

ESSAYS ON THE SECTS AND NATIONALITIES OF SYRIA AND PALESTINE.

(Continued from January "Quarterly Statement," p. 83.)

THE MARONITES.

By FREDERICK JONES BLISS, B.A.

II.

THE CLERGY, CHURCHES, AND SCHOOLS.

The book of the Council of the Lebanon gives a list of 52 Maronite Patriarchs, with their places of residence, from Yuhanna Marûn 685, to Yusif el Khazin who was present at that Council in 1736.

In his "Bibliotheca Orientalis,"¹ Assemanus presents the life of the first Patriarch. He quotes from a treatise against the Jacobites, written in 1495 by Barclajus, Bishop of Nicosia, who used an ancient Arabic manuscript; and also from Quaresmius, who published the same facts in Latin, in 1639, in his "Elucidatio Terræ Sancti." Assemanus convicts both authors of certain anachronisms. He refers to a work of a Maronite Patriarch, Stephen Edenensis, who uses Barclajus and Quaresmius.

According to Assemanus John Sirimensis was born in the 7th century on Mount Suaidia, near Antioch, of noble and pious parents, Agathon and Nohema, which seem to be "Frank" names. He was educated in things human and divine in Antioch, then in the Convent of Mar Marûn on the Orontes, and lastly in Constantinople where he learned the Greek language and the "mysteries of wisdom." Thence he was called home by the death of his parents. He had two nephews, Abraham and Cyrus, the former he placed at the head of his house, and the latter he took with him to the Convent of Mar Marûn. There he became a monk, and then a priest. Many flocked to hear his preaching. The Latins in Antioch called the attention of the Papal Legate to his zeal, and John was created Bishop of Botrys, "that he might maintain the Lebanese in the Roman faith." He cultivated the vine of the Lord (so says the chronicle) so faithfully in the shores of Phœnicia, that he led into the obedience of the Church of Rome many Monophysites and Monothelites. His success extended not only through the Lebanon, but as far as Jerusalem and the provinces of Armenia. In these places he appointed tribunes and prefects, as well as bishops and priests. His military leaders, one of whom was Abraham, became a terror to Persians and Saracens. Twice he was obliged to flee to the monastery of Mar Marûn. When, in the second year of the Emperor Justinian, the Patriarch Theophanes died, John, who happened to be in Antioch, was unanimously elected his successor. He built churches and monasteries,

¹ Vol. I, chap. 43, p. 496.

and consecrated many bishops and priests. He died on February 9th 707, in the Monastery of Mar Marûn, in the castle of Caphar Hai nea Botrys. Numerous clergy and an infinite number of people flocked to his funeral, to receive a blessing by touching his body. Assemanus then attempts to vindicate Yuhanna Marûn from the charge of heresy. Then follows a list of his works found in the Vatican Library:—1. "Liturgia." 2. "Libellus fidei ad Libanotas adversus Monophysitas et Nestorianos." 3. "Liber Adversus Monophysitas." 4. "Ad Nestorianos." 5. "Epistola de Trisagio." 6. "De Sacerdotis." 7. "Commentarium in Liturgiam St. Jacobi."

Such is the account of their first Patriarch received by the Maronite scholars. We have shown before, however, that during the period in which he lived the Maronites, including their prelates, were Monothelites.

But, as we have just seen, this account represents Yuhanna Marûn's election as unanimous, and as taking place at Antioch where he succeeded Theophanes.¹ I believe there is no clear, authentic account of the circumstances and place connected with the beginning of Maronite independence.

The head of the Maronite Church bears the title of Patriarch of Antioch, and of the whole East.² Since 1440 the patriarchal seat has been at Qannubîn in the gorge of the Qadisha River, which breaks forth from a cavern in the face of a precipice below the rolling plateau, where stands the ancient grove of the cedars. In recent years the Patriarchs have spent their summers in Bdîman on the top of the opposite cliff, and have wintered at Bkerke, near Beirût. The late Patriarch Paul summered at Raifûn, as his age and health did not permit him to take the difficult ride to Bdîman. The Patriarch is also *ex officio* Bishop of Jebail. According to the decision of the fourth Lateran Council, the Patriarch of Antioch has the third rank after the Roman Pontiff; the order of Patriarchates being thus:—Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. Among the Patriarchal prerogatives we may mention

¹ In the recently published pamphlet referred to in a former note (Cereni Storici Sulla Nazione Siro-Maronita), G. Notain Dersauni, a Lebanon Abbot, tries to prove this succession, by identifying Constantine Deacon of Syracuse, whom the historian Anastasius says was confirmed by the Pope as successor of Theophanes with John Maro whom their own historian following Quaresmius calls his successor by Papal Confirmation. The argument is not strong. The pamphlet, however, is an interesting one. It aims to prove that the true succession to the Chair of Antioch is in the line of the Maronite Patriarchs.

² The Greek-Melchites, Armenians, Nestorians, Jacobites, Maronites, Greek-Catholics (a united Greek-Melchites), and Syriac Catholics, each claim a Patriarch of Antioch, the last three being recognized by Rome, which gives precedence over the others to the one longest in office. For about 170 years previous to the expulsion of the Franks by the Saracens in the 13th century there was a Latin Patriarch of Antioch. This office has lapsed, but the honorary title is held to this day by a prelate at Rome.

the following¹: He may have the cross carried before him except in Rome, or when the Pontiff is present in person or by Legate; he may wear the pontifical robes; he may ride a white horse, caprisoned, and with gold bridle and stirrups; he may write synodical letters to other Patriarchs, and his name is to be remembered in the divine services of other Patriarchates; he may re-examine controversies which have been decided in the dioceses, and confirm or reject the decisions; he may establish canons to be observed by all his Bishops; he may convene a general Synod, and preside over it; he may judge in matters of disagreement between his Bishops and Clergy; he is to see that the Catholic Faith is kept pure; formerly he could depose Bishops for fault, but since 1736 the removal of a Bishop from office is reserved to the Pope, but while the case is pending the Patriarch may imprison the offender in a monastery; he is to supervise the monasteries and monks; he alone may receive penitent heretics and schismatics, and allow marriage in the forbidden degrees of relationship; he may establish new fasts and feasts, and may for cause of war or famine temporarily suspend fasts; he may make changes in the ritual, provided the substance is unaltered; he is to consecrate the chrismatic oil; in all grave matters he is to consult his Bishops, and some questions are to be referred to Rome.

It is impossible to make a definite statement in regard to the Patriarchal revenues. It may be said in general that they amount to several thousand pounds annually. The sources are as follows: the incomes from the many estates belonging to the Patriarchate and its affiliated convents; large sums of money sent from Europe for masses; price of masses from wealthy Maronites; the tithes from the Maronite nation, &c. According to the laws of the church each Maronite man is taxed 3 piastres per annum, or about 5½*d*. Originally, as I understand the matter, these tithes were the due of the Patriarch. To-day, however, the tithe-gathering is not strictly enforced. In one village where other sects are influential, I am told that the tithes have not been collected for three years. In some cases the Bishops are allowed to retain a large part of the tithes, while in others the parish priests may keep them.

