were taken away from her feet, and the sack of sand that she carried; and the muzzle was taken from her mouth, and they were swallowed up with the infidels. And when the king saw this sign of a wonder, he was amazed and astonished.

And he turned round and said to the crowd of the infidels, “ They had sinned some sin before the gods, therefore hath the earth swallowed them up.” And in all these things the heart of the king was hardened, and that of his magnates, and they believed not in God. And the angel of God turned hastily towards the assembly of the wicked, and he slew many of them. But the number of those who were engulfed with those who died was ten thousand ; and those who were left cried to the Lord God, saying, “ Have mercy upon us. oh God ! and forgive us our sins by Thy grace, and be reconciled to us, according to Thy mercies; for Thou art the merciful God, who hast done many wonders by the hand of Irene.” And three thousand souls believed in God at that moment.

And as the king did not wish to believe, the Lord smote him and slew him. But the blessed lamb of the Christ went into the city, and taught many, and baptized them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And they brought near to her those who were sick with various and hateful diseases, and she cured them by the power of God. For the grace of God accompanied the holy Irene. And moreover they brought near to her those in whom there were evil spirits, and she cured them by the power of God. And she chased away the demons. And they brought to her a certain six years old boy, in whom was an evil spirit, which withered him up.

And when she saw it she was grieved on account of his youth. And she asked

the mother of the boy :“ How old is this child ? “ And the boy’s mother said :“ Six years old, lady.” And the blessed one, the handmaid of the Christ, took pity on the boy. And she lifted him up in her arms, and sealed him in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost And she prayed and said :

“God who has created man in His image, the merciful, the pitiful, He who has said : I do not wish the death or destruction of men, Lord God ! whose are the heaven and the earth, rebuke Satan and all his temptations, and look on the tender age of this boy, and send him help from Thy sanctuary, and let all men know that Thou hast answered them who call upon Thee in truth; and shew the sign of Thy miracle in him who has wronged this boy, and may this demon speak and make [himself] known to me.”

And when the blessed one had prayed and finished her prayer, the angel of God bound the demon and set him before her. And when she saw the demon, she said to him, “Tell me, thou unclean demon, why hast thou subjugated this boy and spoilt his youth?” Said the demon: “I implore thee, my lady, I have surely been sent” Irene said :“ God doth not tempt, and willeth not the death of man. Tell me, therefore, who hath sent thee.” The demon answered :“ Wicked men who treat each other badly.” Irene said: “Shew me who it is that sent thee.” Said the demon :“ I have told thee, my lady, that they are wizards, the enemies of the justice of God, and our friends. Therefore we are sent by them for vengeance. And we go wheresoever we are sent. And some men we corrupt, and some we paralyse ; and some of them we put to death in ways that are bad and varied.”

Irene said :“ Bring them to me, those who have sent thee.” The demon said : “My lady, whilst I am standing here I will tell thee their names.”

Irene said: “Who are they?” The demon said: “I implore of thee, my lady, Amos and Euteles, they who have a bazaar near the great portico of the Temple of Fortune of the city, and who have also a bank.”

Then she sent and had them both brought, and she said to them, “ Hear ye what this demon saith? Look if he be speaking the truth. And I will not loose the demon; because a demon has never spoken the truth, and see if ye have sent him ; and so far as I think, he speaks the truth from fear, for no demon

is able to stand up before the servants of God and lie, for he fears lest they should destroy him.”

And the holy Irene turned towards all the people, and said : *“Brethren, do not believe the demon, because he is a liar, and does not desire the quiet of men, but wars and contentions; because he is the enemy of justice. But I ask you to tell me the truth. Has it ever been heard by you about these men that they are malefactors ? ”*

They said, “ Yes, lady, they are bad, and their parents also followed these bad courses, and they have corrupted and destroyed many people of the city.” And she said to these two bad men, “Verily ye have sinned like men and have made God angry, but now repent towards Him ; and your sins shall be forgiven ; and your debts shall be blotted out.”

