

GERVASE OF TILBURY

*OTIA IMPERIALIA*

Recreation for an Emperor

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY  
S. E. BANKS AND J. W. BINNS

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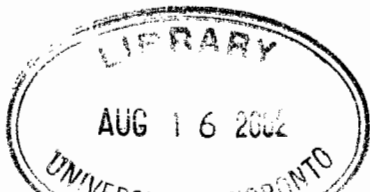
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whether it was in fact lawful for Constantine to transfer imperial authority to the pope, or for the pope, having received it, to pass it on to another.<sup>165</sup> By so doing he had caused confusion in the empire, ‘for with two people holding the same title, division reduces their power.’ As we have seen, he expresses the hope that Otto will reunite the empire by inheriting rule over the east by right of his wife’s inheritance.<sup>166</sup>

Gervase laments the unhappy state Rome has been reduced to as a result of being subject to both a pope and an emperor.<sup>167</sup> He acknowledges that injustice is to be found in the workings of the papacy; for instance, when speaking of the unequal distribution of bishoprics in England, he applies to the papacy the line of Ovid, ‘Ludit in humanis Romana potentia rebus’, and says that instead of doing the will of the Most High, ‘the papacy with its plenitude of power casts down many deserving men, and raises up the undeserving in their place.’<sup>168</sup> He also admits that the Church’s ministers are not always worthy of their calling.<sup>169</sup> He asserts that the commands of a spiritual ruler, just as much as those of a temporal one, must be subjected to careful discrimination.<sup>170</sup>

Nevertheless, Gervase insists that since Otto owes his sovereignty over the west to the pope, he must show him due gratitude and obedience: ‘Would that you would show yourself innocent to Innocent, and give proof of the sincerity which I presume to exist in you in relation to your consecrator in deeds of filial devotion! For you could never be justified in offending him, nor could you ever worthily repay such a deserving benefactor.’<sup>171</sup> He refers obliquely to Otto’s broken promises with regard to the Italian territories,<sup>172</sup> and speaks repeatedly of the seriousness of excommunication, and the virtue of repentance.<sup>173</sup> He reminds Otto that the Church’s defence is entrusted to the emperor, and he urges him to protect

<sup>165</sup> *Otia*, ii. 18, pp. 452–3.

<sup>166</sup> Loc. cit.; see above, p. xxxix.

<sup>167</sup> *Otia*, ii. 16, pp. 394–5; cf. ii. 18, pp. 450–1.

<sup>168</sup> ‘The power of Rome sports with human affairs’ (Ovid, *Ex Ponto*, iv. 3. 49); *Otia*, ii. 10, pp. 312–15.

<sup>169</sup> e.g. iii. 35, pp. 628–31; iii. 103, pp. 784–5. This does not, however, invalidate their ministry: see iii. 57, pp. 664–5.

<sup>170</sup> *Otia*, iii. 35, pp. 628–9.

<sup>171</sup> *Otia*, ii. 19, pp. 468–9.

<sup>172</sup> *Otia*, ii. 18, pp. 452–3; cf. also ii. 12, pp. 338–41, where Gervase rebukes Otto for attempting to rule where he had no rights, while neglecting Provence.

<sup>173</sup> See e.g. *Otia*, i. 16; i. 19; iii. 103, pp. 788–9.

its ministers from the rapacity of secular lords, promote instruction in the faith, and work for the eradication of heresy, favouring only people who show a proper devotion to the sacraments.<sup>174</sup> Throughout the work Gervase urges Otto to live up to the ideal of a Christian emperor, bringing his people peace, justice, and salvation.

Gervase sums up his attitude to the two powers in the course of an exposition of the virtues of obedience. He says that ‘God wishes human beings to be subject one to another in a twofold scheme: to a lord after the flesh because they are flesh, and to a lord after the spirit because they are spirit.’ Each has his own proper sphere, and neither should encroach on the rights of the other. Then there will be no conflict between the two: for ‘they are united in Christ, they are in harmony in the Christian. You will find no discord on either side, if you safeguard the obedience that is owed to each.’<sup>175</sup>

*‘The marvels of every province’*

To ease the burden of care which came to lie so heavily on his benefactor, Gervase presents an extraordinary collection of the world’s marvels. This was, as he says,<sup>176</sup> his main purpose in writing. That it should have been so is a reflection of the new atmosphere which had invaded Latin literature in the twelfth century, and which manifests itself in a delight in story-telling, a fascination with miracles and marvels, and an attentiveness to the phenomena of this world.

Although a few collections of stories had been made before (such as the Aesopic fables, Valerius Maximus’ *Memorabilia*, and the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great), they were exceptional, and as a general rule, ‘collections of stories and indeed individual self-subsistent stories scarcely exist . . . in written form during the first millennium in the West.’<sup>177</sup> They were regarded as trivial and deceitful unless they served some didactic or illustrative purpose, and story-tellers were condemned as vicious purveyors of lies.<sup>178</sup> But in the course of the twelfth century story-telling gradually gained literary status, and an increasing anecdotalism is observable in the works of many authors who regarded themselves as respectable. The change is evident first in the monastic milieu,<sup>179</sup> in the conversation of Anselm,<sup>180</sup> and the

<sup>174</sup> *Otia*, i. 20, pp. 126–7; i. 1, pp. 18–19; iii. 57, pp. 664–5.

<sup>175</sup> See above, pp. xxxviii–xxxix. <sup>177</sup> Shepherd, ‘The emancipation of story’, p. 45.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid. 45–6; P. Dronke, *Fabula: Explorations into the Uses of Myth in Medieval Platonism* (Leiden and Cologne, 1974), pp. 13–78.

<sup>179</sup> Shepherd, ‘The emancipation of story’, pp. 48–50.

<sup>180</sup> See R. W. Southern, *St Anselm and his Biographer* (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 217–26.

writings of monastic historians such as William of Malmesbury and Orderic Vitalis. But it soon spread to the more secular atmosphere of the courts and schools, and was embraced by many of the authors who flourished in that environment, particularly by those writing in England.<sup>181</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth incorporated a large amount of fiction and legend in his *Historia regum Britanniae*, and, however bitterly more sober historians complained about it,<sup>182</sup> the work immediately won enormous popularity. Gerald of Wales packed his voluminous writings with stories, as did his colleague at the court of Henry II, Walter Map, whose one surviving work, *De nugis curialium* ('Courtiers' Trifles'), reveals in its ironic title the ambiguous status of its subject-matter.<sup>183</sup>

Gervase is aware of a need to justify his use of stories. He assumes the traditional attitude towards 'the lying tongues of players or actors',<sup>184</sup> and asserts that his own stories are not 'the crude falsehoods of idle tales':<sup>185</sup> on the contrary, he is a reliable author, reporting only 'those things which are sanctioned by the authority of age, or confirmed by the authority of scripture, or attested by daily eye-witness accounts'.<sup>186</sup> His aim is partly didactic: some of the stories serve as *exempla* conveying explicitly moral lessons,<sup>187</sup> while others whose didactic nature is less obvious are nonetheless introduced with edifying remarks.<sup>188</sup> The work is therefore related to the great didactic collections of the later Middle Ages, such as the *Dialogus miraculorum* of Caesarius of Heisterbach, the *exempla* of Jacques de Vitry, or the early fourteenth-century *Gesta Romanorum*.<sup>189</sup>

<sup>181</sup> e.g. Petrus Alfonsi, *Disciplina clericalis*, ed. (incomplete) A. Hilka and W. Söderhelm (Helsingfors, 1911); on this, and on Petrus, a converted Spanish Jew who flourished in the first third of the twelfth century, see C. Bremond and M. A. Polo De Beaulieu, 'Pierre Alphonse, *Disciplina clericalis*', in *Exempla médiévaux: introduction à la recherche, suivie des tables critiques de l'Index exemplorum de Frederic C. Tubach*, ed. J. Berlioz and M. A. Polo De Beaulieu (Carcassonne, 1992), pp. 85–7.

<sup>182</sup> See William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, i. Proemium.

<sup>183</sup> See Shepherd, 'The emancipation of story', pp. 53–55.

<sup>184</sup> *Otia*, Preface, pp. 14–15.

<sup>185</sup> *Otia*, iii. Preface. <sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>187</sup> e.g. the stories which demonstrate the evils of adultery (*Otia*, iii. 95–9); the efficacy of the sacraments (iii. 57 and iii. 103, pp. 784–9); the importance of prayer (i. 20, pp. 112–15 and iii. 24); or the virtue of hospitality (iii. 100).

<sup>188</sup> e.g. *Otia*, iii. 68, 84, and 101.

<sup>189</sup> C. Bremond, J. Le Goff, and J.-C. Schmitt, *L' "Exemplum"*, Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental, xl (Turnhout, 1982); P. von Moos, *Geschichte als Topik: das rhetorische Exemplum von der Antike zur Neuzeit und die historiae im "Polycraticus" Johannis von Salisbury* (Hildesheim, 1988); A. Strubel, 'Exemple, fable, parabole: le récit bref figuré au Moyen Age', *Le Moyen Age*, xciv (1988), 341–6; C. Delcorno, *Exemplum e letteratura:*

However, the majority of the stories are presented simply for their own sake, without any suggestion as to their interpretation, and the author is happy to admit that his aim is as much to amuse as to edify. This is the point of departure for the great European tradition of story–literature.

An enjoyment of stories combined naturally with a love of the marvellous. Gregory the Great had demonstrated the potency of this combination in his *Dialogues*, one of the best-loved books of the Middle Ages, and well known to Gervase. Miracles and marvels had a ready audience throughout the Middle Ages, but in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries their literature abounded. The first collections of miracles of the Virgin were made in the twelfth century,<sup>190</sup> the Virgilian legends were written down;<sup>191</sup> and the crusades stimulated interest in the marvels of the east. Caesarius of Heisterbach produced his *Dialogus miraculorum* in the early thirteenth century, and saints' legends and marvels in general proliferated, both in Latin and in the vernaculars.<sup>192</sup>

In his Preface to Book III, Gervase considers the question of what constitutes a marvel. He comments that it is a natural human characteristic to be fascinated by all that is new, of recent occurrence, rare, or strange. He goes on to distinguish between miracles and marvels: 'Now we generally call those things miracles which, being preternatural, we ascribe to divine power, as when a virgin gives birth, when Lazarus is raised from the dead, or when diseased limbs are made whole again; while we call those things marvels which are beyond our comprehension, even though they are natural: in fact the inability to explain why a thing is so constitutes a marvel.'<sup>193</sup>

*Tra medioevo e rinascimento* (Bologna, 1989); *Exempla médiévaux* (n. 181 above); C. Delcorno, 'Nuovi studi sull'exemplum. Rassegna', *Lettere italiane*, xlvi (1994), 459–97.

<sup>190</sup> See R. W. Southern, 'The English origins of the miracles of the Virgin', *Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies*, iv (1958), 176–216; P. Carter, 'The historical content of William of Malmesbury's Miracles of the Virgin Mary', in *The Writing of History in the Middle Ages: Essays presented to Richard William Southern*, ed. R. H. C. Davis et al. (Oxford, 1981), pp. 127–65. <sup>191</sup> See *Otia*, iii. 10, n. 4.

<sup>192</sup> See M. D. Legge, 'La précocité de la littérature Anglo-Normande', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, viii (1965), 341; for further references, see C. W. Bynum, 'Wonder', *American Historical Review*, cii (1997), 1–26, esp. 10–14 and nn., and J. Le Goff, *L'Imaginaire médiévale* (Paris, 1985), pp. 17–37.

<sup>193</sup> *Otia*, iii. Preface: Gervase was not the first to define a marvel as something natural but unexplained; cf. William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, i. 28: 'Mira . . . dicimus, non tantum propter raritatem, sed quia occultam habent rationem.' It became a commonplace to distinguish between miracles and marvels on these lines; Gervase, however, is remarkable for the 'scientific' approach he adopts towards marvels; see J. Le

This definition shows how the fascination with marvels was related to the new attentiveness to the external world which manifests itself in the twelfth century, as 'a certain existential naturalism' began to make itself felt in medieval culture.<sup>194</sup> A fresh perception of the challenging reality of the visible world emerged in both literature and art, becoming the life-force of a growing secularity. This perception prompted some early movements towards empiricism. For instance, a few travel records and topographical works based on empirical observation were written,<sup>195</sup> a delight in drawing from life began to find an outlet in the margins of manuscripts; and the revival of science encouraged the observation of eclipses, volcanoes, tides, earthquakes, and other natural phenomena.<sup>196</sup>

Gervase's collection of marvels forms a notable contribution to this movement. He possessed an insatiable curiosity and a keen alertness to the world about him which fostered his capacity for observation and description. It is clear from the provenance of the marvels that he had been collecting materials throughout the course of his career: England, Italy, and Sicily are well represented, and above all the south of France. Many of the chapters in Book III read like transcriptions from a notebook. While he is often dependent on written or oral sources, some chapters, such as his account of the kermes oak,<sup>197</sup> are evidently based on personal observation. He shows

Goff, *L'Imaginaire médiévale* (Paris, 1985), p. 27. In this context, for William of Newburgh's discussion of revenants, see N. Caciola, 'Wraiths, revenants and ritual in medieval culture', *Past and Present*, no. 152 (1996), 3–45, at pp. 21–2.

<sup>194</sup> B. Stock, *Myth and Science in the Twelfth Century* (Princeton, 1972), pp. 3 ff.; see also M.-D. Chenu, 'Nature and Man—the renaissance of the twelfth century', in *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century*, ed. and transl. J. Taylor and L. K. Little (Chicago, 1968), pp. 1–48.

<sup>195</sup> e.g. the lively descriptions of Ireland and Wales by Gerald of Wales (*Topographia Hibernica*, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, and *Descriptio Cambriae*), which display his considerable powers of observation alongside a large measure of folklore and ignorance. On twelfth-century topography, see Wright, *Geographical Lore*, pp. 115–21, and on its frequent origins in border regions (England/Wales, Germany/Slavs) see R. Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 12–13, 158–77; and *Medieval Frontier Societies*, ed. R. Bartlett and A. Mackay (Oxford, 1989), pp. 41–7 and 169–70.

<sup>196</sup> Cf. p. xlv above; see classically C. H. Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, Mass., 1927), pp. 332–7; Thorndike, *History of Magic*, vol. ii; U. T. Holmes, Jr., 'Transitions in European education', in *Twelfth Century Europe and the Foundations of Modern Society*, ed. M. Clagett, G. Post, and R. Reynolds (Madison, 1961), at p. 34; T. Stiefel, 'Science, reason, and faith in the twelfth century', *Journal of European Studies*, vi (1976), 1–16; G. Beaujouan, 'The transformation of the Quadrivium', in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. R. L. Benson and G. Constable (Oxford, 1985), pp. 463–87.

<sup>197</sup> *Otia*, iii. 55.

an interest in scientific studies, and delights in quasi-scientific explanations.<sup>198</sup> He describes the marine explorations of the Sicilian diver, Nicholas Pipe, and confirms his findings from his own observation of marine acorns on the sea-shore.<sup>199</sup> He advances an original theory as to why it is impossible to sail round the world, based on his observation of the Camargue.<sup>200</sup> He also claims to have conducted experiments in order to verify certain marvels,<sup>201</sup> and to have participated personally in the interrogation of a revenant.<sup>202</sup> He states that it is his aim to confound sceptics,<sup>203</sup> and yet he is himself remarkable for the sceptical approach which underlies his whole interest in marvels. This leads him on one occasion to suggest a natural explanation as an alternative to a supernatural one,<sup>204</sup> on another to record that an investigation on his part met only with repeated telling, rather than solid proof.<sup>205</sup>

Gervase drew his marvels from a wide range of sources. A considerable number are derived from the literary tradition: for instance, many of the marvels of the east described by Pliny make their appearance, mediated largely through Honorius' *De imagine mundi*, the *Letter of Pharasmanes to Hadrian*, and the *Epistola Alexandri ad Aristotelem*. Augustine's *De ciuitate Dei* provided him with a mine of information, as did Peter Comestor's *Historia scholastica*. Other sources include Jerome's *Life of St Paul the First Hermit* and *Life of St Hilarion*, the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great and Sulpicius Severus, Orosius' *Adversum paganos* and Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*, the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, Eucherius of Lyons' *Passio Acaunensium martyrum*, the *Passio Sancti Thomae Apostoli*, tracts on the Edessan image and the Volto Santo di Lucca, a treatise on the consecration of stones, Fretellus' description of the holy places, and Pseudo-Marcella's *Vita S. Marthae*.

Alongside the material he drew from this learned and largely clerical tradition, Gervase records many stories and beliefs derived

<sup>198</sup> e.g. *Otia*, i. 12, on dew and clouds; ii. 12, pp. 336–43, on volcanoes and earthquakes.

<sup>199</sup> *Otia*, ii. 12, pp. 332–5.

<sup>200</sup> *Otia*, iii. 40.

<sup>201</sup> e.g. *Otia*, iii. 10, 14, and 112.

<sup>202</sup> *Otia*, iii. 103, pp. 782–3.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 760–1

<sup>204</sup> On the absence of snakes on the island of Lérins he remarks: 'I do not know whether this is due to the religious observance of such great and holy fathers, or whether it is to be attributed to the soil's own constitution' (*Otia*, iii. 67).

<sup>205</sup> *Otia*, ii. 7, pp. 248–9, concerning a spring in which burning torches are extinguished, but extinguished torches are relit.

from oral tradition. At the time when he was writing, Europe was still a largely oral society.<sup>206</sup> Gervase is by no means unusual among medieval authors in his reliance on oral testimony, but he is one of the first to have set about recording in writing the things people said about their local customs and beliefs. He draws extensively on popular, often pre-Christian levels of culture, thus giving his work a peculiar interest as a record of European folklore. He is undaunted by the Church's ambivalent, even hostile attitude to such tales; though staunchly orthodox, he knows the value of a good story.<sup>207</sup>

Most of the folklore can be classified as local legend, the simplest form of traditional narrative. The narrative is usually short, consisting most often of only one motif. The commonest marvels are descriptions of remarkable natural phenomena, such as earth, springs, rocks, or trees. Sometimes magic qualities are attributed to these, as with the grapes which ripen and then disappear,<sup>208</sup> or the spring whose water never boils;<sup>209</sup> but others are simply things which are unusual or misunderstood, such as the kermes oak and its red 'berries'.<sup>210</sup> There are also a number of tales of animals and birds endowed with human characteristics, such as the raven of Clairevum.<sup>211</sup> Enchanted places feature in several chapters: the Peak Cavern,<sup>212</sup> for instance, or Laikibraï.<sup>213</sup> Various transformations are described: of men into wolves,<sup>214</sup> of women into cats or snakes.<sup>215</sup> Fairies, water-sprites, brownies, poltergeists, incubi, ghosts, and other less well-known spirits inhabit the pages. These beings range from benign home-helps to nightmarish nocturnal spectres which steal children, suck blood, or take people's bodies apart and reassemble them in the wrong order.<sup>216</sup> There are saints' legends and miracles,<sup>217</sup> wish-fulfilment fantasies,<sup>218</sup> and a number of legends concerning historical characters, from Virgil<sup>219</sup> to Raymond V of Toulouse.<sup>220</sup>

<sup>206</sup> See M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, Mass. and Oxford, 1993); B. Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation* (Princeton, 1993). Twelfth-century authors sometimes show an awareness of the effects of literacy on an oral society: see e.g. Gerald of Wales, *Gemma ecclesiastica*, ed. J. S. Brewer, RS xxi (2) (1862), 5-7.

<sup>207</sup> Sometimes he acknowledges a conflict between the ecclesiastical and popular traditions, but nonetheless presents them both side by side: see e.g. *Otia*, i. 15; iii. 12; iii. 86; iii. 93.

<sup>209</sup> *Otia*, iii. 48.

<sup>211</sup> *Otia*, iii. 95.

<sup>213</sup> *Otia*, iii. 69.

<sup>215</sup> *Otia*, i. 15 and iii. 93.

<sup>217</sup> e.g. *Otia*, iii. 34-5.

<sup>219</sup> *Otia*, iii. 10, 12-13, 15-16, 112.

<sup>208</sup> *Otia*, iii. 102.

<sup>210</sup> *Otia*, iii. 55.

<sup>212</sup> *Otia*, iii. 45.

<sup>214</sup> *Otia*, i. 15 and iii. 120.

<sup>216</sup> *Otia*, iii. 61 and 86.

<sup>218</sup> e.g. *Otia*, iii. 7.

<sup>220</sup> *Otia*, iii. 103, pp. 784-9.

From this brief survey it can be seen that Gervase's marvels derive from the common stock of European folklore. Indeed many of the motifs are to be found the world over. Sometimes a universal motif is attached to a particular place or event: for example, the belief in the healing power of water is attached to the spring at Barles, by which people who suffer from goitre are cured;<sup>221</sup> or the motif of the animal which dies of grief at its master's death is applied to the extraordinary horse of the troubadour Guiraut de Cabrera.<sup>222</sup> The latter is an example of a story which has been preserved without any Christian overlay: Gervase confesses himself at a loss to explain the nature of the horse, but simply reports the story, neither dismissing it as untrue, nor attributing the horse's qualities to a demonic presence. Elsewhere the influence of Christianity makes itself felt: for instance, the universal motif of an approach to the Underworld through a lake is given a Christian interpretation as a bishop's vision of the gates of hell in a lake.<sup>223</sup> Sometimes old pagan superstitions are christianized by being associated with Christian feasts or prayers.<sup>224</sup> But very often such beliefs were condemned by the Church as pertaining to the devil: and so a supernatural wife is unable to bear being present at the consecration of the host,<sup>225</sup> and night-riders immediately fall to the earth if they name Christ.<sup>226</sup> This tendency to associate traditional heathen beliefs with the devil later gave rise to the notion of a voluntary pact with Satan, and led to the witch-hunts.<sup>227</sup>

Many of the marvels seem to have been written down by Gervase much as he would have heard them, with little literary interference on his part. In this respect he is a better guide to popular lore than authors like Geoffrey of Monmouth or Marie de France, who used traditional stories as a basis for literary re-working. Simplicity and directness mark Gervase's presentation for the most part, though some stories are treated with greater concern for effect, if they have more dramatic potential, as with the black knight of Wandlebury,<sup>228</sup> or serve to illustrate one of Gervase's didactic themes, as with the excommunication of Count Raymond of Toulouse.<sup>229</sup> Both these

<sup>221</sup> *Otia*, iii. 126.

<sup>222</sup> *Otia*, iii. 92.

<sup>223</sup> *Otia*, iii. 18.

<sup>224</sup> e.g. the customs relating to dew described in *Otia*, i. 12; or the use of the Lord's Prayer to activate the magic properties of the upside-down bean of *Otia*, iii. 14.

<sup>225</sup> *Otia*, iii. 57.

<sup>226</sup> *Otia*, iii. 93.

<sup>227</sup> See *Otia*, iii. 86, nn. 8 and 23; iii. 93, n. 6.

<sup>228</sup> *Otia*, iii. 59.

<sup>229</sup> *Otia*, iii. 103, pp. 784-9.

stories are told in a vivid narrative style, with a wealth of circumstantial detail; but even here an effective reporting of what he has heard, rather than free invention, seems to be Gervase's aim.

Some of the stories which Gervase records were subsequently developed in a literary tradition, and Gervase is an important witness to the original popular versions. This is the case with the story of Mélusine,<sup>230</sup> and also with the Virgilian legends.<sup>231</sup> The latter originated in Naples, a city which enjoyed Virgil's special favour, and which, according to legend, he built. Gervase was one of the first to write down these legends; in his versions they are mostly aetiological, and Virgil is depicted as a white magician who worked for the public good. But once the stories became known in the rest of Europe they lost their Neapolitan bias, and Virgil the necromancer became a very different character as the subject of popular romance.

It may seem hard to credit that Gervase believed some of the things he reports. Indeed some of his past critics, including the great Leibniz, have doubted his sanity. But when he is being his most improbable he often assures the reader that he has everything on good authority. A medieval author loved to have authorities, and if they did not exist he might invent them, as Geoffrey of Monmouth apparently invented the book which he was at such pains to translate into Latin.<sup>232</sup> But it would be wrong to accuse Gervase of deliberate falsification, or even of irony. He was far removed in his thinking from the 'anxious incredulity' that besets our age,<sup>233</sup> and cannot be judged by our canons of veracity and reliability. Like Herodotus,<sup>234</sup> he applied himself to report what was said, whether or not he believed it: hence the immense value of his collection to folklorists.

The marvels are presented in no particular order, though Gervase often visibly proceeded by association: for instance, a number of chapters concerned with flies lead him to Virgil's bronze fly, and thence to further Virgilian legends. The chapters range from brief jottings to extended narratives; they are written for the most part in a straightforward, relaxed style, varied occasionally by passages of earnest exhortation or dramatic narration.

The collection as a whole conveys a remarkably fresh and colourful

<sup>230</sup> *Otia*, i. 15 and n. 14.

<sup>231</sup> *Otia*, iii. 10, 12–13, 15–16, 112. See iii. 10, n. 4, and especially the works of Comparetti and Spargo.

<sup>232</sup> *HRB*, c. 2 (= ed. Griscom, i. 1); see pp. xvii–xviii of Neil Wright's Introduction.

<sup>233</sup> Runciman, 'Some remarks', p. 239.

<sup>234</sup> *Historiae*, vii. 52.

picture of the author's world. Perhaps more than anyone else of his age, Gervase is able to recreate the experience of all that he has seen and heard.<sup>235</sup> The picture ranges from the shady forests of England to the harsh mountains of Catalonia, from the sun-baked streets of Naples to the castles and vineyards of Provence. Knights and ladies, monks and bishops, soldiers and farmers come before our eyes; there are vignettes of women doing their washing, a mother waking to her child's cry in the night, peasants sitting up late at their tasks on a winter's evening; and in the midst of these everyday scenes, we meet the whole array of marvellous creatures and phenomena with which Gervase set out to amuse and delight his ill-fated imperial patron.

### III. THE MANUSCRIPTS

#### *Descriptions of the manuscripts*

There are thirty known manuscripts of the *Otia imperialia*. A thorough analysis of twenty-nine of them was made by the late J. R. Caldwell of Berkeley in a series of four articles;<sup>236</sup> a thirtieth copy was subsequently discovered by B. U. Hucker.<sup>237</sup> The following descriptions are arranged according to Caldwell's grouping, but it should be borne in mind that 'no manuscript is utterly faithful to the traits of its group. There is evidence all along the line of conflation. Moreover, all too frequently, for purposes of consistency, the collation revealed groups conjoining in various combinations'.<sup>238</sup> Conclusions regarding the relationships of the manuscripts are therefore necessarily tentative. However, certain patterns do emerge, which throw at least some light on the production and transmission of the text.

<sup>235</sup> Jamison, for instance, said of him: 'Gervase perhaps of all Anglo-Norman contemporaries re-creates most vividly and intimately the incidents of everyday life and the friendliness and hospitality of the south' ('The Sicilian Norman kingdom', pp. 274–5; cf. Schlauch, 'Literary exchange', p. 170).

<sup>236</sup> 'The autograph manuscript of Gervase of Tilbury', *Scriptorium*, xi (1957), 87–98; 'Manuscripts of Gervase of Tilbury's *Otia imperialia*', *Scriptorium*, xvi (1962), 28–45; 'The interrelationship of the manuscripts of Gervase of Tilbury's *Otia imperialia*', *Scriptorium*, xvi (1962), 246–74; 'Gervase of Tilbury's addenda to his *Otia imperialia*', *Medieval Studies*, xxiv (1962), 95–126.

<sup>237</sup> 'Eine unbekannte Handschrift der *Otia imperialia* des Gervasius von Tilbury', *Scriptorium*, xxxviii (1984), 318–19. See the description of *SP* below (pp. lxxviii–lxxix).

<sup>238</sup> Caldwell, 'Interrelationship', p. 274.

## TERTIA DECISIO

Hec<sup>a</sup> sunt capitula libri huius tercii.<sup>b</sup>

Prefacio in opus<sup>c</sup> sequens continens mirabilia pleraque<sup>d</sup>

- i. De magnete lapide
- ii. De sale Agrigentino et Cardonensi,<sup>e</sup> et confectione salis marini, et de salinis Wichii
- iii. De lapide abeston, et lapide accenso in lucernam, et lucerna fani Veneris, et cereis Beate Virginis
- iv. De ficu Egypti, et ligno quod conuertitur in lapidem
- v. De pomis Pentapolis que crescunt et fauillantur
- vi. De lapide cum luna crescente et decrescente<sup>f</sup>
- vii. De tribus donis Terdone
- viii. De cimiterio Fructuariensi
- ix. De fenestra Camisse
- x. De mirabilibus Podii Sancte Marie; de musca Neapolitana
- xi. De nuce que simul frondet et fructificat
- xii. De mirabilibus Neapolis
- xiii. De orto Virgilio et tuba
- xiv. De faba uersa et eius natura
- xv. De balneis Puteolanis
- xvi. De rupe incisa que non admittit insidias
- xvii. De Iohanne episcopo et animarum penis
- xviii. De uisione portarum inferni
- xix. De Auerno et luto Thori
- xx. De turre que non admittit uigiles
- xxi. De pugna scarabeorum
- xxii. De rupe que digito mouetur et non toto<sup>g</sup> corpore
- xxiii. De figura Domini in Edissa<sup>h</sup>
- xxiv. De alia figura Domini in linteo
- xxv. De Veronica Romana<sup>i</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The list of chapters appears only in the descendants of β. In X it is presented in situ. In I it is divided into two parts, the first (i–xciv) between items 7 and 8 of the addenda (f. 223<sup>r</sup>–224<sup>r</sup>), and the second (xcv–cxlviii) after the last item of the addenda (f. 233<sup>r</sup>–234<sup>r</sup>). The last three items of the addenda and the second part (xcv–cxlviii) of the chapters were missing in the copy from which Q was made, but the first part is presented in situ. Folio references are provided in X and I, by a late hand in both <sup>b</sup> Hec . . . tertii] Sequuntur capitula huius libri tercii Q <sup>c</sup> in opus] operis X <sup>d</sup> pleraque om. I <sup>e</sup> Cardone I <sup>f</sup> et decrescente

## BOOK III

The following are the chapters of this, the third book:

Preface to the work that follows, including a number of marvels

1. The Loadstone
2. The Salt of Agrigentum and Cardona, and the Making of Sea-salt, and the Salt-supply of Droitwich
3. The Asbestos Stone, a Stone which is Lit to provide a Lamp, the Lamp in a Shrine of Venus, and the Wax-lights of the Blessed Virgin
4. The Fig-tree of Egypt, and the Wood which Turns to Stone
5. The Apples of the Pentapolis which Grow and then Turn to Ashes
6. The Stone which Waxes and Wanes with the Moon
7. The Three Gifts of Tortona
8. The Cemetery of Fruttuaria
9. The Window of Connexe
10. The Marvels of Le Puy-Notre-Dame; the Fly of Naples
11. The Nut-tree which bears Leaves and Fruit Both at Once
12. The Marvels of Naples
13. Virgil's Garden and the Trumpet
14. The Upside-down Bean and its Nature
15. The Baths of Pozzuoli
16. The Rock-passage which Admits No Treachery
17. Bishop John and the Punishment of Souls
18. A Vision of the Gates of Hell
19. Avernus and the Mud of Le Thor
20. A Tower which Admits No Watchmen
21. The Beetles' Battle
22. A Rock which is Moved by One Finger and Not by the Whole Body
23. The Image of the Lord in Edessa
24. Another Image of the Lord on a Cloth
25. The Veronica in Rome

om. QI <sup>g</sup> toto Q; om. XI <sup>h</sup> et de uultu Lucanensi add. after Edissa I <sup>i</sup> De quarta figura Domini add. after Romana I



- xxvi. De Veronica Edissena<sup>j</sup>  
 xxvii. De littore Palestine  
 xxviii. De uirtute et consecratione lapidum  
 xxix. De boas dracone  
 xxx. De ordeo et arenis Egypti  
 xxxi. De herbis Egypti<sup>k</sup>  
 xxxii. De cibariis que ad solem coquantur  
 xxxiii. De Olimpo et Athlante et Sinai  
 xxxiv. <De uento quem in cirotheca conclusit sanctus Cesarius  
 xxxv. De uirgula arida que per obedientiam floruit; in uita  
 sanctorum Thebeorum<sup>l</sup>  
 xxxvi. De uinea sine plantatore prodeunte  
 xxxvii. De uado de Rodestum<sup>m</sup>  
 xxxviii. De aqua que uires reparat equis lassatis  
 xxxix. De prato crustato  
 xl. De aquis que calore congelantur in sal  
 xli. De uexillis apparentibus in<sup>n</sup> die sancti Constantii  
 xlii. De rupe que uocatur<sup>o</sup> Equa Illi<sup>p</sup>  
 xliii. De dominabus apparentibus in fenestra<sup>q</sup>  
 xliv. De beuere et eius natura  
 xlv. De castro del Pech  
 xlvi. De ymagine Beate Virginis  
 xlvii. De cruce latronis in Cypro  
 xlviii. De aqua que nunquam bullit  
 xlix. De Saltu Domini  
 l. De statua aurea  
 li. De balsamo et eius probatione  
 lii. De fluuio succrescente  
 liii. De signis in morte Iulii apparentibus  
 liii. De ligno crucis et piscina probatica  
 liii. De arbore uermiculi  
 lvi. De bombicibus Sericis  
 lvii. De domina castri Esperuer  
 lviii. De militibus apparentibus  
 lix. De milicia Osberti filii Hugonis  
 lx. De cornu et pincerna siluestri

26. The Veronica in Edessa  
 27. The Coast of Palestine  
 30. The Power and Consecration of Stones  
 31. The Boa Snake  
 30. The Barley and Sands of Egypt  
 31. The Herbs of Egypt  
 32. Food which is Cooked in the Sun  
 33. Olympus, Atlas, and Sinai  
 34. The Wind which St Caesarius Shut Up in a Glove  
 35. The Dry Rod which Blossomed as a result of Obedience; an  
 Episode from the Life of the Theban Saints  
 36. A Vineyard which Grows Without a Planter  
 37. The Ford of Radstone  
 38. Water which Restores Strength to Wearied Horses  
 39. A Meadow on a Crust  
 40. Water which Hardens into Salt in the Heat  
 41. The Banners which Appear on the Feast of St Constantius  
 42. The Crag which is Called Equal to That  
 43. Ladies who Appear at a Window  
 44. The Beaver and its Nature  
 45. The Castle of the Peak  
 46. An Image of the Blessed Virgin  
 47. The Thief's Cross in Cyprus  
 48. Water which Never Boils  
 49. The Lord's Leap  
 50. A Golden Statue  
 51. Balsam and the Testing of It  
 52. A River which Springs Up  
 53. The Signs which Appeared on the Death of Julius  
 54. The Wood of the Cross and the Sheep-Pool  
 55. The Kermes-Tree  
 56. Silk-Worms  
 57. The Lady of the Castle of L'Éparvier  
 58. A Vision of Knights  
 59. The Prowess of Osbert Fitz Hugh  
 60. A Horn and a Woodland Cupbearer

<sup>j</sup> De . . . Edissena] De uirtute epistole Domini et beati Thome apostoli I      <sup>k</sup> De . . .  
 Egypti] *om. Q*      <sup>l</sup> De uento . . . Thebeorum] *ed.*; De uento Pontico et ciroteca sancti  
 Cesariis. De uirtute sancte obedientie et uirga storacina X (*add. in margin by late hand*);