Notwithstanding his great income, the late Patriarch Boulos Mes'ad lived in much simplicity. Indeed, the church at Bkerke was small and poorly furnished. The chief reception room was a long white-washed vaulted room, with ordinary divans, a common carpet, and a table. The present Patriarch, Yuhanna el 'Haj, is building extensively, both at Bkerke and at Bdman. I have been told that Boulos Mes'ad said that his master Jesus Christ was poor, and it did not become his followers to live in luxury. He was born in 1806, of peasant parents in the Kesrawan. At the age of 11 he entered the Ecclesiastical School of Rumiyyeh, and at 14 entered 'Ain Warka. It is said that in one of these schools he did the work of a servant. At 18 he went to Rome and studied at the Propaganda. He was ordained Priest in 1830. Then he became Secretary of the Patriarch Yusif Habeish, in whose service he continued

¹ "Leb. Council," Part III, chap. 6

till 1854, when the Patriarch died. In 1840 he had been created titular Bishop of Tarsus, acting as the Patriarch's representative. Rival candidates for the Patriarchate were supported by two powerful parties; finally a compromise was effected in the choice of Boulas Mes'ad, whose health was so poor that it was not thought he could live long. However, he outlived the rival factions, his death occurring in April, 1890. During all these years he never left the Lebanon, even to visit Beirût, save in 1867 when he was summoned by the Pope to attend a canonization at Rome. He then visited Paris and Constantinople, receiving from Napoleon III the decoration of the Legion of Honour, and from the Sultan the First Order of the Medjidie. This exclusiveness in never leaving his Patriarchate is characteristic of the ancient Maronite independence. The Patriarch was always regarded as the head of the Maronite nation. "The Patriarch is our Sultan," was the reply given to the local authorities in about the year 1850 by the inhabitants of Ehden, when the Turkish Government demanded indemnity for the American Missionaries who had come to that place to spend the summer, and who were instantly driven out, not being permitted to spend the night.

Personally the late Patriarch was gentle and agreeable. He had a refined, delicate face, with soft white hair and a silky beard. He was credited with a knowledge of history. Certainly he was well posted in the annals of the Lebanon, and prided himself upon keeping in memory the intricacies of inter-marriages, and the dates when the various families migrated to various villages. He wrote a book called the "Dur-el-Munzûm," treating of several disputed points in Maronite history. He had the love of his people. At his funeral I witnessed a large gathering of clergy, notables, and peasants. At the end of the reception room the Bishops were ranged on a divan to receive the numerous guests. The French Consul, the Pope's Legate, and the Secretary of the Lebanon Governor had seats of honour. There were also present delegates from the Jesuit Mission, various Catholic Prelates, Lebanon nobles, &c., &c. The court and corridors were densely crowded. Soldiers tried to preserve order at the door of the church. The funeral services were, of course, according to the Maronite rite, but, before these, prayers were chanted in the church by the Greek Catholics and the Armenian Catholics. The dead Patriarch, dressed in full canonicals, covered with his Orders, grasping in one hand a large cross and in the other the staff, was seated in an arm-chair in an opening of the Altar rails. His face was wonderfully natural, and bore a sweet, restful expression. Behind him stood a priest on guard. Many advanced, knelt, and kissed the cross. The chancel was filled with Priests, and when the Special Burial Service for a Patriarch began the chief guests were admitted behind the rails. A simple, eloquent address was made by one of the Bishops. At the close of the service the Patriarch's outer garments were changed, but the lace sleeves sent from Rome were put on him again. Then his chair was borne aloft and carried around the church by several men. The sight was somewhat shocking, as the mitre of the dead Patriarch shook and

almost fell over. Outside the church the body was seated upright in a sort of open Sedan-chair with curtains, and carried by men to a large oak where it was put down, while several laymen made speeches. Then the Bishops and chief guests returned to the Convent for dinner, at which there were speeches, one at least of which made reference to the coming Patriarch, while the Sedan-chair was borne 2,000 feet or more up the mountain to Ashqut, the Patriarch's birthplace. Many relations followed with the peasants of the district. As the procession approached a village the men of the place would come out and bear the Sedan-chair to the next. The interment was in a vault of the church at Ashqut, where, according to rule, the body of the Patriarch was seated in a chair.

Ten days after the death of the Maronite Patriarch the Bishops proceed to the election of his successor.¹ No one is eligible who is under forty, and it is recommended that the candidate be a Bishop, though a simple Priest may be chosen. Six Bishops may form a quorum. The doors of the church where the election takes place are guarded from the outside by a Priest, the Canons says, but a Sheikh of the House of Khazin tells me that this is one of their hereditary privileges. Under seal of secrecy two Priests are admitted as secretaries, two Bishops are chosen to count the votes, and the Bishop who has been longest in office presides. He first writes his choice upon a piece of paper, seals it, and drops it into a cup upon the Altar. When all have thus voted the two Bishops count the votes; if they do not correspond with the number of voters they are thrown, unopened, into a brazier of coals near the door and a new vote is taken. If the number is correct the papers are opened, and the names of those voted for are read aloud and taken down by the secretaries, but not the names of the voters. A two-thirds vote is necessary for choice. Election by acclamation is legal only where it is absolutely unanimous. When any candidate has the sufficient number of votes his election is proclaimed by the President, who with the two Bishops and the two secretaries then approaches him, bending the knee and saying: "The Holy Spirit calls thee to be Patriarch of Great Antioch, and over the whole extent of the Apostolic Seat." All present bow the knee, and the Patriarch-elect answers: "I accept and obey." He is then robed and conducted to the throne at the right of the Altar, where all the Bishops proceed and kiss his hand. The decree of election being signed, the doors are thrown open, and the Patriarch-elect stands near the Altar rails with his Bishops while Psalm xix. is chanted. He then pronounces a general absolution. The next Sunday or Feast Day is appointed for the consecration, after which he writes letters to the Pope, professing devotion to the Catholic Faith and obedience to its head, and praying for a confirmation of his election and consecration. One of his Bishops is sent as special envoy to Rome, who brings back the robe of office.

¹ "Leb. Council," Part III, chap. 6, sect. 7.

The Patriarch is assisted in his duties by two or three titular Bishops, who act as secretaries. Any case of dispute between the Patriarch and Bishops must be decided in Rome, as he is responsible to no one but the Supreme Pontiff. Every ten years he is to send an especially authorised agent to Rome to report on the temporal and spiritual condition of the Patriarchate. Every Maronite Patriarch adds to his own name that of St. Peter, the founder of the church of Antioch.

The Book of the Lebanon Council traces the history of the Patriarchate of Antioch, and of its former Patriarchs, Primates, Metropolitans, and Bishops. It refers to the division of the Patriarchate before the 8th century among the Melchites, Maronites, Armenians, Jacobites, and Nestorians; it deplors the devastation of its territory by the infidels, and states that in consequence of its reduced condition the Patriarch now exercises not only the Patriarchal function but those of a Primate and Metropolitan as well. The book constantly speaks of Metropolitans and Bishops, but it states that the difference between them now is only one of precedence and title. The Council reduced the number of Bishops from sixteen to eight, which are: *Aleppo*; *Beirût*, including part of the Metn district of the Lebanon; *Baalbec*, including part of the Kesronan; *Damascus*, including the rest of the Kesrawan; *Cyprus*, including part of the Metn; *Tyre and Sidon*, including the Southern Lebanon; *Tripoli*, with the adjacent Lebanon district; *Jebail*, including the Bshereh region. As said before, the Patriarch is always *ex officio* the Bishop of Jebail.

The name of the Sees do not always coincide with the actual seats. There are four *in partibus* Bishops, three of whom attend on the Patriarch; the fourth is at the head of the Convent of Missioners. By title they are assigned to 'Arka, Acre, Hama, and Nazareth. Among these twelve Bishops there are several scholars, trained in the Propaganda, but it is doubtful whether they have attained to the broadest culture. Bishop Dibs, of Beirût, has built up a large college, where French and Arabic are taught. The late Bishop of Cyprus, drawing upon liberal European resources, established a boarding-school in the Lebanon. Here he entertained his guests in the handsomest manner. The late Bishop Na'mtallah, of the noble house of Dah-deh, was a great linguist; he told me that he had studied 15 languages, including Chinese. He was particular that his lower clergy should be men of learning, and I am told that he ordained a surprisingly small number of Priests.