And they returned her an answer : “ But as for us, lady, we do not know what thou hast said, and we cannot approach to that business.” And when Irene saw that they denied about their deeds and that they did not want to confess and repent towards God, she said to them : “Ye yourselves know; I am freed from your blood.” And she looked to heaven and said: *“Lord Jesus the Christ, Son of the Living God, if it be true what they say about these men, and if they do not want to confess and repent, shew concerning them a sign of miracle in the sight of every one ; and let those who are standing here see and know that Thou only art the God of truth.”* And immediately a fire was kindled in their hearts, and it took hold of their bodies, and they were burnt. For the burning came from themselves and amongst them, and they were like a flaming furnace. And they burned and became like burnt firebrands. And when they saw them a great fear fell amongst them. And after these things she lifted the boy in her arms, and looked to heaven and prayed. And she sealed him in the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit. And he was healed and she gave him quite whole to his mother.

But when the great crowd who were standing there saw the death and destruction of the wicked people, and the healing of the boy, they gave praise to God and shouted, saying, *“Great is the God of Irene.”*

And after two days some people were carrying a certain young man and were going out to bury him. And the blessed Irene saw that his parents were weeping, and were lamenting bitterly over him, because he was their only son.

And she was grieved. And the father of the young man who had died, when he saw the holy Irene, came and fell on his face before her feet, saying to her, while prostrate, “ I beseech thee, lady, have pity on the humiliation of my grey hairs. This was the only son I had. And if thou wilt, pray to God that he may live. For we also are Christians, lady, and disciples of the Word of thy holiness, and by means of thee we have known the Living God.”

And she took pity on his old age, and went with him to those who were carrying the bier. And she spake to the bearers and they laid the bier down on the earth.

And she turned to the whole crowd and said, “ *My fellow believers, offer prayer to God with me.*” **And she stretched out her hands and looked towards heaven, and prayed, saying,** “ *O Lord God, King of the ages, He who sitteth on the cherubim and the seraphim stand before Him : and the angels and the archangels and all the hosts of heaven serve Him with fear. O God who didst shew wonders by the hands of the prophets and of the holy fathers ; Lord of the righteous, and Lover of the penitent ; He whom the prophets sought for and whose faith the Apostles preached : in the created [world] by Jesus the Christ, the Son of the Living God ; He who said, ‘ He that believeth (John xiv) on me, greater works than these which I do, shall he do/ He who gave life to the only son of the widow, and snatched the daughter of Jairus from death by His hand, He who called Lazarus out of the grave, and brought him up out of Sheol, the voracious pit. And now, Lord, Thou art and Thou dost exist forever. Shew, Lord, the power of Thy might in this dead man, and let him live, and stand up; because he also is the only son of his parents. And let these multitudes see [it] and praise Thy holy name. And let all the erring ones turn towards Thee’*

And when she had finished her prayer, the dead man lived and arose and ran and came before her and adored her. But when these crowds saw it they were astonished and they praised God. And many believed in God on that day. And on that day, by the will of God, Timothy the holy priest came to the holy woman. And she saw him and rejoiced with great joy. And she ran and did obeisance to him as to the apostle of Jesus. And she led him and went to the castle where her father and her mother dwelt And she said to the great crowd of the believers, “My brethren, be active, and come with me as far as the castle.” And as they were on their way, it was told to Licinius her father, “ Thy daughter and a priest of God are coming towards thee.” And when he heard

[it], he rejoiced with great joy. And when he saw the great crowd that was coming, he commanded that all the gates of the wall should be opened, and the gates of the castle itself. And the king and queen ran and went joyfully out to meet the holy priest, and Irene their daughter. For their mind exulted when they heard that their daughter was alive, and was coming towards them. And when they saw their daughter with the holy priest, they ran and did obeisance to him. And they wept and kissed and embraced their daughter lovingly, and praised God. For they had imagined that their daughter was dead. And when they saw her in life, they rejoiced and praised God. And the blessed one turned to her father and her mother, and said to them, “Peace be to you, my beloved parents. Be not troubled and weep not, for behold God hath given you His grace, and by means of the fruit of your blood ye have known God.” And she turned to the holy priest and said to him, “I beseech of thee, my lord, priest of the living God, complete thy blessing and thy favour to my weakness ; and baptize my father and my mother, and the many young men who are hoping to receive the symbol of the Christ”: and she said to her father and to her mother, “Dear parents, behold [, this is] the day when your debts shall be wiped out, and ye shall be washed from the filth of your sins. Behold, our Lord Jesus hath sent the holy priest. Take the baptism and receive the symbol of the Christ; and partake of the marriage feast of the heavenly king.” And they said, “And what may prevent it, O beloved daughter?”