*om. QI*      <sup>m</sup> sic X; Rodestim *QI*      <sup>n</sup> in *om. Q*      <sup>o</sup> nominatur I      <sup>p</sup> De  
 rupe . . . Illi] X (*add. in margin by late hand*); *om. Q*; *this and the following title misplaced*  
*after xxxvii in I*      <sup>q</sup> De . . . fenestra] De fenestris in quibus apparent domine I

- lxi. De neptunis siue portunis  
 lxii. De grant et incendiis  
 lxiii. De dalphyno, pisce marino  
 lxiv. De serenibus bene cantantibus  
 lxv. De diuersis naturis animalium  
 lxvi. De monte Catalonie  
 lxvii. De insula Lirinensi  
 lxviii. De astucia uulpis  
 lxix. De Lai ki brai  
 lxx. De cornu sancti Simeonis  
 lxxi. De silua fatata per horas<sup>s</sup>  
 lxxii. De onagris cornutis<sup>t</sup>  
 lxxiii. De equinocefalis  
 lxxiv. De bestiis Brisonis fluuii  
 lxxv. De hominibus natis sine capite  
 lxxvi. De mulieribus barbatis  
 lxxvii. De mulieribus habentibus dentes aprinos  
 lxxviii. De palacio solis et lune<sup>u</sup>  
 lxxix. De fenice  
 lxxx. De montibus flammantibus in ortu solis  
 lxxxi. De hominibus simiis, et gallinis que comestores urunt  
 lxxxii. De prato quod aquis superfertur et tremit, et<sup>v</sup> de montibus Galensibus  
 lxxxiii. De uirtute feniculi<sup>m</sup>  
 lxxxiv. De aucipite regis Scottorum  
 lxxxv. De lamiis, dracis, et fantasmatis  
 lxxxvi. De fantasmatis que strie<sup>x</sup> dicuntur  
 lxxxvii. De stagno piscoso cum omnibus patet<sup>y</sup>  
 lxxxviii. De mari Haueringo<sup>z</sup>  
 lxxxix. De fontis aspergine<sup>a</sup>  
 xc. De cimiterio Elisii Campi  
 xci. De nuce que habet decem nucleos in testa  
 xcii. De equo Girardi de Cabreria<sup>b</sup>  
 xciii. De uisionibus fantasticis, et orationibus<sup>c</sup>

<sup>r</sup> diuersis naturis] sagacitate I      <sup>s</sup> De . . . horas] De feris silue Carleoli I  
<sup>t</sup> et serpentibus add. after cornutis I      <sup>u</sup> De arboribus eorum et responsis earum et sacerdotibus earum add. after lune β; this chapter is found only in I, where it constitutes item 8 of the addenda (see Appendix i. 8)      <sup>v</sup> et om. X      <sup>m</sup> et uerbis fascinantium add. after feniculi I      <sup>x</sup> uel masce add. after strie I      <sup>y</sup> omnibus patet] nulli

61. Neptunes or Portunes  
 62. Grant and Fires  
 63. The Dolphin, a Fish of the Sea  
 64. The Beautiful Singing of Sirens  
 65. Various Animals' Natures  
 66. A Mountain in Catalonia  
 67. The Isle of Lérins  
 68. The Fox's Cunning  
 69. Laikibrais  
 70. The Horn of St Simeon  
 71. A Forest which is Haunted at Certain Hours  
 72. Horned Onagers  
 73. Equinocephali  
 74. The Beasts of the River Briso  
 75. People Born with No Head  
 76. Bearded Women  
 77. Women who have Boars' Teeth  
 78. The Palaces of the Sun and the Moon  
 79. The Phoenix  
 80. Mountains which Blaze at Sunrise  
 81. The Ape-people, and Hens which Burn Anyone who Eats Them  
 82. A Meadow which is Borne on Water and Quakes, and the Welsh Mountains  
 83. The Power of Fennel  
 84. The King of Scotland's Fowler  
 85. Lamias, Dracs, and Phantoms  
 86. Phantasms which are called *Stries*  
 87. A Lake which is Full of Fish when it is Open to All  
 88. Haveringemere  
 89. A Spring's Sprinkling  
 90. The Cemetery of Les Aliscamps  
 91. The Nut-tree which Produces Ten Kernels in a Shell  
 92. The Horse of Guiraut de Cabrera  
 93. On Supernatural Visions, and Prayers

prohibetur I      <sup>z</sup> De . . . Haueringo] De alio stagno in Anglia I      <sup>a</sup> De . . . aspergine] De fonte qui plueret facit I      <sup>b</sup> Expliciunt capitula after Capreria (sic) Q; remainder of titles omitted      <sup>c</sup> De . . . orationibus] De fantasiis nocturnis opinionibus I

- xciv. De arbore que facit siliquas  
 xcv. De coruo et eius sagacitate<sup>d</sup>  
 xcvi. De iudicio cignororum  
 xcvi. De ouo coruino supposito ciconie  
 xcvi. De caseo putrefacto<sup>e</sup>  
 xcix. De ictu uiri mortui in uxorem<sup>f</sup>  
 c. De carni priuio et equo militis<sup>g</sup>  
 ci. De potencia ueneni<sup>h</sup>  
 cii. De botris qui non fructificant<sup>i</sup>  
 ciii. De uisione mortui<sup>j</sup> et eius responsis<sup>k</sup>  
 civ. De pullo strutionis et ingenio Salomonis<sup>l</sup>  
 cv. De ligno paradisi et cruce Domini<sup>m</sup>  
 cvi. De concordia .lxx. interpretum<sup>n</sup>  
 cvii. De mirabilibus terre Pentapolis<sup>o</sup>  
 cviii. De coitu Loth<sup>p</sup>  
 cix. De arbore que dicitur Agnus castus<sup>q</sup>  
 cx. De contrarietate complexionis Egypti<sup>r</sup>  
 cx. De Moyse et cyconiis<sup>s</sup>  
 cxii. De ossibus Ioseph et nomine Dei tetragrammaton<sup>t</sup>  
 cxiii. De duobus cherubim<sup>u</sup>  
 cxiv. De lapide rationalis et eius uirtute<sup>v</sup>  
 cxv. De facie Moysi<sup>w</sup>  
 cxvi. De serpentibus ignitis et situlis<sup>x</sup>  
 cxvii. De gleba effossa et renascente<sup>y</sup>  
 cxviii. De diuisione maris Pamfilici<sup>z</sup>  
 cxix. De tumulo Moysi<sup>a</sup>  
 cxx. De gerulfis et eorum lunationibus<sup>b</sup>  
 cxxi. De Chimera et decem Sibyllis  
 cxxii. De ualle de Lentuscla<sup>c</sup>  
 cxxiii. De aibus que nascuntur<sup>d</sup> ex arboribus  
 cxxiv. De uinea Vccie<sup>e</sup>

<sup>d</sup> et . . . sagacitate] *om. I*    <sup>e</sup> De ouo . . . putrefacto] *om. X*    <sup>f</sup> De . . . uxorem] De mortuo qui occidit uxorem quandam suam *I*    <sup>g</sup> De . . . militis] De hospitalitate *I*    <sup>h</sup> De . . . ueneni] De baculo putrefacto *I*    <sup>i</sup> De . . . fructificant] De racemis de Rauchamaura *I*    <sup>j</sup> mortui *ed.*; mortuis *X*    <sup>k</sup> De . . . responsis] De mortuo apparente uirgini mira dicente et annuntiente *I*    <sup>l</sup> et . . . Salomonis] *om. I*    <sup>m</sup> De . . . Domini] De arbore ex qua lignum Domini *I*    <sup>n</sup> De . . . interpretum] Vrbanum principis responsum *I*    <sup>o</sup> terre Pentapolis] que sunt ubi quinque ciuitates sunt submerse *I*    <sup>p</sup> cum filiabus *add. after* Loth *I*    <sup>q</sup> que . . . castus] quem dicimus agnum castum *I*    <sup>r</sup> De . . . Egypti] De pascuis

94. A Tree which Produces Pods  
 95. A Raven and its Discernment  
 96. The Swans' Court of Justice  
 97. The Raven's Egg which was Put in a Stork's Nest  
 98. Rotten Cheese  
 99. The Blow a Dead Man Dealt his Wife  
 100. The Beginning of Lent and a Knight's Horse  
 101. The Power of Poison  
 102. Vines which Bear No Grapes  
 103. A Vision of a Dead Man, and his Replies  
 104. The Ostrich's Chick and Solomon's Genius  
 105. The Tree of Paradise and the Lord's Cross  
 106. The Agreement of the Seventy Translators  
 107. The Marvels of the Land of the Pentapolis  
 108. Lot's Intercourse  
 109. The Tree which is Called Agnus Castus  
 110. The Opposing Properties of the Soil of Egypt  
 111. Moses and the Storks  
 112. Joseph's Bones and the Tetragram of God's Name  
 113. The Two Cherubim  
 114. The Stone of the Breastplate and its Virtue  
 115. Moses' Face  
 116. The Burning Fiery Serpents  
 117. Soil which is Replenished when it is Dug Up  
 118. The Parting of the Sea of Pamphylia  
 119. The Tomb of Moses  
 120. Werewolves and their Lunar Cycles  
 121. The Chimera and the Ten Sibyls  
 122. The Valley of Lantosque  
 123. Birds which Grow out of Trees  
 124. The Vineyard of Uzès

Egypti *I*    <sup>s</sup> De . . . cyconiis] De pericia Moysi et sepultura *I*    <sup>t</sup> nomine . . . tetragrammaton] oue *I*    <sup>u</sup> De . . . cherubim] De cherubim et eius figura *I*    <sup>v</sup> De . . . uirtute] De lapidibus rationalis *I*    <sup>w</sup> Moysi] Moysi cornuta *I*    <sup>x</sup> situlis] urentibus *I*    <sup>y</sup> De . . . renascente] De agro Ebron et crucis parte *I*    <sup>z</sup> De . . . Pamfilici] De mari Panphilico *I*    <sup>a</sup> et beate Katherine *add. after* Moysi *I*    <sup>b</sup> De . . . lunationibus (*ed.*; lucrationibus *X*) ] De hominibus qui fiunt lupi *I*    <sup>c</sup> De . . . Lentuscla (*ed.*; Letuscla *X*) ] De niuibus obruentibus transeuntes *I*    <sup>d</sup> que nascuntur] nascentibus *I*    <sup>e</sup> De comite Sancti Egidii excommunicato *add. after* Uscessie (*sic*) *I*

- cxxv. De fonte qui tempore metendorum pratorum scaturit  
 cxxvi. De fonte quo curantur gutturnosi  
 cxxvii. De fonte qui subito disparet  
 cxxviii. De fontibus Aluigani  
 cxxix. De fonte Cesareste  
 cxxx. De fonte qui omnes<sup>f</sup> sordes respuit<sup>g</sup>  
 [cxxx. De calice aque et arundinibus  
 cxxxii. De ypotamis  
 cxxxiii. De scorpionibus et cancris et serpentibus et leonibus et  
 apris et uespertilionibus Indie, et ydontotiranno<sup>h</sup> et muribus  
 et nicticoracibus<sup>i</sup>  
 cxxxiv. De miranda belua maris Indici  
 cxxxv. De Iociophagis<sup>j</sup> et Cynophalis<sup>k</sup>  
 cxxxvi. De ualle Iordia et lapidibus eius  
 cxxxvii. De griffis et aliis bestiis  
 cxxxviii. De arundinibus et<sup>l</sup> spongiis et piscibus uariis Hodiue  
 fluminis<sup>m</sup>  
 cxxxix. De signis in morte Alexandri<sup>n</sup>  
 cxl. De signis in morte Karoli<sup>o</sup>  
 cxli. De septem dormientibus in Germania<sup>p</sup>  
 cxlii. De Scriptobonis et umbra hominis<sup>q</sup>  
 cxliii. De Caribdi et uoragine maris Britannic<sup>r</sup>  
 cxliv. De statu Iudeorum<sup>s</sup> et balsamo  
 cxlv. De Parthis et eorum ortu et conuersatione<sup>t</sup>]  
 De exitu operis et est epistola.<sup>u</sup>

*Incipit tercia decisio continens mirabilia uniuscuiusque prouincie, non omnia, sed ex omnibus aliqua.*

Vt operi cepto debitam consummationis exhibeamus perfectionem, consequens erit, postquam de creatione celi et terre et eorum dispositione ac ornatu primam decisionem ordinauimus, et in secunda decisione mundum in tres partes distinctum per singulas regiones ac prouincias diuisimus, cum succedentium regnorum per loca et tempora descriptione, illam nostri tractatus primordiale materiam

<sup>f</sup> omnes om. I      <sup>g</sup> X and I continue with the titles of items 17-31 of the addenda (see Appendix i. 17-31), presenting them as additional chapters of Book III      <sup>h</sup> sic X for odontotyranno      <sup>i</sup> et cancris . . . nicticoracibus] om. I      <sup>j</sup> sic I, iacis ranis X for Ichthyophagis      <sup>k</sup> sic I, cenofalis X for Cynocephalis      <sup>l</sup> et om. I  
<sup>m</sup> uariis . . . fluminis] om. I; de Seribus et feris eorum add. after fluminis X      <sup>n</sup> in . . .

125. A Spring which Bubbles Up at the Time for Hay-making  
 126. A Spring at which People who Suffer from Goitre are Cured  
 127. A Spring which Suddenly Disappears  
 128. The Springs of Le Vigan  
 129. The Spring of Ceyreste  
 130. A Spring which Shuns All Dirt  
 [131. The Cup of Water and the Reeds  
 132. The Hippopotami  
 133. The Scorpions, Crabs, Snakes, Lions, Boars, and Bats of India, and the Odontotyranus, and Mice, and Nycticoraces  
 134. A Remarkable Beast which Inhabits the Indian Sea  
 135. Ichthyophagi and Cynocephali  
 136. The Jordia Valley and its Gemstones  
 137. Griffins and Other Creatures  
 138. The Reeds and Sponges, and the Various Fish, of the River Briso; the Chinese and their Animals  
 139. The Signs on the Death of Alexander  
 140. The Signs on the Death of Charlemagne  
 141. The Seven Sleepers in Germany  
 142. The Scriptoboni, and a Person's Shadow  
 143. Charybdis and the Whirlpool in the British Sea  
 144. The Jewish State, and Balsam  
 145. The Parthians, their Origin and Way of Life]  
 The End of the Work, and a Letter

*Here begins the third book, containing marvels from every province, not all the marvels, but a selection from the total*

We now mean to complete the work we have undertaken with its promised final part: we have set in order the first book on the creation of heaven and earth and their arrangement and adornment, and in the second book we have divided the world into three parts and specified all its different regions and provinces, providing a description of its successive kingdoms, and of where and when they held sway; it is now time to fulfil, as best we can, the original aim and intention of our

Alexandri] que apparuerunt in morte Magni Alexandri X      <sup>o</sup> De . . . Karoli] I; add. in margin by late hand X      <sup>p</sup> in Germania] Germanie X      <sup>q</sup> De . . . hominis] De diuersitate diei et noctis et umbre propter uarietatem climatis I      <sup>r</sup> Britannie om. X  
<sup>s</sup> antiquo add. after Iudeorum X      <sup>t</sup> eorum . . . conuersatione] ortu eorum I  
<sup>u</sup> De . . . epistola] I; om. X

et causam ad aliquantam prout licuerit perfectionem ducere.<sup>a</sup> Vt enim ab exordio meminimus, propositi nostri principium est mirabilia singularium prouinciarum deliciosis auribus inferre, ut habeat imperialis celsitudo, cum dilucidum fuerit ei uacationis interuallum, quo suas recreet<sup>b</sup> meditationes, secundum illud:

Interpone tuis interdum gaudia curis.<sup>1</sup>

Enimuero non ex loquaci ystrionum garrulitate ocium decet imperiale imbui, sed potius, abiectis importunis fabularum mendaciis, que uetustatis auctoritas comprobauit aut scripturarum firmavit auctoritas aut cotidiane conspectionis fides oculata testatur ad ocium sacri auditus sunt ducenda. Et quoniam humane mentis auditas ad audiendas ac hauriendas nouitates semper accuitur, antiquissima commutari necesse erit in noua, naturalia in mirabilia, apud plerosque usitata in inaudita. Censemus enim noua quadruplici<sup>c</sup> ratione iudicari: aut creatione, aut euentu, aut raritate, aut inauditu. Que ergo noua creantur delectant ex nature motu. Que nuper eueniunt, si frequentia minus, si rara plus habent admirationis. Que inaudita percipiuntur amplectimur, tum ex mutatione cursus naturalis quam admiramur,<sup>d</sup> tum ex ignorantia cause cuius ratio nobis est imperscrutabilis, tum ex assuetudine<sup>e</sup> nostra quam in aliis uariari sine cognitione iudicii iusti cernimus. Ex hiis, duo proueniunt: miracula et mirabilia, cum<sup>f</sup> |  
f. 58<sup>v</sup> utrorumque finis sit admiratio. Porro miracula dicimus usitatius que preter naturam diuine uirtuti ascribimus, ut cum uirgo parit, cum Lazarus resurgit, cum lapsa membra reintegrantur. Mirabilia uero dicimus que nostre cognitioni<sup>g</sup> non subiacent, etiam cum sunt naturalia; sed et mirabilia constituit ignorantia reddende rationis quare sic sit.<sup>2</sup>

Ecce enim uulgare notumque est salamandram<sup>3</sup> in igne uiuere, et cum ignis consumptiue<sup>h</sup> sit nature, hec igne nutritur, non consumitur. Vidi equidem, cum nuper Rome essem, allatam a cardinali

<sup>a</sup> ducere supplied by author N      <sup>b</sup> recreet supplied by author N  
<sup>c</sup> quadruplici N      <sup>d</sup> admiramur β; admirantur N      <sup>e</sup> assuetudine] affectudine  
written by scribe, glossed by author id est affectione N      <sup>f</sup> cum [f. 58<sup>v</sup>] cum N  
<sup>g</sup> cognitionis N      <sup>h</sup> confinitue N

<sup>1</sup> Cato, *Distichs*, iii. 6. 1.

<sup>2</sup> On this definition of a marvel, see above, pp. lvii–lviii, n. 193.

<sup>3</sup> Up until late antiquity the salamander was thought to extinguish fires, but not to live in them (e.g. Pliny, *Hist. nat.* x. 86. 188). Augustine is Gervase's source here, and for the other marvels in this preface (*Civ.* xxi. 4, *CSEL* xl (2), 517–21 = *PL* xli. 712–14). Isidore of Seville attempts to have it both ways, saying of the salamander: 'Vivit enim in mediis

treatise. For, as we recall from the preface, our primary purpose is to present the marvels of every province to our discerning listener, in order that His Imperial Highness may have a source of refreshment for his thoughts when a clear interval of leisure is his, according to the dictum:

Interrupt your cares with gladness now and then.<sup>1</sup>

To be sure, it is not proper that an emperor's leisure should be contaminated with the prating babbling of players; on the contrary, the crude falsehoods of idle tales should be spurned, and only those things which are sanctioned by the authority of age, or confirmed by the authority of scripture, or attested by daily eye-witness accounts, should be brought to his venerable hearing in his leisure hours. And since the appetite of the human mind is always keen to hear and lap up novelties, the oldest things will have to be presented as new, natural things as miraculous, and things familiar to us all, as strange. For we reckon that things are adjudged novelties on four criteria: for their originality, or their recentness, or their rarity, or their strangeness. So, anything that is newly created gives pleasure by reason of the working of nature. Anything that has only just happened causes excitement, less if it happens often, more if it is rare. When anything strange is observed we seize on it, partly because of the inversion of the natural order which surprises us, partly because of our ignorance of the cause, whose working is a mystery to us, and partly because of seeing our expectation cheated in unfamiliar circumstances of which we lack a proper understanding. From these causes arise two things, miracles and marvels, though they both result in wonderment. Now we generally call those things miracles which, being preternatural, we ascribe to divine power, as when a virgin gives birth, when Lazarus is raised from the dead, or when diseased limbs are made whole again; while we call those things marvels which are beyond our comprehension, even though they are natural: in fact the inability to explain why a thing is so constitutes a marvel.<sup>2</sup>

For instance, it is a matter of common knowledge that the salamander<sup>3</sup> lives in fire, and although fire is of a destructive nature, this creature is nourished by it, not destroyed. I myself saw, when I was lately in Rome, a strap of salamander skin about the size of a belt which had been brought there by the cardinal Master

flammis sine dolore et consummatione, et non solum quia non uritur, sed extinguit incendium' (*Etym.* xii. 4. 36).

magistro Petro Capuano<sup>4</sup> corrigiam de corio salamandre amplam uelut cinorium renum, et cum ex contrectatione aliquas sordes contraxisset, in ignem<sup>5</sup> ipsam uidimus ab omni inquinamento purgatam et in nullo consumptam.<sup>6</sup> Sed<sup>7</sup> et dampnatissimi<sup>8</sup> Sicilie montes, qui tanta temporis diurnitate ac uetustate nunc ac deinceps flammis estuant et integri perseuerant, satis idonei testes sunt non omne quod ardet absumi, sicut indicant anime non omne quod dolere potest posse et<sup>k</sup> mori.<sup>7</sup>

Carnem quoque pauonis nulla temporis uetustate corrumpi testatur Augustinus in libro *De ciuitate Dei*,<sup>9</sup> asserens se id ita probasse: cum enim ex auditis faceret periculum, frustrum<sup>10</sup> ad octo dies coctum iussit conseruari intactum, quod cum exacto tempore incorruptum etiam per triginta dies seruasset integrum, etiam post annum nihil os eius offendit olfatu, nisi quod aliquantum corpulentie siccioris fuit et contractioris.

<sup>11</sup>Vnde hec rebus insita condicio prodierit quis indicare<sup>m</sup> queat, cum et ignis admiranda sit permutatio qui, cum natura sit lucidus, ipse in sui colore pulcherimus omnia que lambit decolorat, dum ex ardente fulgenteque<sup>n</sup> pruna carbonem reddit teterrimum, et e contra lapides igne cocti candidi fiunt. Porro carbones ictu leuissimo franguntur pressuque facillimo conteruntur, et in eis tanta est firmitas quod nullo humore corrumpuntur, nulla etate uincuntur. Cumque carbonum materia, lignum, sub aqua aut terra putrescat, ad carbonum perpetuitatis indicium sub terminis agrariis carbones ponuntur, ut terminis cuiusuis malicia motis, uerior rei dubie firmitas probetur, dum carbones incorrupti sub stipite uel memoriali lapide reperiuntur.<sup>11</sup>

Accedit ad consimilem admirationem quod de calce cotidiana

<sup>i</sup> igne X <sup>j</sup> dampnatissimi MSS; quidam notissimi Augustine <sup>k</sup> et om. XQ; etiam Augustine <sup>l</sup> frustrum X <sup>m</sup> iudicare β <sup>n</sup> fulgente quod N

<sup>4</sup> Peter of Capua was cardinal deacon of Santa Maria in Via Lata from 1193, and cardinal priest of San Marcello from 1201 until his death in 1214; see W. Maleczek, *Petrus Capuanus: Kardinal, Legat am vierten Kreuzzug, Theologe* (Vienna, 1988). This episode may have taken place at the time of Otto's coronation in 1209.

<sup>5</sup> The accusative *ignem* may have been intended to convey elliptically the insertion of the skin into the fire before the occurrence of the marvel, or may simply have been a mistake for the ablative, as the scribe of X thought.

<sup>6</sup> The belief that the salamander skin was cleansed by fire was widespread in the Middle Ages (see Liebrecht, p. 97). What Gervase saw must have been asbestos, which was thought to be made from the animal's skin.

<sup>7-7</sup> et dampnatissimi . . . posse et mori] Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xxi. 4 (*CSEL* xl (2). 517 = *PL* xli. 712).

Peter of Capua.<sup>4</sup> When it had picked up some dirt from being handled, it was put into a fire,<sup>5</sup> and before our eyes the fire cleansed it of every stain, but did not burn it at all.<sup>6</sup> <sup>7</sup>The infernal<sup>8</sup> mountains of Sicily also offer quite sufficient proof that not all that burns is destroyed: throughout the ages, from time immemorial up to the present, they have been seething with flames, and seem likely to continue; and yet they remain undamaged. Likewise souls show that not everything that can suffer can also die.<sup>7</sup>

Augustine attests also, in his book *City of God*,<sup>9</sup> that a peacock's flesh does not decay no matter how old it is. He says that he proved it like this: conducting an experiment on the basis of what he had heard, he ordered a cooked piece<sup>10</sup> of meat to be preserved untouched for eight days, and since when the time had passed it was unspoil, he preserved it for another thirty days, and it was still fresh; even after a year it did not offend his nostrils at all by its smell: the only change was that the flesh had become a little dry and shrunken.

<sup>11</sup>Who can tell the origin of these innate properties in things? The transformation produced by fire is also remarkable: although it is itself bright by nature and very beautiful in its own colour, it discolours everything on which it plays. It produces the blackest charcoal from a hot glowing coal, but on the other hand stones that are baked in fire turn white. Charcoal, moreover, can be broken by the lightest blow and crumbled by the gentlest pressure, and yet there is such great durability in it that no damp erodes it and no age destroys it. And although wood, the raw material of charcoal, rots in water or earth, the durability of charcoal is shown by the fact that it is laid beneath land-boundaries in order that, if someone moves the boundary-markers out of ill-will, a perfectly reliable settlement of the dispute may be reached, in that the charcoal is found undecayed beneath the right position of the post or marking-stone.<sup>11</sup>

We should be similarly impressed by what we see daily displayed to

<sup>8</sup> This alteration to the text of Augustine (see apparatus) reflects the belief that Mt Etna was an entrance to the other world; see *Otia*, ii. 12, n. 41, and iii. 17, n. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Augustine, loc. cit.; cf. Isidore, *Etym.* xii. 7. 48.

<sup>10</sup> The form *frustum* appears only in X, where it is presumably a scribal correction; see *Otia*, ii. 21, n. 30.

<sup>11-11</sup> Vnde . . . memoriali lapide reperiuntur] Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xxi. 4 (*CSEL* xl (2). 518 = *PL* xli. 712-13). Augustine's description of the practice of burying charcoal beneath boundaries is also echoed by Isidore (*Etym.* xix. 6. 7) and Alexander Neckam (*De naturis rerum*, ii. 50); but there is no evidence that it was widely employed.

conspicione uidemus, que <sup>12</sup>si aqua frigida conspersa fuerit ignescit, cum omnia frigiditate aque tacta frigescant; olei uero perfusione non calet, cum oleum sit ignis incitamentum. Hec omnia si de aliquo Indico lapide narrentur, cuius experimentum ad nos peruenire non posset, profecto mendacium iudicarem, aut certe admirationis stupore teneremur. Quia uero ante oculos nostros cotidiana de hiis documenta uersantur, non genere minus mirabili, sed ipsa uisus assiduitate uilescent; ita ut ex ipsa India, quia<sup>o</sup> remota pars orbis est, desideremus<sup>p</sup> nonnulla mirari, que ad nos poterant<sup>q</sup> minus<sup>r</sup> miranda perducere.<sup>12</sup> Nullus ergo fabulosa iudicet que scribimus: non enim ut inanibus uerbis aures sacras detineamus hec compegimus, sed ut, omissis mimorum mendaciis que paucitati ueritatis immiscent, miranda que non nouerunt fallaces sub ueridica terrarum et auctorum<sup>s</sup> testificatione sumatis.

i. *De magnete lapide*<sup>a</sup>

In India magnes lapis gignitur, qui ferrum rapit tanta uiolencia quod legimus in libro *De ciuitate Dei* Augustinum <sup>1</sup>anulum ferreum magneti iunxisse, cumque raptum ad se traxisset, iunctus est anulus anulo, sicque medianti anulo secundus iungitur; additur tercius et ille rapitur; additur quartus nec minore uirtutis extensione rapitur: iamque sibi per mutua circulorum reciacula non implicatorum intrinsecus sed extrinsecus adherentium quasi cathena<sup>b</sup> pependit anulorum. Probationi iungitur probatio si ferrum cifo superferas argenteo et magnetem subponas. Sicut enim inferius mouebitur magnes, ita ferrum mutabitur, cifo medio semper inmutato. Si uero

<sup>o</sup> quia Cβ; et N; quae Augustine      <sup>p</sup> desideremus MSS; desierimus Augustine  
<sup>q</sup> poterant MSS; potuerunt Augustine      <sup>r</sup> minus om. Augustine      <sup>s</sup> actorum N

<sup>a</sup> The scribe of N mistakenly made quod (end of line 1) the first word of this chapter. The author wrote capitulum in the margin to indicate where it actually begins, and the title is keyed to the right place      <sup>b</sup> cautena N

<sup>12-12</sup> si aqua . . . minus miranda perducit] Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xxi. 4 (CSEL xl (2). 519 = PL xli. 713); Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xxxvi. 53. 174, xxxiii. 30. 94, xxiv. 1. 3; Isidore, *Etym.* xvi. 3. 10, xix. 10. 19; Neckam, *De naturis rerum*, ii. 51. Gervase has changed the text of the last sentence (see apparatus); Augustine says: 'we have ceased to marvel at many of the marvels of India itself (a part of the world so remote from us) which it has proved possible to bring into our experience' (transl. H. Bettenson).

<sup>1-1</sup> anulum . . . et raptum remittit (p. 564)] Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xxi. 4 (CSEL xl

view in the case of lime, which <sup>12</sup>catches fire if it is sprinkled with cold water, though all other things are cooled by contact with cold water; while it is not warmed if oil is poured on, though oil fosters fire. If all these things were told of some Indian stone of which we could have no first-hand knowledge, we should surely judge them to be false, or at least we should be overcome with awed amazement. But because the evidence for these things is set before our eyes every day, they are held of no account, not because they are of a less marvellous character, but simply because we see them so often. And so it happens that we are quick to marvel at many things from India, just because it is a distant part of the world, but when it has been possible for these things to be brought over to us, they have appeared less wonderful.<sup>12</sup> Therefore no one should take the things we write to be idle tales, for our purpose in assembling them has not been to weary your venerable hearing with empty words, but the wish that, laying aside the lying fictions of players which are mingled with a small amount of truth, you may learn of marvels of which mere story-tellers have no knowledge, on reliable testimony deriving from the lands where they occur or from writers who vouch for them.

i. *The Loadstone*

The loadstone is found in India. It attracts iron with very great force, as we read in Augustine's book *City of God*: he describes how <sup>1</sup>he brought an iron ring into contact with a loadstone, and when it had taken hold of it and attached it to itself, another ring was added to the first: the second one adhered to the ring between it and the loadstone; a third was added, and that too was attracted; a fourth was added, and was attracted just as powerfully. And now a sort of chain of rings dangled down by the borrowed magnetism of the circles, which were not interlinked but merely clung together on the outside. Proof is added to proof if you put some iron in a silver bowl and apply a magnet underneath, for as the magnet moves underneath, the iron will move with it, while the bowl in between stays still. But if you

(2). 520 = PL xli. 714); Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xx. 1. 2, xxxvii. 15. 61; Solinus, *Collect.* lii. 57; Isid. *Etym.* xvi. 4. 1, 2; Honorius, *De imagine mundi*, i. 12 (13) (ed. Flint p. 55 = PL clxxii. 125); Neckam, *De naturis rerum*, ii. 94.

f. 59<sup>r</sup> magneti iunxeris adamantem, non solum | magnes ferrum non rapit,  
sed et raptum remittit.<sup>1</sup>

Hec circa naturas lapidum memorauimus ut miretur imperfectio nostra quod propter ignorantiam infirmitatis nostre exsoluere non sufficimus.<sup>2</sup> Infideles enim homines, cum<sup>c</sup> diuina, ut ait Augustinus, uel preterita uel futura miracula predicamus, que illis experienda non ualemus ostendere, rationem a nobis flagitant quam reddere non sufficimus. Excedunt quippe uires mentis humane; ideoque existimant falsa plerumque esse que dicimus, cum de hiis etiam que cotidiana uidemus ipsi reddere rationem non possint.<sup>d2</sup>

## ii. De sale Agrigentino

Agrigentinum Sicilie salem admiranda nouimus contrarietate dissolui, et in ipsa naturali dissolutione consistere: cum igni fuerit admotus, uelut in aqua fluescit; si uero iungatur aque, uelut in igne<sup>a</sup> crepitat.<sup>1</sup>

Sed et in Catalonia, que prouincie subiacet Terraconensi,<sup>b</sup> castrum est Cardona, in cuius monte sal saxeam trahit duriciem, et cum in montis concauo sustullitur, superueniente pluuiam, mons in eadem salis quantitate atque salsugine crescit et reintegratur.<sup>2</sup> Huius autem salis tanta firmitas est quod in modum lapidis effertur, cutellisque admodum acutis uix radi potest aut euelli.

Istud quoque in imperio tuo, uenerande princeps, admirandum censeo, quod apud Arelatem urbem, regni Arelatensis capud, insula est undique Rodano marique Mediterraneo clausa, quam 'Sticados<sup>c</sup> arua' Lucanus nominat.<sup>3</sup> In hac stagna sunt maritima que terre contiguitate modica aqua distenduntur. Sicut ergo frigida aqua in<sup>d</sup> hyemis asperitate congelatur ex constrictione frigiditatis,<sup>e</sup> sic aqua salsa, que calida est et sicca, ex constrictione caliditatis coagulatur sub

<sup>c</sup> cum] circa NC      <sup>d</sup> possunt XQ

<sup>a</sup> igne] aqua NX      <sup>b</sup> Terraconensi N      <sup>c</sup> Sticados Lucan      <sup>d</sup> in om.  
XQ      <sup>e</sup> ex . . . frigiditatis] om. XQ

<sup>2-2</sup> Infideles . . . rationem non possint] Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xxi. 5 (*CSEL* xl (2). 521 = *PL* xli. 714).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xxi. 5 (*CSEL* xl (2). 521 = *PL* xli. 715); Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xxxi. 41. 86; Solinus, *Collect.* v. 18; Isidore, *Etym.* xvi. 2. 4, xiv. 6. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Otia*, iii. 117.

bring a diamond into contact with a magnet, the magnet not only does not attract iron, but releases any that it had attracted.<sup>1</sup>

We have recorded these things concerning the properties of stones in order that our limited understanding may marvel at what we are unable to explain, due to the ignorance of our weak nature. For, as Augustine says,<sup>2</sup> when we talk about divine miracles, past or future, which we do not have the power to demonstrate to them in practice, unbelievers demand an explanation from us which we are not able to give. Miracles, indeed, are beyond the capacity of the human intellect. But then they reckon that much of what we say is untrue, although they are themselves unable to give an explanation even of things which we see every day.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. The Salt of Agrigento

We know that the salt of Agrigento in Sicily has the remarkable property of dissolving when salt normally solidifies, while it solidifies when it is natural for salt to dissolve: when it is thrown on a fire it dissolves as if it were in water, but if it comes into contact with water it crackles as if it were in a fire.<sup>1</sup>

In Catalonia, which adjoins the province of Tarragona, is the castle of Cardona. This castle is built on a mountain containing salt which takes on the hardness of rock. When the salt is quarried, leaving a hollow in the mountain, the mountain grows with the next rainfall to produce the same amount and quality of salt, and is made whole again.<sup>2</sup> The hardness of this salt is such that it has to be extracted like stone, and can hardly be scratched or cut by even the sharpest knives.