Among the Episcopal functions are the following: the power of ordaining Priests and Deacons; of administering the Sacrament of the Chrism; of consecrating the holy oil; of dedicating churches and altars; of binding and loosing; of governing the clergy and people. The Episcopal revenues vary; they include a portion of the titles and the incomes from properties belonging to the diocese. A Bishop visiting the villages of his See often receives from the chief men the price of Masses, the amount in each case depending upon the liberality of the giver. The Bishops are strictly forbidden to enrich their families from the Episcopal

revenues. However, a Bishop's influence is so great that his relations are at least indirectly benefited by his position.

The Patriarch has the sole authority in the election and consecration of Bishops, but he is to have the advice and consent of the Bishops. The ancient Eastern custom of consulting the wishes of the people is kept up, and to this end agents are sent to all the Priests and chief men of the diocese. According to the Canons the nomination may be either by the Patriarch or by the people. The candidate should be of good character, born in wedlock, learned, and qualified for the duties of the office; he must have been six months in Priests' orders, and should not be less than thirty years of age. The Patriarch usually consecrates the Bishop-elect, but upon necessity he may delegate the duty to three other Bishops. A Bishop must reside in his own diocese, and may not perform his Episcopal functions in the See of another without his permission. He may exercise discipline upon his people and clergy; but after the accused has received his sentence in the Episcopal Court he may appeal to the Patriarch. Great gentleness and charity are enjoined upon the Bishops in the exercise of their judicial functions.

The Maronite Canons recognise several grades of Priests below the Bishop. The Chorepiscopus (Arabic, *أستقف* *أخوري*) is described as a

Priest appointed over districts in which he has the general charge of clergy and people. He may wear the mitre and carry two crosses, and he may ordain readers, exorcists, &c. The Archpresbyter exercises the same functions in a city, taking precedence of the Chorepiscopus. Each Bishop may have one *Periodonta* (Arabic: *بردوت*), who is to tour among the villages of the diocese examining the general condition of churches and monasteries. He has no fixed seat. He may not wear the mitre, and can carry but one cross. With the Chorepiscopus he shares the power of consecrating baptisteries and of dedicating altars.

So much for the Canons. Of these grades of the Priestly office I can find but little trace. Even the names are unknown to some of the people. In each district the Bishop has an agent, appointed for a time for facilitating business, but with no such privileges as the Chorepiscopus. In Alexandria, and I believe in other places at a distance from an Episcopal Seat, the local head of the Maronites is called *Berdote*, but he is not the itinerant *Periodonta* of the Canons. On great occasions he may wear the mitre and carry the staff. He is also permitted to confirm. He is responsible to the Patriarch directly. Owing to difficulties in the last Episcopal election in Aleppo, a Priest with the title of *Berdote* is discharging a Bishop's functions to-day. I have been told that the title was once conferred as a mark of honour upon a Priest of Tripoli.

The Maronite priests may be classed under two different heads—the parish priests and the priests who are also monks. There is also a large body of priests without charge, who serve as teachers in the colleges, or as secretaries. The parish priest does not differ much from his flock save

in dress and in the respect due to his office. He may not marry after ordination, but a married man may be ordained, though he cannot take a second wife.¹ He wears a long cassock, usually black, with a girdle, and, when out of doors, an ample black cloak. His head-dress is a round, stiff, quilted turban, wound about with dark blue cloth. This old Syrian head-dress is going out of fashion as it is heavy, and a cylindrical black cap, or even a red fez with black turban, is often seen instead. The priest is usually a man of some means; he owns a house, he has vineyards and fields to care for, and sometimes he engages in temporary business, though this is not approved by his flock. The people usually prefer a priest from their own village. In the town of Hammana, where I write, the families are divided into three groups, each of which has a church and one or more priests from their own number. Thus the priest has a certain family dignity, and the backing of his relatives. The Maronite priests are better educated than any others in Syria, perhaps with the exception of the Greek Catholics. Their morals are said to be higher than the average morals of the people. In former times the authority of the village priest was great, and he could often control the conduct of his parishioners; but the people are rapidly growing independent of such control, though it is still strong in some regions. Terror of being placed under the ban of the Church, formerly so strong, has greatly decreased. Force of character and personal goodness make themselves felt, now as ever. The village priest here assures me that there is a growing tendency to ordain unmarried men, and to appoint strangers over the parishes, whose minds, unburdened with temporal affairs, may be free to attend to the spiritual needs of the people. In this we may trace the growing influence of Rome and the Jesuits.

Each priest is to say Mass once a day, and once only. The ordinary price of a Mass is 3 piastres. The priest may get the price of his Masses from the people, from his Bishop, or from any source. When a Mass or set of Masses are said he gives a receipt. The price of hundreds of Masses are sent yearly from Europe, and are distributed among the priests, giving rise to a good deal of business. For example, a priest wishing to buy a book from the Jesuits, may agree to say so many Masses for it. In one case a number of Masses, paid for in Europe at 5 piastres a Mass, were to be said by the priest for the ordinary price of 3 piastres, the difference going to the village school-teacher. A man who wishes to send his son to the Bishop's school may agree to furnish the price of a certain number of Masses to different priests, from whom he takes a receipt when the Masses are said. This receipt he sends to the school.

The priest has no regular salary, but his people make him yearly contributions of money, wood, grain, or produce. The fees for marriages, baptisms, funerals, churching of women, and the purification of their houses after confinement mount up to a fair sum in the course of the year. Some small villages have no regular priest, but are supplied from a neighbouring convent.

¹ Marriage used often immediately to precede ordination.

The churches are of hewn stone, and are usually more solidly built than the houses of the villages. They are simple, oblong structures, with flat roofs, lighted by small windows high up, and with a door in the north, and sometimes in the south, for the men, and one on the west for the women. The only pretence towards architectural effect is found in the belfries; the material used is white or yellow stone; the open work is sometimes graceful, with slight pillars and a dome and cross. In one case the dome has four chalices at four corners. Over the principal entrance may be found an inscription, with date and rude carvings of chalices and crosses. Some of the more modern villages have tiled roofs and large windows. A fine Cathedral church is building now in Beirût.

The interiors are usually vaulted and whitewashed. A latticed screen divides the church about two-thirds the way down into the parts for men and women. The latter have also sometimes a gallery. High pulpits are found, but sometimes with the stair missing, which may be taken as a commentary upon the use put to them. The great wooden or stone screen peculiar to the Eastern churches, shutting off the chancel, is not found among the Maronites. In its place are the ordinary altar rails. There are usually three altars, with pictures above them, the picture of the patron Saint hanging over the high altar. The pictures are mostly modern, in the Italian style and usually in very poor art. The stations of the Cross are, I believe, a recent innovation. The rich, dark colouring which characterises the crudely drawn Byzantine pictures is missing. The service books are to be found in two desks outside the altar rails. The altars have a rich, if somewhat tawdry, decoration. During hours of service the people preserve silence and a reverent demeanour, the men removing their caps at certain times.

In some churches near the door may be observed a framed sheet with a small bag hanging underneath. On one such sheet I found a list of eighty-four classes of the dead to be prayed for: spiritual fathers; secular teachers; those who in this life adorned themselves with fine clothing; former priests of the village; those who were jealous; those who did not fulfil their oaths; those who held Saint Joseph in honour, etc. In the bag were eighty-four numbered lots; anyone leaving the church may draw a lot, and say a *pater* or a *salve* in behalf of the corresponding class of persons in the list.

If the parish is large and there is but one church, several priests of equal authority may officiate in the same church, with a division of the parish work. In such cases they say Mass, one after the other. In visiting the Maronite villages one notices the interest and pride taken in the churches by the laymen, who are constant worshippers not only on Sunday and Feast days, but often on a week day, at the morning Mass or at vespers. In this respect districts differ, but I was particularly struck with it at B'sherreh. In Hammana there are two offshoots from the parent church. The last church was built recently, and gives a good illustration of the zeal of the people.