And the priest took the oil, and blessed and anointed them, and he blessed upon and sanctified the water, and baptized the king and the queen and also the soldiers: and [of] the troops of the king four hundred persons who were with them, and fifty thousand persons of the many people who had come there. And after the holy priest had baptized them, the holy Irene greeted her father and her mother, and all the rest of the household. And the blessed one commanded them and said to them, “*Be confirmed in what ye have received. Be valiant in Jesus, and be strong in the faith. Lo ! ye have received baptism. Your bodies are cleansed, and ye are mingled with the sheep of Jesus. Your hearts are sanctified to be a dwelling place of Jesus.*” **And she said to them, “Abide in peace, and if it please the Lord Jesus, I will see you again.” And she went out of the castle with the priest, and many people. But the king and the queen remained in the castle, and the four hundred persons who were with them, who had been baptized, praising God, and there was great joy in that city.**

And afterwards two lepers drew near to her, who came from a far country. And she saw the dust that was upon their faces, and that their shoes were split, and she knew that they had come from afar. And she said to them, “Why have ye come to me? Behold, I am a weak woman, commonplace and feeble, and I possess nothing in this world, and I am a sinner.” But they said to her,

“ O lady ! thou doest well to humble thyself in [relation to] thine own will. But towards God thou art elect and great. And thou dost fulfil the word of Jesus thy Bridegroom; for thou hast heard that He said, ‘Whosoever humbleth himself shall be exalted ‘ And those people threw themselves down on the ground before her feet, and they wept and said, “ If thou wilt, lady, pray for us to God, and we shall be cleansed from our leprosy.”

Then the holy one threw herself down before the Lord and shed tears with sobs, and prayed, saying, “O Lord God, to whom belongs the heaven and the earth, hearken unto the voice of Thy handmaid. And in Thy compassion grant my request : and may Thy power come from on high on the bodies of these people, and may they be cleansed, and let many see [it] and praise Thy great and fearful name.” And whilst she was praying, the angel of God came and stood before her.

And he said to her, “ Peace be unto thee, Irene, virgin of the Christ.” And when she saw the angel, she said, “ Blessed be Thou, O God, to whom belongs the heaven and the earth, for Thou hast heard the voice of Thy humble servant, and hast not turned away Thy face from me. But Thou hast sent Thine angel from on high from before Thy holy throne ; and he has come to heal and to cleanse the bodies of these people.”

And immediately a fountain of water sprang up there. And when the blessed one saw it, she praised God and said, “This spring is from the holy water of Jordan, of that which Elisha the prophet blessed; and the Lord of Elisha blessed [it] by His baptism.”

And she said to these men, “ Go in and wash in that water, confessing the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit ; and your bodies shall be cleansed, and shall become tender as infants.” Then these men went with great fear into the fountain of water, saying, “We confess the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.” And they came out of the fountain with their bodies cleansed, and fear and astonishment took hold of the great crowd that was

there, and they praised God that the blessed Irene, the virgin of the Christ, had done these miracles and cures.

And she was three years in that city. And when Zedekiah and Severon his son were dead, Numerianus reigned after them, the son of Septinus. And he inquired about the blessed Irene. And he said, "Where is she?" And they said to him, "She is here in the city." And he sent soldiers, and commanded them, and said that they should "bring her to the city of Callinicus ; and let her be kept there until I come " And the soldiers found her, those who went out after her ; and they brought her to the city of Callinicus ; and there she was carefully kept in the prison-house until the king should come there. And when he came, they informed him [saying], " Irene is there, she whom thy; Majesty asked for." And he commanded, " Bring her to me." And she came and stood before him. And when the king saw her, he was astonished.