There is something in your empire too, venerable Prince, which I consider remarkable. Near the city of Arles, capital of the kingdom of Arles, there is an island completely surrounded by the Rhône and the Mediterranean Sea; Lucan calls it 'the Fields of Lavender'.<sup>3</sup> On this island there are salt lakes which are divided up by strips of land, and hold only a little water. Now just as cold water turns to ice as a result of the binding action of the cold in the harshness of winter, so salt water, which is warm and dry, solidifies into salt as a result of the binding action of the heat in the high temperatures of August.

<sup>3</sup> Lucan, *Pharsalia*, iii. 516; cf. Pliny iii. 5. 79. Gervase is referring to the Camargue; see *Otia*, ii. 10, n. 27.



Augusti feruore<sup>f</sup> in salem. Quod igitur illic facit frigiditas constringens, in sale operatur caliditas siccitatem coagulans.<sup>4</sup>

Accedit ad hec in sale mirabile. Est enim in maiore Britannia, quam Angliam dicimus, aui tui regnum, in episcopatu Wigorniensis, uilla suburbana Wichium<sup>g</sup> nomine, in qua sub monticuli cuiusdam radice aqua profluit, haut grandis, dulcissima. In huius ripa putei numero pauci distenduntur, quorum profunditas modica et aqua salsissima: cum in cacabis aqua bullitur, densescit in salem albissimum. Ferturque<sup>h</sup> ab uniuersa prouincia quod a natiuitate Domini usque ad natiuitatem sancti Iohannis Baptiste<sup>5</sup> salsissima scaturit aqua, per alteram anni partem subdulcis prorumpit et ad salem inutilis;<sup>i</sup> et, quod mirabilis arbitrator, cum ad usum salis aqua prorumpit oportuna, si non hauritur supereffluit, cum dulcessit ad alteram anni partem, uix superexrescit. Et cum tempus aduenit salsuginis nulla uicinitate frangitur aque fluuialis, nec in aliqua propinquitate maris inuenitur aut cuiusuis salsitatis contagium,<sup>6</sup> cum sit illa prouincia fluuiis<sup>j</sup> fontibusque irriguis<sup>k</sup> spatiosa.<sup>7</sup>

### iii. De lapide abeston

Est in Arcadia abeston lapis qui semel accensus extingui non potest.<sup>1</sup> Est et in Aquensi prouincia, castro Baldimento,<sup>2</sup> rupes rubea ad instar coralli rubei, cuius fragmenta, si fuerint accensa, ad instar candelae lumen faciunt, et diutinam lucernam faciunt<sup>a</sup> ante materie consumptionem. Porro Augustinus in .xxi. libro *De ciuitate Dei*<sup>3</sup> narrat esse in

<sup>f</sup> feruore supplied by author N      <sup>g</sup> Wichium supplied by author N      <sup>h</sup> fertur quod N  
<sup>i</sup> inutilis supplied by author in space left by scribe N      <sup>j</sup> fluuiis N  
<sup>k</sup> fontibusque irriguis β; fontibus irriguisque NAC

<sup>a</sup> facit N

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Otia*, iii. 40, n. 2.

<sup>5</sup> i.e. from 25 December to 24 June. The feast of St John the Baptist, being Midsummers Day, was surrounded with a host of superstitions: cf. *Otia*, iii. 11, 21, and 102. On the Droitwich salt industry, see D. Hooke, 'The Droitwich salt industry: an examination of the West Midlands charter evidence', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History*, ii (1981), 123–69.

<sup>6</sup> One would expect *contagio*, to balance *propinquitate*; instead *contagium* appears to have replaced the spring as the subject of *inuenitur*.

<sup>7</sup> Ralph de Diceto also describes this stream (*Abb. chron.* p. 13); in his account, however, it is useless for making salt from three o'clock on Saturday afternoon until Monday morning, and also on apostles' feast days, holidays called by the local priest, and vigils.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xxi. 5 (*CSEL* xl (2). 521 = *PL* xli. 715); Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xxxvii.

Therefore what the stiffening force of cold does in other circumstances, heat achieves in the case of salt by turning it into a dry solid.<sup>4</sup>

There is another marvel to do with salt. It occurs in Great Britain, which we call England: your grandfather's kingdom. In the diocese of Worcester there is a country town called Droitwich, in which, at the bottom of a little hill, some water trickles forth; it is not abundant, but it is very sweet. On the bank of this stream a small number of wells have been dug; they are not very deep, but their water is extremely salty: when the water is boiled in pots, it is reduced to pure white salt. It is actually maintained by all the people of the province that from the Nativity of the Lord until the Nativity of St John the Baptist<sup>5</sup> the water of the spring is very salty, but for the rest of the year it flows quite sweet and is of no use for making salt; and, a thing that seems to me even more remarkable, when the water flows that is suitable to be used for salt, it overflows unless it is drawn, but for the rest of the year while it is sweet, the level barely rises. And when the season of its saltiness arrives it is not engulfed by the water of a nearby river, nor is it situated close to the sea, or in contact<sup>6</sup> with any salt water, although that province is amply irrigated by rivers and springs.<sup>7</sup>

### 3. The Asbestos Stone

In Arcadia the asbestos stone is found, which, once set on fire, cannot be extinguished.<sup>1</sup> Also, in the province of Aix, in the village of Beaudiment,<sup>2</sup> there is a red stone like red coral; if chips of it are set on fire, they provide light like a candle, and serve as a lamp for a long time before their substance is consumed. Further, in the twenty-first book of his work *City of God*,<sup>3</sup> Augustine tells how, in a certain shrine

54. 146; Solinus, *Collect.* vii. 13; Isidore, *Etym.* xiv. 4. 15, xvi. 4. 4; Honorius, *De imagine mundi*, i. 25 (27) (ed. Flint p. 61 = *PL* clxxii. 129); *Otia*, ii. 7, at n. 74. The Greek word ἀσβεστος meant 'unquenchable', but by a shift of meaning came to signify 'incombustible', and hence was applied to fire-proof materials like our asbestos. Pliny simply describes the Arcadian asbestos as 'coloris ferrei', but Solinus, doubtless thinking of the first meaning, adds: 'accensus semel, extingui nequitur.' Augustine derives most of the chapter from which Gervase takes this sentence from Solinus, who often 'improves' on Pliny.

<sup>2</sup> A small village near Sisteron in Provence.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xxi. 6 (*CSEL* xl (2). 524 = *PL* xli. 716); Isidore, *Etym.* xvi. 4. 4. Pliny mentions a shrine of Venus at Paphos on whose altar rain never fell (*Hist. nat.* ii. 97. 210). Athena had a lamp at Athens which when filled with oil burned day and night for a year without refilling or relighting (Pausanias, i. 26. 7). An inextinguishable lamp made of asbestos is said to have stood in the *Mutatorium Caesaris*, on the site of which the church of Santa Balbina was built (*Graphia aureae urbis Romae*, c. 33, ed. Valentini and Zucchetti,

quodam Veneris fano camdelabrum quod lucernam habet ardentem sub diuo, nullaue tempestate uel imbre potest extingui.

Sed et a multis habemus compertum quod<sup>b</sup> sunt cerei quos refert antiquitas cum Christo a Beata Virgine presentatos in templum, qui sine consumpcione lucendique intermissione perpetuo lucent. Verum istud miraculis diuine uirtutis attribuitur, sicut et illud de uirgula fumi. Habet enim uetus Ebrehorum traditio quod quedam Iudeorum progenies in templo curam habebat incensi, qui tanta ministerii singularitate pollebant quod ex aromatibus faciebant incensum f. 59<sup>v</sup> quod, primis in turibulis legalibus impositum,<sup>c</sup> | uirgulam faciebat fumi aromatici tam constante direccione celos penetrantem quod nulla ui uentorum declinabat ad aliam partem preterquam ad fastigium celi et templi.<sup>4</sup> De quo Salomon in canticis sponse: 'Que est ista que ascendit per desertum sicut uirgula fumi ex aromatibus mirre, et thuris, et uniuersi pulueris<sup>d</sup> pigmentarii?'<sup>5</sup>

#### iv. De ficu Egipti

Est in Egipto ficus cuius<sup>a</sup> lignum in aquam proiectum non supernatat, ut communis lignorum natura est aquis supernatare,<sup>b</sup> sed cum diu inmersum fuerit illius ficus lignum rursus<sup>c</sup> ad aque superficiem emergit.<sup>1</sup>

Scio in Anglia, episcopatu Lincolniensi, inter Londonias et Norhamtonam, uico quem Aspele<sup>2</sup> uulgo nominat, siluam esse cuius ligna, si secta fuerint et in aquam riui interfluentis proiecta uel in terra arida iuxta ripam aque sepulta, atque uel in aqua uel in arida per anni<sup>d</sup> spatium confossa dimittantur, redeunte anni circulo

<sup>b</sup> After quod space left for several words in N      <sup>c</sup> After impositum the scribe of N wrote, correctly, uirgulam faciebat, then repeated incensum quod primis in turibulis legalibus [f. 59<sup>v</sup>] impositum, before continuing uirgulam facebat (sic) fumi etc. The author inserted fumi after faciebat before noticing the duplication; the words uirgulam . . . impositum are expunged      <sup>d</sup> pulueris supplied by author N

<sup>a</sup> cuius omitted, restored by scribe in margin and keyed in, but after lignum N  
<sup>b</sup> supernature N      <sup>c</sup> rusus N      <sup>d</sup> anni corrected by author from annum N; annum AI; annuum CXQ

p. 91); the same legend, but involving two tapers and a torch, is connected with Virgil in the *Image du Monde* (see Comparetti, *Virgil*, p. 306).

<sup>4</sup> In the last age of the temple the family of Abtinios, or Awtinas, held the privilege of compounding the sacred incense, which was burned every morning and evening (Exod. 30: 7, 8). The proper fabrication of the incense, compounded from thirteen constituents (Josephus, *Bell.* v. 218), was a secret art: this family alone knew how to add the ingredient

of Venus, there is a lampstand holding a lamp which burns under the open sky, and no wind or rain can put it out.

We have established from many sources that there are some waxlights which, according to an ancient tradition, were presented with Christ in the temple by the Blessed Virgin, and they stay alight all the time without ever burning away or going out. But that is attributed to the miraculous working of divine power, as is too the phenomenon of the pillar of smoke. For an old Hebrew tradition has it that a particular family of the Jews was responsible for the incense in the temple. This family discharged their duties with such singular devotion that the incense they made from spices, when it was put in the principal censers according to the Law, produced a wand of aromatic smoke, going up to heaven with such an unswerving course that no gust of wind could divert it into any other path than that which led straight to the summit of heaven and of the temple.<sup>4</sup> Solomon refers to this in his song to his spouse: 'Who is she that goes up by the desert, as a pillar of smoke of aromatical spices, of myrrh and frankincense, and of all the powders of the perfumer?'<sup>5</sup>

#### 4. The Fig-Tree of Egypt

There is a fig-tree in Egypt, the wood of which does not float when it is thrown into water, though it is a normal property of wood to float on water; but after it has remained submerged for a long time, the wood of that fig-tree bobs up again to the water's surface.<sup>1</sup>

I know of a wood in England, in the diocese of Lincoln, between London and Northampton, at a hamlet which the people call Aspeley;<sup>2</sup> if any trees of this wood are felled and thrown into the water of a brook which flows through it, or buried in the dry ground by the water's edge, and are then left for the space of a year lodged either in the water or in the earth, when the year has turned full circle the

*m'aleh ashan* ('that which makes the smoke ascend'), a herb, probably leptadenia pyrotechnica, which made the smoke rise in a straight line to the roof (*Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, 1971-2), s.vv. *Incense* and *Awtinas*).

The odd phrase 'ad fastigium celi et templi' may reflect uncertainty as to whether the smoke maintained its straight course just as far as the roof (as was in fact the case), or all the way to the summit of heaven (as is suggested by 'celos penetrantem').

<sup>5</sup> S. of S. 3: 6.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xxi. 5 (*CSEL* xl (2). 521-2 = *PL* xli. 715); Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xiii. 14. 56; Solinus, *Collect.* xxxii. 34; Neckam, *De naturis rerum*, ii. 80.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Aspeley Guise, in Bedfordshire: an example of Gervase's local knowledge of England.

ligna saxeam duritiem contrahunt; et in quamcumque effigiem per quamvis dolaturam uel celaturam fuerint transformata, lapidis grauitatem soliditatemque pretendunt. Si uero non secantur sed plantantur, ut in alio solo coalescunt. Cui simile asserunt euenire in regno uestro Arelantensi.

v. *De pomis Pentapolis<sup>1</sup> que crescunt et fauillantur*

In terra Sodomorum poma nascuntur aspectu pulcherima. Pro tempore crescunt, et cum ad debitam ex tempore maturitatem peruenerint, confracta fumum faciunt ac fauillam.<sup>2</sup>

vi. *De lapide qui cum luna crescit<sup>a</sup>*

In Perside lapis est selentis,<sup>b</sup> cuius candor cum luna crescit ac decrescit.<sup>1</sup>

vii. *De tribus donis Terdone*

In Ytalia ciuitas est Terdona, sic dicta a tribus donis quibus ab indigenis predita narratur. In uigilia Pasce, cum iam hora baptismi uenerit, (in)<sup>a</sup> fonte<sup>b</sup> baptisterii ebullit<sup>c</sup> aqua perlucida ad baptismum scaturiens et limpidissima. Est et in urbe eadem ecclesia sancti Quintii, in qua<sup>d</sup> quisquis baptizatus fuerit, uita eius protenditur usque ad quadraginta annorum spatium. Accedit in eiusdem ciuitatis territorio mirabilis signum. Quociens enim quiuis loci illius paterfamilias infra annum terminum mortis habet, sulcus terre illius, cum aratro terra scinditur, sanguine sub cultro manat. Vnde ex antiquissima consuetudine dicunt institutum quod, quociens incole

<sup>a</sup> et decrescit *add. after crescit CXQ*      <sup>b</sup> sic NAXQ for selenitis

<sup>a</sup> in *ed.*; *om. MSS*      <sup>b</sup> fonte C; fontes NAXQ; fontis I      <sup>c</sup> ebullit N  
<sup>d</sup> qua] aqua N

<sup>1</sup> On the Pentapolis, see *Otia*, i. 12, n. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xxi. 5 (*CSEL* xl (2). 522 = *PL* xli. 715); Josephus, *Bell.* iv. 484; Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 7; Solinus, *Collect.* xxxv. 8; Comestor, *Gen.*, c. 53 (*PL* cxcviii. 1101). These apples were thought to reproduce the ashes from the destruction of the land of Sodom by fire (*Gen.* 19: 24). For other disappointing fruits, see *Otia*, iii. 94 and 102.

timber proves to have taken on the hardness of rock; and into whatever shape it is transformed by any manner of hewing or carving, it appears as heavy and solid as stone. If, however, the timber is not hewn, but is planted, it takes root, as happens in other soil. They say that something like this occurs in your kingdom of Arles.

5. *The Apples of the Pentapolis<sup>1</sup> which Grow and then Turn to Ashes*

In the land of Sodom apples grow which are very beautiful to look at. They grow in the usual season, and come to full ripeness in due time; but then if they are broken open, they yield only smoke and ashes.<sup>2</sup>

6. *The Stone which Waxes with the Moon*

In Persia there is a stone, selenite, whose lustre waxes and wanes with the moon.<sup>1</sup>

7. *The Three Gifts of Tortona*

In Italy is the city of Tortona (*Terdona*), so called because of the three gifts (*dona*) with which it is said by the inhabitants to be endowed. During the Easter Vigil, as soon as the time has arrived for the baptismal ceremony, a sparkling stream of pure water gushes up for the purpose in the font of the baptistery. In the same city is a church of St Quentin; anyone who is baptized in this church will go on living for forty years. An even more remarkable sign also occurs in the territory of the same city. Whenever any head of a household from that place is destined to die within a year, the furrow made in his land when the earth is cloven by the plough trickles with blood beneath the ploughshare. Consequently it is prescribed, they say, by an ancient custom that, every time the inhabitants hire their ploughmen for the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xxi. 5 (*CSEL* xl (2). 522 = *PL* xli. 715); Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xxxvii. 67. 181; Solinus, *Collect.* xxxvii. 21; Isidore, *Etym.* xvi. 4. 6, xvi. 10. 7; Honorius, *De imagine mundi*, i. 13 (14) (ed. Flint p. 55 = *PL* clxxii. 125). Selenite, or moonstone, derived its name from the suggestion of moonlight in the gem's lustre; hence the notion that it waxes and wanes with the moon.

bubulcos sub mercede annua conducunt, ipsos tactis sacrosanctis euangelis iurare faciunt tale indicium mortis patrifamilias indicatum iri.<sup>1</sup>

viii. *De cimiterio Fructuariensi*<sup>1</sup>

In episcopatu Taurinensi Italie est monasterium Fructuariense, antiqua religione celebre, in quo, iuxta ecclesiam sanctorum Benigni ac Tiburcii,<sup>a</sup> est cimiterium in quo singulariter monachi sepeliuntur. Verum si post triduum aperta fuerit sepultura, in ea nec ossa nec cinis mortui comparebunt:<sup>b</sup> quod multociens<sup>c</sup> probatum ac compertum a monacho cumfina, uiro religioso ac litterato, accepi sub fide uerbi testificatum.

ix. *De fenestra Camisse*

Accedit ad argumentum lucerne inextinguibilis quam in fano Veneris extitisse dicit Augustinus<sup>1</sup> inaudita et miranda rei nouitas, que non audita nouitas est, et ab antiquo cotidiana conspectione probantibus antiquitas est. In prouincia Viennensi<sup>a</sup> regni Arelatensis, ad confinium ciuitatis Gracionopolis, est prioratus sancti Micahelis de Camissa,<sup>2</sup> monasterio sancti Theofredi suppositus. Locus hic ab antiquo ueneranda religione pollet, situ amenus, in montis pendulo arduus, uentis<sup>b</sup> expositus, ab omni hominum strepitu semotus, et ex qualitate positionis religioni debitus. Inter ceteras religioni solitas officinas eminet rectorium, late spatiosum et omni procelle uentorum obiectum. In huius propatulo fenestra patet grandis, ad quantitatem ianue, uniuersam domum illuminans. Cum ergo irrumpentibus spiritibus procellarum domus in tanta montis ardui summitate constituta | tota fere concutitur, queuis<sup>c</sup> lucerna et ex quauis

<sup>a</sup> Tribucii N      <sup>b</sup> compararebunt N      <sup>c</sup> nultociens N

<sup>a</sup> sic *QI*; Viennesi supplied by author N      <sup>b</sup> uentis supplied by author N  
<sup>c</sup> queuis supplied by author N

<sup>1</sup> This superstition is connected, as Liebrecht notes (p. 98), with the frequent medieval representation of death as a ploughman who ploughs a bloody furrow.

<sup>2</sup> A Benedictine abbey near Volpiano, founded in 1003/1015 by William, abbot of Saint-Bénigne in Dijon (see M-A. dell'Omo in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, iv. 1003–5).

year, they make them swear, with a hand on the holy gospels, that any such warning of death will be made known to the head of the household.<sup>1</sup>

8. *The Cemetery of Fruttuaria*<sup>1</sup>

The monastery of Fruttuaria is in the diocese of Turin in Italy. It is renowned for its venerable religious tradition. It contains, next to its church of Sts Benignus and Tiburtius, a cemetery in which the monks are buried in individual graves. But if a grave is opened after a space of three days, neither the bones nor the ashes of the dead will be found in it. This has been put to the test and confirmed many times; I learnt it on the reliable testimony of a monk from that region, who is a devout and educated man.

9. *The Window of Connexe*

A strange and remarkable phenomenon lends credence to the inextinguishable lamp which, according to Augustine, stood in the shrine of Venus.<sup>1</sup> It is a novelty in so far as it has not been heard of, but it is also an antiquity for those who for many years have had the proof of it daily before their eyes. In the province of Vienne in the kingdom of Arles, in the vicinity of the city of Grenoble, is the priory of Saint-Michel-de-Connexe,<sup>2</sup> under the jurisdiction of the monastery of Saint-Chaffre. This place has long flourished with a respected religious community. It is pleasantly situated high up on a mountainside, exposed to the winds, but secluded from all the tumult of humanity: it is ideally suited to the religious life by the nature of its location. Among the other buildings normally pertaining to a monastic community, the refectory stands out: of spacious dimensions, it is exposed to every gust of wind. A large window the size of a door forms an opening in the wall of this building, admitting light to the whole interior. When storm-blasts buffet it, situated as it is on such a high peak of a steep mountain, the whole building shakes quite

<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *Civ.* xxi. 6 (*CSEL* xl (2). 524 = *PL* xli. 716); cf. *Otia*, iii. 3, n. 3.

<sup>2</sup> A Benedictine priory near Champ, founded at the end of the eleventh century under the auspices of the great abbey of Saint-Chaffre-du-Monastier (see Beaunier-Besse, *Abbayes et prieurés*, xxxvi. 99–100; Cottineau, *Répertoire*, ii. 2814).

materia, si in medio patentis illius ostii ponatur, nullo flatu concucietur: quin immo perseuerans immobilis accenditur ad lucendum. Res mira: parietes tanta uentorum rabie turbantur, et modica candele scintilla non mouetur; et interius illata moritur.

x. *De domibus Podiensibus*<sup>a</sup>

In Galliis, prouincia Bituricensi, ciuitate Aniciensi quam uulgo Podium Sancte Marie nominat,<sup>1</sup> est ecclesia frequentia miraculorum celebris, reliquiis sanctorum ditata, clero populoque honorata, et inter alias precipuas sancte Dei Genitricis Marie memorias<sup>2</sup> frequentata. In huius domo quam cenaculum refectionis nominant, nec aranea nec musca potest, etiam si inferatur, diu manere; quin imo uel ilico moritur, uel fuga misere<sup>b</sup> sue uite consulens auolat aut inter manus tenentis elabitur. Sed et in latrina canonice Podiensis, nullus umquam fetor eructuat, nullus corrupti aeris putor sentitur, cum sit locus in monte<sup>c</sup> prominens et ab omni aquarum profluuii alienus.<sup>d</sup>

Rem expertam loquar. Est in regno Arelatensi, prouincia Aquensi, uicus Bariolis nomine, in quo canonica<sup>3</sup> singularis fundata est, antiquitate ueneranda, possessionibus honorifice fundata, hospitalitate uicinis ecclesiis inuidiosa.<sup>e</sup> In hac est refectorium, ab antiquo edificatum, in quo nulla musca detineri potest. Huius rei nouitatem mihi per auditum cognitam ad probationem per experimentum ducturus, accessi sedulus explorator si quo mellis uel cuiusuis pinguedinis linimento scutellis musce, ut assolent, insiderent. Profecto rem rumore comperiens ueriuorem, uolens fallaciam ingeniosam cogitationis humane frustratam quadam uiolentia adiuuare, muscarum uenator effectus, predam in refectorio melli, lacti, ac pinguedini supersterno. Tunc maior excreuit admiratio, cum uim animi et uiolentiam corporis a me temptatam perpendo cassari; sicque cum fide facta de auditis stupor est augmentatus.

<sup>a</sup> De Podio Beate Marie C; De Podio XQ <sup>b</sup> miserie N <sup>c</sup> in monte om.  
XQ <sup>d</sup> alienis N <sup>e</sup> inuidioiosa N

<sup>1</sup> i.e. St Mary's Mount. The town of Le Puy-en-Velay was built around Mont-Anis, whence its Latin name, *Anicium*. See G. Fournier in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, v. 1904-5.

<sup>2</sup> The accusative *memorias* supplies the expected substantive after *inter*, but by its position it also suggests the ablative *memoriis* with *frequentata*.

<sup>3</sup> Notre-Dame de l'Espinar in Barjols, originally a Benedictine priory, became a collegiate church of canons regular in 1060, and enjoyed great power and prestige in the

violently. However, if any lamp, made from any substance at all, is set in the middle of that wide opening, no gust will make it flicker: rather, it stays quite still and burns with a bright light. What a marvel! Walls are rocked by such a raging wind, and the little flame of a candle is unmoved; but if it is brought inside, it goes out.

10. *The Buildings of Le Puy*

In France, in the province of Bourges, and the town of Anicium which is commonly called Le Puy-Notre-Dame,<sup>1</sup> there is a church renowned for the frequency of its miracles, rich in relics of the saints, honoured by clergy and people alike, and among its other outstanding monuments<sup>2</sup> abounding in memorials of Mary, the holy Mother of God. In a building here which they call the dining-hall, no spider or fly can stay any length of time, even if one is brought in: it either dies on the spot or, seeking to escape with its wretched life, flies away or slips through the hands of its captor. Also, in the latrine of the canons of Le Puy, no odour is ever given off and no stench of impure air can be smelt, although the place is high up on the hill and far from any running water.

I am going to tell of something of which I have personal experience. In the kingdom of Arles, in the province of Aix, there is a small town called Barjols, in which there is a notable collegiate foundation,<sup>3</sup> of venerable age; it is honourably endowed with estates, and excites the envy of neighbouring churches by its lavish hospitality. It has a refectory, built long ago, in which no fly can be made to stay. I had learned of this strange matter by hearsay, and wanted to test it by an experiment. So I came as an eager investigator to see if flies would settle, as they usually do, on platters with a smearing of honey or some other sticky substance on them. I discovered that the matter was in truth more than a rumour. Deciding to adopt violent measures in support of my ingenious ruse, a product of human thinking which had so far failed, I turned into a hunter of flies, and strewed my prey over honey, milk, and fat in the refectory. Then my amazement increased, when I observed that the mental energy and physical force which I had invested were in vain. And so while I came to believe what I had heard, my stupefaction was intensified.

twelfth and thirteenth centuries (see J. P. Papon, *Histoire générale de Provence* (Paris, 1777-86), i. 266; Achard, *Description*, i. 303-5; Beaunier-Besse, *Abbayes et prieurés*, vii. 37).

Porro in Campania, ciuitate Neopolitana, scimus Virgilium arte mathematica muscam erexisse eneam,<sup>f</sup> que tante uirtutis in se habuit experimentum quod, dum in loco constituto perseuerauit<sup>g</sup> integra, ciuitatem late spatiosam nulla musca ingrediebatur.<sup>4</sup>

xi. *De nuce que simul frondet et fructificat*

Adicitur mirabile mirabili dum in pretaxato uico Bariolis<sup>a</sup> aliquid nouum conspexi. Vidi quippe nucem grandem in orto iuxta antemuralia<sup>b</sup> que, depositis secundum morem aliarum arborum foliis, hyemali frigore tabescit, et cum omnes cetere arbores, redeunte ueris beneficio, suco succrescente uirescunt, foliis uestiuntur, floribusque fructificandi prenunciis suos delectant amatores, hec sola in yemalis constrictionis ariditate perseuerat; nullisque uiroris aut fructus premissis indiciis, exactis iam quatuor ferme mensibus, adueniente sancti Iohannis Baptiste sollempnitate, repentina exultatione nascentis precursoris gaudio congaudet, et ex improviso producit folia et fructum, cuius quantitas in nullo inferior est aut depressior aliarum arborum nucibus.<sup>1</sup>

xii. *De carne imputrescibili macelli<sup>a</sup>*

Iam nunc ad ciuitatem Campanie Neapolim redeamus, in qua macellum est in cuius pariete insertum perhibetur a Virgilio frustum

<sup>f</sup> eneam with second e expunged N      <sup>g</sup> perseueraret CXQ

<sup>a</sup> Banolis N      <sup>b</sup> antemuralia N

<sup>a</sup> De multis mirabilibus Neapolitanis CXQ

<sup>4</sup> This is the first of a group of legends which Gervase recounts concerning Virgil and his association with Naples; see also chapters 12, 13, 15, 16, and 112. Gervase was one of the earliest writers to record these legends, which attributed magical powers to Virgil and came to enjoy a wide popularity (see Comparetti, *Vergil*; Spargo, *Virgil*; N. Silento, *Civiltà napoletana del medioevo nei sec. vi-xiii* (Naples, 1959)).

This story of the fly-talisman was the first to appear in writing, and remained one of the most popular. It was first recorded by John of Salisbury in his *Policraticus*, completed c. 1159 (i. 4, ed. K. S. B. Keats-Rohan, *CCCM*, cxviii (Turnhout, 1993)). It is next alluded to in the *Apocalypsis Goliae*, an anticlerical satire of c. 1180 (ed. K. Strecker (Rome, 1928), p. 18). Conrad of Querfurt, chancellor of the emperor Henry VI, mentions it in a letter he wrote in 1196 to his friend Arnold of Lübeck (printed in Arnold's *Chronica Slavorum*, *MGH SS* xxi. 194); Conrad was writing from Sicily after the imperial troops had taken Naples. In Neckam's *De naturis rerum* (ii. 174), dating from the late twelfth century,

Further, we know that in Campania, in the city of Naples, Virgil used his astrological art to set up a bronze fly: this fly proved to possess such great power in itself that, for as long as it remained undamaged in its appointed place, no fly could enter that city, wide and spacious as it was.<sup>4</sup>

11. *The Nut-Tree which bears Leaves and Fruit Both at Once*

To add marvel to marvel, I saw a strange thing in that same town of Barjols. What I saw was a huge nut-tree in a garden near the town wall: like other trees, this one sheds its leaves and dies back in the cold of winter; but then, when the kindly spring comes round again, while all other trees grow green as their sap rises, put on their leaves, and delight their lovers with flowers which herald their fruitfulness, this tree alone persists in the bareness of its hard, wintry aspect, and puts forth no sign of greenness or fruitfulness. Only when practically four months have passed, and the feast of St John the Baptist is drawing near, does it join in the rejoicing with a sudden rush of gladness at the birth of the Precursor, and unexpectedly produces leaves and fruit, whose quantity is in no wise inferior or lacking compared to the nuts of other trees.<sup>1</sup>

12. *A Market's Incorruptible Meat*

Let us now return to the Campanian city of Naples. There is a meat-market there, in one wall of which Virgil is said to have set a piece of

although there is no mention of a fly, Virgil is said to have freed Naples from a plague of leeches by a golden leech which he threw into a well. Helinandus' *Chronicon*, written between 1204 and 1229, included some Virgilian legends, and although the relevant section has been lost, Vincent of Beauvais drew on it in his *Speculum historiale* (vi. 61); he refers to a bronze fly-talisman. The *Cronica di Partenope*, an anonymous Neapolitan work written soon after 1326 which used the *Otia* as a source, adds that the fly was as big as a frog, and was first removed from its gate to a window in the Castel Capuano, and then to the Castel Cicala, where its power failed (c. 18, ed. Naples, 1680; cf. Comparetti, *Vergil*, p. 340, n. 1). Liebrecht (pp. 98-105) gives many instances of the use of bronze, iron, and steel to ward off evil. A belief in talismans seems to have flourished especially in the south of Italy as a result of the Byzantine influence.

<sup>1</sup> In X there are two notes at the foot of the page in later hands claiming knowledge of other similar trees. There is a species of walnut-tree of this habit, known as 'le noyer de la Saint-Jean': see E. Rolland, *Flore populaire* (Paris, 1903), iv. 65-6.

carnis tante efficacie quod, dum illic erit inclusum, in ipsius macelli continentia nulla caro, quanto quanto tempore uetustata, nares olfacientis aut intuentis aspectum aut comedentis saporem offendet.<sup>1</sup>

f. 60<sup>v</sup> Est et in eadem ciuitate porta | Dominica, Nolam Campanie ciuitatem olim inclitam<sup>b</sup> respiciens, in cuius ingressu est uia lapidibus artificiose constructa. Sub huius uie sigillo conclusit Virgilius omne genus reptilis nociui. Vnde prouenit quod, cum ciuitas illa in ambitu plurimum spaciosa tota columpnis subterraneis innitatur, nusquam in cauernis aut rimis<sup>c</sup> interioribus aut ortis<sup>d</sup> infra urbis<sup>e</sup> menia conclusis uermis nociuus reperitur.<sup>2</sup>

Tercium est quod illic expertus sum, tunc quidem ipsius ignarus, sed fortuito casu re ipsa mihi dante scientiam et probationem, coactus sum esse sciens eius quod,<sup>3</sup> si non preuentus essem periculo, uix aliena relatione fieri possem assertor. Nempe anno quo fuit Acon obsessa,<sup>4</sup> circa imminens sancti Iohannis Baptiste festum, cum essem Salerni,<sup>f</sup> de subito superuenit mihi hospes iocundus, cuius sincera dilectio tum cognatione,<sup>g</sup> tum diutina in scolis et curia domini mei regis uetustioris Anglie Henrici, aui<sup>h</sup> uestri, serenissime princeps, commansione<sup>i</sup> firmata, non iam alterum a me sed in ipso me alterum mihi obuennisie faciebat. Exultauit cor meum propter singularitatem affectionis et propter rumores quos recentiare mihi tam fidelis nuncius<sup>j</sup> poterat de nostrorum prosperitate propinquorum, quorum omnium hic non tam sanguine quam amore fuit propinquissimus. Properantem ad transitum et transfrectationem, diu reluctantem, uici precum instancia. Philipus hic erat, filius Patricii olim illustris comitis Saresberiensis, cuius neptis ex fratre comitatum Saresberiensem iure matrimonii transfudit in istum auunculum uestrum, domine imperator.<sup>5</sup> Inter uolentem et inuitum<sup>k</sup> meliori consilio trahitur

<sup>b</sup> inclitem N      <sup>c</sup> rimis C; ruinis altered from runis N, ruinis AXQ      <sup>d</sup> ortis supplied by author N      <sup>e</sup> urbis supplied by author N      <sup>f</sup> Salerni ed.; Salerni N; Salernii AI; Salerno CXQ      <sup>g</sup> cognatione N      <sup>h</sup> aui supplied by author N      <sup>i</sup> cum mansione N      <sup>j</sup> nuncius supplied by author N      <sup>k</sup> inuitium N

<sup>1</sup> The magical meat-market is interesting in that Virgil seems to be the only magician ever to have thought of such a thing. According to Conrad of Querfurt (*MGH SS* xxi. 196), Virgil built it in such a way that the flesh of an animal killed in it stayed fresh for six weeks, but if it was removed it rotted immediately. In Alexander Neckam's account (*De naturis rerum*, ii. 174), the meat was preserved for five hundred years by the power of herbs. Vincent of Beauvais (*Speculum historiale*, vi. 61) simply says that the market was built in such a way that no flesh rotted in it. No one apart from Gervase mentions the piece of meat let into the wall. This story seems to have been forgotten when the legends lost their local character, but it is found in the Neapolitan *Cronica di Partenope* (c. 22).