Permission being obtained from the Bishop, who gave some assistance, the two or three families who were departing taxed themselves in money and work for the new enterprise. The men and boys brought up stones from the quarry, and men, women, and children carried down the tiles for the roof from a station on the Damascus carriage road. Certain contributions were made by the other villages, and there was a division of the church furnishings between the parent church and the new one. Each church has its lay *wakeel* or steward, appointed by the Bishop, with whom he is to make a yearly account of the church lands, income, and expenditure.

The oldest churches which I have seen are those in Bsherreh and Ehdén. In Ghosta, a former centre of the Khazins, there are three fairly old churches, the most ancient dating back 300 years. Mar Yusif, a later construction, occupies a commanding position on a steep hillside, and is visible far out at sea. We read on the walls inside a queer Latin inscription, which connects this high-perched Lebanon church with a brilliant civilisation—"Ex-Ludovigi XV. Galliarum Regis Munificentia Edifigium hoc erectum est, 1769." On a side altar there is a glass case containing a minute skull, small bones, and a receptacle holding clotted blood, relics of Mar Monsur or Ignatius, brought from Rome by the Patriarch Yusif Istafan. He and two Bishops have their tombs in vaults in the thick walls, where they were placed in a sitting posture.

Almost every Maronite village has its primary school, in which Arabic reading and writing and a little Syriac are taught. But few are supported by the villagers themselves. Protestant schools have had a stimulating effect upon Roman Catholic orders. The Jesuits have many free schools throughout the Lebanon, and have erected buildings. In the purely Maronite districts there are very few Protestant schools. In these village schools are to be found boys up to the age of 12 or 13, after which they must leave school for work. We have spoken of the colleges of Bishop Dibs, and of the Bishop of Cyprus in the Lebanon, but these are planned upon foreign models and cannot be called characteristically Maronite. In these schools, with those of the Jesuits at Beirût and the Lazarists at 'Antura, several hundreds of Maronite youths are receiving a higher education. At the Jesuits' and at the College of Dibs there are theological departments.

A purely Maronite institution is 'Ain Warka, the chief theological college, the others being at Rumiyyeh, Reifûn, and Mar 'Abda. It is most picturesquely and appropriately situated in an amphitheatre of steep hills, rounding high in the rear and making a great V-shaped opening—pines on the one incline, oaks on the other, filled by the blue of the sea, which though very near is hundreds of feet below. On one side a curious perpendicular structure of rock crops out, on which obvious foundation houses are perched one above the other, cottages of the peasant-partners of the school. The sheer hillsides are terraced, and planted with mulberries. In the bosom of the great recess stands a small group of gigantic pines—

graceful, stately. Above the terraces the white limestone of the mountain walls are embossed with small oaks. On one side of the amphitheatre stands the school, an aggregation of solid, square buildings, well grouped. The doorway of the church is surrounded by rich carving in geometrical figures. The building was formerly a nunnery, but was changed into a school in 1788 by a Bishop of the House of Istafan. The interior of the church is handsome, with good carving in the three arches on the east wall. We were shown a rich collection of robes, &c. The library is not large. A long staircase ascends to the arcaded quadrangle occupied by the school. At one end is the school-room, where we found twenty-three boys, from the age of 8 to 13, seated at desks. They were dressed in black robes (the "ghumbaz"), folding over in front and fastened by a scarlet girdle, with a red fez and thin black turban. Each boy has a separate room, furnished with a little iron bedstead. When the class begins to study philosophy each lad studies in his own room, a chair and table being added. They play in the quadrangle, but twice a week go for a walk, and once a month for an excursion. Cooked food is served every day, but they are given meat only twice a week. The President is from the House of Istafan. The course lasts for ten or twelve years, and only one class is instructed at a time. The class, that entered this last year, for the next three years will study Syriac; for the three years following, Arabic; then during the remainder of their time, I believe, Latin, philosophy, and theology. When they are graduated, and not till then, a new class will be taken. It is curious to find French excluded from the school, and Italian taught in its place. The Preceptor, a graduate of the school, told me that the reason for this lies in the close connection of the school with Rome. The school is endowed (though it was recently closed for some time that the funds might accumulate), and the Patriarch may send free to each class four boys; each Bishop may appoint two, and the House of Istafan two. For other lads the fee is 1,500 piastres a year. To my notice of 'Ain Warka I am pleased to add that I have been twice entertained at the school with cordial hospitality.

It will be seen that the number of thoroughly trained priests must be small relatively to the number of parishes, as the theological schools take on a class only once in so many years. Bishops differ in the care exercised in choosing candidates for consecration. In some cases a man may be made a priest after a few months' notice. Preaching by the parish priest is rare.

In a hollow of the hills, near to 'Ain Warka, nestles the Convent of Missioners, called Deir-el-Krêm, with a Bishop at its head. At various times, but especially during Lent, these priests go from village to village, by twos, making a visitation of eight days, beginning with a Sunday. They hold three services daily, with preaching on various subjects. An American Missionary tells me that he attended several of these services; he found the discourses to be mainly on practical themes, and of an excellent spirit. The people attend in large numbers. Many who have not confessed for years confess to these Priests, who are said to be armed

with especial absolving power from the Pope. Silence is said to be enjoined on the people during the week. I saw two or three Missioners at their services in 'Akura. As a special mark, they have a small red cross on the top of the cap.

III.

THE MONASTERIES.

Among the chief features of a Lebanon landscape, from almost any point of view, are the monasteries. Not only are these very numerous, but they almost invariably have been placed in some bold and striking position. They dominate the landscape. Perched upon a lofty ridge, crowning some conical hill or jutting out from the steep mountain-side, upon a huge rock foundation—their physical prominence is typical of their social and religious importance in the Lebanon. They are thickest in the region about the Dog River, where we find conventual establishments of the Maronites, Greek Catholics, Syriac Catholics, and Armenian Catholics. The Missionary College of Bzummar, belonging to the latter has for its head a most intelligent man, who, regretting the absence of forests in his Lebanon, due to the ravages of charcoal burners and of goats, is carefully cultivating a noble oak grove among the fantastic rocks where his convent stands.

The three congregations of Maronite monks all belong to the Order of St. Antony, and were originally one. The first division had its origin in the year 1700, when a certain Bishop Gabriel of Belluni sent a number of Priests from the Convent of the Virgin of Tamish to inhabit the Convent of Mar Isha'ya (Isaiah) which he had built on the summit of a hill in Brummana about three hours from Beirût, overlooking the sea, which is 2,500 feet almost directly below it. Soon after Patriarchal permission was given these monks to establish a new order, or sub-order of the monks of St. Antony, under the name of the monks of St. Isha'ya. Later their special book of rules was confirmed at Rome by Pope Clement XII. The Order has now twenty establishments. The remaining monks continued under the name of the monks of Mount Lebanon, but were divided again into two Orders—the Aleppine and the Lebanese. I have not found the exact date of this division, but it was later than 1736, as the Council does not mention the Aleppines. There is a legend, which I give for what it may be worth, that about 150 years ago there arose jealousy at Deir Tamish between the city monks from Aleppo, who were well-fed and lazy, and the Lebanon monks, who complained that after a hard day's work in the fields they were not given enough to eat. One day a priest of the Lebanon party returned to the convent to find his pet lamb killed and eaten by the monks from Aleppo. Such a disturbance followed that the Patriarch made a division of monks and convents that has lasted to this day. The two divisions go by the names of

Halabiyeh and Libnaniyeh, or Beladiyeh, or the monks of Qozhayya, from their chief convent.

A Maronite friend has furnished me with a list of 120 names, which he claims to contain all the Maronite conventual establishments. Fifty of these belong to the Beladiyeh or Libnaniyeh. My friend says that ten years ago the Abbot-General of this Order told him that its monks numbered 1,500; I am inclined to regard this as an over estimate, for while perhaps a dozen convents contain from 30 to 100 monks each, many have much smaller numbers, while several on the list are mere houses where a single priest or monk represents the Order, as in Beirât or Baalbec; or as in the miserable village of Mruj, too poor to support a parish priest, where a monk-priest lives in a room belonging to a neighbouring convent, and ministers to the people. In Hammana there is a house with a chapel, called a school, where a priest and monk look after some lands belonging to the Order. The Order has two nunneries.