And he said to his great men, " Hallo ! this maiden is very like her father." And he said, "This girl is [the daughter] of Licinius; he forsook his kingdom, and renounced it; and now this city is without a king. On her account Zedekiah my brother was stoned and died. And because of her the angel of the Lord smote Severon his son and slew him. And I seek to requite their blood at her hands. And I fear lest a fate worse than that of my colleagues should befall me. Truly, as I see, this woman is a destroyer of the kingdom and also an over- turner of kings. And I know not what I shall do to her." And he turned and said to the advocates who were standing in his presence, " Advise me in your wisdom by what torment I shall destroy her from the world. She has killed my father, and Zedekiah my brother ; and she caused Severon his son to perish from the world. And what will she do to me ? She is the extirpator of royalty." The magnates said to him, " Truly thou hast spoken well, lord the king." Then the king commanded that they should bring her before him, and they brought her, and she stood before him.

The king said, " Irene, what dost thou say? Wilt thou sacrifice to the gods or wilt thou be obstinate? and dost thou persist in the folly of the Christians ? "

Irene said, *"Because thou hast repeatedly said that I am the overturner of royalty, I say to thee, that thou also, if thou dost not believe in God, in a very little while the judgment of God shall overtake thee also ; and thou shalt die a frightful and uncommon death. And then thou shalt know that there is a God who rules in the heaven and in*

the earth.” And when the king had heard [it] he was filled with great rage ; and he commanded, “ Bring me men who are artificers in copper.” And they came and stood before him. The king said to them, “ Make me three very large cows.” And they made them and brought them to him. And he commanded that they should be greatly heated. And these cows were heated for three days and three nights, until the copper was nearly melted. And when the cows were heated, he commanded, and they brought Irene before him. The king said, “ Irene, what sayest thou? I have commanded that there should be three cows of copper on thy account And [here] they are. And I have commanded that they should be heated. And they are also heated frightfully. Now if thou wilt sacrifice to the gods, thou shalt be delivered from a frightful and terrible death. But if thou wilt not sacrifice, thou shalt be cast into the cows and shalt be burnt, and shalt die a very hard death. And if thou shouldst conquer the one by thy witchcraft, thou shalt be cast into the other ; and if again thou shouldst conquer the second one by thy skill, thou shalt be cast into the third, and shalt perish. And very grievously shalt thou depart. And we shall see if Jesus will come, He in whom thou believest, and will save thee from my hands. Approach, therefore, and sacrifice to the gods.”

Irene said, “ *Be not troubled, O son of Satan ; for however much thy father Satan hath excited thee against me, I am not afraid of thee, neither now do thy threats move me. See therefore that thou explain to me in the skill of thy deceitful teaching, the stripes and the torments of thy contrivances.*” **Then the king was greatly enraged,** and said to her, “ **Cursed child ! slayer of its parents, extirpator of royalty, thou hast called me senseless, I will shew thee what sense there is in me, by means of the torments that my mind shall devise against thee.**” And he commanded them to carry her out, and to heat these copper cows.

And he commanded the heralds to go out into the city and proclaim that all men should come and see the punishment and procession of the infidel despiser of the gods. And when all the city was assembled, the king came and sat on his judgment-seat, and he commanded them : “ Bring before me the audacious one, the parricide” And she came and stood before him. The king said, “ Irene, choose between two things, either sacrifice to the gods, or go into the copper cow”

Irene said, “ *O senseless fool, and ignorant sinner ! son of Satan the coiling serpent!*

I have said to thee once [for all] that I am a Christian ; and I will not sacrifice to the infidel demons nor to the foul fiends ; and I will not forsake Jesus the Christ, my Lord ; and I shall not be forsaken by Him. And these cows which flame by means of thine evil skill, are to me fountains of cold water by the help of Jesus, and they are of no account to me. For thou shalt see quickly the power of the Lord Jesus to help that is with me. And as for thee, His wrath is ready to come upon thee by means of a terrible angel. And thou shalt die a fearful and uncommon death; not like thy predecessors, but thou shalt die the fearful death of terror. And thine [own] liver shall be thy food, and thy lung thy sustenance. And thy punishment shall be from thyself and in thyself. And thou shalt know that there is a God in heaven.” **Then the king waxed exceeding wroth, and was like a lion eager to rend. And he commanded them to throw her into the copper cow. And when she heard [it,] before the servants of sin had laid hold of her and led her out, she made the sign of Jesus on her breasts and between her eyes, and she ran boldly to the copper cow and went in. And immediately the fire was quenched; and the handmaid of the Christ was set free like a ship on a peaceful sea ; and waters flowed from the cow itself. But when the judge saw it, he said to the people, “ Did I not tell you that she would conquer by her witchcraft?” But all the people wept bitterly, when they saw the beauty of her youth, and what torments she suffered.**