<sup>2</sup> The confinement of the serpents is only recorded by writers who drew their material from its source at Naples. Conrad of Querfurt (loc. cit.) says that it was the Ferrean Gate

meat; this has such a powerful effect that, as long as it remains immured there, no meat, however old, within the confines of this market will cause offence to the nostrils if smelt, to the eyes if seen, or to the palate if eaten.<sup>1</sup>

Also in this same city is the Dominican Gate, facing towards Nola, a city of Campania which enjoyed renown in the past. Through the passageway of this gate is a road skilfully constructed from stones, and under the seal of this road Virgil confined every type of harmful reptile. As a result, although that entire city with its widely-extended circumference rests on underground columns, no poisonous snake is found anywhere in the caverns or hidden clefts or gardens contained within the city-walls.<sup>2</sup>

There is a third marvel of which I had personal experience there, though at the time I knew nothing of it; but since, completely by chance, the thing gave me knowledge and proof of itself, I was forced to accept the truth of it, though if I had not previously had experience of it, but had only heard someone else's account of it, I could hardly have made out a case for it.<sup>3</sup> It was in the year when Acre was besieged,<sup>4</sup> just before the feast of St John the Baptist; I was at Salerno, when I received an unexpected but welcome visitor: my true affection for him, strengthened both by our kinship and by our long comradeship in the schools and at the court of my lord the elder King Henry of England—your grandfather, most serene Prince—meant that it was not someone other than myself, but another self in him, who now came to me. My heart was glad because of my special love for him, and because of the news which such a reliable reporter would be able to relay to me concerning the welfare of our relations, of all of whom he was closest to me, not so much in blood as in love. Although he was in a hurry to move on and cross the strait, and hesitated for a while, I won him over with my pressing invitation. This man was Philip, the son of the late Patrick, noble earl of Salisbury; Philip's niece transferred the earldom of Salisbury by right of marriage from his brother to your uncle, my lord Emperor.<sup>5</sup> My friend, though in

under which Virgil confined the serpents, and adds that the imperial soldiers were reluctant to destroy that gate in case they got out again. The *Cronica di Partenope* (c. 28) follows Gervase's account. Liebrecht (p. 106) suggests that the statement that Naples was built on subterranean columns may be linked with the popular idea that Virgil built the city on an egg, first recorded in the *Image du Monde*.

<sup>3</sup> The accusative *quod* is loosely used instead of an objective genitive with *assertor* ('advocate').

<sup>4</sup> Probably 1190; see above, p. xxviii.

<sup>5</sup> Patrick, created earl between 1142 and 1147, was killed in 1168; his elder son William

amicus ad ciuitatem Nolanam, ubi tunc ex mandato domini mei, illustris regis Siculi Guillelmi,<sup>6</sup> mansio mihi erat, ob declinandos Panormitanos<sup>1</sup> tumultus ac feruores estiuos.

Quid plura? Post aliquot dies deliberauimus ad Neapolitanum mare accedere, si quo fortassis euentu paratior ac minus sumptuosa nobis illic occurreret transfretatio. Ciuitatem aduenimus, in hospicio uenerabilis auditoris mei in iure canonico apud Bononiam, Iohannis Pinnatelli,<sup>7</sup> Neapolitani archidiaconi, scientia, moribus, et sanguine illustris, nos recipientes; a quo iocunde recepti, causam aduentus pandimus. Ipseque comperta<sup>m</sup> uoti nostri instancia, dum parantur epule, mare nobiscum accedit. Facto uix unius hore spacio, succincta breuitate uerborum nauis conducitur precio plus quam optato, et instanciam uiatorum dies data ad nauigandum accelerat. Ad hospicium redeuntibus, sermo est quo successu quibusue auspiciis omnia nobis desiderata tam celeri manu occurrerint, ignorantibus et stupentibus nobis de tanta felicitate successuum. 'Heus,' inquit archidiaconus, 'per quam ciuitatis portam intrastis?' Cumque que fuerit porta explicarem, ille perspicax intellector adiecit: 'Merito tam breui manu uobis fortuna subuenit! Oro mihi ueridica relatione dicatis: qua parte aditus ingressi estis, dextra uel sinistra?' Respondemus cum ad ipsam ueniremus portam et paratior<sup>n</sup> nobis ad sinistram pateret ingressus, occurrit ex improuiso asinus lignorum<sup>o</sup> strue honeratus, et ex concursu compulsi sumus ad dexteram declinare. Tunc archidiaconus: 'Vt sciatis quanta miranda Virgilius in hac urbe fuerit operatus, accedamus ad locum et ostendam quod in illa porta memoriale Virgilius reliquerit super terram.'

f. 61<sup>r</sup> Accedentibus nobis ostendit in dextra parte caput parieti portalis insertum | de marmore Pario, cuius rictus<sup>p</sup> ad risum et eximie iocunditatis hylaritatem trahebantur. In sinistra uero parte parieti erat aliud caput de consimili marmore infixum, sed alteri ualde dissimile: oculis siquidem toruis, flentis uultum ac irati, casusque infelicis iacturam deplorantis, pretendebat.<sup>q</sup> Ex hiis tam aduersis uultuum imaginationibus duo sibi contraria fortune fata proponit archidiaconus omnibus ingredientibus imminere, dum modo nulla

<sup>1</sup> Parnormitanos *N*      <sup>m</sup> comparata *N*      <sup>n</sup> paratior *N*      <sup>o</sup> lignorum  
supplied by author *N*      <sup>p</sup> rictus *N*      <sup>q</sup> precedebat *N*

Fitz Patrick died in 1196, leaving an only daughter Ela or Isabel, who married William Longespée, an illegitimate son of Henry II; cf. *HBC*, pp. 480-1.

<sup>6</sup> i.e. William II, called the Good, king of Sicily 1166-89; see above, p. xxviii.

<sup>7</sup> The Pignatelli were one of the most illustrious Neapolitan families; cf. Cappelletti, xix. 469 and 505.

two minds, by his better judgment allowed himself to be taken to the city of Nola, where I had a villa at that time by order of my lord the renowned King William of Sicily,<sup>6</sup> to allow me to escape from the bustle and heat of Palermo in the summer.

To cut a long story short, after several days we decided to go down to the sea at Naples, to see if by any chance we might find a reasonably-priced berth there, on a ship getting ready to sail. We reached the city, and called upon the hospitality of the venerable John Pignatelli,<sup>7</sup> archdeacon of Naples, formerly a pupil of mine in canon law at Bologna, and a man of outstanding knowledge, character, and birth. He gave us a warm welcome, and we made known to him our reason for coming. On learning of the urgency of our errand, he came with us to the sea while a meal was being prepared. Hardly had an hour passed when, after a few brief words, a ship was booked at a better price than we had hoped for, and the appointing of a day for sailing quickened the travellers' enthusiasm. On our way back to our host's, we remarked how successfully and auspiciously all that we wanted had been achieved in so short a time: we were amazed and baffled at such great good fortune. 'Aha,' said the archdeacon, 'by which city-gate did you enter?' When I described which gate it was, he, a man of shrewd intelligence, replied: 'There is a reason why fortune assisted you so readily! Please tell me exactly what happened: by which side of the gate did you enter, the right or the left?' We replied that when we were coming up to the gate, the left-hand side of the entrance was more readily accessible to us; but an ass laden with a pile of logs suddenly got in our way, and we were forced to turn aside to the right to avoid it. Then the archdeacon said: 'So that you may know what great wonders Virgil performed in this city, let us go to the place, and I shall show you what memorial he left on earth on that gate.'

When we got there he showed us a head of Parian marble inserted in the wall of the gateway on the right-hand side, with its mouth stretched into a merry laugh of immense delight. But on the left-hand side there was another head affixed to the wall, of the same marble, but otherwise very different from the first: for it presented the face of someone weeping, wild-eyed and angry, and bewailing the hardship of a wretched lot. The archdeacon explained that from these, so different, representations of faces, two opposite outcomes of fortune hang over all who enter there, provided that they do not deliberately



fiat declinatio ad dexteram siue ad sinistram ex industria procurata, sed, sicut fatalia sunt, fato euentuique<sup>r</sup> committantur. 'Quisquis', inquit, 'ad dexteram<sup>s</sup> ciuitatem istam ingreditur semper dextro cornu ad omnem propositi sui effectum prosperatur, semper cressit et augetur; quicumque ad sinistram flectitur semper decidit et ab omni desiderio suo fraudatur. Quia ergo ex asini obiectione ad dexteram deflexistis, considerate quam celeriter et quanta prosperitate iter uestrum perfecistis!'<sup>8</sup>

Non tamen hec scripsimus quasi Saduceorum sectam comprobemus, qui omnia dicebant in Deo et *marmone* consistere, hoc est in fato et casu fortune,<sup>9</sup> cum omnia in sola uoluntate Dei sint posita, secundum illud: 'In uoluntate tua omnia sunt posita, et non est qui possit resistere uoluntati tue,' etc.,<sup>10</sup> sed istud ad admirationem artis matematicae Virgilio memorauimus.

### xiii. *De orto Virgilio et tuba enea*<sup>a</sup>

Erat in confinio eiusdem ciuitatis Neapolitane, uelut ex oposito, mons Virginum,<sup>1</sup> in cuius decliuo inter prerupta saxorum aditu graui<sup>b</sup> Virgilius ortum<sup>2</sup> plantauerat, multis herbarum generibus consitum. In hoc inuenitur herba lucii,<sup>3</sup> quam oues cece quandoque tangentes, statim acutissimum<sup>c</sup> uisum recipiunt.

In eodem erat ymago enea bucinam ad os tenens, quam quotiens auster ex obiecto subintrabat, statim ipsius uenti flatus conuertebatur. Quid autem conuersio ista Nothi<sup>4</sup> commodi portabat? Audite. Est in confinio ciuitatis Neapolitane mons excelsus,<sup>5</sup> mari infixus, subiectam sibi Terram Laboris spatiose prospectans; hic mense Madio fumum

<sup>r</sup> euentui que N      <sup>s</sup> a dextera XQ

<sup>a</sup> enea om. CXQ      <sup>b</sup> aditu graui XQ; aditu (abditu I) graui aditu NI  
<sup>c</sup> accutissimum N

<sup>8</sup> Gervase is our only early source for the two marble faces; they are next mentioned in the *Cronica di Partenope* (c. 26), which adds the detail that the laughing face was a man's and the weeping one a woman's.

<sup>9</sup> The Sadducees were a conservative Jewish sect of the priestly class who flourished before and at the time of Christ. However, Gervase is mistaken in referring to them here: it was of the Pharisees that Josephus made this statement (*Bell.* ii. 162; cf. Comestor, *Evan.*, c. 31 (*PL* cxcviii. 1553); *Otia*, i. 5, n. 15). This last paragraph reflects the tension between Christianity and the fascination with marvels, which tended to be of a distinctly pagan stamp; see above, pp. lx–lxi.

<sup>10</sup> (Rest of) *Esth.* 13: 9.

<sup>1</sup> This mountain was also sometimes called *mons Vergilianus*; cf. Comparetti, *Virgil*, pp. 279–81.

turn aside to the right or to the left, but are exposed to chance and accident, as is necessary in events governed by fate. 'Whoever enters the city on the right-hand side', he said, 'always succeeds in accomplishing all that he attempts with fortune on his side, and invariably thrives and prospers; but whoever turns to the left always fails and is cheated of his every wish. Since, then, you turned to the right because your way was blocked by the ass, look how speedily and successfully you have accomplished your errand!'<sup>8</sup>

In writing this it has not been our intention to support the sect of the Sadducees, who claimed that all things were dependent on God and *εἰμαρμένῃ*, that is, on fate and the accidents of fortune;<sup>9</sup> for all things are ordered by God's will alone, as it is written: 'All things are in your power, and there is none that can resist your will' etc.<sup>10</sup> No, we have recorded it simply to win admiration for Virgil's astrological art.

### 13. *Virgil's Garden and the Bronze Trumpet*

In the neighbourhood of the same city of Naples, more or less opposite it, there was a mountain called Monte Vergine.<sup>1</sup> On the side of this mountain, in a barely accessible position amid sheer rock-faces, Virgil had cultivated a garden,<sup>2</sup> and sowed it with many species of plants. In it is found the luce plant:<sup>3</sup> whenever blind sheep touch this plant, they immediately receive very sharp sight.

Also in this garden there used to be a bronze statue of a man holding a trumpet to his mouth. Whenever the south wind met the statue head on and found its way into the trumpet, the blast of the wind was immediately reversed. Now what benefit did that reversal of Notus<sup>4</sup> bring? Listen. There is a high mountain<sup>5</sup> near the city of Naples, right by the sea, overlooking the Terra di Lavoro which extends far and wide below it; in the month of May this mountain

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Neckam (*De naturis rerum*, ii. 174) says that Virgil had a garden which he enclosed in immobile air instead of a wall, while Vincent of Beauvais (*Speculum historiale*, vi. 61) says that he contrived that no rain ever fell on it; see further Spargo, *Virgil*, pp. 61–8.

<sup>3</sup> The normal meaning of *lucius* in medieval Latin is 'pike' (–fish). Here there is presumably an association with *lux* ('light'). The identity of the herb is uncertain, but a possible clue is provided by the definition: 'xifion idest erba lucia vel rosa campania' (quoted from a tenth- or eleventh-century MS in the *Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum*, ed. G. Loewe and G. Goetz (Leipzig, 1892), iii. 630); the *ξίφιόν* is the *Gladiolus segetum*, or corn-flag.

<sup>4</sup> i.e. the south wind, bringer of disease, hunger, and destruction.

<sup>5</sup> i.e. Vesuvius.

teterrimum eructuat et interdum cum cinere ardentissimo ligna proicit exusta in carbonis colorem, unde illic quoddam inferni terreni spiraculum asserunt ebullire. Plante igitur Notho, puluis calidus segetes omnesque fructus exurit, sicque terra in se feracissima ad sterilitatem ducitur. Ob hoc, tante regionis illius dampno consulens, Virgilius in opposito monte statuam, ut diximus, cum<sup>d</sup> tuba erexit, ut ad primum uentilati cornu sonitum et in<sup>e</sup> ipsa tuba flatus subintrantis impulsus, Nothus repulsus uel mathesis quassaretur. Vnde fit quod, statua illa uel etate consumpta uel inuidorum malicia demolita, sepe pristina dampna<sup>f</sup> reparantur.<sup>6</sup>

xiv. *De faba uersa et eius efficatia*

In huius sane montis estuantis ascensu crescit herba quam uulgus fabam inuersam nominat, ad altitudinem nouelle nucis alta,<sup>a</sup> foliis ut nucis amplis ac subacutis. Huius fructus sicut fabe siliquis includitur, ea tamen diuersitate, quod dependent terramque respiciunt cum e contra fabarum silique in altum protendantur. Est autem huius potentia satis ridiculosa. Si enim ipsam<sup>b</sup> cum oratione dominica ter repetita genu flexo collegeris, orans ut qualem uultum pretendis, talem gustans ex ea pretendat, sine dubio hunc ipsam habere effectum conspicies. Si colligendo risus exasperas, gustans usque ad solis occasum ridebit sine intermissione; si fletus simulas, flebit falsa quasi pietate turbatus; si nauseam aut egerendi gestum exprimis, id idem continget comedenti. Nec hiis fidem dedissem si non ipse probassem, cum summo labore ardua montis illius petens, herbamque repperi in cauerna montis, sub castro quod indigene Summam<sup>1</sup> |

f. 61<sup>v</sup> nominant, quod regis speciale est,<sup>c</sup> munitione firmissimum.

<sup>d</sup> cum supplied by author N      <sup>e</sup> in supplied by author N      <sup>f</sup> dampno N

<sup>a</sup> alta C; altam NAß      <sup>b</sup> ipsum N      <sup>c</sup> est supplied by author(?) N

<sup>6</sup> Virgil is credited with a rich variety of automata. Liebrecht (pp. 106–7) notes that the idea of a statue keeping a volcano in check is found as early as the fifth century in a Sicilian legend recorded by Olympiodorus of Thebes (Photius, *Bibliotheca*, lxxx, PG ciii. 261). According to Conrad of Querfurt (*MGH SS* xxi. 196), a bronze archer, not a trumpeter, kept Vesuvius in check. Other Virgilian legends described an archer threatening an ever-burning fire, and various other pneumatic marvels (see Spargo, *Virgil*, pp. 117–35).

belches out foul smoke, and at the same time hurls up timbers charred as black as coal, along with burning-hot ash. This has given rise to the assertion that a vent of the terrestrial hell blasts out there. When the south wind blows, therefore, a hot dust scorches all the fruit and the crops, and thus terrain which is naturally very fertile is reduced to sterility. It was for this reason, taking thought for such a large region's loss, that Virgil set up the statue with its trumpet on the opposite mountain, as we have said, in order that at the first sound of the blasted horn and the first impact of the wind making its way inside this trumpet, Notus should be thrown into confusion, driven back by the power of astrology. But that statue either perished from age or was destroyed in a spiteful act of jealousy, and the old losses often recur.<sup>6</sup>

14. *The Upside-down Bean and its Properties*

On the way up this fiery mountain there grows a plant which is commonly called the upside-down bean, as tall as a young nut-tree, with large, slightly pointed leaves like those of a nut-tree. The fruit of this plant is contained in pods like beans, but with this difference, that they hang downwards and face the ground while bean-pods turn upwards. Now this plant has quite a droll property. If you gather it while genuflecting and repeating the Lord's Prayer three times, praying that whatever countenance you assume, whoever tastes of it should assume the same, you will undoubtedly witness it have this effect. If you make yourself laugh while you gather it, whoever tastes it will laugh uninterruptedly until sunset; if you simulate tears, he will weep as if overwhelmed by sham sentiment; if you imitate sickness or the gesture of vomiting, the same will befall whoever eats it. I should not have attached credence to this if I had not tested it myself; but with great toil I made for the heights of that mountain, and found the plant in a mountain cave, below the castle which the locals call the Height,<sup>1</sup> which is the king's own castle, very strongly fortified.

<sup>1</sup> The name of this castle doubtless derived from the high semicircular ridge called Monte Somma which girds the cone of Vesuvius on the north side near the top.

xv. *De balneis Puteolans*

Est etiam in ciuitate Neapolitana<sup>a</sup> ciuitas Puteolana, in qua Virgilius ad utilitatem popularem et admirationem perpetuam balnea construxit, miro artificio edificata, ad cuiusuis interioris ac exterioris morbi curationem profutura; singulisque cocleis<sup>1</sup> singulos titulos superscripsit, in quibus notitia erat cui morbo quod balneum deberetur. Verum<sup>b</sup> nouissimis diebus, cum apud Salernum studium fisicorum uigere cepisset, Salernitani inuidia tacti titulos balneorum corruperunt, timentes ne diuulgata balneorum potentia lucrum practicantibus<sup>c</sup> auferret aut diminueret. Ipsa tamen balnea, pro maxima parte intacta, diuersis morborum generibus medelam tribuunt. Suspecta quoque sunt illa que certam incolarum non habent noticiam aut ad uirtutem memoriam, eo quod inter duo contrariorum effectuum infirmitas infici quandoque potius posset quam curari.<sup>2</sup>

xvi. *De rupe incisa que nullas admittit insidias*

In eodem confinio est mons mira uirtute, ad modum cripte concauus, cuius tanta est longitudo quod medium tenenti uix duo capita comparent. Arte mathematica hic operatus est Virgilius quod in illo montis opaco, inimicus inimico si ponit insidias, nullo dolo nulloue fraudis ingenio sue malicie in nocendo dare potest effectum.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Neapolitana N    <sup>b</sup> uerum] unde N    <sup>c</sup> practigantibus N

<sup>1</sup> The word *coelea* ('snail') was applied to various things in spiral form, including a machine for drawing water (Vitruvius, v. 12. 5, x. 6. 1); it may have been by this route that it came to be used of baths or basins here.

<sup>2</sup> The mineral springs of Pozzuoli and Baia enjoyed a great reputation in the Middle Ages, and it was inevitable that their virtue should be attributed to Virgil. Conrad's version (*MGH SS* xxi. 194–5) differs slightly in that he maintains that the baths were identified by statues rather than inscriptions. The baths are included in several later accounts of Virgil's magical powers, including the *Cronica di Partenope* (c. 29), which adds the information that the Salernitan doctors who allegedly destroyed the baths were punished by God, for on their return they were all drowned in a storm at sea apart from one who lived to tell the tale.

The baths were described in the early thirteenth century by the Campanian poet, Peter of Eboli, in his work *Nomina et uirtutes balneorum seu de balneis Puteolorum et Baiarum*,

15. *The Baths of Pozzuoli*

Also in the state of Naples is the town of Pozzuoli. Here Virgil built some baths, which served for the common good and won him undying acclaim. They were constructed with wonderful skill, so as to promote the cure of any internal or external disease; he set individual inscriptions over all the baths,<sup>1</sup> indicating which bath should be used for which disease. But only recently, when the study of medicine began to flourish at Salerno, the Salernitans, held in the grip of envy, destroyed the inscriptions over the baths; they were afraid that, if the power of the baths became known, the medical practitioners would find that they made less money, or none at all. However, the baths themselves are for the most part undamaged, and offer cures for all sorts of diseases. But the ones which are not well known by the locals, or whose particular healing-power has been forgotten, are regarded with suspicion, because between two baths of opposite effects a sickness could sometimes be contracted rather than cured.<sup>2</sup>

16. *The Rock-passage which Admits No Treachery*

In the same neighbourhood there is a mountain with extraordinary powers. It is hollowed out to form a tunnel, whose length is so great that someone standing in the middle can hardly see the two ends. Here Virgil contrived by his astrological art that if a person lays an ambush for his enemy on that dark path through the mountain, he cannot, by any guile or deceitful trick, put his evil design into practice and harm his victim.<sup>1</sup>

ed. A. Danèu Lattanzi (Rome, 1962); see also Kauffmann, *Baths of Pozzuoli*; C. R. Mailler, 'L'acqua dall'antichità al Medioevo: le terme flegree', *Quaderni Medievali*, xxvi (1988), 79–98; M. Hanly, 'An edition of Richart Eudes's French translation of Pietro da Eboli's *De balneis Puteolanis*', *Traditio*, li (1996), 225–55.

<sup>1</sup> The remarkable *crypta Neapolitana* was dug through the mountain called Pausilypum (the modern Posilipo), between Naples and Pozzuoli, before the time of Virgil; but since Virgil's tomb was by the entrance it naturally came to be associated with him. Gervase is the only author to mention the tunnel among those who first recorded the legends. See M. Capasso, *Il Sepolcro di Virgilio* (Naples, 1983), pp. 23–6; Liebrecht, p. 108; Comparetti, *Virgil*, p. 343.

xvii. *De Iohanne episcopo et animabus mortuorum*<sup>1</sup>

Sunt in confinio Puteolino montes quorum harena in summitate pedes addurit et sui ardore prohibet ascendentibus progressum. Illic refert antiquitas episcopum Iohannem<sup>2</sup> quondam Puteolanum, uirum sanctum et in omni bono opere perfectum, dum agendam mortuorum sedulus orator passim deambulando cantaret, audisse animarum lamentationes, que in concauitate montis sulfurei<sup>3</sup> pati audiebantur. Sed et quandoque cuidam lamentanti episcopus ex parte Domini nostri Iesu Christi precipit<sup>a</sup> cuius sit anima cuiusue reatus criminationi<sup>b</sup> obnoxia pandat. Familiari itaque lacrimosoque colloquio, humana uoce, anima adiurata respondit se cuiusdam noti atque uicini spiritum esse, illic grauibus penalibusque Auerni<sup>4</sup> incendiis addictam. Inquirat uir sanctus si quam spem salutis haberet. At illa se missis et orationibus respondit posse saluari, si per annum cotidianum pro ea offerretur Domino sacrificium. Ad hec episcopus: 'O', inquit, 'anima christiana, quibus intersignis quibusue indicibus compertam habeo<sup>c</sup> tuam saluationem?' Respondit anima: 'Si reuoluto anno ad hunc redieris locum et me sub Dei nomine interpellaueris, respondebo tibi si in locis hiis penalibus adhuc fuero; sin autem, pro certo scias me per Dei misericordiam et tuas orationes esse liberatam.'

Quid ultra? Reuoluto anno in missis et orationibus ab episcopo continuato, animam adiuratam nusquam auditam referebat<sup>d</sup> episcopus, unde<sup>e</sup> ipsam prorsus liberam uir Dei ex conducto presumebat. Asserunt enim animas, quamdiu in locis penalibus quasi nobis uicinis et coniunctis sunt, per uisiones nunc sompniorum, nunc manifeste in corporum pristinatorum similitudine,<sup>f</sup> ex diuina dispensatione cumfinibus<sup>g</sup> et amicis frequenter ut licenter apparere, statusque sui

<sup>a</sup> precepit ACβ      <sup>b</sup> criminationis N      <sup>c</sup> habeo N      <sup>d</sup> referabat N  
<sup>e</sup> unde supplied by author N      <sup>f</sup> similitudine supplied by author N      <sup>g</sup> cumfinibus supplied by author N

<sup>1</sup> Near the top of the column in which this chapter is written the author wrote in the margin: 'In Dialogo Gregorii libro .iii.'. This would seem to be a reference to the story of the hermit on Lipari who saw Pope John and Symmachus cast the Arian Theodoric into the volcano there (Gregory the Great, *Dial.* iv. 31 (ed. Moricca, p. 274 = iv. 30, *PL* lxxvii. 369)).

<sup>2</sup> i.e. John II, bishop of Pozzuoli c. 1135 (Gams, *Series episcoporum*, p. 914). This episode is discussed briefly by Schmitt, *Les Revenants*, p. 107.

<sup>3</sup> The idea that volcanoes were entrances to hell is found as early as Tertullian (*De paenitentia*, xii, ed. J. G. P. Borleffs, *CCSL* i. 339–40). It was encouraged by Gregory the Great's confirmation that souls burned in corporeal fire (*Dial.* iv. 30, ed. Moricca, p. 272 =

17. *Bishop John and the Souls of the Dead*<sup>1</sup>

In the neighbourhood of Pozzuoli there are some mountains, on whose summit the sandy ground scorches the feet: people climbing up are prevented from going on by its burning heat. An old story is told there about John,<sup>2</sup> a past bishop of Pozzuoli, who was a holy man, beyond reproach in every good work. Once he was singing the office of the dead while walking along at random, unremitting as he was in prayer, when he heard the wailing of souls which, from the sound of it, were suffering in the hollow centre of the sulphurous mountain.<sup>3</sup> After a while the bishop conjured one unhappy soul in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to make known whose soul it was, and for what crime it had brought condemnation on itself. Then the soul he had addressed replied with a human voice, in familiar and sorrowful accents, saying that it was the spirit of someone known to him from the neighbourhood, and that it had been sentenced to the severe penal fires of Avernus<sup>4</sup> there. The holy man asked if it had any hope of salvation. It replied that it could be saved by masses and prayers, if the sacrifice of the mass were offered to the Lord on its behalf every day for a year. To this the bishop rejoined: 'O Christian soul, by what signs, by what tokens shall I be assured of your salvation?' The soul replied: 'If in a year's time you return to this place and invoke me in the name of God, I shall answer you if I am still in these regions of retribution; if I do not answer, you may know for certain that I have been released, through God's mercy and your prayers.'

Well, what happened? The bishop used to tell how, when a year had passed, during which he had offered masses and prayers without fail, he called on the soul, but nowhere heard its voice. So the man of God presumed, from what had been said, that it really was free. For they say that as long as souls are in the places of punishment, which, as it were, verge and border on our world, by divine dispensation they appear in visions to their relatives and friends as often as they wish, sometimes in dreams, sometimes openly in the semblance of their former bodies, and they make known the wretchedness and exigency

iv. 29, *PL* lxxvii. 365–6); cf. *Otia*, iii. 103, at n. 7), and became a widespread belief in the Middle Ages: see Liebrecht, pp. 108–9; MacCulloch, *Medieval Faith and Fable*, pp. 98–100; Le Goff, *Naissance*, pp. 126–31, transl. Goldhammer, pp. 91–5; *Otia*, ii. 12, n. 41, and iii. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Otia*, iii. 19, n. 1.

miseriam et necessitatem pandere;<sup>5</sup> uerum cum ad altiora gaudia purgatorio exacto euecte fuerint, iam ad nostram non se offerunt uisionem.

xviii. *De uisione portarum inferni*

Aliud eiusdem episcopi mirabile dictum recensebo, dum modo non tedeat audire quod salubre esse debet didicisse. Est in confinio loci iam dicti lacus quem Iohannis dicunt, cuius aqua teterrima,<sup>a</sup> sed infuso oleo efficitur limpissima ac lucida. Ad hunc lacum memoratus episcopus accedens ut exploraret<sup>b</sup> quid in aqua posset esse uel sub aqua latens, in cuius confinio multas ac terribiles lamentancium f. 62<sup>r</sup> uoces frequenter | audiebat, uno aliquo die cadum olei purissimi aque superfudit, statimque uelut<sup>c</sup> accensa lucerna uidit sub aqua portas eneas et uectes ferreos maxime quantitatis<sup>d</sup> prostratas;<sup>e</sup><sup>1</sup> cepitque in uiri<sup>f</sup> sancti mentem subire has esse portas inferni, quas Dominus noster Iesus Christus confregit quando infernum spoliauit.<sup>2</sup>

xix. *De Auerno*<sup>1</sup>

Est et inter Neapolim et Puteolum locus quidam, quasi stagni sicca uestigia, terra quidem lutosa. In hunc locum si proiectum quodlibet animatum fuerit, statim moritur. Sed et aues superuolitantes alitu loci illius statim inficiuntur, et sic moriuntur. De loco isto scripsit Lucretius:

<sup>a</sup> teterrina *N*      <sup>b</sup> ut exploraret] explorare *XQ*      <sup>c</sup> uelut *supplied by author N*  
<sup>d</sup> quantitatis *supplied by author N*      <sup>e</sup> prostratas *N*      <sup>f</sup> uirri *N*

<sup>5</sup> For other stories of souls which availed themselves of this permission, see *Otia*, i. 20 (pp. 112–15) and iii. 103.

<sup>1</sup> The participle is feminine, in spite of the mention of *uectes* as well as *portas*.

<sup>2</sup> The motif of an underwater approach to the Other World is universal in folklore (see *MI* F93); here it is united with the Christian legend of the Harrowing of Hell. It was a common belief as early as the second century that at Christ's death he descended into hell, 'broke the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder' (Ps. 106 (107): 16; cf. Isa. 45: 2), and so delivered the righteous from Satan. The story is appended to the Latin version of the *Evangelium Nicodemi*, also known as the *Acta Pilati*, the most popular of the apocryphal gospels, composed originally in Greek c.600 AD (ed. Kim, 21: 2). Peter of Eboli

of their condition;<sup>5</sup> but when their time in purgatory is over and they have been conveyed to joys on high, they do not present themselves to our sight any more.

18. *A Vision of the Gates of Hell*

I shall relate another remarkable tale concerning the same bishop, as long as it does not bore you to hear it; it should certainly prove salutary if you take its teaching to heart. Near the place of which I have just been speaking, there is a lake which they call John's Lake; its water is very murky, but when oil is poured into it, it becomes completely clear and transparent. The bishop I have been talking about approached this lake one day with the purpose of investigating what there could be in the water or hidden under the water, for he used regularly to hear many spine-chilling cries of lamenting souls in its vicinity. He poured a jar of the purest oil over the water, and immediately, as if a lamp had been lit, he saw broken-down<sup>1</sup> bronze gates and iron bars of massive size under the water, and it gradually dawned on the holy man that these were the gates of hell which our Lord Jesus Christ overthrew when he harrowed hell.<sup>2</sup>

19. *Avernus*<sup>1</sup>

There is also a place between Naples and Pozzuoli, which seems to be the dried up remains of a lake, where the ground is very muddy. If any living creature is driven into this place it dies at once. Even birds flying overhead are immediately infected by the atmosphere of the place, and die from its effects. Lucretius wrote of this place:

narrates Christ's descent into hell in describing the bath of Tripergola, near Lake Avernus (see Kauffmann, *Baths of Pozzuoli*, pp. 51–2). There are also Virgilian associations here: Aeneas descended into the Underworld through a cave beside Lake Avernus (*Aen.* vi. 236 ff.). R. J. Clark, 'Giles of Viterbo on the Phlegraean Fields: a Vergilian view?', *Phoenix*, xlix (2) (1995), 150–62, points to the mixture of classical and medieval traditions in the present chapter and ch. 15 above, as well as in the writings of Giles of Viterbo.

<sup>1</sup> Lake Avernus, near Pozzuoli, was believed to be an entrance to hell, because its Greek name, *Ἄορνός*, was interpreted as 'without birds': the myth arose that no bird could fly across it and live because of its deadly sulphurous exhalations.

Principio, quod Auerna uocantur nomen, id a re  
Impositum est, quia sunt auibus contraria cunctis.<sup>2</sup>

Huic simile in attractione uidimus in regno Arelatensi, in confinio ciuitatis Auinionensis, uilla que Thorum<sup>3</sup> dicitur. Erat enim, in loco quo nuper ecclesia in honore sancte Marie constructa est, lutum tantam uim habens attractiuam quod si quodlibet lignum aut quamcumque solidam materiam aut manum aut pedem cuiusuis animantis infixeris, nulla ui nulloue artificio de cetero sine<sup>a</sup> succisione potest extrahi.

xx. *De turre que non admittit uigiles*

In regno Arelatensi, episcopatu Valentino, castro Liueronis,<sup>1</sup> est turris episcopi Valentini plurimum excelsa, que nocturnum custodem non admittit. Si quis autem custos ad uigiliam noctis in illa fuerit constitutus, in mane se sentiet ad uallem subiacentem delatum, sine timore precipicii aut quolibet terrore deponentis. In ualle se casu positum inueniet, et nullius tactum sentiet aut collisionem.

xxi. *De pugna scarabeorum*

In Galliis, prouincia Narbonensi, episcopatu Vceciensi, est castrum de Remolins.<sup>1</sup> In hoc due sunt turres, ad quarum alteram quotannis circiter diem sancti Iohannis Baptiste conuenit infinita multitudo scarabeorum, quorum corpora dimensiones aliorum scarabeorum excedunt, et plurimi sunt cornuti. Hii per octo dies tanto impetu se mutuo flagellant quod de mortuis et depulsis uix platee possunt scobari.

<sup>a</sup> sine supplied by author N

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, vi. 740–1. This was a very rare text in the Middle Ages, and Gervase may have drawn on some intermediate source; the lines are quoted, for instance, by the fourth-century grammarian Nonius Marcellus (*De compendiosa doctrina*, i. 14. 5).

<sup>3</sup> Le Thor is a small town about seven miles east of Avignon. The terrain is mostly fertile and well irrigated, but 'il y a un quartier du terroir nommé le Trentain et les Paluns, qui est fort vaste et . . . ci-devant marécageux et inutile' (Achard, *Description*, ii. 495). The parish church, Ste-Marie-du-Lac, which dates from the twelfth century, owes its name to a tradition that a statue of the Virgin was discovered in a pond there.

First, its name Birdless was given to it  
From the fact that it is deadly to all birds.<sup>2</sup>

We have seen a similar case of mud drawing things into itself in the kingdom of Arles, near the town of Avignon in a village called Le Thor.<sup>3</sup> For, on the spot where a church was built recently in honour of St Mary, there was some mud whose powers of suction were so great that if you implanted in it a piece of wood or a solid object of any kind, or some living creature's hand or foot, it could never be withdrawn again by any exercise of strength or skill, but had to be cut off.

20. *A Tower which Admits No Watchmen*

In the castle of Livron,<sup>1</sup> which is in the diocese of Valence in the kingdom of Arles, there is a very high tower belonging to the bishop of Valence: this tower admits no night-watchman. If any guard is stationed on it for the night-watch, he will find in the morning that he has been carried down to the valley below, without experiencing alarm at the fall or any fear of whoever deposited him. He will discover himself unexpectedly lying in the valley, and will feel no one's touch and no impact.