The Halabiyeh have 14 establishments, and the monks of Isha'ya, 20. Each of these three Orders has its Abbot-General and Directors, and holds a triennial Council, which in the case of the Beladiyeh, is opened and closed by the Pope's Legate, and in the other cases by the Patriarch. The 36 establishments on the list do not belong to the three Orders (their monks, however, come from the Orders), but are under the direct control of the Patriarch or Bishops. They include the episcopal seats, various schools, and 15 nunneries. Many were built by the noble house of Khazin and other families, who claim certain privileges, as the appointing of priests or directors from among themselves, and care for their poor. The list also includes the two convents of the 'Abbad or servants who wear a peculiar conical cap, and, it is said, go as servants to the nunneries.

The convents have large properties. From one-seventh to one-sixth of the land in the Lebanon belongs to the monasteries of the various churches, and more than four-fifths of this property is Maronite. The revenues are largely spent in building, and in buying more land. The yearly revenue of Deir-el-Na'meh, near the mouth of the Damin, is said to be between £1,600 and £2,000. The heads of convents are strictly forbidden to enrich their relatives, but they are often accused of it by the people, who entertain a low opinion of the general morality of the monks, an opinion which an observer would concur with, judging from their general appearance, though gentle, pious individuals may be found among them. The nuns, on the contrary, bear an excellent reputation for virtue. The conventual lands are worked by peasant partners, who share in the profits, and in some cases work for wages. Convents under the patronage of a Saint with a reputation for effecting miraculous cures have an especial source of revenue in the gifts of grateful visitors.

The most interesting monasteries are to be found in or near the gorge of the Qadisha, or Sacred River. Around the plateau of the cedars the mountains sweep in a splendid amphitheatre; the plateau comes

abruptly to an end in a precipice, in the face of which a cavern sends forth a stream, falling over in a series of cascades, and soon entering the deep canyon which, in the course of ages, itself has formed. In some parts this canyon is 1,600 feet deep, but one can call across it to a friend on the other side. At the bottom foams the Qadisha, and a rich vegetation climbs the terraces to the foot of the massive limestone cliffs which form the walls of the valley. In the early Christian ages Anchorites inhabited the caves in the Sacred Valley, many of which can be traced to-day. It may be supposed that later these hermits formed communities, giving rise to the monasteries which we still find in this wild gorge. This region contains the large Maronite towns of Ehden, Hasrûn, Bsherreh, Hadeth, &c., &c.

Near the head of the valley, where it is somewhat more open than further down, hiding itself under the cliffs, indeed built partly in a cavern, is the ancient convent of Mar Elisha'. On entering and ascending some dark, winding stone steps we found it difficult to distinguish between the natural and artificial, between hewn stone and the wall of the mountain. We were entertained hospitably by the Abbot in a broad window leading off the corridor. One monk used a quaint euphemism in the phrase, "I pray in the food," by which he meant to tell us he was cook. Mar Elisha' has 25 monks. We were surprised to hear that until within 50 years, some Franciscans lived in the same convent. These have since built a convent for themselves further up the mountain. Near Shweir there is a double convent of Mar Elias, which from a distance appears one, where the Maronites and Greeks, who regard each other as heretics, live side by side in harmony. Two parish churches, also Greek and Maronite respectively, with a wall in common, occupy the same site in the village of Deir el Harf in the Metn.

At Mar Elisha' the cells are small and dark, the corridors low, and the whole building has an ancient and musty odour; but the monks have recently built a fine new convent on the edge of the opposite cliff, for a more comfortable winter residence.

The convent at Bdîman, a few miles further down along the cliff, has been of recent years occupied by the Patriarchs who find that Qannubîn is an inconvenient place, even for spending the summer. From Bdîman to the bottom of the Qadisha valley a mule path zig-zags down a side gorge. The road is very steep, with sharp turnings, which make anyone not possessing the strongest nerves to shudder, but with the exception of a few places it is not stony. We rode to the bottom, crossed a narrow bridge over the torrent, foaming below over rounded boulders, and rode up the opposite valley-wall till we reached the gardens of the convent 300 feet above the stream. The simple stone buildings, placed at different angles to each other, which form the convent of Qannubîn, crouch under the limestone cliffs. The chapel, which is built into a cave, opens on to an irregular court-yard surrounded by rooms, some quite modern, some of great antiquity. Tradition says that the convent was built by the Emperor Theodosius in the 4th century. A

small room, at present unused, is pointed out as the ancient chapel. The present chapel is a vaulted room, once covered with frescoes. The priest told me with some pride that as it was soiled he had white-washed it over, except above the altar. There the fresco represents a company of kneeling Patriarchs, with a number of violin-bearing cherubs over their heads. This is the only fresco I have observed in a Maronite Church. The Jacobite Church at Sudud has a vaulted roof elaborately frescoed. We visited the granary and the wine-cellar, where we found some fine old jars, 3 or 4 feet high. The priest and a lay brother are the only inhabitants. The steep hillsides around and below the convent are steeply terraced and richly planted with vines, fig trees, walnuts, oaks, and olives. The convent is dedicated to the Virgin. It was here that As'ad Shidiaq, the Protestant martyr, met his death.

Near the convent is the chapel of St. Marina, who is said to work cures. I give her tradition as obtained from various people.¹ Marina was a maid who desired to lead a holy life, and who, in disguise of a youth, presented herself at Qannubin as a novice. In due time she became a monk under the name of Marinus. While she was conducting business in a village, a girl fell in love with the supposed monk and made proposals which were rejected. Later this girl bore a child by some lover, and bringing it to Qannubin, declared that the monk Marinus was its father. When thus charged, Marinus meekly bowed the head and said: "Sar," which means, "What is done, is done." As a consequence, he (or she) was turned out of the convent. The girl-monk took refuge in a neighbouring cavern, where she gave suck to the boy. Some months or years after the convent bell was heard to toll. As no one was ringing it, the monks were alarmed and searched for the cause of this miracle. In the cave they found the dead body of the expelled monk, with the child at the breast. In the hand was a paper which read, "Let an old man undress me." Thus her innocence was established, her true sex revealed, and she became a Saint. It is added that the boy became a monk, and later was made Superior of Qannubin.

A few miles below Qannubin a smaller side-gorge enters the Qadisha Valley. The best approach is from Ehdn, which lies on the hills above. The rough and tortuous path in one place passes between two crags, joined above by an arch surmounted by a cross. Above the road are awful, jagged precipices of limestone, and the opposite side of the gorge is of hardly less terrifying effect. Under the eternal frown of those mountain walls stands the famous Convent of Qozhayya. The present monastery was built in 1732, and is the richest, I believe, in the Lebanon, containing 100 monks. Churchill describes the church as being in a subterraneous cave, but the present church is large and airy, with an elaborately carved façade. The reception room is ample.

The convent contains a printing press, whence Syriac and Arabic

¹ I have found in the Sinksar the same traditions with variations. Qannubin is not mentioned.

books have been issued. But the interest of the place centres in a cave which pierces far into the mountain above. The opening is small, and guarded by a stout door. Within, the cave widens and slopes upwards and inwards. We could look in for perhaps 50 yards and then all was lost in darkness. The legend runs that St. Antony once came from Egypt to visit the hermits of this region and slept in the cave. The full name of the convent is Mar Antonius Qozhayya, which is erroneously derived from *Kanz el hayyat* (كنز الحياة), treasure of life.

To this convent and cave are brought the insane that St. Antony may drive out the evil spirit. Moslems, Druzes, and members of the various Christian sects visit the place, but especially in the spring "when the blood runs full," so a priest of the place told me. The convent has a wide-reaching fame, which adds much to its revenues.