Then she prayed in God’s presence and said, “ O Lord God, who dwellest in the highest heavens ! hearken to my voice, and let Thy mercy come hither. See, because of Thy name I suffer these things. This I know, that Thou hast helped me and wilt help me. But because of these crowds, that they may see the sign of a miracle and may praise Thy name.” **And when she had said these things and had prayed, she saw the angel of God standing beside her. And he said to her, “ Peace be to thee, Irene ; fear not, for the Lord is with thee, and I have been sent for thy comfort.”** **And she rejoiced and exulted at the sight of the angel.**

And then the king commanded them to throw her into the second cow. Irene said, “ O Satan, and son of Satan, and enemy of justice, if thou hast not been confounded by the first cow, thou shalt be confounded by this second one; and thou shalt despise thyself. And if again thou art not moved by the second, thou shalt be confounded by the end of the third, and shalt blush, when the wrath of the Lord shall come suddenly upon thee.”

And he commanded them to throw her into the second cow. But when she

heard it, she sealed herself in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost And she went into the cow rejoicing and exulting in the power of Jesus to help. And immediately the fire was quenched, and the flame was cooled, and the cow was melted like wax ; and the blessed one was not hurt. And when the king again saw [it] he said to his magnates, “Did I not tell you that she would conquer the fire by her witchcraft?”

And the king commanded them to throw her into the third cow. But when she had heard it, she blessed God and said to the judge, “ Thy torments are very insipid and thy fire is very cool. Thou art a serpent with many heads, and with thee are thy servants. For as for these cows, water instead of fire has come to them.” And she went joyfully into the third cow in the strength of Jesus, laughing at them, for the pagans imagined that there her destruction would be. But when the blessed one entered the third cow, it walked as if it were animated in the flesh; that it might proclaim to the unbelievers about the grace of God. And that brazen cow walked for four stadia here and there. And all the people who were standing there for the spectacle were seized with astonishment, saying to one another, “Who has ever seen brass that walked like flesh ?” And while they were saying these things, they looked and watched whence they should see the blessed one. But as for the cow its brass was melted like water ; and it fell to the earth, and the blessed one appeared in the sight of all men. And they were amazed at this wonder. Even the king was greatly astonished that the fire had no power over her. And they all cried to the Lord and said, “*There is none like unto Thee, Lord God, and there are none like unto Thy servants. Be merciful to us as in the abundance of Thy grace. Thou art He who hast done the miracle by the hand of Irene ; and Thou hast shewn Thy might and Thy valour amongst the nations .*” And a hundred thousand souls believed in God that day. And the few people who were left who were unbaptized, believed nevertheless in God.

And when the king saw that all the people believed in God, he was exceedingly wroth and bitter ; and he opened his mouth and blasphemed against God. And he said to Irene, “ I swear by all the gods, that I will not spare thee, but I will cut thee up limb by limb ; and I will make thee food for dogs.” Then Irene laughed and said, “*Thou and thine imaginations shall be confounded, and all thy contrivances against me, thou son of Satan.*” And when the king had heard [it] he gnashed his tusks like a wild boar against her, and blasphemed God. But suddenly the angel of the Lord struck him with a pain in his heart, and with an internal wound.

And he went to his house screaming. And a fire was kindled within him, and he tasted no food, and his liver overflowed and swelled up, and his lung was nourishment for him, and worms came out of his mouth : and his kinsmen were afraid to come near him. And he yelled and burst asunder and died. And his body was decomposed and his bones were scattered. And then the earth did not receive his bones. And when he died, he commanded Bura the Eparch to try the virgin of the Christ After the death of the tyrant and of those [who were] with him, the word of God had free course by means of the Blessed One; and God was glorified, and the faith became mighty, and many were baptized. And she was in the city of Callinicus for thirty days doing signs and wonders; and she cured many in the name of Jesus. She made the deaf hear; she opened [the eyes of] the blind; she cleansed the lepers ; and she healed all who were in pain ; and she baptized many in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

And at the end of thirty days the Eparch went to Tela of Mauzalat (“ Mesembria “ in the Sunaxaristes.) And he sent soldiers after her to Callinicus to bring her. And these soldiers found her. And they had heard from many of the citizens the signs and wonders and miracles which she had done. And they were greatly astonished. And they approached and said to her,“ Hail to thee, handmaiden of the Christ ! the Eparch sends for thee.”