21. *The Beetles' Battle*

In France, in the province of Narbonne and the diocese of Uzès, is the castle of Remoulins.<sup>1</sup> In it there are two towers, at one of which a numberless host of beetles gathers every year around the feast-day of St John the Baptist. They have larger bodies than other beetles, and a great many of them are horned. For eight days they engage in mutual flagellation with such violence that the ground can hardly be swept clear of their dead and defeated.

<sup>1</sup> The ancient castle of Livron (now in ruins) is about twelve miles south of Valence. It had been ceded to Odo, bishop of Valence, in 1157 by the emperor Frederick I. The tower was still known as the Devil's Tower in the last century (Duchesne, *Livre*, p. 157, n. 48).

<sup>1</sup> Remoulins, whose castle possesses a distinctive square tower, is situated half-way between Nîmes and Avignon.

xxii. *De rupe que unico<sup>a</sup> digito mouetur et non toto corpore*

In regno Arelatensi, prouincia Ebredunensi, castro quod Noth<sup>1</sup> dicunt, est rupis magna, quam si minimo digito impuleris, totam ad facilem motum duxisti; si uero totum corpus aut infinita plaustra boum<sup>b</sup> admoueris, immobilis perseuerat.<sup>2</sup>

xxiii. *De figura<sup>a</sup> Domini in Edissa<sup>1</sup>*

Legimus in *Gestis Saluatoris*<sup>2</sup> quod Adgarus rex Edisse, que caput est Mesopotamie Sirie, moram faciens in Mesopotamia Sirie,<sup>b</sup> auditis Domini miraculis, ardenti desiderio cordis cupiebat Christum uidere. Mittens igitur ad eum epistolam per Ananiam cursorem in Ierosolimis, confessus est ex operibus eius ipsum esse Deum aut Dei

<sup>a</sup> uno CXQ      <sup>b</sup> boum supplied by author N

<sup>a</sup> frigastia N      <sup>b</sup> moram . . . Sirie] om. XQ

<sup>1</sup> Identified as Annot, near Castellane (Alpes-de-Haute-Provence), by A. Duchesne (*Livre*, p. 157, n. 50).

<sup>2</sup> This may have been one of the 'rocking-stones' which have been found in most European countries and in parts of America. W. G. Wood-Martin (*Traces of the Elder Faiths of Ireland* (London, 1902), ii. 259f.) says of them: 'Rocking-stones—although by some antiquaries considered as evidences of Druidical worship, may be looked upon as natural phenomena, which can be explained by a course of denudation. The boulder after having been dropped into its present position by the action of ice, the subsequent agency of water would suffice to account for the gradual removal of the earth originally surrounding these stones, until the blocks are left balanced on a natural rock-bed. . . . Above Blacklion, not far from Enniskillen, may be seen a rocking-stone, weighing several tons, which can be set in motion by the hand. It is a great wonder to the country people, who regard it as having been placed in its present position, and used as a plaything, by the giants of long ago. . . . In good examples, a slight push produces an oscillation.' The phenomenon was known in antiquity: see Pliny, *Hist. nat.* ii. 98. 211.

<sup>1</sup> During the first century BC and the first two centuries of our era the city of Edessa, now Urfa, was the capital of Osrhoene, a state ruled by Arab kings and subject alternately to Rome and Parthia. From the late third century on, the fame of the story recorded here brought many pilgrims to Edessa, and it became one of the foremost cities of Christendom, until it fell into the hands of the Turks in the twelfth century (see Runciman, 'Some remarks'). The legend that an image of Christ was brought to Edessa by Thaddaeus (Greek) or Addai (Syriac) as a consequence of an exchange of letters between King Abgar V Ukama (4 BC–7 AD; 13–50 AD) and Christ, appears to have originated as anti-Manichaean propaganda in the late third century. It is found in the Syriac *Doctrina Addai* (G. Phillips, *The Doctrine of Addai, the Apostle*, London, 1876), and in Greek papyrus fragments; it is also recorded by Eusebius of Caesarea, who claims to have translated the correspondence himself from the Syriac of the Edessan archives (*HE* i. 13, *PG* xx. 119–30; cf. below, iii. 26,

22. *A Rock which is Moved by One Finger and Not by the Whole Body*

In the kingdom of Arles and the province of Embrun, at the castle which they call Noth,<sup>1</sup> there is a huge rock. If you push this rock with your little finger, you can put the whole thing into easy motion; but if you bring to bear your whole body or countless teams of oxen, it remains immovable.<sup>2</sup>

23. *The Image of the Lord in Edessa<sup>1</sup>*

We read in *The Deeds of the Saviour*<sup>2</sup> that Abgar, king of Edessa, which is the capital of Syrian Mesopotamia, while residing in Syrian Mesopotamia, heard of the Lord's miracles, and with a burning desire of the heart he longed to see Christ. Therefore, sending a letter to him in Jerusalem by the courier Ananias, he acknowledged that his works showed him to be God or the son of God, and he put at his disposal

n. 2). A common Syriac source probably lies behind all these witnesses (see Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, i. 493).

The sermon from which Gervase drew his account (see n. 2) has some affinities with Rufinus' translation of Eusebius (see Eusebius–Rufinus, *HE*, ed. Mommsen, pp. 83–97); Eusebius, however, does not mention an image. This may have been because of his own aversion to images, or it may be that the image was lost for a time. The *Doctrina Addai* knows of an image, and Evagrius, writing in c.600, describes how a portrait of Christ of divine origin protected Edessa against the Persians in 544 (*HE* iv. 27, *PG* lxxxvi (2). 2748–9). From then on it came to dominate the Abgar-legend. Known as the Mandylion (a Greek version of its Arabic name of *mandil*, derived in turn from the Latin *mantile* or *mantilium*), it was translated to Constantinople in 944, but was lost when the crusaders sacked the city in 1204.

<sup>2</sup> Gervase's source is an interpolated Latin version of an ancient sermon, probably written originally in Greek; it is printed from MSS of the twelfth and fourteenth centuries in Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, pp. 130\*\*–135\*\*. The original must date from before 769, since the sermon was drawn on by Pope Stephen III in his speech against the iconoclasts at the Lateran Synod of that year (*Concilia Aevi Karolini*, i (1), ed. A. Werminghoff, *MGH Concilia* ii (1) (Hanover, 1906), no. 14, p. 90); Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, pp. 137\*\*–138\*\*. The text at this stage asserted only that Christ's face was miraculously imprinted on a cloth. At some date between 769 and c.1135, when the sermon seems to have been used by Orderic Vitalis (*HE* ix. 11), an interpolation was made to the effect that not just the face but the whole body of the Lord was imprinted on the cloth.

The fact that Gervase names the *Gesta Saluatoris* as his source suggests that he read the sermon as part of another work. Since in the two twelfth-century MSS used by Dobschütz (Dijon cod. 50 (32) and cod. 638–642 (383) II) the sermon follows immediately after the *Evangelium Nicodemi*, and this work is also included in the fourteenth-century MS (Bibliothèque Nationale Lat. 6041A), and since the *Evangelium Nicodemi* is frequently entitled *Gesta Saluatoris* in MSS, it seems evident that this is the work in question.



filium, exposuitque ei se ipsum et ciuitatem suam que, licet parua, duobus ipsis posset sufficere; et in fine, cum humiliter rogasset ut dignaretur fatigari ad eum et liberare eum ab infirmitate sua,<sup>3</sup> subiunxit: 'Valeas Iesu bone, Saluator orbis, semperque nostri digneris memor esse.'

Magister humilitatis et humane salutis auctor<sup>c</sup> in hec uerba rescripsit: 'Beatus es qui in me credidisti cum ipse me non uideris.<sup>4</sup> Scriptum enim est de me quia hi qui me uisuri sunt, in me credituri non sunt, et qui me minime sunt uisuri ipsi, in me sunt credituri ut salui fiant.<sup>5</sup> De hoc autem quod scripsisti, ut uenirem ad te, oportet ea primum explere propter que huc missus sum; postquam uero cuncta compleuero, iterum oportunum est recipi me ab eo a quo missus sum. Cum ergo assumptus fuero, mittam tibi aliquem ex discipulis meis, qui curet te ab infirmitate tua et populum tuum saluet. Sed quia me corporaliter uidere desideras, en tibi dirigo lintheum in quo faciei | f. 62<sup>v</sup> mee figura et tocuis mei corporis status continetur; quem tu dum uideris, ardorem tui animi refrigerare poteris. Beatus tu, sed et illi omnes beati qui scandalum in me non habuerint. In Dei Patris sapientia bene ualeas per cuncta secula.'

Traditur autem ex archiuis auctoritatis antique quod Dominus super lintheum candidissimum toto corpore se prostrauerit, et ita uirtute diuina non tantum faciei sed etiam tocuis corporis dominici speciosissima effigies lintheo impressa sit. Hec Domini ymago in lintheo apud Edissam, que caput est Mesopotamidis Sirie, sine aliquo<sup>d</sup> corruptionis uestigio in maiori ecclesia reseruata,<sup>6</sup> in precipuis festiuitatibus Domini Saluatoris de aureo scrinio producitur et cum hymnis, psalmis, et orationibus<sup>e</sup> adoratur. De hac quoque naratur quod singulis annis, in die sancto Pasce, in omnium conspectu diuersas accipit uariationes: prima siquidem hora diei representat infanciam, tertia pueritiam, quinta adolescentiam, septima iuuentutem, nona uero hora plenitudinem representat etatis in qua Dominus passionem pro nostra suscepit redemptione.<sup>7</sup> Fuit autem secundum uerba Domini ciuitas Edissa conuersa ad fidem

<sup>c</sup> actor N

<sup>d</sup> aliqua N

<sup>e</sup> rationibus N

<sup>3</sup> Abgar was a leper.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. John 20: 29.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. John 6: 36; Mark 16: 16.

<sup>6</sup> The image was kept in the cathedral of Hagia Sophia, built in the sixth century for the specific purpose of housing it.

<sup>7</sup> The description of this ceremony is drawn directly from the sermon. The changing

his own person and his city which, small though it was, could suffice for the two of them; in conclusion, having humbly begged him to deign to undertake the toilsome journey to come and free him from his sickness,<sup>3</sup> he added: 'Farewell good Jesus, Saviour of the world; may you be so kind as to remember us always.'

The master of humility and author of human salvation replied in these words: 'Blessed are you who have believed in me although you have not seen me.<sup>4</sup> For it is written of me that some who are to see me will not believe in me, and others who are not to see me themselves at all will believe in me, that they may be saved.<sup>5</sup> As for the matter of which you wrote, that I should come to you, I must first accomplish those things for which I was sent into this world; and after I have brought everything to fulfilment, it is fitting that I should be received again by the one who sent me. Therefore, after I have been taken up, I shall send you one of my disciples, to cure you from your sickness and to save your people. But because you desire to see me in the flesh, see, I am sending you a linen cloth on which is preserved the appearance of my face and the form of my whole body. When you look at it, you will be able to assuage the burning desire of your spirit. You are blessed, as are all those who have not found a stumbling-block in me. May you be strong in the wisdom of God the Father for all time.'

A tradition founded on ancient and reliable records has it that the Lord lay down full length on a pure white linen cloth, and thus, by divine power, a most beautiful image of not only the face but also the whole body of the Lord was imprinted on the cloth. This image of the Lord on a cloth is preserved without any trace of decay in the major church at Edessa,<sup>6</sup> capital of Syrian Mesopotamia, and it is brought out from its golden casket on the chief festivals of our Lord and Saviour, and adored with hymns, psalms, and prayers. It is also related of this image that every year, on the holy festival of Easter, it takes on different aspects in the sight of all: at the first hour of the day it shows his infancy, at the third, his boyhood, at the fifth, his adolescence, at the seventh, his youth, while at the ninth hour it shows our Lord in the prime of life, as he was when he bore his passion for our redemption.<sup>7</sup> The city of Edessa was indeed converted to faith in Christ, in accordance with the Lord's words, following his

vision of Christ is reminiscent of some versions of the legend of the Holy Grail: cf. e.g. *Perlesvaus*, branch vi, where Gawain sees Christ in the Grail first as a child, and then as a crucified king (ed. W. A. Nitze and T. A. Jenkins (Chicago, 1932), i. 119).



Christi, post ascensionem Domini, ab uno ex septuaginta<sup>f8</sup> discipulis, Thadeo nomine, per quem et salus corporis et fides mentis ab Adgaro est recepta.

xxiv. *De alia figura Domini*

Est alia in lintheo Domini figura expressa que, ut in *Gestis de Vultu Lucano*<sup>1</sup> legitur, hoc suum habuit inicium. Cum Dominus ac Redemptor noster exutus uestimentis suis in cruce penderet, accedens Ioseph ab Arimachia ad Mariam matrem Domini et ad<sup>a</sup> alias mulieres que secute sunt Dominum ad passionem suam, ait: 'O', inquit, 'quanto amore huic iusto tenebamini ex ipso rerum effectu perpendi potest! Quem enim nudum in cruce pendere uidistis, non operuistis.' Quo castigationis alloquio mota, mater eius et alie que cum ea<sup>b</sup> erant, cito euntes, emerunt lintheum mundissimum, tam amplum et extensum quod totum crucifixi corpus operiebat; cumque deponeretur, pendens de cruce apparuit tocius corporis effigies in lintheo expressa. Ad cuius<sup>c</sup> similitudinem et exemplar, Nicodemus Vultum Lucanum effigiauit, in cuius medio lintheum inclusit, et ampullam sanguinis Domini, et unum ex tribus clauis, partemque corone spinee et spongie et uestimenti Domini et Beatissime Virginis Dei Genitricis et de cunabulo Domini et de umbelico Domini.

Dicunt tamen magistri nostri, et hoc tenet Romanorum traditio,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>f</sup> lxx A; lxii NCI; lxxii XQ

<sup>a</sup> ad om. XQ      <sup>b</sup> eo N      <sup>c</sup> cuuus N

<sup>8</sup> Confusion reigned in the Abgar-legend as to the identity of Thaddaeus. A Thaddaeus is named as one of the twelve by Matthew (10: 3) and Mark (3: 18), but the legend of this Thaddaeus was associated with Hamidiya on the Syrian coast, Beirut, and Arwad, not with Edessa. Eusebius therefore made him one of the seventy-two (Luke 10: 1, Vulgate; seventy in A.V.), and the sermon followed suit (Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, p. 135\*\*); later tradition confused the two (Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, i. 494).

<sup>1</sup> The Volto Santo di Lucca is the most famous of several images supposedly made by Nicodemus. The legend as Gervase presents it clearly sprang from the association of Nicodemus with Joseph of Arimathaea at the burial of Jesus (John 19: 39); they are similarly associated in the *Evangelium Nicodemi* and other apocryphal writings, and in the Grail legends. Gervase probably picked up the legend in Lucca: his description of the image's eyes suggests an eye-witness account, and his claim to have handled the flask of blood at St Mary's of Sarzana is probably genuine. The *Gesta de Vultu Lucano* may have been, or at least included, Leboino's description of the miraculous translation of the image to Lucca (printed by D. Barsocchini in *Ragionamento sul Volto Santo in Memorie e documenti per servire all'istoria del ducato di Lucca*, v (1) (Lucca, 1844), 3–99, at pp. 53–7). This work has been dated to the twelfth century, though the author claims to have been a

ascension, by one of the seventy<sup>8</sup> disciples, Thaddaeus by name, through whom Abgar received both health for his body and faith for his mind.

24. *Another Image of the Lord*

There is another image of the Lord imprinted on a cloth which, as one reads in *The History of the Image of Lucca*,<sup>1</sup> originated as follows. When our Lord and Redeemer was hanging on the cross, stripped of his clothing, Joseph of Arimathaea went up to Mary, the Lord's mother, and the other women who followed the Lord to his passion, and said: 'Ah, the extent of the love by which you were bound to this righteous man can be judged by your actions! For you have seen him hanging naked on the cross, and have not covered him.' Upset by this reproving comment, his mother and the other women who were with her quickly went and bought a cloth of finest linen, so large and wide that it covered the whole body of the crucified; and when he was taken down, an image of his whole body hanging from the cross was seen to have been imprinted on the cloth. Making a copy in its likeness, Nicodemus fashioned the Image of Lucca. Inside it he enclosed the cloth, with a flask of the Lord's blood, one of the three nails, and fragments of the crown of thorns, the sponge, and the clothing of the Lord and of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God; there were also pieces of the Lord's cradle and umbilical cord.

However, our masters say—and the Roman tradition supports this<sup>2</sup>—that the Lord's umbilical cord and the foreskin from his

deacon of Bishop Wilfred and a contemporary of the translation in 742. An addition to it gives an account of the image's origin which is closely related to Gervase's text; whether it dates from before or after Gervase wrote is not certain.

The image is still in Lucca, and has been dated to the eleventh century. It is a life-size wooden crucifix, hollowed out inside to contain relics; for an illustration of the face see Maurus Green, 'Enshrouded in silence', *Ampleforth Journal*, lxxiv (1969), Plate 12.

<sup>2</sup> Gervase's source here was probably the *Liber de ecclesia Lateranensi*, written in the twelfth century by John the Deacon, a canon of the Lateran (printed in Mabillon's *Museum Italicum*, ii. 560–76). Chapter 14, 'De ecclesia sancti Laurentii in Palatio', describes the oratory of St Lawrence, the ancient pontifical chapel of the Lateran (which was the residence of the popes from the fourth to the fourteenth century), now called the Sancta Sanctorum because of the hoard of relics it contains. The chapter begins (p. 572): 'In sacro namque palatio est quoddam Sancti Laurentii oratorium, in quo tria sanctissima computantur altaria. Primum in arca cypressina, quam Leo papa III [795–816] condidit, tres capsae sunt. In una est crux de auro purissimo adornata gemmis et lapidibus preciosis, id est hyacinthis et smaragdis, et prasinis. In media cruce est umbilicus Domini nostri Jesu Christi: et desuper est inuncta balsamo, et singulis annis eadem unctio renouatur, quando

quod umbilicus Domini et prepuccium circumcissionis eius sunt in cruce de auro purissimo, adornata gemmis et lapidibus pretiosis, que sita est in quadam capsula cipressina quam Leo tertius posuit in oratorio sancti Laurentii, quod est in sacro palatio Lateranensi. Hec quoque crux uncta est balsamo, et quotannis eadem unctio renouatur, quando dominus papa cum cardinalibus suis facit processionem ab oratorio illo in ecclesiam sancti Iohannis Lateranensis in Exaltatione Sancte Crucis.<sup>3</sup> E contra tradunt Galli<sup>4</sup> quod prepuccium Domini delatum est ab angelo Carolo Magno in templo Domini, et ab eo apud Aquis Granis primo reconditum, postea a Carolo Caluo fuit apud Carrosium translatum.<sup>4</sup>

Quia uero, sacratissime princeps, orationes sanctorum ex ipsorum institutione formate digniorem habent apud modernos memoriam, dignum duxi subiungere orationem cotidianam Nicodemi, qui Vultum Lucanum formauit, quem filium Ioseph Iusti, nobilis decurionis, tradicio Hebreorum dicit. Cotidie ergo, genua coram Vultu Lucano flectens, dicebat: 'Ecce Agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccata mundi, Deus noster. Ecce Deus iustus, ecce Deus uiuorum et mortuorum. Ecce uita uiuentium, spes morientium, salus omnium credentium, quem adoramus, quem glorificamus, cui benedicimus; et Deum Patrem omnipotentem et Filium cum Sancto Spiritu laudemus et superexaltemus in secula. Adiutor et protector et defensor sis mihi, f. 63<sup>r</sup> Domine benignissime et sanctissime et misericordissime.' Hanc igitur orationem in corde teneas quociens sacerdos inter uerba consecratoria hostiam eleuat, et adiungas: 'Aue Rex noster, principem mortis in cruce debellans. Aue Corpus Domini nostri Iesu Christi, quod pro nobis suspensum est in patibulo, et consecratur in hoc altari in memoriam passionis dominice.' Connectas quoque orationem Eusebii: 'Perficiant in nobis, Domine Deus, sacramenta tua quod continent, ut quod nunc specie gerimus, rerum ueritate capiamus.'<sup>5</sup>

dominus Papa cum cardinalibus facit processionem in Exaltatione sanctae Crucis ab ipsa ecclesia Sancti Laurentii in basilicam Saluatoris . . . ' The text is reprinted from here in *DACL*, s.v. Latran (viii (2). 1624–5), where the words 'et prepuccium Circumcissionis' are added after 'umbilicus', with the note: 'L'édition de Mabillon ne portait que *umbilicus Domini nostri Jesu Christi*. Le ms. des Archives de la basilique de Latran, A LXXII, fournit la leçon donnée ici, mais il a subi un grattage. Le ms. de Cambrai 710 (fol. 83 verso) donne la même leçon sans grattage.' An illustrated description of the cross may be found in *DACL*, iii. 1715–17.

<sup>3</sup> Holy Cross Day (14 September), adopted from the eastern Church by the west in the seventh century, commemorates in the west the recovery of the supposed True Cross from the Persians in 629.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Comestor, *Evan.*, c. 6, Additio 2 (*PL* cxcviii. 1541), where the passage is a gloss copied into many late twelfth- and thirteenth-century MSS of the work: see A. G.

circumcision are in a cross of purest gold, ornamented with gems and precious stones, which is kept in a reliquary of cypress-wood which Leo III placed in the oratory of St Lawrence in the holy Lateran Palace. They say, also, that this cross is anointed with balsam, an anointing which is repeated every year when the lord pope, with his cardinals, goes in procession from that oratory into the church of St John Lateran on Holy Cross Day.<sup>3</sup> Then again, the Gauls maintain<sup>4</sup> that the Lord's foreskin was brought by an angel to Charlemagne in the Lord's temple, and was initially laid by him in Aachen, but was afterwards translated to Charroux by Charles the Bald.<sup>4</sup>

Now since, most worshipful Prince, the prayers of the saints, which owe their form to the saints' own practice, well deserve to be held in remembrance by the people of our time, I have deemed it fitting to add here the daily prayer of Nicodemus, who fashioned the Image of Lucca; according to a tradition of the Hebrews, this Nicodemus was the son of the noble decurion, Joseph the Just. Every day he used to go down on his knees before the Image of Lucca, and say: 'Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world, our God. Behold the righteous God, behold the God of the living and the dead. Behold the life of the living, the hope of the dying, the salvation of all believers, the one whom we adore, whom we glorify, whom we bless; and let us praise God the Father almighty, and the Son, with the Holy Spirit, and exalt them above all else for evermore. Be my helper, my protector, and my defender, Lord most kind, most holy, and most merciful.' Keep this prayer in your heart, then, every time the priest elevates the host during the words of consecration, and add: 'Hail to our King, vanquishing the prince of death on the cross. Hail to the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which hung on the tree for our sake, and is being consecrated on this altar in memory of the Lord's passion.' You should also add the prayer of Eusebius: 'Lord God, may your sacraments fulfil in us what they embody, that what we now perform outwardly, we may receive in truth.'<sup>5</sup>

Remensnyder, 'Legendary Treasure at Conques: Reliquaries and Imaginative Memory', *Speculum*, lxxi (1996), 884–906, at pp. 894–5; cf. also Fretellus, *PL* clv. 1047–8 (= ed. Boeren, c. 54). The belief that Charlemagne had travelled to Jerusalem formed the basis of many churches' claims for their relics: see G. Paris, *Histoire poétique de Charlemagne* (Paris, 1905), p. 57.

<sup>5</sup> This prayer, attributed by Gervase to Eusebius, is to be found in the *Sacramentarium Gregorianum* (p. 95, no. 166, 8). It was used by Ratramnus (*De Corpore et Sanguine Domini*, c. 88, *PL* cxxi. 164) and Ascelin of Chartres (*Epistola Ascelini ad Berengarium*, in

Illud sane non erit omittendum quod Vultus Lucanus oculos tenet apertos et terribiles ostendit, quod ad figuram pertinet. Sicut enim leo, rex omnium ferarum, cum dormit oculos aperit, ut intuentibus in eum numquam dormire uel sue potestatis uigilantiam intermittere uideatur, ita Christus numquam sue potestatis uirtutem intermittit, sed se malis terribilem ostendit.

Si quis autem unde aut qualiter Vultus Lucanus ad nos usque peruenerit querit, audiat ipsum, tempore Caroli et Pipini, a Transalpino reuerendo Gulfredo<sup>6</sup> Gallie presule repertum Ierosolimis, in domo Seleucii in absconso positum. Hunc extrahens et in nauis bituminata desuper clausa, tabulatu operta, reconditum, sine remige ac remigio a portu Iope dimittit; sicque diuina uirtute preduce per mare nauis aduecta, ad plagam pelagi Lunensis applicare parat. Sane Lunenses, ut eis piratica uita in usu erat, rapiendi<sup>d</sup> animo accedentes, spe sua frustrati miraculo diuino, tanti thesauri indigni iudicati, dum fugant et fugientem insequuntur nauim, magis fugiuntur: sicque fit quod dum insecutionem parant, nauis fugit; stat cum subsistentibus; redit cum redeuntibus.

Tanta nouitate tacta uicinia, ad Lucensem<sup>e</sup> hec inaudita sed diu temptata retulit. Nec mora sanctissimus Lucensis antistes Iohannes nauigia disponit, remos orationum aptat, psalorumque usus remigio, nauim quam non persequitur consequitur, et cum debita ueneratione recipit.<sup>7</sup> Indignati Lunenses quod Lucensibus insecuta<sup>8</sup> dudum nauis occurrit, questionem mouent de acquisitis. Proponunt que ad sui commodum questus eis uidentur accommoda. Tandem pace reformata uultus sacratissimus cum inserto thesauro Lucensium parti cedit, unicaque ampulla de duabus<sup>9</sup> sanguinem ymaginis<sup>10</sup> Saluatoris continentibus Lunensibus addicitur

<sup>d</sup> rapiendo *NI*

<sup>e</sup> episcopum *add. before Lucensem C, after Lucensem X*

L. d'Achery's *Vita Lanfranci*, *PL* cl. 67) to defend the theory of transubstantiation. Gervase quotes it again in his *Commentary on the Lord's Prayer*: see Appendix iii, n. 128.

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of the identity of Bishop Wilfred, and of Bishop John of Lucca, see Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, p. 286\*\*, n. 2; for John (died 803), see also Gams, *Series episcoporum*, p. 740.

<sup>7</sup> Self-propelling boats are frequently met with in folklore: see *MI* D1523.2. Liebrecht (pp. 109–10) compares this story with Pausanias, vii. 5. 5–8; cf. also Homer, *Odyssey*, vii. 558 f.; Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 305 f.; Augustine, *Civ.* x. 16 (*CSEL* xl (1). 474 = *PL* xli. 294–5); Marie de France, *Lai de Guigemar* (*Lais*, pp. 3–25 and 165); C. Plummer, *Bethada Náem n-Érenn*, ii. 59; V. Elwin, *Folk Tales of Mahokoshal* (New York, 1944), p. 8; *Otia*, ii. 10, pp. 294–5. F. de Mély ('L'image du Christ') treats of the miraculous sea-voyages of a number of relics and images, including that of Lucca. We have here an example of a pagan motif being transformed into a Christian miracle.

The observation must certainly be included that the Image of Lucca keeps its eyes open and reveals their awfulness, as far as is possible for a portrait. For just as the lion, the king of all beasts, keeps his eyes open when he sleeps, so that to onlookers he seems never to sleep or to relax the vigilance of his power, so Christ never remits his mighty power, but shows his awfulness to evil-doers.

Now if anyone wants to know whence or how the Image of Lucca came over to us, let him hear. It was found in Jerusalem in the time of Charles and Pippin by the reverend Wilfred,<sup>6</sup> bishop of Transalpine Gaul; it had been hidden in a secret place in the house of Seleucius. Wilfred took it away and stowed it in a boat, which was caulked with pitch, sealed over on top and covered with planks; he then dispatched it without oarsman or oar from the port of Joppa. Having voyaged thus across the sea, with divine power as its guide, the boat was all set to come in to land in the bay of Luni. The people of Luni, however, accustomed as they were to a life of piracy, approached the boat with the intention of seizing it for plunder. But they were cheated of their hope by a divine miracle, being judged unworthy of so great a treasure: as long as they went on pursuing and chasing the boat, it kept eluding them, and they found themselves instead getting further away; and so it happened that while they were trying to catch it the boat went further off, but when they called a halt it stood still, and when they withdrew it came back.

The people of the neighbourhood, awestruck at such a strange phenomenon, reported these events which, though unheard of, were confirmed time and again, to the bishop of Lucca. Without delay the saintly Bishop John of Lucca equipped ships: he furnished them with oars of prayer, and using the rowing of psalms, he overtook the boat without pursuing it, and received it with due reverence.<sup>7</sup> The people of Luni were outraged that the boat which they had just been pursuing<sup>8</sup> came to meet the people of Lucca, and they raised the question of the spoils. They proposed what seemed to them a fitting arrangement, to secure some profit for themselves. Eventually peace was restored, and the sacred image with the treasure inside it fell to the portion of the people of Lucca, while just one flask of the two<sup>9</sup> in the Saviour's image<sup>10</sup> containing his blood was handed over to the

<sup>8</sup> Note the use of *insecuta* with a passive sense.

<sup>9</sup> Earlier (pp. 598–9) we were told of only one flask.

<sup>10</sup> The word *ymaginis*, present in all the manuscripts collated, is difficult, and the text would make good sense without it ('one of the two flasks containing the Saviour's blood').

ad aliquod miserie sue remedium, que etiam iam nunc ad proximum castrum translata est, episcopali sede illuc translata. Est autem castrum Lunensis episcopi quod sancte Marie de Sarzenai<sup>11</sup> dicunt, ubi ampullam uidimus et tractauimus, ubi etiam<sup>f</sup> in maledictionem Lunensem episcopatum translatum audiuimus.

xxv. *De figura Domini que Veronica dicitur*

Porro sunt alii uultus Domini,<sup>a</sup> sicut est Veronica,<sup>b</sup> quam quidam Rome delatam a Veronica dicunt, quam ignotam tradunt esse mulierem. Verum ex antiquissimis scripturis comprobauimus hanc esse Martham sororem Lazari, Christi hospitam,<sup>1</sup> que fluxum sanguinis duodecim annis passa, tactu fimbrie dominice sanata fuit, propter diutinam passionem fluxus curua incedens; unde a uarice,<sup>c</sup> poplitis uena incuruata, Varonica<sup>d</sup> (quia incuruata) dicta est.<sup>2</sup> Hanc ex tradicionem<sup>e</sup> ueterum nouimus lintheo<sup>f</sup> impressam habuisse dominici uultus effigiem, quam Volusianus, amicus Tyberii Cesaris, aput Ierosolimam<sup>g</sup> ab ipso transmissus ut de factis et miraculis Christi certum signum referret, quo de morbo suo Tiberius curaretur, ab ipsa Martha, licet inuita, quorundam suggestionem abstraxerat. In cuius direptione<sup>h</sup> Martha contristata uultumque hospitis sui secuta traditur Romam uenisse, et Tyberium in primo Varonice<sup>i</sup> picture conspectu curasse, ut legitur in *Speculo ecclesie* et in<sup>j</sup> *Gestis Titi et Vespasiani*.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>f</sup> episcopatum *add. after etiam NAI*

<sup>a</sup> Domini *N (correcting diuini), I; diuini ACXQ* <sup>b</sup> Veronica *with a faint e written above first a, but a not expunged, N* <sup>c</sup> a uarice *Q, auarice ACXI; auaricie N*

<sup>d</sup> Veronica *AX* <sup>e</sup> tradicionem *N* <sup>f</sup> in *add. before lintheo XQ*

<sup>g</sup> Ierosolimam *N* <sup>h</sup> direptionem *N* <sup>i</sup> Varonice *ACβ* <sup>j</sup> in *om. XQ*

<sup>11</sup> The bishopric of Luni was transferred to Sarzana in 1202 in order to escape from the increasing unhealthiness of the marshy plains of Luni. The clergy adopted the church of San Basilio in Sarzana, which then assumed the title of Santa Maria. The bishops, however, continued to call themselves bishops of Luni for some time (see Cappelletti, xiii. 446–7).

<sup>1</sup> Confusion reigned as to the identity of the Haemorrhissa. At first, in the gospels (Matt. 9: 20; Mark 5: 20; Luke 8: 43) and other early mentions of her (e.g. Eusebius, *HE* vii. 18, *PG* xx. 680), she was nameless. Then a western tradition deriving from Pseudo-Ambrose (Sermo 46 *De Salomone*, *PL* xvii. 698) identified her with Martha, the sister of Mary and Lazarus, and it is this tradition which Gervase follows here and in iii. 50. In the east, on the other hand, she was named Berenike or Bermike (Latin Veronica), the earliest occurrence of this being in the original Greek version of the *Evangelium Nicodemi* (*Evangelia apocrypha*, ed. Tischendorf, p. 239); and the western legend of the Veronica adopted this identification.

people of Luni, as some compensation for their disappointment. Just recently this was translated to the next town, when the episcopal see was transferred there. For the town which they call St Mary's of Sarzana<sup>11</sup> is now the residence of the bishop of Luni. It was there that we saw and handled the flask, and we heard that the bishopric, too, had been transferred there, leaving Luni under a curse.

25. *The Image of the Lord which is called the Veronica*

There are, furthermore, other portraits of the Lord: one such is the Veronica, which some say was brought to Rome by Veronica, who appears in the tradition as an unknown woman; but we have established from ancient sources that she was Martha, Lazarus' sister, who gave hospitality to Christ.<sup>1</sup> After suffering from an issue of blood for twelve years, she was healed by touching the hem of the Lord's garment. As a result of her prolonged suffering from the haemorrhage she walked doubled up, and so she was called Veronica ('the bent one'), from *varix*, the name of the bent vein in the knee.<sup>2</sup> We know from an old tradition that this woman had a likeness of the Lord's features imprinted on a linen cloth, which Volusianus, a friend of Tiberius Caesar, took from Martha's own hands, notwithstanding her protests, at certain people's instigation. He had been sent to Jerusalem by Tiberius to bring back a sure token of the deeds and miracles of Christ, in the hope that Tiberius might be cured of his sickness by it. It is reported that Martha, grieved at its theft, followed the image of her guest. She came to Rome, and cured Tiberius at his first glimpse of the Veronica portrait, as one reads in *The Mirror of the Church* and *The Deeds of Titus and Vespasian*.<sup>3</sup> So even then, a long

<sup>2</sup> This attempt to derive the name Veronica from *uarix* (related to *uarus*, bent), seems to be peculiar to Gervase. The words 'est ergo Veronica pictura, Domini ueram . . . representans effigiem' at the end of the paragraph suggest that he also knew the usual etymology from one Greek and one Latin word: *uera εἰκών*, a true image.

<sup>3</sup> The Veronica-legend has a very complicated history. In the earliest versions, such as the Greek *Evangelium Nicodemi* (loc. cit.) and the *Apocritus* of Macarius of Magnesia (ed. C. Blondel (Paris, 1876), p. 1), Veronica, or Berenike, is identified with the Haemorrhissa, but there is no mention of an image. By c.600, in the *Cura Sanitatis Tiberii* (printed by Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, pp. 157\*\*–203\*\*), she possesses an image of the Lord, but there is as yet no idea that Christ imprinted it miraculously on a cloth: it is merely a painting ('ob amorem eius imaginem ipsius sibi depinxit, dum ipse maneret in corpore', p. 176\*\*). The *Cura Sanitatis Tiberii* tells how Tiberius sent Volusianus to Jerusalem because he had heard about Jesus' healing miracles and hoped to be cured of his own sickness. Volusianus found that Jesus had been crucified, but he was told by a certain

Vnde et tunc, longo ante apostolorum aduentum tempore, Christi fides usque adeo Romanis innotuit, quod Tyberius de mansuetissima oue seuissimus lupus<sup>4</sup> effectus perhibetur, descuiens in senatum eo quod, ipso uolente, suscipere Christi agnitionem dedignaretur, sicut  
 f. 63<sup>v</sup> in libro *De transitu Beate Virginis<sup>k</sup> et gestis discipulorum<sup>5</sup>* | profusius tractaui. Est ergo Veronica pictura, Domini ueram secundum carnem representans effigiem a pectore superius, in basilica sancti Petri iuxta ualuam a parte<sup>l</sup> introitus dextra recondita.