The priest told me that sometimes the patients are cured by simply passing under the arch and cross, mentioned above; others, when they enter the conventual precincts; and still others in the church, where a priest exorcises the evil spirit by adjuring him in the name of God and beating the patients on the head, sometimes with a shoe. If the evil spirit will not come out of the man he is taken into the cave, and an iron collar is fastened around his neck, and if violent he is further chained. Several madmen may be chained in the cave at the same time. The priest in charge visits the cave occasionally, giving the patients to drink of the holy water which drops from the roof, but feeding them very little. The cure is effected when the patient is found without the iron collar; its removal is said to be the work of St. Antony, whose appearance is sometimes described by the patients.

The crazed wretches may remain in the horrible place anywhere from one day to two weeks. If no cure is effected it is concluded that the man has no devil to be exorcised, but has a disease of the brain, for which the place professes no cure. The priest told a ghastly story of two desperate madmen who with great difficulty were chained in the cave; the door was locked upon them; but when next day the cave was opened, the chains were lying on the ground and no trace was found of the maniacs, who have not been heard of to this day. It would be interesting to pass some time at Qozhayya and to follow up the people, in whose mental condition the place, with its circumstances, undoubtedly effects some change.

While on this subject I may mention that belief in diabolical possession is strong, and the exorcist is a recognised functionary in the Maronite Church. Not alone in Qozhayya, but in the village churches, devils are said to be cast out. Many stories are told, with ludicrous remarks, of the evil spirit, who may mock the priest, saying, "Get out of my sight, you and your cross;" or may call out to the crowd, proposing to enter into this one or that one, who promptly turns and runs. In one case it is said that the priest beat a girl on the head with his shoe for two hours before a very impudent spirit came out of her,

but at length the picture of St. Antony floated of itself from the altar and touched her lips, whereupon the devil left her, and she asked for food, which she had not touched for two weeks.

Bkerke, the winter residence of the Patriarch in the Kesrawan, has a curious history. Churchill¹ quotes Volney's story of Hindiyi, which is as romantic as it is horrible. According to Volney, about the middle of the 18th century, a Maronite girl acquired the reputation of a hermit and of a worker of miracles. She had many followers, from whom she collected money enough to build the double convent of Bkerke for monks and nuns, which was for a time under the general direction of the Patriarch. For 20 years this Hindiyi was the real director of the two establishments, which seemed very prosperous, except that a large number of deaths occurred. Finally, a traveller happening to sleep on the ground outside the convent had his suspicions aroused by a secret burial at midnight, three monks and two men bearing a long white bundle to a piece of ground full of stones and rubbish. He reported the matter to a man in Beirût who had two daughters in the convent, to which he at once repaired and asked to see his children. When his request was refused he brought the affair before the Emir Yusif Shehaab, at the seat of Government. The convent and grounds were searched; the eldest daughter was found almost dead within, while the body of the younger had been buried in the rubbish. Hindiyi was seized, but in her turn prosecuted the Patriarch. In 1766 the affair was referred to the Propaganda at Rome, and "infamous scenes of debauchery and horrid cruelties were discovered." It was proved that Hindiyi had procured the death of nuns to get hold of their property. This extraordinary woman consecrated the host and pretended to fall into heavenly ecstasies. So much for Volney's account. The people tell many legends of her. Her name is said to arise from her nocturnal visits to India, where she was borne by spirits. She confined the nuns in horrible dungeons. She used to be carried up in the air by devils. When the Bishop wished to prove her wickedness he sent a priest to say Mass for her, who purposely gave her a piece of unconsecrated wafer. Hindiyi, after partaking of it, declared that never before had she been so filled with holy influences, that this was the most heavenly morsel—which was taken as proof positive that she was an impostor. She was shut up in various convents, but Volney says that she always retained a party in her favour, and was believed in by some to his day. One legend has it that she died repentant.

The more modern monasteries are solid structures, built in quadrangles, with covered corridors, ample cells, lofty chapels, and red-tiled roofs. Visitors are received with hospitality.

The monastic rules differ but little in the three orders. In a letter dated in 1732, Clement XII, confirming the regulations and laws of the Lebanon monks, refers to the ancient institution of Oriental monks

¹ "Mt. Lebanon," Vol. I, pages 78-85.

founded by St. Antony, and spread in Egypt, Syria, and all the East by his disciples. The gathering of some of the Lebanon monasteries into a congregation with an Abbot-General had its origin in Elisha'. From other sources I have heard that the scholar Germanus Farhat, with two other brothers, when a monk in his monastery, organised the ancient rules into a constitution. The Pope says that these rules have been sacredly preserved in the monasteries of the Orient, and have never been disapproved by Rome, as nothing can be found in them contrary to piety and the Orthodox faith, but that to avoid calumny it is better that they should have a confirmation from Rome. This was obtained by the Abbot-General, who visited the city for the purpose.

The monks of Mar Isha'ya also received Papal confirmation of their rules, which were later printed at Rome. Of this book I propose to give a brief analysis. It must be said that it contains the ideal of the monastic life; how far the real daily life falls short of the ideal can be known only to one who has lived long in a convent. Many particulars are mentioned by the people in which the monks disregard their rules. In many cases the monks are recruited from the lazy and from those who have some prudent reason for seeking the seclusion of a monastery, though some novices enter from religious motives. The Superiors are much taken up with directing the worldly affairs of their convents, and are often lax. With this *caveat* I give the rules, some of which will be found to contain much excellence.

First, the vows of obedience, chastity, and poverty are considered. A monk must hold his Superior in the place of Jesus Christ, and must obey him in everything except in sin. He must love him in his heart and show his love by his acts. He must do nothing without his permission, nor criticise his administration. He must tell him everything he thinks or does. He must not teach, preach, comment, send or receive letters, accept a trust, lend or borrow, give or ask alms without his Superior's permission.

A monk is expected to subdue his senses in every way. No woman may enter the monastery.

He must hold no personal property or own anything. The property of his relatives should be to him as the property of strangers. (This rule has apparently been relaxed by this congregation. I am told that a monk of St. Isha'ya may now manage a small property of his own with permission of the Abbot, provided that he does not enrich his relations, and that at his death everything goes to the convent.)

The monk must not ask for promotion but should seek the advancement of others. He is urged to show especial respect to those who do not respect him, to avoid judging others, as well as any word which may give pain or arouse suspicion. He is to purify himself from ambition lest jealousy, the destroyer of love, enter his breast. He is not to give way to anger in the time of his trial, but must overcome by patience.

In dress the monks must use only dark colours. The robe is to be of wool, and near the left shoulder is to be embroidered in blue a scroll or

staff, the sign of the Order. The novices are to wear a hair-robe, and the monks a narrow girdle. In sleep no garment below the girdle is to be taken off. The bed is to be that of a poor man.

Each monk must occupy his cell alone, nor can he enter the cell of another without permission. All the cells are to be opened by one key. A monk may not travel alone, but must ask a companion of the Superior, whom he must inform of his route. When in another convent he is to be subject to its Superior. The monks are to eat but twice a day, and then in silence. No meat is to be taken except in case of sickness and by the Superior's permission. (Indulgence has, however, been granted the monks of St. Isha'ya to eat meat Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. The Beladiyeh also have a yearly Papal indulgence to eat meat. All now smoke and drink wine.)

Work is enjoined upon all. A monk may not vary his work without permission. Silence is always recommended, but is required between the second and third times of prayer, at table, and in church. Much silent prayer is recommended, but those who are wearied with much labour are excused. Oral prayer is necessary at the seven fixed times : 1. Evening prayer. 2. Sittar, or before bedtime. 3. Midnight. 4. Dawn. 5. Third hour of the day. 6. Sixth hour. 7. Ninth hour. On Wednesdays, Saturdays, and on the Feasts of the Virgin, the Litany of Mary must be said. Psalm li. is to be repeated five times on Wednesdays and Fridays, and on other days the Pater and the Salutation of Mary five times. Confession must be made at least once a week. The monks should always be ready for communion in deed and desire. They must commune on Sundays and on the Great Feasts, unless too many of these occur in one week, when, out of respect to the Sacrament, the Superior advises the monks to abstain. When in sickness a monk must thank God more than when in health. Mortification of the flesh is not to be carried too far.