Irene said,“And where is the Eparch?” The soldiers said,“In Tela of Mauzalat, my lady; and he awaits thee there,” And the blessed virgin of Jesus arose, and went with them, and entered the city of Tela. And it was said to the Eparch: “Behold, Irene has come.” The Eparch said, “Bring her before me.” And she came and stood before him. And when the Eparch saw her, he said,“Peace be to thee, Irene.”

Irene said,“ Dost thou greet me with peace ? but there shall be no peace upon thee. Because God has said, (Is. xiviii) that there is no peace to the wicked.” The Eparch said,“Thou impudent and godless woman ! Thou dost surely insult me. Approach now and sacrifice to the gods, or dost thou not know that I have received a commandment concerning thee from Numerianus the king to judge thee?” Irene said,“See, and give heed to thyself, lest thou shouldst follow after him who hast commanded thee.”

The Eparch said, “Approach and sacrifice to the gods, lest I destroy thee from off the world by varied tortures “ Irene said, “ Hearken, Eparch, and I will tell thee. We are a spectacle to men and also to the angels. To men for derision, and to the angels for praise. And we are considered as dross by men. Now therefore I say unto thee, Bura the Eparch ! prepare for thyself instruments of torture as thou wilt, and thou shalt see the power of God in the fortitude with which I shall endure the agony. But thou wouldst force me to sacrifice to the lifeless gods, who neither see nor hear, nor smell, nor walk, whose makers shall become similar to them, and all those who, like thee, trust in them. And I would persuade and advise thee, to turn and to know the living God, who never dies ; He who made thee out of nothing ; lest thou shouldest die a bad death like thy predecessors.”

Bura said, “ unmannerly child ! O parricide ! dost thou really threaten me?” Irene said, *“have not insulted thee, but I give thee this advice, that thou shouldst know Him who kills and who makes alive, who brings down to Sheol, and who raises up, and who loves those who return to Him. And I confide in Jesus, that the grace of the Christ will speedily draw thee, that thou mayest know God.”* The Eparch said, “ Shall I also then become a Christian, O cursed child ?” Irene said, “ I have said the word, which I know shall become a deed.”

The Eparch said, “ I swear by all the gods, that I will not spare thee, nor thy impudence; but I decree for thee these tortures that have not yet been seen in the world, nor have they entered into the heart of the judges; and they will terrify by their severity all who see them.”

The Eparch said, “ Bring me the smiths.” And they came and stood before him. And he said to them, “ Make me an arm-chair of iron, and let it be one cubit high in elevation; and make me two thin chains.” And they made [them] and brought [them]. And he commanded them to make Irene sit down. And she came and stood before him. The Eparch said, “Irene, what sayest thou? wilt thou sacrifice to the gods or no?”

Irene said, *“ Satan incarnate ! son of the deceiver ! how far wilt thou persist in thine audacity ? Have I not said to thee that I will not sacrifice to unclean demons, nor will I worship foul fiends ; and I will not forsake my Lord and my God, Jesus the Christ; and I shall not be forsaken by Him : for He will deliver me from all thine inventions,*

senseless fool ! “

Said the Eparch to his servants, “ Make her sit down in this iron chair, and bind her with these chains, and heap wood above it. And throw fat and wax and naphtha and sulphur and pitch and resin upon the wood, and kindle the fire.” And the servants of sin did thus. And when the fire had mastered the wood, and had risen above the chair twelve cubits, the Eparch said, “Let us see if Jesus will deliver her from my hands.” And immediately, by the commandment of God, an angel descended from heaven, and seized Irene by her hand, and set her out of the chair. And the chair and the iron chains were melted like wax. And he took her out of the flame, and placed her on one side out of the fire, when the fire had not reached to her dress. And when the Eparch saw that she was standing outside of the flame he was greatly astonished; and he feared and trembled greatly. And he ran and fell on his face before her feet, weeping, and sought to persuade her, saying, “ *I implore thee, O lady, handmaiden of the Christ, have mercy upon me. Lo ! I also believe in thy God, and henceforth I am a Christian. And henceforth I renounce all the gods of paganism, and let me not die a fearful death, lady.*”

But she said to him, “Did I not tell thee that thou wouldst speedily turn towards Jesus?” And he said to her, “ *I implore of thee, lady, pray for me, that I may be accepted and not rejected ; and that what I have plotted against thee may not come into judgment against me.*”

And Irene said, “ *Peace be to thee, fear not, let no anxiety come to thee.*” But when the crowds who surrounded the Eparch saw that he believed in God, many also believed with him, and confessed God.