Est et alia dominici uultus effigies, in tabula eque impressa,<sup>m</sup> in oratorio sancti Laurentii in palatio Lateranensi, quam sancte memorie nostri temporis papa Alexander tertius multiplici panno Serico operuit, eo quod attentius intuentibus tremorem cum mortis periculo inferret.<sup>6</sup> Vnumque procul dubio compertum habeo, quod si diligenter uultum dominicum, quem Iudeus in palatio Lateranensi iuxta oratorium sancti Laurentii uulnerauit,<sup>7</sup> cuius uulnus<sup>n</sup> cruore tamquam recente faciem dextram operit, attendas, non absimilem Veronice basilice sancti Petri, eiue picture que in ipso sancti Laurentii est oratorio, Vultuque Lucano reperies.

<sup>k</sup> Virginis] Marie XQ      <sup>l</sup> parte supplied by author N      <sup>m</sup> impressa] depicta XQ  
<sup>n</sup> uulnus] uultus XQ

Marcius about Veronica's picture of Jesus, and forced her to give it up. She went with it to Rome, where it effected an immediate cure for Tiberius. Dobschütz asserts (p. 293\*) that this text is Gervase's source here. It is presented as a continuation of the *Evangelium Nicodemi* in one class of MSS, and is probably the oldest version of this legend. The words 'licet inuita', common to both, and Gervase's mention of the coming of the apostles to Rome, which forms the subject of a continuation of the *Cura*, suggest that Gervase was familiar with the text. But his appears to be a composite version: as well as drawing also on Pseudo-Ambrose (cf. n. 1), he must have known a version in which the image was imprinted on a cloth. A version which probably dates from c. 700, the *Vindicta Salvatoris* (*Evangelia apocrypha*, ed. Tischendorf, pp. 471–86), presents the story of the healing of Tiberius as part of the legend of the capture of Jerusalem by Titus and Vespasian (Titus is here a king of Aquitaine), and it may well be this work which Gervase refers to as the *Gesta Titi et Vespasiani*; in it the image is said to be imprinted on a linen cloth. He also apparently knew the passage in the *Speculum ecclesiae* of Honorius of Autun which tells how Tiberius sent a friend to Judaea to bring Jesus to him, and the friend brought back the image instead, 'quam Veronica in panno ob Christi amorem depingere fecerat' (PL clxxii. 831).

The legend only reached its full development, according to which Veronica offered Christ her veil on which to wipe his face as he carried his cross to Calvary, in the late Middle Ages. It enjoyed great popularity, and came to be celebrated in the sixth station of the cross. The Veronica was venerated in the old St Peter's in Rome, where Pope John VII consecrated an altar to it in 705. However, the icon was stolen by the troops of Charles V in 1527; many churches now claim to possess it.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Orosius, *Adversum paganos*, vii. 4. 7; *Otia*, ii. 16, at nn. 18–19.

<sup>5</sup> This work is now lost: see above, p. xcii.

time before the arrival of the apostles, the Christian faith was known to the Romans, and had such an effect that Tiberius is said to have turned from the mildest of sheep into the fiercest of wolves,<sup>4</sup> raging against the senate because they disdained to recognize Christ when he wanted them to. I have treated this matter more fully in my book *The Passing of the Blessed Virgin and the Deeds of her Disciples*.<sup>5</sup> The Veronica portrait then, presenting a true physical likeness of the Lord from the chest upwards, is preserved in St Peter's basilica near the door, on the right-hand side of the entrance.

There is also another image of the Lord's features, this one imprinted in a similarly miraculous way on a panel, which is in the oratory of St Lawrence in the Lateran Palace. A pope of our time, Alexander III of holy memory, had it covered with a large silk cloth, because it caused such violent trembling in people who gazed at it too intently that there was a risk of death.<sup>6</sup> And one thing I know beyond a shadow of doubt: if you examine carefully the image of the Lord in the Lateran Palace beside the oratory of St Lawrence, which a Jew wounded,<sup>7</sup> and whose wound covers its right side with apparently fresh blood, you will find that it is not unlike the Veronica in St Peter's basilica, or the portrait which is inside the oratory of St Lawrence, or the Image of Lucca.

<sup>6</sup> Various portraits of the Madonna and some of Christ himself are supposed to have been painted by St Luke (see Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, pp. 267\*\*–280\*\*). The so-called 'acheropita'—an image not made with hands—in the Sancta Sanctorum of the Lateran is one of them; according to legend, Luke began a portrait of the Lord after the ascension, but when he had drawn the outline an angel finished the work (see e.g. John the Deacon, in Mabillon, *Museum Italicum*, ii. 572). G. Marangoni described the image in his *Istoria dell'antichissimo oratorio Sancta Sanctorum* (Rome, 1747, pp. 87–90) as an ancient portrait on wood with a twelfth-century painting on a silk cloth pasted over it. This is probably the cloth with which, according to Gervase, the panel was covered by Alexander III (1159–81). Cf. M. Ph. Lauer, 'Le trésor du Sancta Sanctorum', *Fondation Eugène Piot, Monuments et Mémoires*, xv (1906), 23; ill. plate V.

<sup>7</sup> This notion of an image wounded by a Jew probably derived from the legend of another alleged work of Nicodemus. This legend became well-known in the west through the Latin translation of the proceedings of the Second Nicene Synod in 787, made by Anastasius Bibliothecarius and dedicated to Pope John VIII (872–82), printed by J. D. Mansi in *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova, et amplissima collectio*, xiii (Florence, 1767), 580–5. Peter, bishop of Nicomedia, had a sermon, falsely attributed to Athanasius, read at the council, which gave an account of this image, providing proof of the divine power of images. According to the legend, a Christian of Beirut left an image of the Lord in his house when he moved. It was found by Jews, and they inflicted on it the various wounds of the passion. When they pierced the side, blood and water flowed out which performed healing miracles, whereupon the Jews were converted to Christianity. The story is told by Honorius in his *Speculum ecclesiae* (PL clxxii. 1003). In Gervase's account the word-order suggests that the wounding took place in the Lateran; however, there is no mention of it in John the Deacon's *Liber de ecclesia Lateranensi*.

xxvi. *De uirtute epistole Domini et beati Thome apostoli*<sup>a</sup>

Iam nunc ad materiam pridem ceptam redeamus.<sup>1</sup> In Edissa equidem ciuitate, ob presentiam sancte ymaginationis Christi, nullus hereticus uiuere potest, nullus paganus, nullus ydolorum cultor, nullus Iudeus; sed nec locum illum barbari possunt inuadere. Si quando exercitus obuenit hostilis, stans super portam ciuitatis innocens puerulus epistolam legit et sic, eadem die qua legitur epistola, aut pacantur barbari aut fugiunt effeminati.<sup>2</sup>

In hac equidem ciuitate<sup>b</sup> sepultum asserunt beatum Thomam apostolum, qui a rege Gundoforo exceptus est in Indie ciuitate Eliofo, ueniens a Cesarea ex mandato dominico in uicem architectoris. Cumque ipsum ad fidem Christi conuertisset, profectus est exinde Thomas ad Indiam superiorem, in qua regnabat rex Migdeus; ubi, regina conuersa ad fidem Christi cum multitudine populi sui, decollatus est ac sepultus. Denique Ciro<sup>3</sup> Alexandro Romano ueniente, uictore de Perside, Xerse rege deuicto, impetrauerunt Edisseni ut mitteret ad reges Indorum imperans Edissenis<sup>c</sup> reddi<sup>d</sup> corpus apostoli. Quo impetrato, translatum est corpus in ciuitatem Edissam; quod in locello argenteo repositum cathenis argenteis suspensum dicitur.

Sed et de apostolo narratur quod sacro die pascali corpus eius deponitur et iuxta altare maius in cathedra collocatur, sicque de manu eius populus communionem sacram recipit. Et est mirabile quod nullus in mortali persistens et impenitens ecclesiam ingreditur; aut si se communioni<sup>e</sup> improbus exactor ingerit, apostolus a danda

<sup>a</sup> De Veronica que est in ciuitate Edissa CXQ <sup>b</sup> ciuitate N <sup>c</sup> Edissonis N  
<sup>d</sup> reddit N <sup>e</sup> communioni supplied by author N

<sup>1</sup> iii. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Gervase's source for this paragraph and the next was the *Passio Sancti Thomae Apostoli*, an account of Thomas's evangelization of India and eventual martyrdom, written c. 550. Christ is said to have appeared to Thomas in a vision at Caesarea, and told him to go to serve King Gundaphorus as an architect. (Gundaphorus, or Gondophernes, was an Indo-Parthian king who ruled from c. 19 to c. 45 AD.) Thomas gave the king's money to the poor, building a palace in heaven instead of on earth. He then went to Upper India, where he was put to death by King Migdeus, or Misdaeus, because on their conversion the royal women spurned their husbands' beds; there is Gnostic influence in the work's insistence on celibacy for Christians. On p. 159 f. the *Passio* describes the translation of St Thomas's body to Edessa, and the power of Christ's letter to Abgar to protect that city from enemies within or without. It was Thomas, according to Eusebius (*HE* i. 13, *PG* xx. 123), who had sent Thaddaeus to Edessa.

On the origin of the story of the letter, see *Otia*, iii. 23, n. 1. Its protective powers were

26. *The Power of the Lord's Letter and of the Blessed Apostle Thomas*

Let us now return to the subject we began above.<sup>1</sup> As a result of the presence of the holy image of Christ, no heretic can live in the city of Edessa, no pagan, no idolater, no Jew; and barbarians cannot invade the place. If a hostile army ever does come against it, an innocent little boy stands on top of the city-gate and reads the letter; in consequence of this, on the very day on which the letter is read, the barbarians either make peace or lose their nerve and run away.<sup>2</sup>

They say that St Thomas the apostle is buried in this city. He was received by King Gundaphorus in Eliofo, a city of India, when he went there from Caesarea at the Lord's command in the capacity of an architect. And when he had converted him to faith in Christ, Thomas set out from there to Upper India, where King Migdeus reigned. There, after the queen and many of their people had been converted to faith in Christ, he was beheaded and buried. Later, when Cyrus<sup>3</sup> Alexander the Roman arrived in Edessa after his conquest of Persia, having overthrown King Artaxerxes, the people of that city prevailed upon him to send to the kings of India demanding that the apostle's body should be handed over to them. They obtained their desire, and the body was translated to the city of Edessa, where it is said to be kept in a silver chest hanging from silver chains.

There is a story about the apostle which tells how, on the holy festival of Easter, his body is let down and set on the bishop's throne next to the high altar; and so the people receive holy communion from his hand. And the wonderful thing is that no one who is persisting in mortal sin without repenting comes into the church; or if a sinful candidate does present himself for communion, the apostle withdraws his hand from administering it, in order that the guilt of

vaunted as early as c. 383, when the pilgrim Egeria was shown round Edessa by the bishop (*Itinerarium Egeriae*, xix. 5–19, ed. E. Francheschini and R. Weber, *CCSL* clxxv (1965), 60–2). Gervase introduces a mention of the image here, where the *Passio* speaks only of the letter, in keeping with his treatment of the legend in iii. 23.

<sup>3</sup> According to the *Passio* (p. 159), the relics of St Thomas were acquired by the Edessans in the time of Severus Alexander: 'Denique supplicantes Siri ab Alexandro imperatore romano ueniente uictore de Persidis proelio, Xerse rege deuicto, impetrarunt hoc ut mitteret ad regulos Indorum, ut redderent defunctum ciuibus;' i.e. c. 233, when Severus Alexander returned from his confrontation with Ardashir (Artaxerxes) I, ruler of the new Persian empire of the Sassanids. The reading *Ciro* (*NCQI*) or *Cirio* (*X*) as a cognomen for Alexander in the MSS of the *Otia* is obviously a corruption of *Siri* in the *Passio*.

The relics were in fact translated in 394 (Runciman, 'Some remarks', p. 241). They were later removed to the island of Khios, and finally to Ortona in the Abruzzi.



communione manum retrahit, ut publicetur rei delinquentis<sup>f</sup> crimositas aut extorqueatur impenitentis ac presumptuosi confessio.<sup>4</sup>

xxvii. *De littore Sirie<sup>a</sup> Palestine<sup>1</sup>*

Vt<sup>b</sup> testatur beatus Ieronimus in *Vita sancti Hylarionis*, litus quod Palestine Sirie<sup>c</sup> Egyptoque protenditur,<sup>d</sup> per naturam molle, harenis in saxum durescentibus, asperatur; paulatimque coherens sibi glare<sup>e</sup> perdit tactum, cum non perdit<sup>f</sup> aspectum.<sup>2</sup>

xxviii. *De uirtute quorundam<sup>a</sup> lapidum<sup>b</sup>*

Sunt qui uirtutem lapidibus<sup>1</sup> ac incantationes magicas pro fabulosis reputant, quorum incredulitatem cotidianis experimentis arguimus necnon autenticis sanctorum patrum scripturis. Ecce enim, ut in prima decisione notauimus, sub titulo *De inuentione musice et multorum artificiorum*,<sup>2</sup> Salomon docuit includi sub anulis demones, et cum sigillis et characteribus<sup>c</sup> et exorcismis hinc acciri, inde arctari.

Sed et Merlinum scimus in Anglia, iuxta montem Ambrii, Coream Gygantum collocatam transtulisse a Childardo monte Hybernie, et cum incantationibus lapides ad perpetuam admirationem sub diuo suspendisse, ut in prima decisione, titulo *De gigantibus*,<sup>3</sup> memorauimus.

Porro beatum audiamus Ieronimum in *Vita beati Hylarionis*<sup>4</sup> narantem quod, propter felicem Sabinarum raptum, seruatur a Romulo exinde in Romanis urbibus (ut)<sup>d</sup> Conso, quasi consiliorum deo, quadriga septeno currant<sup>e</sup> circuitu, et sic equos partis aduerse

<sup>f</sup> delinquentis *N*

<sup>a</sup> Sirie *om. CXQ*                      <sup>b</sup> ut *ACQI*; et *NX*                      <sup>c</sup> Sirie *om. Jerome*  
<sup>d</sup> praetenditur *Jerome*                      <sup>e</sup> glare<sup>a</sup> *Jerome*                      <sup>f</sup> perdat *Jerome*

<sup>a</sup> quorundam] et consecratione *CXQ*                      <sup>b</sup> lapidum *supplied by author N*  
<sup>c</sup> carecteribus *N*                      <sup>d</sup> ut *Jerome; om. MSS*                      <sup>e</sup> curant *N*

<sup>4</sup> The *Passio* does not mention St Thomas's communion. It is, however, described, though set in India and without verbal correspondence with Gervase, in the anonymous twelfth-century document *De adventu patriarchae Indorum* (printed by F. Zarncke in *Abhandlungen der philologisch-historischen Classe der Königlich Sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, vii (1879), 841–2).

<sup>1</sup> Palestine was the name given to the southern part of Syria, from the Greek *Συρία Παλαιστίνη* (Syria of the Philistines; cf. *Otia*, ii. 4, n. 50).

the offending culprit may be made public, or the bold impenitent's confession may be wrung out of him.<sup>4</sup>

27. *The Coast of Palestine in Syria<sup>1</sup>*

As the blessed Jerome attests in his *Life of St Hilarion*, the coast which fringes Palestine and Egypt is naturally soft, but becomes rough because the sand hardens into rock. Little by little it solidifies and loses the texture of gravel, while retaining its appearance.<sup>2</sup>

28. *The Power of Certain Stones*

There are some who hold magic spells and the power latent in stones<sup>1</sup> to be merely fabulous. But on the evidence of daily experience and also the authoritative writings of the holy fathers, we charge them with lack of faith. For instance, as we observed in Book I, in the chapter *The Invention of Music and Many Arts*,<sup>2</sup> Solomon showed how demons could be confined in rings, and summoned out or shut in again by means of seals, signs, and spells.

We also know that Merlin transported the Giants' Ring from Mount Killaraus in Ireland and set it up in England near Amesbury. By means of spells he raised up the stones under the open sky, to be an everlasting source of wonder, as we recorded in Book I, in the chapter *The Giants*.<sup>3</sup>

And now let us hear the blessed Jerome relating in his *Life of St Hilarion*<sup>4</sup> how, in memory of the propitious rape of the Sabine women, ever since the time of Romulus it had been the custom in Roman cities for four-horse teams to do seven laps of a circuit in honour of Consus, as the god of good counsel. In this the victory was

<sup>2</sup> This brief extract from Jerome's *Vita Hilarionis* (xi. 2, ed. Bastiaensen, p. 96 = *PL* xxiii. 38) illustrates the way in which Gervase frequently takes something marvellous which is an integral part of another author's narrative, in this case of a healing miracle, and presents it out of context for its own sake.

<sup>1</sup> *Lapidibus* would seem to be an ablative of place (in which case one would expect the preposition *in*), or possibly a dative of possession (normally only used with part of *esse*).

<sup>2</sup> *Otia*, i. 20, at nn. 43 and 62.

<sup>3</sup> *Otia*, i. 23, at n. 26 (the chapter is there called *De causa diluuii*).

<sup>4</sup> *Vita Hilarionis*, xi. 3–5 and 8–13 (ed. Bastiaensen, pp. 96–8 = *PL* xxiii. 38–9).

f. 64<sup>v</sup> fregisse uictoria fuit. Cum ergo Italicus quidam perpendisset aduersarium suum anul<sup>5</sup> suo habentem maleficium,<sup>f</sup> qui demoniachis quibusdam precantationibus et huius prepediret equos et illius | concitaret ad cursum, uenit ad beatum Ylarionem, et non tam aduersarium ledi quam se defendi obsecrans obtinuit. Aqua enim cifo<sup>g</sup> fictili quo bibere uir Dei consueuerat imposita, Italicus stabulum<sup>6</sup> (quod yppodromum dicunt, ab *yppos* quod est equus, et *dromos* quod est uelox:<sup>7</sup> unde Herodes, audiens Iudeos mortem suam expectantes cum gaudio, nobiliores ex eis conclusit in yppodromo),<sup>8</sup> equos et aurigas suos carcerumque repagula conspersit, sicque uictor effectus est.

Plerosque uidimus affirmantes quod<sup>h</sup> lapides preciosi qui muscarum habent celaturam hanc habent uirtutem quod, si sacratifuerint, a loco<sup>i</sup> in quo sunt omnem muscarum frequentiam expellunt; qui uero celaturam habent equorum habentium alas, uelocitatem equis cursoriis augent aut conferunt.<sup>9</sup>

Quia de lapidum consecratione tetigimus et celatura, quiddam mirandum et digne memorandum tibi, princeps sacratissime, offero. In quadam Ebrehorum doctorum traditione<sup>10</sup> scriptum legi quod Deus, cum populo suo peculiari dedisset ut ab omni opere seruili sabbatum intactum seruaret, affectione speciali illos prosequens, precepit ut colligerent limpидissimos lapides fluminum, inter quos, torrentum impetu pollitos et fluxu aquarum complanatos, multi reperiebantur preciosi, qui decursu fluminum paradisi ad fines Asiae deueniunt et a uicinitate fluiorum Indie Egyptum et Arabiam tangunt. Hos uoluit filios Israel in manibus tenere uel pre oculis habere ex<sup>j</sup> consilio diuine prouidentie,<sup>k</sup> ut acciperet cogitatio mentis

<sup>f</sup> maleficium *AXQ* and *Jerome*      <sup>g</sup> cifo supplied by author(?) (for scypho) *N*  
<sup>h</sup> quod] quos *N*      <sup>i</sup> loquo *N*      <sup>j</sup> ex] eo *β*      <sup>k</sup> prouidentie *N*

<sup>5</sup> The text of the *Vita Hilarionis* at this point (xi. 5) reads: 'Hic itaque, aemulo suo habente maleficium . . .', not *anulo suo*, the reading which accounts for the inclusion of this incident here. Jerome told the story as a demonstration of the superiority of Christian thaumaturgy over pagan magic.

<sup>6</sup> In Jerome's text *stabulum* refers to the stall or stable housing Italicus' horses; Gervase apparently took it to be the race-course itself, and added the section in parentheses.

<sup>7</sup> The word *δρόμος* actually means 'course' or 'race'.

<sup>8</sup> According to Josephus (*Bell.* i. 659; *Ant.* xvii. 173-9), when Herod was near to death, realizing that his passing would not be mourned by the Jews, he shut their principal men in the hippodrome and ordered that they should be killed when he died; they were, however, released. Gervase's immediate source here is the Comestor, *Evan.*, c. 17 (*PL* cxviii. 1546).

gained by breaking the strength of one's rival's horses. When therefore a certain Italicus had inferred that his opponent had some enchantment in his ring,<sup>5</sup> so that by certain devilish spells he could hinder one man's horses and spur another's on in the race, he approached St Hilarion and obtained by his entreaties, not so much that his opponent should be harmed, as that he himself should be protected. Pouring some water into the earthenware cup from which the man of God habitually drank, Italicus sprinkled the enclosure<sup>6</sup> (which they call the hippodrome, from *ἵππος* meaning 'horse', and *δρόμος* meaning 'fast'<sup>7</sup>—Herod, hearing that the Jews were joyfully looking forward to his death, confined their principal men in the hippodrome);<sup>8</sup> he also sprinkled his horses and drivers, and the bars of the starting-stalls, and by these means he became the winner.

We have seen many people claiming that precious stones which have a fly engraved on them have this property, that if they have been consecrated they drive out all presence of flies from the place where they are; while those which have winged horses engraved on them endow race-horses with speed, or greater speed than before.<sup>9</sup>

Since we have touched on the consecration and engraving of stones, I am going to put before you a remarkable thing, most worshipful Prince, which well deserves a mention. I have seen it written in a tradition of the Hebrew doctors<sup>10</sup> that when God had ordained for his chosen people that they should keep the sabbath free from any manual labour, he bestowed a special favour on them: he told them to gather the brightest stones from the rivers, among which, polished as they were by the force of the current and smoothed by the flow of the waters, many precious ones were found. These are carried by the stream of the rivers of paradise down to the boundaries of Asia, and from there, joining the rivers of India, they reach Egypt and Arabia. He wanted the children of Israel to hold these in their hands or to keep them before their eyes, following the ordinance of divine providence, in order that their

<sup>9</sup> 'The use of engraved gems as talismans was inherited by Europe from the East. . . . The belief in the magical properties of engraved gems is ridiculed by Pliny, and is not to be found either in Anglo-Saxon England or Carolingian France, or indeed in western Europe before the Crusades. Its earliest manifestation in western Europe does not appear to be earlier than the latter half of the twelfth century; it must have been brought in on the tide of ancient learning that then flowed from Arabic Spain towards the southern coasts of France' (J. Evans, *Magical Jewels of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Oxford, 1922), pp. 95-6).

<sup>10</sup> Gervase's source for this Jewish tradition has not been identified, but as Liebrecht remarks (p. 110), there is a rich rabbinical lore regarding the sabbath.



otium uel laborem, ut sic minus ueretur animum affectata interdicti operis corporalis estuatio.<sup>11</sup> Sicut ergo cuiusuis ad cogitandum uana uel seria, celestia seu terrena, mouebatur intentio, sic post modicum tempus celatura diuina uirtute firmata nunc in animis cogitantium uaria preordinata, leuibus et ociosis bestias, aues, et herbas aut arbores presentabat; grauibus et preterita Dei miracula patribus exhibita cogitantibus,<sup>1</sup> apparebat Moysi cum uirga draconis<sup>12</sup> representatio, aut immolatio Ysaac,<sup>13</sup> aut huiuscemodi diuine uirtutis signa. (Vnde lapides illi *capmahu*<sup>m</sup> uulgo dicuntur, quasi caput facientes in Deo admirabili. *Manhu* siquidem Ebrahice interiectio est admirantis, unde ‘manna’ a *manhu*, quasi admiratione, nomen accepit.<sup>14</sup> Sic ‘euge’ nunc subsanantis, ut ibi: ‘Auertantur statim et’ erubescences qui dicunt mihi: Euge, euge!’;<sup>15</sup> nunc congratulantis, ut ibi: ‘Euge serue bone, et fidelis.’<sup>16</sup> Sic ‘osanna’ laudis, unde pueri clamabant: ‘Benedictus qui uenit in nomine Domini: osanna in excelsis.’<sup>17</sup>) Hinc est quod sacram ymaginationem habentes lapides altioris et sacratoris uirtutis sunt; qui uero uanitati mentium respondebant, cotidianis utentium commodis deseruiebant.

#### *De consecratione lapidum<sup>o</sup>*

Nunc de consecratione lapidum pauca loquamur. Nullus enim lapis est pretiosus qui ad consequendam suam uirtutem extrinsecam cum herba sui nominis aut cum sanguine<sup>p</sup> auis uel bestie non consecratur, adiunctis exorcismis quorum noticia ad nos per Salomonem descendit. Extrinsecam diximus; intrinsecam quippe uirtutem plerique lapides habent a sui natura sibi insitam, preter id quod extrinsecus adiurati ac consecrati efficiunt. Nempe smaragdus quod ex naturali sui coloris intensione<sup>18</sup> uisui<sup>q</sup> prodest, ex natura contrahit; quod

<sup>1</sup> cogitatoribus *XQ*                    <sup>m</sup> chapmahu *N*                    <sup>n</sup> et *om.* *Q* and *Psalterium Gallicanum*                    <sup>o</sup> De . . . lapidum *N*; *om.* *ACß*                    <sup>p</sup> cum sanguine] consanguine *N*                    <sup>q</sup> uisui *XQ*; uisu *NACI*

<sup>11</sup> i.e. only *physical* work was forbidden on the sabbath: the mind was free either to rest or to work.

<sup>12</sup> Num. 21: 9.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Comestor, *Exod.*, c. 34 (*PL* cxcviii. 1160).

<sup>15</sup> Ps. 69 (70): 4 (3).

<sup>16</sup> Matt. 25: 21, 23. A similar distinction between the different meanings of *euge* is found in Cassiodorus, *Expositio in Psalterium*, lxi. 3 (*CCSL* xcvi. 625 = *PL* lxx. 493).

<sup>17</sup> Matt. 21: 9.

<sup>18</sup> The word *intensio* subsequently became a technical term, owing to ‘a peculiarly medieval concern with the manner in which qualities varied in intensity. How, for example, did colors change their hues and intensities, and water become hot and

faculty of thought might derive from them either rest or work, with the result that in this way the restless desire for the forbidden physical work should torment the mind less.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, as each person’s attention was drawn to reflect upon things vain or serious, heavenly or earthly, so after a short time an engraving, cut by divine power, began to represent the various preordained things which were in their minds while they were engaged in this meditation: it presented animals, birds, and plants or trees to light and idle minds, while to serious minds and those considering the miracles of God shown to their fathers in the past, there appeared an image of Moses with the rod of the serpent,<sup>12</sup> or the sacrifice of Isaac,<sup>13</sup> or other signs of divine power of this kind. (And so those stones are commonly called *capmahu*, having their origin (*caput*), so to speak, in the wonder of God. For *manhu* is an exclamation of wonder in Hebrew, and so manna took its name from *manhu*, or wonder.<sup>14</sup> Likewise *euge* is an exclamation, sometimes derisory, as in the verse: ‘Let them be presently turned away blushing for shame, that say to me: Aha, aha’;<sup>15</sup> and sometimes complimentary, as in the verse: ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.’<sup>16</sup> Similarly *hosanna* is an exclamation of praise, whence the children shouted: ‘Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.’<sup>17</sup>) This explains the fact that stones with a sacred image possess a higher and holier power, while those which answered to vain imagining simply served for the everyday benefit of their users.

#### *The Consecration of Stones*

Now let us say a few things about the consecration of stones. For there is no precious stone which may not be consecrated for the exercise of its extrinsic power with the herb of the same name or with the blood of a bird or animal, combined with spells, knowledge of which has come down to us through Solomon. We said extrinsic; and to be sure very many stones have an intrinsic power inherent in them from their own nature, quite apart from what they can do when they have been conjured and consecrated from without. The emerald, indeed, derives from nature its power to benefit the sight by the natural intensity<sup>18</sup> of its colour, while it derives from consecration its

color? The study and analysis of such problems came to be designated as “the intension and remission of forms and qualities” (E. Grant, *Physical Science in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1977), p. 55). On the emerald as pleasing to the eye, cf. Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xxxvii. 16. 63.

gratiam confert, ex consecratione. Saphirus potestatem potentis, affluentiam diuitis, auget ex adiuratione ac conseruat. Sed et nonnulli inflaturas, pustulas nociuas, et antracem curant. Eliotropia cum herba sui nominis consecratur et sic hominem profecto reddit inuisibilem.<sup>19</sup> Acates cum acate herba facit uictorem.<sup>20</sup> Quid plura? Tot hominibus uerba, herbe, lapidesque preciosi conferre solent remedia, quot humanitati nostre sunt oportuna, graciosa, uel necessaria, non hec operantibus | lapidibus aut lapidum impresuris, non herbis aut herbarum alligamentis, sed hec omnia operante summo rerum auctore<sup>r</sup> Deo in uerbis, herbis,<sup>s</sup> et lapidibus. Celatura signum est efficacie et non ad effectum. Indicta lapidi natura cum uerbis consecratoriis innatam uirtutem ampliat et confirmat.

Oportet tamen ut honestatem corporis et sinceritatem mentis is conferat, qui gestando lapidem eius uirtutem<sup>t</sup> probare contendit. Fugit ab indigno contrectatore dignitas lapidis et ab obscuro consecratore efficacia consecrationis, non quod conferatur a bono maius, a malo minus, sed ubi dignus non est dator, datorum minoratur auctoritas et peccatum conferentis exauditionem tardat summi largitoris; et quamuis gratiam conferat muneris, gratiam tamen non confert celestis auctoris, quam propter suam amisit uilitatem, indignum se exhibens ad administrationem<sup>u</sup> sacramentalem. Hinc est quod, sicut lapides episcoporum benedictionibus cum herbis adiunctis per sollempnes exorcismos consecrantur, ita, cum ex turpitudine gestantis inficiuntur, ad manum episcopi cum sanguine columbe liniuntur, et orationibus iteratis amissam uirtutem uel interscisam recipiunt. Facit ergo columbe sanguis in lapide quod cinis uitule rufe<sup>v</sup> faciebat in populi expiatione,<sup>21</sup> aut ysosop cum salibus in ecclesie reconciliatione.<sup>22</sup>

Si consecrationis modum queris in lapidibus, libellum consule *De*

<sup>r</sup> auctore *N*      <sup>s</sup> herbis supplied by author *N*      <sup>t</sup> uirtutem supplied by author *N*  
<sup>u</sup> ministracionem *AXQ*      <sup>v</sup> rufe *om. XQ*

<sup>19</sup> This idea is mocked by Pliny (*Hist. nat.* xxxvii. 60. 165).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xxxvii. 54. 142.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Num. 19: 1–10; Comestor, *Lev.*, c. 22 (*PL* cxcviii. 1209–10).

<sup>22</sup> Hyssop and salt were used by the Jews in many purification rituals, and were gradually taken over by the Christian Church. Salt water was being used to purify Catholic churches by the Donatists in the fourth century, when Optatus of Milevis mocks this practice (*De schismate donatistarum*, vi. 6, *PL* xi. 1078–9). In the sixth century Pope Vigilius (537–55) denied the necessity of aspersions with holy water at the reconciliation of a church (E. Martène, *De antiquis ecclesiae ritibus* (Bassano, 1788), ii. 284–5); but the *ordines* in Martène's collection show that by the ninth century at least, aspersions of water mixed

power to bestow grace. The sapphire augments and preserves a powerful person's power and a wealthy person's riches, if it has been enchanted. A number of stones cure tumours, malignant pustules, and carbuncles. The heliotrope is consecrated with the plant of the same name and then of a truth renders a person invisible.<sup>19</sup> The agate with its herb makes one victorious.<sup>20</sup> In short, words, herbs, and precious stones customarily bring as many remedies to human beings as are fitting, pleasing, or necessary to our human nature; but it is not the stones or their engravings that accomplish these things, it is not the herbs or their couplings: it is God, the supreme author of all that is, who accomplishes all these remedies through the words, the herbs, and the stones. An engraving is a sign of his power and is not powerful in itself. The quality imposed on a stone by the words of consecration extends and endorses its innate potency.

It is, however, essential that anyone who seeks to prove a stone's potency by his handling of it should bring to it purity of body and sincerity of mind. A stone's worth shuns an unworthy handler and the efficacy of the consecration shuns an impure consecrator, not because more is conferred by a good person and less by a bad one, but because when the giver is not worthy, the authority of the gifts is diminished, and the sin of the one who bestows the gifts impedes the co-operation of the supreme disposer; and even though he may confer the grace of the gift, he nonetheless does not confer the grace of the heavenly author, which he has lost on account of his baseness, showing himself unworthy to administer the sacraments. Hence it happens that, just as stones, coupled with their herbs, are consecrated with bishops' blessings by means of solemn adjurations, so, when they become tainted by the baseness of the one who handles them, they are anointed at a bishop's hand with the blood of a dove, and at the repetition of prayers they recover their lost, or rather interrupted, power. The blood of a dove therefore effects in the case of a stone what the ashes of a red calf used to effect in the expiation of the people,<sup>21</sup> or hyssop with salt in the reconciliation of a church.<sup>22</sup>

If you want to know how stones are consecrated, consult the little

with salt, ashes, and wine, and in some cases with sprinklings of hyssop, were a regular feature of the rite not only of the reconciliation of a church but also of the consecration of a church (pp. 240–87; cf. M. Andrieu, *Les Ordines Romani du Haut Moyen Age*, iv (*Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense* xxviii, 1956), 341–2).