The novitiate is to last one year (with the Beladiyeh it is two), and the novices must be tried in a convent where there are monks observing the rules.¹ Except by especial indulgence a novice may not be under 16 or over 45 years. He must be orthodox in the faith; if born among schismatics he cannot be accepted without the permission of the General. If he has committed gross sin he must show genuine repentance. He must be unmarried; or, if married, he must obtain permission of his wife, from whom he has been separated, before the priests. If a parish priest, he must give up his charge with Episcopal sanction. He must not be diseased, or crazy, or half-witted. Any Superior of a convent who receives a novice with any one of these disqualifications is to be degraded from office for three years.

For eight days after his acceptance the novice is left in a solitary

¹ The Legate has recently ordered that candidates for the Order of the Beladiyeh should all be tried in Deir el Na'meh. The number of Novices is said to have fallen off in consequence of this limitation.

place, dressed in the clothes in which he came, to think over the monastic life. He is then robed in the clothes of a novice. His own clothes are carefully preserved. After his vow he cannot claim these, but within an hour of it he may dispose of them as he wishes. Any gifts he makes to the convent must be presented openly before all the brothers. A vote relative to his acceptance is cast by the monks at the end of the sixth, ninth and twelfth month; the first two votes appear only to serve as indications, the last vote alone being determinative. If chosen, he is given three days to decide whether he will take the vows or not. If he decides to vow, he is taken to the church, with at least two monks, before the Superior, who is seated at the altar. The formula is as follows: "I, N., vow before God Omnipotent, and the Abbot-General, the most reverend M., and his successors after him, to observe obedience, chastity, and voluntary poverty till death, according to our institutions and rules. And I also vow on my soul that I will not desire, wish, or accept, either by my own means or by means of others, any rank, be it of our Order or of others, except by the command of the Superiors."

On entering the convent the novice is to make a confession covering his whole past life. He is to confess and commune once a week, and make an especial confession at least twice a year. If a priest, he may say Mass. In the presence of his Superior and teacher he must keep silence, nor can he speak to outsiders save in the presence of a monk. If the Superior or a priest pass by, he must rise with arms folded and stand, looking at the ground till he has passed. If rebuked he must kneel at once, nor offer any excuse till it be asked for. For half an hour a day a teacher is to explain the rules of the monks, the catechism, and the order of oral and silent prayer. If the novices cannot read, they must learn by rote. At table the novices take an inferior position.

The Superior is to choose with great care the monks who are to be consecrated as priests. Candidates for the priesthood are to be carefully instructed, even on days when there is no labour, for the teaching is sacred. Priests must keep all the rules. They are forbidden to serve the parishes or confess outsiders, unless invited by the Bishop. No monk may own or read a book without the Superior's permission.

In every convent there should be a schedule designating the hours for rising, sleeping, meals, and prayers, and assigning the manual labour. Strangers are not to eat with the monks in the refectory, or, if eating there, take their meals before or after the brothers. A monk going out of the convent must have a companion; he is to avoid the travelled ways, shops, and markets; he should not cultivate the friendship of Government officials.

No new convent can be founded without permission of the Patriarch and the Bishop of the diocese. Superiors may not sell endowed land, or run the convent into debt. If a monk receives an inheritance it goes entirely to the convent, but the use of part of it, such as books, may be reserved to him, provided it does not create jealousy. The endowed property of one convent cannot be transferred to another, but the General

Superior may use the revenues from gifts and the labour of monks for poorer convents. He may also for good cause transfer monks from one convent to another. (I am told that monks often follow a popular Superior from monastery to monastery.)

A long section is devoted to the obedience due to the Patriarch, who is to be regarded as a father and consulted on all essential points. The next speaks of the value of unburdening the conscience to the Superior, an act not identical with confession, but voluntary. The Superior may not act on knowledge thus acquired. He is to put searching questions, as—Is the monk content with his state? Does he keep the rule? Does he love to pray?

On the 17th of January occurs the Feast of St. Antony, when a solemn service is held, at which the monks renew their vows, the Superior first standing forth and repeating the formula in a loud voice. When a monk is very ill he must confess and commune. In the special room for the sick there is an altar, with a consecrated wafer always upon it. On the death of a monk, every priest in every convent is to say a Mass for his soul. When the Pope or Patriarch dies, a funeral service is held in every convent. Monks are to be buried in the convent cemetery in their clothes. (I am told that dead monks are carried to the church on a fleece, and then buried in a vault, but not put in a coffin.)

Five years after taking the vows a monk may, if he wish, lead the life of a hermit, temporarily or permanently, in a cell at some distance. If among the hermits there is no priest they must attend the convent church, which at any rate they must visit at Easter and Christmas, when they may dine at the general table. The hermits are served with food and water by an especially appointed monk. They cultivate plots of ground; the Superior is warned against letting monks take to the hermit's life through laziness. (Hermits are actually found in certain parts of the Lebanon. They spend much time in prayer, sleep on the ground, wear iron girdle, and hair cloth shirt. Their Arabic name signifies prisoners. Some are said to mortify the appetite by gazing longingly at luscious grapes, of which they deny themselves the taste.)

The Book of Rules treats at length of the duties of officials. At the General Council, convoked once in three years, is elected the Abbot-General. He has general charge of the Brotherhood; he may control the conduct of Superiors in their convents; the Superiors are to make accounts with him twice a year; he may not abolish a convent, but he may buy and sell property, if it is beneficial; he may temporarily close a convent; he may impose and remit punishments; if necessary, he may suspend temporarily certain rules; by consulting the Patriarch, he may for cause convoked the General Council before the time; at the Council he has the casting vote; he may accept and reject novices; he hears complaints against Superiors; he must appoint a deputy, who will take his place at death till a successor be elected; in the churches of the Order he may bear the mitre and staff. He must visit in person or by deputy all the convents once a year; keep a list of the monks, and

inform himself of their conduct. He dwells in the convent chosen for him by the General Council, but does not displace its Superior.

The Abbot-General is aided in his labours by four Directors, whom he is obliged to consult in some cases. There are also Local Superiors, having the convents of their districts in charge.

The Heads of convents are elected once in three years by the Abbot-General and the Council of Directors. The Head is to choose at least three monks as advisers, who aid but cannot control him. The slightest details of the convent should be his care, even to keeping the gate-key after bed-time. He must see that no fire-arms, musical instruments, or bad books are admitted. Twice a year he must visit the convent properties, and once a month make an account with the steward who has charge of the revenues. After his secular duties are over he may preach and confess. He is urged to do menial services occasionally.

The Steward should acquaint himself with all the property of the convent, lands, cattle, goats, &c. With the peasant *shrik* or partners he is to make monthly accounts. He is to receive the alms given to the convent. His temporal affairs do not excuse him from his spiritual duties. In his contact with the world he is urged to try to improve it. He must take care that the dependants are instructed to be good Christians.

The appointed preachers are to learn by heart some portion of the Bible every day. They should read Church History, the Lives of the Saints, and Commentaries. They should not preach without preparation, but write their sermons and commit them to memory. They are to be peace-makers.

The duties of the Confessor and Sacristan are described. The Librarian is to make a catalogue, if the books are numerous. He is to register the names of monks who draw books, with the date. No monk may draw a book without the Superior's permission, nor an outsider without permission of Council.