And she was there, in that city, for fifty days. And in it she won many to Jesus, and the Lord God sent the holy priest to her in the city of Tela, and he baptized the Eparch and many who were with him who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. But Shabur the Persian king had come to Nisibis; and he had heard about the blessed Irene, that she was in Tela. And at the end of fifty days, he sent seven horsemen after her, and they brought her to Nisibis. And when she had entered the city of Nisibis, it was told to Shabur the king :

“ Irene is come.” And he commanded them to bring her. And she came speedily

and stood before him. But when Shabur the king saw her, he did not wish to interrogate her, for he said, “This is the destroyer of royalty.” And he struck her with the sword which he held in his hand and killed her. The king said, “Is not this the famous one? Why has she not killed me? Where is Jesus her helper? Let him come now and succour her, if he can.” Then the Christian brethren came and carried away her holy body, and buried it. Said the king : “ Lest Jesus should come and raise her up? After these things the king was silent ; and found nothing further to say about her. And she was for four days in the grave. And at the end of four days, an angel came down from heaven and raised her up. And he said to her:

“Irene, thy struggle is finished, and the crown of thy victory is adorned. From henceforth nothing bad shall come near to thy body ; and thou shalt see nothing hateful in the world ; because the course of thy labour is finished Rise therefore and enter the city, and fear not ; and make disciples of many, according to thy custom. And king Shabur, who killed thee, will do obeisance to thee, and will try to persuade thee to remain in his city. And many will believe in God along with him on account of thee. Blessed and happy art thou among women, and great is thy reward in heaven, and glittering is the crown of thy victory at the marriage supper of the heavenly bridegroom, Jesus the Christ.” And the angel went from her up to heaven.

And the blessed Irene took in her hand an olive branch, and she sang praises and psalms. And she went into the city and spake thus : “ Let God arise, and let all His enemies be scattered ; and let those who hate Him flee from before Him,” and “There is none like unto Thee, Lord God ! and there are nothing like unto Thy works. For lo! Thou doest wonders to the dead, and men shall arise and praise Thee. Lord, who is like unto Thee ? “

And when the citizens saw her, they knew that she had risen from the dead, and they ran and did obeisance before her. And they shouted, saying, “Great is the God of Irene. And there is no other, but He alone.” And when there was a shout and a great uproar, the king heard it and was afraid. And he inquired what was the noise of the uproar in the city. The dwellers in his palace say to him, “Because of Irene, who is risen from the tomb, they are thanking and praising God who has raised her.”

And when the king heard [it], he commanded them to bring her into his

presence. And Irene came and stood before him, carrying the sprig of olive, and looking like the dove of Noah, which carried the tidings of peace to the world. Thus Irene also carried the olive leaf, the tidings of her resurrection. And when the king saw her, he knelt and did obeisance before her. And he said to her, “ Irene, great is thy God. And now I know that God dwells with thee. And whosoever opposes thee opposes himself. And now, lady, I implore and seek to persuade thee, stay in our city, and do what thou wilt with authority and do not fear. Because God is with thee, and man is unable to hurt thee.” And she was a long time in that city, teaching the word of God, and making many disciples. And great was the praise of God because of her. And the number of all those who believed in God and were baptized by her hand was a hundred and thirty thousand souls.

After these things she bade farewell to the king and to all the citizens; and went to the castle to see her father and her mother. Ten days before she went thither Licinius her father died ; and she went to the castle and found him dead . And she was grieved and remained there for three days. And after three days she bade farewell to her mother; and arose, and went to the city. And she left her mother in peace, and was in the city for three days.

And after three days, by the commandment of God, a cloud took up the virgin of the Christ, and carried her to the city of Ephesus, and she was there; and she did many cures and miracles in the name of Jesus ; and she made disciples of many, for the citizens held her as one of the Apostles of Jesus. And she was in that city and in its district for seven years.