*consecratione lapidum*,<sup>23</sup> ubi reperies quosdam lapides unica gaudere benedictione, alios per duodecim lunationes repetitas benedictiones desiderare; nec uacat a figura quod, cum sint septuaginta duo Dei nomina, ut tradunt Hebrei, totidemque linguarum genera,<sup>24</sup> et ex totidem litteris unum Domini nomen cumpactum, unicuique lapidi unum nomen circumscribendum erit, et hoc maxime in septuaginta duobus lapidibus precipuis obseruatur.

xxix. *De dracone quem boam dicunt*<sup>a</sup>

Aput Epidaurum,<sup>1</sup> Dalmatie opidum, inuentus est a beato Ylarione draco mire magnitudinis ac incognite, quales gentili sermone boas uocant, ab eo quod tam grandes sunt quod boues glutire solent.<sup>2</sup>

xxx. *De arenis calidis*<sup>a</sup>

Legimus in *Dialogo Severi*<sup>1</sup> quod Postumianus referebat se, cum Alexandriam nauigaret, reluctantante austro pene in Sirtes<sup>2</sup> illatum fuisse; quod prouide<sup>b</sup> naute cauentes iactis nauim ancoris sustinuerunt. ‘Tribus’, inquit Postumianus, ‘fere a littore milibus, paruum tugurium inter harenas conspicio, cuius tectum, sicut ait Salustius,<sup>3</sup> quasi carina nauis erat, contiguum terre, satis firmis tabulatis stratum, non quod illic uis ulla imbrium timeatur (fuisse enim illic pluuiam nequando quidem auditum est), sed quod uentorum ibi ea uis est ut, si quando uel clementiore celo aliquantulum<sup>c</sup> flatus spirare ceperit, maius in illis terris quam in ullo mari naufragium sit. Nulla ibi

<sup>a</sup> De . . . dicunt] De boas dracone CXQ

<sup>a</sup> De . . . calidis] De ordeo et arenis CXQ      <sup>b</sup> prouide NAQ; proinde CXT; prouidi Severus      <sup>c</sup> aliquantulus Severus

<sup>23</sup> A large number of medieval lapidaries survive, mostly still unedited. For a survey of the material, see J. Evans, *Magical Jewels of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Oxford, 1922); P. Studer and J. Evans, *Anglo-Norman Lapidaries* (Paris, 1924); J. Evans and M. Serjeantson, *English Mediaeval Lapidaries*, EETS (OS), cxc (Oxford, 1933).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. e.g. Isidore, *Etym.* ix. 2. 2; Comestor, *Gen.*, c. 37 (*PL* cxcviii. 1087); *Otia*, ii. 26, at n. 45.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. the modern Dubrovnik.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jerome, *Vita Hilarionis*, xxviii. 2–3 (ed. Bastiaensen, p. 130 = *PL* xxiii. 49). Here again Gervase lifts the marvellous feature from the narrative of Hilarion’s miraculous removal of this pest (cf. *Otia*, iii. 27).

book *The Consecration of Stones*.<sup>23</sup> You will find there that some stones are content with only one blessing, while others need repeated blessings throughout twelve lunar cycles. Nor is it absent from the scheme that, since there are seventy-two names of God, according to Hebrew tradition, and that number also of families of languages,<sup>24</sup> and since there is one name of the Lord made up from that same number of letters, one name will have to be reserved for each stone; this applies especially in the case of the seventy-two principal stones.

29. *The Snake which they call the Boa*

At Epidaurus,<sup>1</sup> a town of Dalmatia, a snake was found by St Hilarion of an extraordinary size such as had never been seen before. In the native speech they call creatures of this kind boas, from the fact that they are so huge that they habitually gulp down oxen (*boues*).<sup>2</sup>

30. *Hot Sands*

We read in the *Dialogue of Severus*<sup>1</sup> that Postumianus recounted how, when he was sailing to Alexandria, because the wind was against him he was almost driven onto the Syrtes.<sup>2</sup> To guard against this, the sailors prudently dropped anchor and secured the ship. ‘About three miles from the shore,’ said Postumianus, ‘I caught sight of a little hut on the sand, whose roof, just as Sallust<sup>3</sup> says, was like the keel of a ship: it came down to the ground, and was covered with quite solid planking, not because any heavy downpour is to be feared there (for in fact it has never been heard of for rain to fall there), but because the force of the winds in that region is such that, if a wind ever begins to blow a little, even in quite fine weather, greater wreckage is caused on those lands than on any sea. No fruits, no crops grow there; for it is an

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Severus, *Dial.* i. 3. 2–6, 4. 4 (ed. Halm, pp. 154–6 = *PL* xx. 186–7). Sulpicius Severus (c.363–c.420) was the author of two dialogues (often divided as three), in which the talk is of miracles, particularly those performed by Martin of Tours which had not been included in Severus’ biography of the saint. Severus’ friend Postumianus had spent three years in the east, and he begins his narration of his experiences with the passage reproduced by Gervase here.

<sup>2</sup> See *Otia*, ii. 11, n. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Sallust, *Jug.* xviii. 8.

germina, sata nulla proueniunt, quippe instabili loco arentibus arenis ad omnem uentorum motum cedentibus. Verum ubi aduersa<sup>d</sup> quedam a mari promontoria uentis resistunt, terra aliquantulum solidior herbam raram atque hyspidam gignit, que ouibus est pabulum satis utile. Incole lacte uiuunt; qui sollertiores sunt uel, ut ita dixerim, diciores, ordeacio pane uescuntur. Ea ibi sola messis est, que celeritate prouentus per naturam solis seu aeris<sup>4</sup> uentorum casus solet euadere: quippe fertur a die iacti seminis tricesimo die mature-scere. Consistere autem illic non alia ratio facit nisi quod omnes tributo<sup>e</sup> liberi sunt. Extrema siquidem Cirenorum hora est deserto illi contigua, quod inter Egyptum et Affricam interiacet, per quod olim Cato Cesarem fugiens duxit exercitum.

f. 65<sup>f</sup> Illic senex quem repperi<sup>f</sup> | apponit prandium<sup>g</sup> sane locupletis-simum: dimidium panem ordeacum! Fasciculum etiam herbe intulit, cuius nomen excidit, que, mente similis, foliis exuberans, saporem mellis prestabat; huius predulci admodum suauitate delectati atque exsaciatu fuimus.<sup>h</sup> Eramus nos quatuor et ipse quintus.<sup>7</sup>

### xxxii. *De herbis Egypti*

De harum terrarum desertarum herbis aliqua succingamus.<sup>a</sup> Erat in prouincia Aquensi et regno tuo, princeps, Arelatensi, miles strenuus et dominus castris Dalchini, iuncti castro Folcarciensi. Hic, Isnardus<sup>1</sup> nomine, proposito melioris uite, nec filiis paruulis nec uxore iuuen-cula salutatis, transfretauit,<sup>b</sup> id habens propositum ut, qualis in solitudine antiquorum patrum esset conuictus,<sup>c</sup> ipsa<sup>d</sup> sue conuersationis<sup>e</sup> experientia probaret.

Iam per solitudinem septennis inceserat, cum in mentem uenit cuidam ex originariis suis ut quo deuenerit dominus eius circueundo terram perquirat. Nauigauit et, post multas hospitatim<sup>f</sup> perquisitiones, tandem solitudinem intrans, repperit hominem quem optauerat, non minus agnitus quam agnoscebat. Salutationis uerbis

<sup>d</sup> auersa *QI and Severus*      <sup>e</sup> a add. before tributo *Severus*      <sup>f</sup> repperi supplied by author *N*      <sup>g</sup> prandium *N*      <sup>h</sup> sumus *XQ and Severus*

<sup>a</sup> succingamus *N*      <sup>b</sup> transfretauit *N*      <sup>c</sup> conuictus *N*      <sup>d</sup> ipsa] pro ipsa *X*; per ipsa *Q*      <sup>e</sup> conuersionis *ACB*      <sup>f</sup> hospitatum *NI*

<sup>4</sup> Here Halm (p. 155, l. 17) conjectured 'soli saeuientium' (i.e. 'because of the speed of its growth, due to the nature of the soil, it generally escapes the onslaught of the raging winds').

unsettled place, with the parched sand shifting at every breath of wind. But where some headlands jutting out into the sea bear the brunt of the winds, the earth is somewhat firmer, and bears sparse, rough grass, which serves as reasonable pasture for sheep. The inhabitants live on milk; any who are more resourceful, or, I should say, richer, eat barley-bread. That is the only crop there: because of the speed of its growth, due to the nature of the sunlight or the air,<sup>4</sup> it generally escapes the onslaught of the winds. It is actually said to ripen on the thirtieth day after the seed is sown. To be sure, the only reason why people live there is that they are all exempt from tax. The farthest boundary of the Cyrenians borders on that desert place, which lies between Egypt and Africa. Cato once led his army through it when he was fleeing from Caesar.

An old man whom I met there served up a really lavish meal: half a loaf of barley-bread! He also set before us a small bunch of a herb whose name escapes me, but it was like mint, with luxuriant leaves, and it tasted of honey. We were delighted with the quite delicious sweetness of this herb, and ate our fill of it. There were four of us, and he made five.<sup>7</sup>

### 31. *The Herbs of Egypt*

Let us add some further information about the herbs of these desert lands. In the province of Aix, in your kingdom, Prince, of Arles, there was a stout-hearted knight, the lord of the castle of Dauphin, which is dependent on the castle of Forcalquier. This man, whose name was Isnard,<sup>1</sup> resolved to lead a better life, and sailed across the sea without even saying goodbye to his small children and young wife. His idea was that he would find out how the fathers of old lived in the desert by actually experiencing the way of life himself.

Seven years had already elapsed since he had set off into the desert, when it occurred to one of his tenants to travel round the world and search out the place where his lord had settled down. He crossed the sea and, after making many enquiries from house to house, he eventually arrived in the desert and found the man he was looking for: he knew him at once, and was recognized in turn. Once they had exchanged their initial greetings, he quickly gave him all the news of

<sup>1</sup> An Isnard of the castle of Dauphin is mentioned in a document of 1182: see H. Rolland, *Dauphin: Contribution à son histoire* (Digne, 1933), p. 8.

premissis et transcurso propinquorum affinium et filiorum statu, post horam debitam mensa parata succedit, herba sui ministerium prebente; uice panis cotidiani quoddam radice genus apponitur secus pauxilluli riui decursum. Hospes benedictione data stupet et, fame inuitante, ad gustandum ducitur: radices oblatas tam sapidas<sup>g</sup> repperit quod merito omnem nostri conuictus panem aut cibum dedignari poterat aut obliuisci. Comedit et saciatur; satius inquit que sit et cuius herbe radix oblata, qualiterue aut quo indice preostensa. Ad hec uir sanctus: 'Cum propter mundi spretas delicias ad hanc in monte Libani solitudinem peruenissem, ut non tantum mundi sed et mei immemor fierem, uidens terram montuosam et asperam, incultam et omni fructu sterilem, consumo modico pane quem<sup>h</sup> ad uiaticulum mecum detuleram, crescenteque naturali corporis esurie, dubius extiti quid consultius esset,<sup>i</sup> aut ardui cepti<sup>j</sup> propositi difficultatem deserere, aut quod ceperam arduum institutum prosequi usquequo natura deficeret. Quid ultra? Ad herbas siluestres me transfero, corde cruditatem earum insipiditatemque abhominante. Iam tepescebat ardor ardui principii, cum repente coruus aduenit, ereptamque in presenti cuiusdam herbe radicem ad pedes meos deponit aduectam. Tunc ego, tacitus rem considerans, herbam ori applico, suauique<sup>k</sup> ac<sup>l</sup> omni dulcedine plenam reperio. Exhinc, timiditati necessitatique mee consultum agnoscens, panem omnem dedi obliuioni, eligens dulcedinem radice, quam et tu probasti, quam omnem ueteris olle nidorem<sup>m</sup> panisue firmamentum.<sup>n</sup>'<sup>2</sup> Dixerat, et conuiuio spiritualiter facto, hospiti suo frater heremi incola uale dixit, dans illi salutationis extreme uerbum et panis sui tam sollempnem quam iugem memoriam.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>g</sup> sapiendas *N*      <sup>h</sup> quem *X*; quod *NAQI*      <sup>i</sup> esset *supplied by author N*  
<sup>j</sup> ceptique *Cβ*      <sup>k</sup> suauique *N*      <sup>l</sup> ac *om. XQ*      <sup>m</sup> nidorem *supplied by author N*      <sup>n</sup> firmamentum *N*

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ps. 104 (105): 16.

<sup>3</sup> Tales of the sustenance of hermits in the desert enjoyed great popularity. The raven in this story may be compared with the ones which supplied food for Elijah (3 Kgs. (1 Kgs.)

his children and other near relations; next, as it was now past the proper time, a meal was prepared. It turned out that the grass served as his table, while in place of daily bread a certain kind of root was set before them beside the course of a little stream. After grace had been said, the guest hesitated at first; but then, compelled by hunger, he brought himself to taste it. He found the roots with which he had been served so tasty that with good reason he could have despised or forgotten all the bread and other food which we eat. He ate his fill; and when he was satisfied, he asked what the root was that he had been given, what plant it came from, and how or by whose guidance it had been shown to him. The holy man said in reply: 'I came to this desert place on Mount Lebanon because I had spurned worldly pleasures, in order that I might become unmindful not only of the world, but also of myself. But seeing that the land was mountainous and hard, uncultivated and barren of any produce, after I had consumed the little bit of bread which I had brought with me for the journey, and with the natural hunger of my body increasing, I was undecided as to what was more advisable: to give up in the face of the difficulty of the arduous course I had undertaken, or to pursue this hard enterprise which I had begun until my life naturally expired. Why spin out my story? I turned to wild herbs, though my sensibility revolted against their toughness and unpleasantness. My ardour for my difficult undertaking was already cooling, when suddenly a raven came on the scene, and tearing up the root of a certain plant in my presence, it brought it and laid it at my feet. Then I, silently pondering what had happened, raised the herb to my lips, and found it delicious and filled with all sweetness. From this time on, recognizing it as an answer to my anxiety and need, I gave up all thought of bread of any kind, preferring the sweetness of the root, which you too have enjoyed, to any fragrance of cooking from the past or the support of bread.'<sup>2</sup> He finished speaking, and after this spiritual banquet, the brother living in the desert bade farewell to his guest, giving him a word of final salutation and the memory of his bread, as awesome as it was lasting.<sup>3</sup>

17: 6); cf. also Jerome, *Vita S. Pauli*, c. 10 (*PL* xxiii. 25) and *Otia*, ii. 4, at n. 84; Severus, *Dial.* i. 16 (ed. Halm, pp. 168-9 = *PL* xx. 194).

xxxii. *De calore solis quo cibaria sicut igne coquantur*<sup>a</sup>

In prenominate Seueri *Dialogo*<sup>1</sup> refert Postumianus: 'Vbi prima heremi<sup>2</sup> ingressus sum, duodecim ferme a Nilo milibus, uidi ollam cum oleribus, que nobis in cenam a uiro Dei parabatur, sine igne feruere. Tanta quippe illic uis solis est ut quibuslibet cocis, etiam ad Gallorum pulmenta, sufficiat. Ex maiore parte qui illic inter illa secreta consistunt, cum alia ibi germina nulla succedant, palmarum pomis que dactilos nominamus<sup>b</sup> aluntur.'

xxxiii. *De Olimpo, qui flatum uentorum excedit*<sup>a</sup>

Cum in plerisque scripturis celsitudo montium describatur, non erit omittendum quod Olympus, mons Tracie, tante dicitur altitudinis quod ad eius apicem nullus uentorum flatus unquam pertingit; quod ex litterarum perpetuitate et aeris nimia subtilitate conuincitur, ut f.65<sup>v</sup> supra, decisione prima, titulo | *De fonte paradysi et quatuor fluiuis*,<sup>1</sup> memorauimus. Si enim illuc uenti peruenirent, utique flatus aquosi crassiorem ibi quandoque aerem generarent.

Est et in ipso Affrice oceano mons Athlas altissimus, qui fabulose humeris suis celum sustentare dicitur, habens Mauritaniam<sup>b</sup> Tingitanam ad sinistram, ut supra, decisione secunda, titulo *De Affrica*,<sup>2</sup> lacius exposuimus.

Sed et ut testatur Postumianus in *Dialogo* Seueri,<sup>3</sup> iugum Sina montis tantam habet celsitudinem quod summum eius cacumen, celo pene uicinum, nequaquam adiri potest. *Cotidiana* tamen *Hystoria*<sup>4</sup>

<sup>a</sup> De . . . coquantur] De cibariis que ad solem sine igne coquantur CXQ <sup>b</sup> que dactilos nominamus om. Severus

<sup>a</sup> qui . . . excedit] et Atlante et monte Synay CXQ <sup>b</sup> Maritaniam N

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Severus, *Dial.* i. 13. 1, 4, 7 (ed. Halm, pp. 164–5 = *PL* xx. 192). Gervase neatly extracts this marvel from Postumianus' lengthy description of how he found a hermit with a well and an ox who could therefore grow plants which were otherwise not to be found in the desert.

<sup>2</sup> In this phrase, taken over from Severus, the genitive *heremi* apparently depends on the neuter plural *prima*: lit. 'the first things of the desert'.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Otia*, i. 11, at n. 10 and ii. 7, at n. 65. Gervase's account here is so abbreviated as to be fully comprehensible only in the light of the earlier passages.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Otia*, ii. 11, at nn. 20 and 30; also ii. 2, at n. 22.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Severus, *Dial.* i. 17. 2 (ed. Halm, p. 169 = *PL* xx. 194).

<sup>6</sup> The *Cotidiana Historia* may have been a martyrology: in the eighth and ninth

32. *The Heat of the Sun, which Cooks Food like a Fire*

In the *Dialogue*<sup>1</sup> of Severus already mentioned, Postumianus reports: 'Where I first entered the desert,<sup>2</sup> about twelve miles from the Nile, I saw a pot of vegetables, which was being prepared for our dinner by a man of God, boiling without a fire. Indeed the strength of the sun is so great there that it suffices for any cooks, even for the elaborate cuisine of the Gauls. For the most part those who live there in those solitary places feed on the fruit of palm-trees, which we call dates, since no other crops grow there.'

33. *Olympus, which Rises above the Path of the Winds*

Although the height of mountains is described in a good many writings, it would be wrong to omit the information that Olympus, a mountain in Thrace, is said to be of such great altitude that no breath of wind ever reaches its peak. This is proved by the way letters remain undisturbed and by the extreme thinness of the air, as we recorded above, in Book I, in the chapter *The Fountain of Paradise and the Four Rivers*.<sup>1</sup> For if the winds did penetrate there, moist currents would surely sometimes make the air there denser.

Another very high mountain is Mt Atlas, out in the ocean off Africa. Atlas is said in legend to support the sky on his shoulders. This mountain has Mauritania Tingitana to its left, as we described more fully above, in Book II, in the chapter *Africa*.<sup>2</sup>

Further, as Postumianus asserts in the *Dialogue* of Severus,<sup>3</sup> the summit of Mount Sinai is so high that its highest peak is completely inaccessible, being practically next to heaven. However, the *Daily History*<sup>4</sup> records that the most blessed virgin Catherine was buried on

centuries so-called 'historical martyrologies' replaced the earlier Hieronymian type, and much fuller biographical notices were introduced. Each copy tended to be different, as individual scribes made their own additions and modifications. A great number include St Catherine under 25 November, frequently with extensive notices (see e.g. the notes to Usuard's *Martyrologium* for that date, *PL* cxxiv. 733–7); it seems likely that Gervase was using some such manuscript here. Cf. *Otia*, iii. 119, at n. 2.

There is no trace of Catherine's name in early martyr-records and her legend appears to have no historical foundation, but she became one of the foremost medieval saints. All the texts of her legend assert that her body was carried to Mt Sinai and buried there by angels (e.g. the *Passio Beatae Catherinae Virginis* in Mombritius' *Sanctuarium*, Solesmes edition (Paris, 1910), i. 287); the monastery on Mt Sinai attracted a great number of pilgrims in the crusading era.

memorat in summitate montis Synai angelorum ministerio beatissimam uirginem Katerinam esse sepultam, ubi iuge oleum manat; fortassis summitatem uerticem intellexerunt auctores.<sup>c</sup> Verum in ipso cacumine uerticis, ubi Deus locutus est ad Moysen legem instituens, credimus locum esse inaccessum a tempore Moysi, ubi nubes operuit Moysen. In eius tamen confinio, sed aliquanto inferius, uirgo Katerina per manus angelicas sepulta predicatur.

xxxiv. *De uento quem in cirotheca conclusit sanctus Cesarius<sup>a</sup>*

Quia uero uentorum ac moncium fecimus mentionem, asserentes montes plerosque omnibus uentis esse altiores, illud quoque annectimus quasdam ualles esse sic montium contiguitate conclusas quod ad illas numquam aura peruenit.

Ecce in regno Arelatensi, episcopatu Vasionensi, est castrum de Nionis, multis colonis inhabitatum. Hoc in ualle circumquaque montibus circumscepta positum est, in quam eo quod uentus nec leuissimus subintrauerat, usque ad tempora Caroli Magni<sup>1</sup> sterilis semper uallis extiterat, omnique humano commodo prorsus<sup>b</sup> inutilis. Verum infecunditatem ipsius comperiens archiepiscopus Arelatensis, sanctissimus uir miraculis preclarus, Cesareus, mare ciuitati sue subiacens adiit et cirotecam suam uento marino oppletam strinxit. Accedens itaque ad uallem, inutilem tunc habitam, in nomine Christi cirotecam uento plenam scopulo cuidam iniecit, uentumque perpetuum iussit emittere; sicque factum est quod statim rupes, facto foramine, per scissuram exhaustum uentum semper eructuat, quem Pontianum uulgus nominat, quasi a ponto illuc uirtute diuina translatum.<sup>2</sup> Hic, inquam, impetuosis spiritus terminos cuiusdam subterfluentis aque<sup>3</sup> non transgreditur; omnia fecundat, omnia

<sup>c</sup> actores *N*

<sup>a</sup> quem . . . Cesarius] pontico et cirotheca sancti Cesarii *CXQ*      <sup>b</sup> prorsus *N*

<sup>1</sup> St Caesarius was archbishop of Arles from 503 until his death in 543, i.e. in the time of Clovis (king of the Franks c.481–511) and his sons Theuderic, Chlodomir, Childebert, and Chlotar. Gervase calls both Charles Martel (c.689–741) and Charlemagne (c.742–814) Carolus Magnus, but this incident would have occurred long before their time.

<sup>2</sup> The scribe of *Q* commented in the margin (f. 161<sup>v</sup>): 'et adhuc ab incolis uulgariter dicitur "lo vent de sant Cezari"'. The story continued to be well-known locally: cf. 'Légendes et traditions du pays d'Arles: du vent de N-S dit le Pontias, ou vent de Saint-Césaire', *Le Musée*, Arles, v (1881), 88. When the orifice through which the wind blows was blocked in the sixteenth century, the land became unproductive and the inhabitants

the summit of Mount Sinai by the ministration of angels, and that oil flows perpetually there; perhaps authors have taken a peak to be the summit. But we believe that on the very top, where God spoke to Moses when he gave the Law, the place where the cloud covered Moses has been inaccessible from his time. Near that place, however, but a little lower down, it is proclaimed that the virgin Catherine was buried by the hands of angels.

34. *The Wind which St Caesarius Shut Up in a Glove*

Because we have made mention of winds and mountains, declaring that many mountains reach higher than any winds, we are also adding the fact that some valleys are so shut in by surrounding mountains that no breeze ever penetrates to them.

For instance, in the kingdom of Arles, in the bishopric of Vaison, is the village of Nyons, where many people now make a living off the land. This place is situated in a valley surrounded by mountains on every side; because not even the lightest wind had stolen into it, up to the time of Charles the Great<sup>1</sup> the valley had always been barren, and no use at all for any human purposes. But Caesarius, archbishop of Arles, a very holy man renowned for his miracles, learnt of its infertility. He went down to the sea near to his city, filled his glove with the sea breeze, and tied it up. Thus equipped, he went to the valley that was then held to be useless, and calling on the name of Christ he hurled the glove full of wind against a certain rock, commanding the rock to send forth a continuous breeze; and so it happened that at once an opening appeared, and the rock perpetually draws a wind through the cleft and blasts it out. The local people call this the Pontian wind, signifying that it was brought there by divine power from the sea (*pontus*).<sup>2</sup> Now I tell you, this gust of air does not cross the boundary of a certain stream<sup>3</sup> which flows down below in

suffered from diseases; so after seven or eight months the wind was allowed to blow again (see Duchesne, *Livre*, p. 160 f., n. 105).

Liebrecht (p. 112) points out that this legend belongs to the large class of tales of wind-makers and -sellers, going back to Aeolus putting the winds in a bag for Odysseus (*Odyssey*, x. 19 ff.). For a bibliography see *MI* D2140–2 and D1543.6. A collection of 'astronomische und tellurische Wunder' performed by saints in the Middle Ages is given by Peter Toldo, in 'Leben und Wunder der Heiligen im Mittelalter', *Studien zur vergleichenden Literaturgeschichte*, vi (1906), 330–3. C. G. Loomis gathers together examples of saints controlling the wind in *White Magic*, p. 45 f.; see also Kittredge, *Witchcraft*, pp. 152–63 and 472–9. <sup>3</sup> i.e. the river d'Eygues.



salubrat, et dum pretereuntes a fronte salutatur, eos arciore flatus algore flagellat quos, uallis confinium egressos, quasi prohibitus ne datas sibi metas excedat, non<sup>c</sup> approximat.

xxxv. *De uirgula arida que per obedientiam floruit*<sup>a</sup>

Insigne cuiusdam abbatis mandatum quantam in nouitio quodam operatum sit uirtutem Postumianus refert.<sup>1</sup> Abbas pollicenti nouitio perpetem ad omnia uel extrema pacienciam storacinam uirgam iam pridem aridam solo figit, imperans ut tam diu uirgule aquam irriguam ministraret donec lignum aridum in solo arente uiuesceret.<sup>b</sup> Subiectus aduena diuine<sup>c</sup> legis imperio, aquam a Nilo per duo ferme miliaria humeris cotidie conuehebat. Quo duobus annis infructuose completo, tercio demum succedentium temporum labente curriculo, uirga floruit. 'Ego', inquit Postumianus,<sup>d</sup> 'ipsam ex illa uirgula arbusculam, que hodie intra atrium monasterii est, ramis uiuentibus uidi, quasi testimonium uirtutis diuine maneat.'<sup>e</sup>

f. 66<sup>r</sup> Ex hiis apparet, serenissime princeps, quid meriti sancti habeat obedientia, que non minus terreno principi debetur in hiis que ad iura pertinent imperii, quam spirituali patri in his que ad Deum spectant. Vult enim Deus hominem homini subesse duplici ratione, carnali domino quia caro est, et spirituali quia spiritus est. Et sicut spiritus carni dominatur, a quo regimur,<sup>f</sup> ita spiritualia precepta preferenda | sunt carnalibus in hiis que militant aduersus animam. Non solum autem diiudicanda sunt mandata terrena, sed et ipsa spiritualis domini distinguenda sunt precepta. Habet enim prelati in quo facile deuiet, cum homo sit, et decipi possit aut ira uel odio, uel timore uel amore corrumpi seu turbari. Tunc<sup>g</sup> ergo cum generalis datur ad aliquid agendum sententia, semper subiecto bono erit

<sup>c</sup> non supplied by author (?) N

<sup>a</sup> De . . . floruit] De uirtute obedientie et uirga storacina CXQ and Severus

<sup>c</sup> diuine supplied by author N; duras Severus

<sup>e</sup> quasi . . . maneat] quasi in testimonium manens Severus

<sup>g</sup> tunc supplied by author N

<sup>b</sup> uiuesceret Q

<sup>d</sup> Postumianus N

<sup>f</sup> regitur ACβ

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Severus, *Dial.* i. 19. 1–6 (ed. Halm, pp. 171–2 = *PL* xx. 196). Liebrecht (p. 112) notes that the motif of a blossoming rod is widespread, and suggests that it originated in the story of the rod of Aaron (*Num.* 17). But the motif is by no means limited to the Judaeo-Christian tradition; a classical parallel is found in the club of Heracles (*Pausanias*, ii. 31). For a collection of such legends, see Loomis, *White Magic*, pp. 94f. and 114; see further *MI* F971.1.

the valley, but it renders the whole valley fruitful and healthy; it welcomes travellers as they approach, but then it whips with quite a severe blast of cold air those whom, once they have left the confines of the valley, it can no longer accompany: for it is apparently forbidden to overstep its appointed limits.

35. *The Dry Rod which Blossomed as a result of Obedience*

Postumianus reports<sup>1</sup> what great power an abbot's extraordinary command brought into operation in a certain novice. Since the novice was promising perpetual submission to any extreme, the abbot planted a branch from a gum-tree in the ground for him; the branch had already withered, but he commanded the novice to give it water to drink until the dead wood should come to life in the parched ground. The newcomer, submitting to the rule of divine law, carried water on his shoulders every day from the Nile, a good two miles away. When he had done this for two years without reward, at last when the third cycle of successive seasons was slipping past, the branch blossomed. 'I have seen', says Postumianus, 'the very shrub that has grown from that rod, with its branches covered in leaves. It is now inside the monastery enclosure, remaining as a testimony, as it were, to divine power.'

From this it is clear, most serene Prince, what holy merit there is in obedience, which is owed no less to our earthly ruler in things which pertain to the laws of the empire, than to our spiritual father in things which have regard to God. For God wishes human beings to be subject one to another in a twofold scheme: to a lord after the flesh because they are flesh, and to a lord after the spirit because they are spirit. And just as the spirit by which we are governed<sup>2</sup> has dominion over the flesh, so spiritual precepts are to be given precedence over carnal ones in cases where the soul is endangered. However, it is not just earthly commands that require careful judgment: the precepts of a spiritual ruler must also be subjected to discrimination. For a prelate has a ready capacity to err, in that he is human, and can be misled by anger or hatred, and corrupted or confused by fear or love. Therefore in the case of a general pronouncement being made that something should be done, it should always be respected and adhered

<sup>2</sup> An odd phrase, whether one reads *regimur* with N, or *regitur* with the other MSS; in the latter case, the subject understood would presumably be *homo*.



timenda ac tenenda; cum uero<sup>h</sup> ad specialia descendit capitula, si manifeste iniusta ex causa et animo, spernenda erit, ut C. .xi. q. .iii.: ‘Non semper’, et c.: ‘Si dominus iubet’;<sup>3</sup> si ex animo solo iniusta, timenda; si ex ordine tantum, timenda; si ex animo et ordine iusta, sed ex causa manifeste iniusta, tempnenda erit, cum expressim fuerit contra Deum lata, ut D. .xl.: ‘Multi’, ubi dicitur: ‘Mandant aliqua martires<sup>i</sup> fieri’ etc.<sup>4</sup> Si ex ordine iniusta, non erit a subdito spernenda, sed usque ad sequentem synodum toleranda, ut C. .xi. q. .iii.: ‘Si episcopus forte’.<sup>5</sup> Si ex iusta causa sit an non dubitatur, humiliter seruetur. Si ex manifeste iniusta causa, sed non de hiis que circa fidem habent periculum, tenenda erit; potuit enim aliud subesse peccatum, propter quod sententia fuisset in reum iaculanda, ut ait Gregorius.<sup>6</sup> Porro in summo pontifice pro sententia est ipsa rei uitatio, ut D. .xciii.: ‘Si inimicus’.<sup>7</sup> Hec quidem de ecclesiastico iudice in hiis que ad Deum spectant. Si uero imperator mandat et id fieri papa uel episcopus uetat, profecto circa terrena, cum in execucione mandati imperialis non subest contemptus diuine legis, imperatori erit parendum; a quo tunc demum erit recedendum cum aut certum est esse contra Deum aut dubitatur an sit fidei consonum, ut C. .xxiii. q. .iii.:<sup>j</sup> ‘Quid culpatur in bello?’.<sup>8</sup> Si ergo mandat que iura sunt imperii, obediā, inquam, non sacrilego principi, sed sacratissime legi, non imperatori, sed imperio; sic et pontifici malo non obedio, sed sedi, non prelato, sed ecclesie, non pape, sed Petro, non homini, sed Deo, cuius legatione fungitur, ut C. .ii. q. .vi. c.: ‘Accusatio’.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>h</sup> uero ACXQ; ergo N; non I      <sup>i</sup> martires β; matres NAC      <sup>j</sup> .iii. XQ

<sup>3</sup> *Decretum*, C. 11 q. 3 cc. 92 and 93.

<sup>4</sup> *Decretum*, D. 50 c. 27.

<sup>5</sup> *Decretum*, C. 11 q. 3 c. 4: ‘Si episcopus forte’ deals with the procedure to be adopted in the case of an unjust excommunication. C. 11 q. 3 c. 30 would be more appropriate here: ‘Clericus, qui episcopi districtionem circa se putat iniustam, recurrat ad sinodum.’

<sup>6</sup> i.e. in disobeying an unjust command a person might fall into some other sin. Gregory the Great’s writings were an important source for canon law; the allusion here is perhaps to *Moralia in Iob*, iv. 1. 2 (PL lxxv. 639).

<sup>7</sup> *Decretum*, D. 93 c. 1.

<sup>8</sup> *Decretum*, C. 23 q. 1 c. 4.

<sup>9</sup> *Decretum*, C. 2 q. 7 c. 15: ‘Accusatio’, on the seriousness of laying charges against

to by a good subject; but when it comes down to particular details, if it is manifestly unjust in motive and intention, it will have to be rejected, in accordance with C. 11 q. 3: ‘Non semper’, and c.: ‘Si dominus iubet’;<sup>3</sup> if it is unjust in intention alone, it should be respected; if in the circumstances alone, it should be respected; but if it is just in intention and circumstances, but manifestly unjust in its motive, it should be spurned, since it will have been issued in clear opposition to God, according to D. 40: ‘Multi’, where it is said: ‘Mandant aliqua martires fieri’ etc.<sup>4</sup> If it is unjust in the circumstances, it should not be spurned by the subject, but should be observed until the next synod, in accordance with C. 11 q. 3: ‘Si episcopus forte’.<sup>5</sup> If there is doubt as to whether it is based on a just motive or not, it should be obeyed in humility. If it is based on a manifestly unjust motive, but is not among those things which carry a risk to the faith, it should be adhered to; for there could have been another sin lurking in the situation, on account of which the defendant would have had to have been found guilty, as Gregory says.<sup>6</sup> Now in a case involving the pope, the complete shunning of the defendant is passed as a sentence, in accordance with D. 93: ‘Si inimicus’.<sup>7</sup> What I have said so far has been in connection with an ecclesiastical judge dealing with matters which have regard to God. If, on the other hand, the emperor issues a command, and the pope or a bishop forbids its execution, the emperor must certainly be obeyed in earthly matters, as long as the carrying out of the imperial command does not involve the contempt of divine law; it will only be necessary to go against him when it is either certain that his command is in opposition to God, or doubtful whether it is compatible with the faith, in accordance with C. 23 q. 3: ‘Quid culpatur in bello?’.<sup>8</sup> If therefore his commands constitute a lawful exercise of his imperial authority, I shall, I say, obey not a sacrilegious ruler, but a sacred law, not an emperor, but the imperial authority; so too I obey not a bad bishop, but the see, not a prelate, but the Church, not the pope, but Peter, not a human being, but God, whose mission he performs, according to C. 2 q. 6 c.: ‘Accusatio’.<sup>9</sup>

priests, ends with the words: ‘quoniam iniuria eorum ad Christum pertinet, cuius legatione funguntur.’

*In uita<sup>k</sup> sanctorum Thebeorum<sup>l</sup>*

Audi, lector, audi quid beatissima Thebeorum legio<sup>10</sup> erga imperatorem egerit. Erant uiri in rebus bellicis strenui, uirtute nobiles, sed fide nobiliores. Euangelici precepti etiam sub armis non immemores, reddebant que Dei erant Deo, et que Cesaris Cesari persoluebant.<sup>11</sup> Inquiunt ad imperatorem<sup>m</sup> Maximianum: 'Tibi miliciam, Deo debemus innocenciam; a te stipendia laboris accipimus, ab illo uite exordium sumpsimus.<sup>n</sup> Sequi imperatorem in hoc nequaquam possumus, ut auctorem<sup>o</sup> uite negemus. Dextre iste pugnare aduersus impios atque inimicos sciunt, laniare pios atque ciues nesciunt. Meminimus nos pro ciuibus potius quam contra ciues arma sumpsisse;<sup>p</sup> pugnauimus pro fide, quam quo pacto tibi seruauimus, si hanc Deo nostro non exhibemus? Iurauimus in sacramenta diuina, iurauimus deinde in sacramenta regia; nichil nobis de secundis, credas, necesse est, si priora prerumpimus.'