The Steward of the Sick is urged to attend to his duties with patience. He is to carry out the doctor's orders; to watch the stages of the disease; to read good works to the patients; to admit brothers to the sick room for spiritual converse, and to instruct the Sacristan to ring the bell when a monk dies. The funeral is to take place twenty-four hours later.

The Porter is to keep the convent gate constantly closed. He is not to open the door until he decide from the window whether it be necessary. If a monk is called for the Superior must be consulted. Entrance of outsiders to the convent, and especially to the brother's corridor, is not to be encouraged, unless they be men of position or distinguished clerics. Occasionally at night the Superior is to examine the doors, which are not to be opened then for any reason, except at his command. The Porter is to hand all letters to the Superior, who will decide whether it will be best to deliver them to those addressed. Women are to be briefly dismissed, or referred to the Sacristan, who may attend to their business outside the convent. (In twice visiting a convent of this

Order I have found the gate open, and was admitted freely to its different parts. These rules were framed when the Lebanon was the scene of constant wars among the feudal nobles.)

The Steward of the Clothes is to care for those as for the garments of the poor of Jesus Christ. He is to mark the clothes of each monk, attend to the washing, and every Saturday night put clean clothes in each cell.

The duties of the Steward of the Store-room and of the Cells are explained. The readers in the refectory are appointed to read to the monks while they eat. The Bible, Church History, the Lives of the Saints, and monastic works are to be used.

The General Council of the monks of Mar Isha'ya is held once in three years in October, on the anniversary of the first Council of the Order. The Superior of the convent where the Council is held is to make all things ready beforehand. No one is to enter this convent until three days before the opening of the Council, except such as come from beyond the seas. The money for the expenses is collected by the various Superiors from the clergy and people. Besides the Abbot-General and the Directors with their deputies (if ex-Directors) all Heads of districts and of convents must be called to the Council, and have votes. All those who have formerly filled the office of Abbot-General and of Director are to be present; each Superior of a convent is to bring a companion, elected by its Council.

The Council lasts seven days. During the first three days the general condition of the Brotherhood is examined and necessary changes or additions are made. Any one is free to make suggestions. During this time the Superiors make accounts with the Directors. On the fourth day the altar in the church is especially ornamented, and the solemn and secret business of electing the Abbot-General is entered upon. The retiring General presides. After chanting the Litany of Mary he delivers up his seal to the Directors, asking forgiveness for all faults, and proceeds to write his vote. The rest follow in order of rank. The votes are cast in a box, and then taken out and counted by the General, the Directors, and two monks. A majority of votes is necessary for election. The General-Elect is proclaimed by the retiring General, or, if the latter is re-elected, by the first Director. The election of Directors follows.

During the remaining three days particular questions relating to the monks are examined, their propositions are judged, and their faults corrected. On the seventh day the doors are thrown open, and all monks may come in to hear read the list of office-holders, the new laws, the names of new monks, and the patrons to be prayed for. The General grants absolution and closes the meeting. Then follows the Council of the General and Directors, at which the Superiors are chosen. The retiring Superiors of districts and convents come into the church, deliver up their seals of office, and retire. The Secretary reads the complaints which have been sent by the monks and others against the Superiors (brought by their companions, sealed), and if the charges are proved the accused are brought in for reproof or punishment. When they have

gone out, a secret election takes place. The Superiors elect are sent for, and on entering they receive seals of convent and the blessing of the General.

The fifth and last section of the rules concerns itself with faults and punishments. Faults are divided into venial, grave, graver and gravest, and are to be punished accordingly. Venial faults are without number and include tardiness, waste of food, complaint against food, making a noise in cell or church; the punishments are: to repeat a psalm, to say a number of *Paters*, &c. Grave faults include quarrelling, habitual profanity, sowing discord, leaving convent without permission, using medicine without consulting Superior, neglect of fasting, upbraiding a repentant brother, &c. These are to be punished by the imposition of special fasts, prayers, silence, genuflexions, &c. Graver faults include neglect of the church fasts, open commission of mortal sin, false accusations, disobedience of Superior, betrayal of convent secrets, continuing to exercise ecclesiastical functions when under the ban, and others. Such sins are punished by loss of vote, disqualification for office, kneeling before door of church, loss of precedence, &c. Among the gravest sins are apostasy, appropriation of money, books and clothes, striking the Superior, however lightly, betrayal of the confessional, use of magic, forgery, exciting rebellion against Superior, accepting preferment from Bishop without permission of Superior. Those committing such sins may be imprisoned in their cells, and may be unfrocked and lose tonsure; but the Superior is to labour with them, remembering the words of St. Antony: "If a brother fall in the water he is to be pulled out and not to be pushed back to destruction."

The sins for which a Superior of a convent may be punished by the General are enumerated, among the gravest being the taking of bribes, the reception of novices who have some disqualification and conspiracy against the General. The faults of the General are punishable by the Council.

If a monk leave the Brotherhood he is to be searched for diligently, and, when found, brought back in love. He is to be deprived of power of voting and of holding office for five years; he is to be imprisoned in his cell for months, and kept on bread and water, and when released for a time is to have a place alone in church and table. If he has cast aside his robes, the General alone may receive him back.

The General alone has power to put under the ban, and shall exercise it rarely. A monk under the ban may not enter the church or eat at General's table, but is to be avoided by all until he repent.

If a monk remain unrepentent after having received every reproof and punishment, including a final six months' trial, the General, with the Directors, may expel him. But the Patriarch must be appealed to for a final decision. Faults which committed three times deserve expulsion are adultery, apostasy, disobedience to Pope or Patriarch, perjury, giving the sacrament to outsiders without permission of the Bishop, &c. But the Superiors are advised to be patient and long-suffering with all offenders.

Of the nunneries, two belong to the Orders of the Beladiyah and Mar Isha'ya, and are under the charge of their respective Generals. The rest are under the direct care of the Bishop of the diocese. In these, according to the Lebanon Council, the Abbess is elected by the nuns in the presence of the Bishop or his Vicar. The candidate for Abbess must be forty years old. Should no nun of the proper age be found eligible in a certain convent, and should the Bishop deem it inadvisable to choose an Abbess from another establishment, he may lower the required age to thirty. The Bishop is to appoint a Father Confessor for each convent. The Bishop should visit yearly, either in person or by deputy, all the convents under his charge, and with the Abbess and two nuns he should examine all the cells. Special visits should be made as necessity requires it.

In the last chapter it is stated that the General Council has the authority to modify or change the rules, provided that those contained in the first 18 chapters, dealing with principles of conduct, remain intact. Interpretation is left to Superiors. The rules are to be read at table once a month, with the exception of parts 3 and 4 (dealing with officers and the General Council), which should be read once a year.

The aim of this paper is to present facts rather than to moralise upon them, but as so much space has been given to the monastic system, a few words may not be out of place. Regarded as close corporations, the congregations of monks are powerful and prosperous. They own immense properties, which are constantly increasing. In controlling these they are very largely independent. In relation to the body politic, however, they may be said to be useless, or worse than useless. Monasticism justified itself in the early and Middle Ages by noble charities and brilliant learning. The Lebanon monks have developed the instinct of getting and neglected the instinct of giving. The Lebanon is poorer rather than richer for their existence. The great wealth they accumulate benefits the Order always, the country never. While the brotherhoods contain a few good scholars¹ the majority of the monks are ignorant. The wealthy Orders have no great schools for the public benefit. The Jesuits form an organisation of tremendous power, always seeking the advancement of the Order, but benefiting the people in many ways wherever they go. The Maronite monastic system is also a vast machine, capable of doing much public work, but, unlike the society of the Jesuits, it leaves it undone. Nor are the monks an example in any way to the people in religion and morals. Hundreds of Lebanon youths who might otherwise be of some benefit to their country in active life are withdrawn from this usefulness. Indeed, it would be difficult to name a single benefit which the Maronite people to-day receive from the Maronite monks.

¹ For a list of past Maronite scholars, see the pamphlet of Notain Derauni.