And Apellianus her secretary heard it, and he arose and came to her to Ephesus. And when he saw her, he did obeisance to her. And they both rejoiced at the sight of each other. And Apellianus related to the citizens everything that she had endured from the kings, and they were very much astonished.

And on the following day she said to all the citizens,

“ O brethren and fathers, abide in peace. And be strong and firm in the Christ. And persevere and be established in your faith in the Christ For tommorrow I shall depart. And ye have received me well, and your recompence is preserved in heaven. For ye have heard that our Lord (Matt. x. 41) said: ‘He who receiveth a prophet in the name

of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward ; and he who receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward and he who receiveth a stranger for the sake of the Christ, the Christ will recompense him in heaven ten thousandfold

And when she had said these things, she finished her speech. But some of the citizens said, “ She has said that she will depart, but where then is she going?” And they said further, “ Perhaps she is going to die.” Others said, “ Nay, but she will ascend to heaven.” Others said, “Perhaps Jesus the Christ, her Bridegroom will send and guide her : for we do not know it because we are sinners. God knows what He will do to His handmaiden.”

But the blessed Irene said to Apellianus her secretary, “ Bring with thee six Christian men, believers, and come with me to a certain well-known place.” And Apellianus brought six Christian men of the patricians of the city, and they went with her outside the city. And they found a certain coffin of marble that had been laid there in that place years before; in which man had never before been laid.

And Irene said to Apellianus and to those with him, “Beloved and faithful brethren, abide in peace. Behold ! I shall go into this coffin today. And do ye take its cover and lay it above it. And for four days let no man come near to the coffin. And she went into that coffin, saying, Brethren, be at peace; and the grace of our Lord Jesus the Christ be with you all, amen.”

And she said, “Let an artificer come and bring iron clasps, and solder the coffin and also the lid with lead. And mark ye [it] with your signet rings ; and seal it, and go ye into the city.” And she commanded them, saying to them, “When four days are finished, come ye out and open the coffin ; and look, if ye find my body in it, well, good; but if ye do not find my body in it, do not doubt, but know ye that my Lord Jesus, my Bridegroom, hath hidden away the body of His handmaiden where He willed. For I know not whither He will carry it; for I have heard that He said, ‘ In my Father's house are many mansions?’ (Johnxiv). And they did as she had said. And an artificer came and put clasps on the lid of the coffin, and soldered them with lead; and they all sealed them with their signet rings, and went into the city. And after four days, Apellianus drew near at the time of dawn, he and six Christian men, they with whose signet rings the

coffin was sealed. And many of the citizens went out with them to the coffin; and they bent the knee and prayed there. And they opened the coffin, and they found the clothes of the virgin of the Christ folded up and lying in the coffin. And they did not find her body.

And they saw the angel of God who was standing there beside the coffin. And he said unto them, *Whom seek ye?*” They say unto him, “Irene, my lord, perhaps thou knowest who has taken her away from here.” But he said to them, “*Lo! she is enjoying herself in the Paradise of Eden, at the marriage feast of the heavenly Bridegroom, Jesus the Christ, the Son of God*” And fear took hold of them, and perturbation remained in their minds; and they went into the city praising and blessing God, about the wonder which they had seen. And many who heard it believed, and confessed the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit

This is the martyrdom of Irene ; this is the conflict of the virgin of the Christ And she was made the messenger of peace on behalf of all believers. And the cities in which she triumphed are: firstly, Magedo, the city in which she was born; secondly, Callinicus; thirdly, Tela of Mauzalet; fourthly, Nisibis; fifthly, Ephesus, in which was her good end.

And the kings who judged her : Licinius her father ; secondly, Zedekia; thirdly, Severon his son; fourthly, Numerianus; fifthly, Bura the Eparch; sixthly, Shabur the Persian king, he in whose presence she finished the course of her conflict. Praise be to the Christ who gave power to His virgin; and she overcame all the wiles of the devil. May God the Christ give us a portion and an inheritance along with her in the kingdom of heaven ! And may her prayer be for the sinner who composed and wrote her martyrology for ever and even

Here endeth the story of the blessed Irene.