Attende igitur, sanctissime papa, qui mandas ne principi paream.<sup>12</sup> Pareo libens in hiis que Dei sunt tibi ut anime custodi; parebo et principi in hiis que ius tangunt imperii. Fidem seruabo inperio cui iurauit in imperatore; fidem Deo seruabo cui iurauit in baptismo. Vtrimque Deo quod illi debeo soluam, si tibi in spiritualibus et in terrenis imperatori obediero. Non ueni<sup>13</sup> pugnam constituere inter sacerdotium et imperium: unita sunt in Christo, concordia sunt in christiano. Vtrinque inuenies consonantiam, si seruaueris debitam utrique obedientiam. Principi legionis tuam, si miles es, debes obedientiam; quanto forcius imperatori parendum est, cui fidelitatem iurasti.

Audi mirabilem obedientie transgressionem mirabili pene cruciatu

<sup>k</sup> uita supplied by author N      <sup>l</sup> In . . . Thebeorum] written in margin N; om. CXQ  
<sup>m</sup> imperatorem supplied by author N      <sup>n</sup> sumpsimus N      <sup>o</sup> actorem N  
<sup>p</sup> sumpsisse N

<sup>10</sup> The legend of the martyrdom of the Theban legion at Agaunum (Saint-Maurice-en-Valais in Switzerland), as a consequence of their refusal to persecute Christians, was first recorded in c.445 by Eucherius of Lyons in the *Passio Acaunensium martyrum*: this work is Gervase's source here. It would seem that a group of Christian soldiers from Egypt was put to death at Agaunum towards the end of the third century, and that the numbers were subsequently exaggerated; later, various martyrs were said to be stragglers from the Theban legion (cf. *Otia*, iii. 41). On the legend, see D. Van Berchem, *Le Martyre de la légion thébaine: Essai sur la formation d'une légende* (Basle, 1956); L. Dupraz, *Les Passions de saint Maurice d'Agaune* (Fribourg, 1961); S. Pricoco, *L'Isola dei santi: Il cenobio di Lerino e le origini del monachesimo gallico* (Rome, 1978), pp. 204–44; E. Chevalley, 'La passion anonyme', *Vallesia*, xlv (1990), 37–120. See also *Otia*, ii. 4, at n. 81; ii. 7, at n. 15; ii. 10, at n. 47.

*An Episode from the Life of the Theban Saints*

Hear, reader, hear how the blessed legion of Thebans<sup>10</sup> behaved towards the emperor. They were men stout-hearted in warfare, noble in their courage, but nobler still in their faith. Even under arms, they did not forget the evangelical precept: they rendered to God the things which were God's, and paid to Caesar the things that were Caesar's.<sup>11</sup> They said to the emperor Maximian: 'We owe you military service, we owe God our innocence; from you we receive payment for our work, from him we have derived our life's source. We can by no means follow the emperor in something which entails our denying the author of life. These right hands know how to fight against the impious and our enemies, but they do not know how to butcher the pious and our own people. We recollect that we took up arms on behalf of our people and not against them; we have fought for the faith, and how shall we keep faith with you, if we do not display it to our God? We swore to serve God, and then we swore to serve our earthly ruler; you have to believe that nothing is binding on us from the second oath, if we break the first.'

Take heed, therefore, Your Holiness, when you command me not to obey my earthly ruler.<sup>12</sup> I gladly render obedience to you, as the guardian of my soul, in what belongs to God; but I shall also obey my earthly ruler in what touches the lawful exercise of his authority. I shall keep faith with the empire, to which I have pledged myself in the person of the emperor; I shall keep faith with God, to whom I pledged myself at baptism. On either hand I shall pay God what I owe him, if I obey you in spiritual matters and the emperor in earthly matters. I have not come<sup>13</sup> to set up conflict between the sacerdotal and imperial powers: they are united in Christ, they are in harmony in the Christian. You will find no discord on either side, if you safeguard the obedience that is owed to each. You owe your obedience to the commander of your legion, if you are a soldier; how much more staunchly should the emperor be obeyed, to whom you have sworn fidelity.

Hear of an extraordinary transgression of obedience which was punished with an extraordinarily severe penalty. In the time of

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Matt. 22: 21; Mark 12: 17; Luke 20: 25.

<sup>12</sup> Otto had been excommunicated by Innocent III on 18 November 1210; see above, p. xxxii.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Matt. 10: 34; Luke 12: 51.

punitam. Tempore Darii regis Persarum,<sup>14</sup> Manlius Torquatus consul Romanorum filium suum uirgis cesum securi percussit, quia contra imperium consulum cum hostibus pugnaverit, quamvis de ipsis uictor extitisset.<sup>15</sup> Si consul hec puniuit in filio que laudanda |  
 f. 66<sup>v</sup> potius erant cum triumpho, que pena dabitur feodotario qui etiam sub principe malo iura non defendit imperii? Quisquis es milicie debitor, considera quid debeas, et attende ne factus princeps exigas a subditis quod ipse subditus non impenderas.

xxxvi. *De uineis sine plantatore crescentibus*<sup>a</sup>

Est in Narbonensi prouincia, ad confinium montis Pessulani, castrum montis Ferrandi,<sup>1</sup> in cuius confinio, filice succisa atque combusta, terra more noualium colitur, aratroque scissa uites producit sine plantatore. Sic igitur uinea<sup>b</sup> beneficio nature concreta per triennium uina facit optima, exhinc ad sterilitatem siluestrem rediens, nisi iterato igne uratur.<sup>2</sup>

xxxvii. *De uado de Rodestum*<sup>a</sup>

In Britania maiore,<sup>b</sup> episcopatu Lincolniensi, loco qui ab indigenis Rodestum<sup>c</sup> nominatur, est<sup>d</sup> aqua profluens ad quantitatem grandis riui, modico uado passim transmeabilis. In hoc si duos equos septempnes adaquaueris, quantumcumque sint in corporis dimensione inaequales, in humectatione tibiarum<sup>e</sup> et laterum inuenire pariter poteris sub equalitate altitudinis<sup>f</sup> humectatos.<sup>1</sup> Cumque aquam

<sup>a</sup> De . . . crescentibus] De uinea que sine plantatore (plantatione Q) crescit CXQ

<sup>b</sup> uinea supplied by author N

<sup>a</sup> sic X; Rodestanen. N, Rodestim Q, Rodelban. I      <sup>b</sup> i written above e of maiore by author N      <sup>c</sup> sic XA; Rodestim NQI      <sup>d</sup> est om. XQ      <sup>e</sup> tibiarium N      <sup>f</sup> alitudinis N

<sup>14</sup> i.e. Darius III, the last of the Achaemenid kings, who reigned 336–30 BC, and was defeated by Alexander the Great.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Comestor, *Esther*, c. 3, Incidentia (PL cxcviii. 1495). Livy (viii. 7) relates that T. Manlius Torquatus as consul in 340 BC had his son beheaded because he fought against the revolting Latins in defiance of his edict.

<sup>1</sup> Confiscated from the count of Toulouse during the Albigensian Crusade, this castle was given to the bishop of Maguelone in 1215 by Innocent III (Duchesne, *Livre*, p. 161, n. 117).

<sup>2</sup> Stories of miraculous growth abound in folklore (see e.g. Loomis, *White Magic*,

Darius, king of Persia,<sup>14</sup> Manlius Torquatus, a consul of the Romans, had his own son scourged with rods and executed with an axe, because he had done battle with the enemy against the command of the consuls; this in spite of the fact that he had been victorious over them.<sup>15</sup> If a consul punished in his son this deed which deserved rather to be celebrated with a triumph, what punishment will be meted out to the vassal who has not defended the rights of the empire, even under a bad emperor? You, whoever you are, who owe military service, think what you owe; and if you become a ruler, make sure that you do not exact from your subjects anything that, when you were a subject yourself, you would not have paid.

36. *Vineyards which Grow Without a Planter*

In the province of Narbonne, in the district of Montpellier, is the castle of Montferrand.<sup>1</sup> Around this castle the bracken is cut down and burnt, and then the ground is tilled, following the usual procedure for newly-reclaimed land; but once it has been furrowed by the plough, it produces vines without anyone planting them. And so in this way a vineyard grows up out of the kindness of nature, and for a cycle of three years it yields very good wines; but after this it returns to a barren, overgrown state, unless it is scorched by another fire.<sup>2</sup>

37. *The Ford of Radstone*

In Great Britain, in the diocese of Lincoln, in a place which is known locally by the name of Radstone, there is some running water attaining the volume of a large stream, but shallow enough to be forded easily at any point. If you bring two seven-year-old horses into the water of this ford, you will be able to notice that, however much they may differ in the size of their bodies, when their legs and flanks get wet, the water reaches the same height on them both.<sup>1</sup> And when

pp. 94–6). This chapter may be compared with Gerald of Wales's description of a wood in the Auvergne, where vines spring up if the undergrowth is destroyed (*Topographia Hibernica*, ii. 7). Since the Montferrand in the Auvergne was better-known than the one near Montpellier, it seems likely that Gerald's wood in the Auvergne is a result of confusion between the two.

<sup>1</sup> On the marvels set in England, see Oman, 'The English folklore'. Extraordinary rivers are a favourite subject of folklore (see *MI* D915, F715, and F932); but the features of this

modice uadosam transieris, occurret in ripa mausoleum apertum, unius hominis capax, quod ad omnem plene etatis hominem in longitudine uidebis conuenire.<sup>2</sup>

xxxviii. *De aqua que pota lassatis reparat uires*<sup>a</sup>

In Britannia maiori, episcopatu Conuentrensi et comitatu de Stafford, ad radicem montis cui nomen<sup>b</sup> Mahul indigene indiderunt, est aqua in modum paludis<sup>c</sup> ample diffusa in territorio<sup>d</sup> uille quam Maggaleam<sup>1</sup> dicunt. In hac palude aqua est limpidissima et silue infinite continua, que tantam habet in resumendis corporum uiribus efficaciam quod, quociens uenatores ceruos aliasue feras insecuti fuerint usque ad equorum lassitudinem, si in ipso estuantis solis ardore aquam gustauerint ac equis exposuerint hauriendam, sic amissas<sup>e</sup> currendi uires reparant quod non cucurrisse dietam, sed uix attigisse iam ceptam arbitreris.

Nec absimilis est herbe cerifolii aut panis calidi<sup>2</sup> uirtus, quibus mustella, ex diutina cum serpente concertatione lassata, se implicat, ut ex confricatione herbarum amissas uires resumat.<sup>3</sup>

xxxix. *De prato de Cerzeules*<sup>a</sup>

In regno uestro Arelatensi, diocesi Vapincensi, est castrum Cerzeules,<sup>b</sup> in cuius castri territorio<sup>c</sup> lacus alte<sup>d</sup> profunditatis excreuit. Sane in lacus medio crusta pratum fecit,<sup>1</sup> que per anni circulum ab hominum attacku libera, tempore herbe tondende, applicitis restibus,

<sup>a</sup> pota . . . uires] uires reparat equis lassatis CXQ      <sup>b</sup> nomen C; om. NAß  
<sup>c</sup> plaudis N      <sup>d</sup> territorio N      <sup>e</sup> admissas NI

<sup>a</sup> de Cerzeules] crustato CXQ      <sup>b</sup> Cerzeules N      <sup>c</sup> territori N      <sup>d</sup> alte  
supplied by author N

river are highly unusual. Radstone, in the Lincoln diocese, appears as 'Rodestun' in 1167. See E. Ekwall, *The Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th edn. (Oxford, 1960), p. 379.

<sup>2</sup> Liebrecht (pp. 112–13) compares this tomb to that on Cruc Maur near Cardigan described by Nennius (*Historia Brittonum*, lxxiv). A number of later writers mention similar tombs without naming their whereabouts; Ralph de Diceto describes two tombs, one which would fit anyone, and another which would fit no one (*Abb. Chron.* pp. 13–14).

<sup>1</sup> 'This clearly refers to the lake at Mear, near Madely' (Oman, 'The English folklore', p. 9).

you have crossed the water, easily fordable as it is, you will be faced on the bank with an open tomb, of a size suitable for one person; and you will see this tomb adjust itself in length to fit any fully-grown human being.<sup>2</sup>

38. *Some Water, a Drink of which Restores Energy to the Weary*

In Great Britain, in the diocese of Coventry and the county of Staffordshire, at the foot of the hill which the locals have named Mahul, there is some water forming a marsh over a wide area in the territory of a hamlet which they call Maggalea.<sup>1</sup> The water in this marsh is very clear. It adjoins a vast forest, and it has such a great power to restore physical strength that, whenever hunters have chased stags or other wild beasts until their horses are worn out, if, even in the heat of a blazing sun, they taste the water and allow their horses to have a drink of it, they restore their lost energy for running to such an extent that you would think, not that they had been running all day long, but that they had only just begun.

Not unlike this is the virtue of the herb chervil, or of hot bread.<sup>2</sup> The weasel rolls itself in these herbs when it is wearied from a long struggle with the snake, in order that it may recover its lost strength by rubbing against them.<sup>3</sup>

39. *The Meadow of Cerzeules*

In your kingdom of Arles, in the diocese of Gap, is the village of Cerzeules, in whose territory a lake of great depth has formed. Now in the middle of the lake a crust of earth has produced a meadow.<sup>1</sup> This crust is free from human contact all year round, but in the hay-making season it is secured with ropes and pulled to the land which

<sup>2</sup> Presumably, here, some kind of herb: cf. *panis cuculi*, wood-sorrel, and *herba calida*, columbine (Latham, *Revised Medieval Latin Word-List*, s.vv. *panis* and *herba*).

<sup>3</sup> Liebrecht (pp. 113–16) draws attention to Pliny's references to the battle of the weasel and the snake (*Hist. nat.* viii. 33. 79, x. 95. 204, xx. 51. 133, and xxxii. 12. 25). He goes on to discuss other appearances of the weasel in folklore, and particularly the belief that souls sometimes appeared as weasels, or, more regularly, as various kinds of birds.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. the 'motte flottante' of Pelleautier, in the marshes beside the mountain of Céze, not far from Gap: a marvel well-known in the Dauphiné (see Duchesne, *Livre*, p. 161, n. 119).

ad terram trahitur lacui imminentem, et sic defalcata sectiones recipit inter plerosque<sup>c</sup> coheredes. Facta itaque congrua diuisione, solutis funibus, crusta redit in id ipsum quo fuerat meditulium lacus occupatura.<sup>2</sup>

xl. *De aquis marinis que<sup>a</sup> congelantur in sal*

In regno Arelatensi, comitatu Aquensi, territorioque urbis Arelatensis, aque nimio frigidissimorum flatuum rigore<sup>1</sup> congelantur<sup>b</sup> in glaciem, effectuque contrario, pre nimio solis ardore sub Augusti feruore, aqua salsa congelatur et condensatur in salis coagulum. Exhinc ergo sumi ratio potest quare mare oceanum circui non potest discursu nauigantium. Hinc enim frigore congelatum sub septemtrione fit inuium, illinc nimio solis ardore spissatum transeuntibus efficitur ad euroaustrum et meridiem immeabile.<sup>2</sup>

xli. *De uexillis apparentibus in die sancti Constantii<sup>1</sup>*

In Italia, in confinio Alpium Apenninarum,<sup>2</sup> episcopatu Thaurinensi, iuxta est mons in cuius uertice requiescit beatus Constancius, unus de sanctissima legione Thebeorum.<sup>3</sup> Ad radices uero montis est abbatia religione preclara ab antiquo. Quotannis igitur, in die festiuitatis sancti Constantii, aduenientibus ad sollempnitatem apparent uexilla quam plurima in cacumine montis deambulantia, nunc alba, nunc rubea,<sup>4</sup> quorum portitores nulli comparent. Sed et ipsa uexilla

<sup>c</sup> plerosque *supplied by author N*

<sup>a</sup> De . . . que] De salinis que calore CXQ      <sup>b</sup> congelatur NCXI

<sup>2</sup> This meadow belongs to the class of floating islands, the most familiar of which is Aeolia, floating on the western sea (*Odyssey*, x. 1 ff.); see further *MI* F737, D1643-3, and D2136.6.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. the mistral.

<sup>2</sup> The theory which Gervase advances here is an elaboration of ideas put forward by a number of earlier writers. The belief that the sea was *concretum* to the north beyond Ultima Thule goes back to antiquity (e.g. Pliny, *Hist. nat.* iv. 16. 104; Solinus, *Collect.* xxii. 9; Martianus Capella, *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, vi. 666, ed. A. Dick, 2nd edn. J. Préaux (Stuttgart, 1978)); and this idea was repeated by medieval authors (e.g. Adam of Bremen, *Hamburgische Kirchengeschichte*, ed. B. Schmeidler, *MGH SRG* ii (Hanover, 1917), 276. Other writers had suggested that the sea's salinity was caused by the heat of the sun (Adelard of Bath, *Quaestiones naturales*, li, ed. M. Müller (Münster,

borders on the lake; and so it is mown, and the crop is divided out among several co-owners. Once a fair distribution has been made, the ropes are untied, and the crust floats back to take up the same position in the middle of the lake where it had been before.<sup>2</sup>

40. *Sea-Water which Hardens into Salt*

In the kingdom of Arles, in the county of Aix and the territory of the city of Arles, the water is hardened into ice by the extreme cold of the chilling winds,<sup>1</sup> and by an opposite process, beneath the extreme fieriness of the sun in the heat of August, the salt water hardens and condenses into solid salt. An explanation can therefore be drawn from this as to why the ocean cannot be circumnavigated in sailors' voyaging. For on the one hand it becomes impenetrable to the north because it is hardened by the cold, while on the other it is rendered impassable to travellers to the south-east and the south because it condenses under the extreme fieriness of the sun.<sup>2</sup>

41. *The Banners which Appear on the Feast of St Constantius<sup>1</sup>*

In Italy, in the region of the Pennine Alps<sup>2</sup> and the diocese of Turin, there is a mountain in the vicinity, on whose summit reposes the blessed Constantius, one of the holy legion of Thebans.<sup>3</sup> In the foothills of the mountain there is an abbey renowned from of old for the quality of its religious observance. Now every year, on the feast-day of St Constantius, banners are seen by the people arriving for his festival, a very large number of them, parading about on top of the mountain, some white, some red;<sup>4</sup> but no bearers are visible. What is

1934); Pseudo-Honorius of Autun, *De philosophia mundi*, iii. 16 (*PL* clxxii. 82); Neckam, *De naturis rerum*, ii. 1, and *De laud. sap.* iii. 75-8). Gervase combined these ideas in the light of his observation of the Camargue, and deduced from them that it was impossible to sail round the world. Compare his remarks on the same phenomenon above, *Otia*, iii. 2, at n. 4.

<sup>1</sup> This chapter and the next two describe visions that can only be seen from a distance.

<sup>2</sup> The Pennine Alps and the Apennines were regularly confused: cf. Isidore, *Etym.* xiv. 8. 13; Paul the Deacon, *HL* ii. 18 (ed. Waitz, p. 83); *Otia*, iii. 44.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Otia*, iii. 35. In Eucherius' account the whole legion was martyred at Agaunum, but later hagiographers maintained that Maximian and Diocletian ran to ground a remnant scattered through various places, especially in Cisalpine Gaul.

<sup>4</sup> These were St Maurice's colours.

existentibus in mortali peccato non comparent, et si quis ad apicem montis ascenderit, statim omnis illa processio uisio disparet.

xlii. *De rupe que nominatur<sup>a</sup> Equa Illi<sup>1</sup>*

Solent adolescentie<sup>b</sup> sectatores non minus figmenta uenari quam uera, et cum uanitas uanitatum sit et omnia uanitas,<sup>2</sup> uani filii hominum, dum mentiuntur in stateris,<sup>3</sup> inter matura precoquum<sup>c</sup> aliquid f. 67<sup>r</sup> decerpunt, | et non minus fabulis quandoque delectantur quam rebus gestis. Ecce in regno Arelatensi et episcopatu Gratianopolitano, iuxta Diensis diocesis confinium, est rupes altissima in territorio quod incole Treues nominant, quam altera e uicino rupes respicit, cui nomen Equa Illi, eo quod sit equalis illi; sed inaccessibilis in sua altitudine. Ex opposita igitur ruppe conspicientibus apparet illic fons perspicuus qui scopulosa scabra delabitur, et in summo rupis apice ad modum prati herba uiret, in quo nonnumquam panni superextensi candidissimi uisuntur ad exsicandum expositi, sicut lotrices in usu habent. Istud unde prodeat aut quid signet aut quo ministrante compareat querere facile fuit, sed inuenire difficilimum.<sup>4</sup>

xliii. *De fenestris in quibus apparent domine<sup>a</sup>*

In regno quoque Arelatensi et prouincia Aquensi, tradunt esse rupem in cuius arduitate, ad instar parietis per fenestras intercisi, a longinqua uia transeuntibus domine due uel plures apparent, inuicem, ut assimilant, colloquentes ac mutuo risu sibi applaudentes. He subsistentibus a remotis uidentur speciose, iocunde, ac delicias; accedentibus autem uisio penitus euanescit in fabulam.

<sup>a</sup> uocatur CXQ      <sup>b</sup> adolentie N      <sup>c</sup> id est antecoctum *written in margin by author N*

<sup>a</sup> De . . . domine] De dominabus apparentibus in fenestra CXQ

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Mont Aiguille, near Monestier-de-Clermont, Isère. Leibniz (p. 974) cites in comparison two hills near Göttingen called 'die Gleichen', and Liebrecht (p. 116) adds the hills in North Africa called the Seven Brothers because of their equal height, mentioned by Pliny (*Hist. nat.* v. 1. 18).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Eccles. 1: 2; 12: 8.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Ps. 61 (62): 10 (9). The Vulgate text: 'Verumtamen uani filii hominum, |

more, even the banners are invisible to any who are in a state of mortal sin; and if anyone climbs up to the mountain-top, that whole vision of a procession immediately disappears.

42. *The Crag which is Named Equal To That<sup>1</sup>*

People in pursuit of youth customarily chase after fiction no less than truth, and although it is vanity of vanities and all is vanity,<sup>2</sup> the vain children of men, liars in the scales that they are,<sup>3</sup> pluck an unripe fruit in the midst of ripe ones, and enjoy mere stories at times no less than actual happenings. Now in the kingdom of Arles and the diocese of Grenoble, near the boundary of the diocese of Die, there is a very high crag, in the district which the inhabitants call Trièves. Close by is another crag facing it, which bears the name Equal To That, because it is as high as the first; but its steepness makes it inaccessible. Well, people looking from the opposite crag can see a clear spring on this one, which tumbles down a rocky gully; and on the very top of the crag there is a patch of green grass like a meadow, and pure white garments are sometimes seen spread over the ground, having been put out to dry, just in the way washerwomen do. Whence that phenomenon comes, or what it signifies, or by whose agency it appears, was easy to ask, but very difficult to discover.<sup>4</sup>

43. *Windows at which Ladies are Seen*

Also in the kingdom of Arles, in the province of Aix, they say that there is a crag, on whose steep face, which is like a wall pierced with windows, two or more ladies appear to travellers when they are a long way away, conversing with each other, as they pretend, and clapping their hands at a shared joke. These women seem beautiful, charming, and alluring to people at a distance; but when they come closer, the vision utterly vanishes into illusion.

Mendaces filii hominum in stateris, | Ut decipiant ipsi de uanitate in idipsum' is indebted to the LXX: πλὴν μάταιοι οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ψευδεῖς οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐν ζυγοῖς τοῦ ἀδικῆσαι, αὐτοὶ ἐκ ματαιότητος ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό. Cf. the New Revised Standard Version: 'Those of low estate are but a breath, those of high estate are a delusion; in the balances they go up; they are together lighter than a breath.'

<sup>4</sup> Liebrecht (p. 116) cites a similar phenomenon, but concerning water- rather than mountain-spirits, described by F. F. A. Kuhn, *Märkische Sagen* (Berlin, 1843), no. 174.

xliv. *De natura beueris et eius domicilio*<sup>a</sup>

Quamuis de naturis animalium tractare nostri non sit propositi, tamen interserere inusitata plurimisque incognita tanquam miranda scribere fuit. In deciuo Alpium Appenninarum,<sup>1</sup> iuxta castrum Secutiam in<sup>b</sup> Thaurinensi episcopatu, est aqua modicum<sup>c</sup> fluuium faciens, sed ex terre pendulo et aliarum scaturiginum immersione in latiore amnem prorumpens. In huius ripa ostensus est mihi beuer, animal quidem ad anteriorem partem gressibile, sed ad subterioremedietatem in piscem desinit;<sup>2</sup> partem inferiorem semper aqua immergit, superiorem terre infigit, et ut nature sue commoda inueniat receptacula, in ripa quasi solaria cauernosa facit, ut cum ascendit aqua uel descendit paratas sibi reperiat mansiones. De hoc sane animali<sup>d</sup> egregius uersificator Bernardus<sup>e</sup> Siluester ait:

Cisimus obrepit,<sup>f</sup> et uestitura potentes  
Marturis, et spolio non leuiore beuer.<sup>3</sup>

xlv. *De antipodibus et eorum terra*<sup>a,b</sup>

In Britannia maiore castrum est inter montana quedam situm, cui populus nomen Pech<sup>c</sup><sup>1</sup> imposuit. Munitio eius difficile expugnabilis, et in monte cauerna foraminis, que uelut fistula uentum pro tempore ualidissime eructuat. Vnde tanta prodeat aura miratur populus, et inter plurima que ibidem cum admiratione geruntur, accepi a uiro religiosissimo, Roberto priore de Kenildewirtha,<sup>2</sup> exinde oriundo, quod cum uir nobilis Guillelmus Peuerelli<sup>3</sup> castrum cum adiacente baronia pretaxatum possideret, uir quidem strenuus et potens ac in animalibus diuersis copiosus, uno aliquo die subulcus eius, cum

<sup>a</sup> De . . . domicilio] De beuere et eius natura CXQ <sup>b</sup> in supplied by author N  
<sup>c</sup> modicum N <sup>d</sup> animalis N <sup>e</sup> Bernardus N <sup>f</sup> abrepit N

<sup>a</sup> eorum terra supplied by author N <sup>b</sup> De . . . terra] De castro quod Angli Pech  
nominant CXQ <sup>c</sup> Peth N

<sup>1</sup> See *Otia*, iii. 41, n. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Horace, *Ars Poetica*, l. 4.

<sup>3</sup> This couplet from Bernard Sylvester (*De mundi uersitate*, iii. 230–1, ed. P. Dronke (Leiden, 1978)), is also quoted by Peter the Chanter (*Verbum abbreviatum*, 85, PL ccv. 255) to illustrate excessive luxury in dress.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. the Peak Castle, near Castleton in Derbyshire.

44. *The Nature of the Beaver and its Habitation*

Although it is not our purpose to treat of the natures of animals, nevertheless we did propose to include unusual phenomena and to write about things with which most people are unfamiliar, as being fit objects of wonder. On the slopes of the Pennine Alps,<sup>1</sup> near the town of Susa in the diocese of Turin, there is some water forming a small river, but surging out into a broader torrent after a drop in ground level and the absorption of other spring-waters. On the bank of this river I was shown a beaver. This is an animal which goes on legs in its fore part, but ends as a fish<sup>2</sup> for its bottom half; it always keeps its hinder part under water, but it rests its front on dry land. In order to find a suitable shelter for its nature, it excavates hollow terraces, as it were, in the bank, so that, according as the water-level rises or falls, it may always find a lodging prepared for it. The distinguished versifier Bernard Sylvester says of this animal:

The squirrel crept up, and, destined to clothe the great,  
The marten, and with a hide of no less value, the beaver.<sup>3</sup>

45. *The Antipodeans and their Land*

In Great Britain there is a castle, situated in a mountainous district, to which the people have given the name of the Peak;<sup>1</sup> its fortifications can hardly be assailed. In the hillside is the mouth of a cave, which from time to time, like a pipe, blasts out a wind with great force. Where such a great gust comes from is a source of wonder to the people, and many things happen there which give rise to further wonder: here is one of them, which I heard from a man of high religious standing, Robert, prior of Kenilworth,<sup>2</sup> a native of the area. When the nobleman William Peveril<sup>3</sup> owned this castle with the attached estate (an energetic and powerful man, rich in various kinds of livestock), a swineherd of his was one day being lazy about the task

<sup>2</sup> Robert was prior c.1160–86. See *The Heads of Religious Houses, England and Wales*, ed. D. Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke, and V. C. M. London (Cambridge, 1972), p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> William Peveril won distinction at the Battle of the Standard in 1138. In the Romance of Fulk Fitz Warine he appears as a fine gentleman, but that he was a man whom a swineherd might justly fear is shown by the fact that he was exiled and lost all his lands in 1155, for having poisoned Ranulf, Earl of Chester' (Oman, 'The English folklore', p. 10). William features in Walter Scott's novel, *Peveril of the Peak*.

segnis circa creditum sibi ministerium esset, suem grauidam de genere scrofarum magis generosam perdidit. Timens ergo propter iacturam<sup>d</sup> asperiora uicarii dominici uerba, cogitauit penes se si quo fortasis casu sus illa foramen Pech<sup>e</sup> famosum, sed usque ad illa tempora inscrutatam, subintrasset. Apponit in animo ut abditi loci se faciat perscrutatorem. Intrat cauernam tempore tunc ab omni uento tranquillo, et cum diutinam in procedendo uiam perfecisset, tandem ab opacis in locum lucidum obuenerit, solutus in spatiosam camporum planiciem; terram ingressus late cultam, messoris reperit fructus maturos colligentes, et inter spicas pendentes scrofam que multiplicauerat ex se suculos editos recognouit. Tunc miratus subulcus et de reintegrata iactura congratulatus, facto rerum prout euenerant uerbo cum preposito terre illius, scrofam recipit, et cum gaudio dimissus, gregem porcorum educit. Mira res: a messibus subterraneis ueniens, hyemalia frigora uidet in nostro emisperio perseuerare, quod utique solis absentie ac uicarie presentie merito ascribendum duxi.<sup>4</sup>

xlvi. *De ymagine Beate Virginis*

f. 67<sup>v</sup> Cum de mirabilibus mundi tractatus nostri sit propositi, nihil inter mirabilia dignius quam id quod, cotidiana adm|iratione dignum, et diuina uirtute firmatur et utilitati nostre deseruire censetur. Ecce in Siria inferiori et prouincia Damascena, sub potestate paganorum, est ecclesia quam sancte Marie de Sardenai<sup>1</sup> nominant. In hac est yconia ymaginem Beatissime Virginis representans, sub cuius mamilla,

<sup>d</sup> factam add. before iacturam X, after iacturam Q      <sup>e</sup> Peth N

<sup>4</sup> The Other World has been a constant challenge to the human imagination, and there is a vast literature on the subject: see, in particular, H. R. Patch, 'Some elements in mediaeval descriptions of the Other World', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, xxxiii (1918), 601-43; id., *The Other World, according to descriptions in mediaeval literature* (Cambridge, Mass., 1950). For further bibliography, see *MI F1-199*, especially F92, F110, F111.0.2, and F161.1.1.

Liebrecht (pp. 117-23) quotes Camden's *Britannia* on this cave, called the Devil's Arse; Camden denies the existence of the wind described by Gervase. Liebrecht also cites Nennius' description of a windy cave (*Historia Brittonum*, lxx). The Peak cavern and its wind are similarly described by Ralph de Diceto (*Abb. chron.*, p. 11), Henry of Huntingdon (*Historia Anglorum*, i. 7, ed. Diana Greenway (OMT, 1996), pp. 22-3), and Alexander Neckam (*De laud. sap.* v. 747-50). In the Saxon legend of Eadburga, daughter of the Thane of Castleton, the Peak cavern likewise forms an entrance to a subterranean world

assigned to him, and lost a pregnant breeding sow of a particularly good stock. Consequently, fearing the sharp words from his master's steward which the loss would provoke, he wondered to himself whether by any chance that sow might have gone into the famous, but up to those times unexplored, cave of the Peak. He made up his mind that he would himself become the explorer of that mysterious place. He entered the cave at a time when the weather was calm, without any wind, and after making his way forward into it for a long time, he eventually came out from the darkness into a light place, and found that he had emerged into wide open fields; advancing into the countryside, which was cultivated all round, he found harvesters gathering in ripe crops, and in the midst of the hanging ears of corn he recognized the sow, which had dropped its litter of several piglets. Then the swineherd, full of amazement, and delighted at the recovery of his loss, described the events just as they had occurred to the overseer of that land; he was given back the sow and, after a joyful leave-taking, led away his herd of pigs. The remarkable thing is that, on his return from the subterranean harvest, he saw the winter cold uninterrupted in our hemisphere. I have justifiably come to the conclusion that this is undoubtedly to be ascribed to the sun's absence, and its presence elsewhere.<sup>4</sup>

46. *An Image of the Blessed Virgin*

It being our aim to produce a treatise on the world's marvels, surely none among them could be more worthy to be included than something which deserves daily admiration, being both established by divine power and seen as serving our needs. Listen, then: in Lower Syria, in the province of Damascus, under pagan rule, there is a church which they call the Church of St Mary of Sardenaye.<sup>1</sup> In this church there is an icon displaying an image of the most Blessed Virgin, and from her breast, which by a divine miracle has turned to

(*A Legend of the Peak*, Loughborough, 1858). See also *The Place-Names of Derbyshire*, i, ed. K. Cameron, English Place-Name Society, xxvii (Cambridge, 1950).

Stories of the Other World were in vogue at this time: cf. William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, i. 27; Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambrie*, i. 8; Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 118-20. In all of them the Other World is situated under, or within, the earth, but it is not an abode of the dead. Gervase's account differs from the others in its reversal of the seasons: the others all describe a kind of half-light.

On mediaeval ideas concerning the possible existence of antipodeans, see *Otia*, ii. 4, n. 116.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. the modern Seidnaya, or Said Nâya, near Damascus.



carnea diuino miraculo facta, oleum uice lactis stillat, infirmorum sanitati proficuum.<sup>2</sup> Quod qualiter aut quo diuino iudicio prouenerit<sup>a</sup> a multis celebriter tam testificatum quam scripture commendatum habemus.

xlvi. *De cruce latronis Dominum in cruce confitentis<sup>a</sup>*

In insula Cipro crux est latronis confitentis Dominum, cui Dominus ait: 'Hodie mecum eris in paradyso.'<sup>1</sup> Eratque sub diuo posita eo quod, tempore inuentionis sancte crucis, cum sancta Elena, mater Constantini imperatoris et filia Colli, regis Britannie maioris,<sup>2</sup> cum tesauo preciosissimo crucis clauorum et ampulis sanguinis et aque que fluxerant e latere Domini pendentis in cruce, transitum fecit per Ciprum Romam rediens, tunc terra Cipri nullum cadauer poterat retinere.<sup>3</sup> Vnde factum est ut ad instanciam populi de corruptione aeris et miranda nouitate conquerentis, crucem in insula Cipro relinqueret, cuius uirtute terra cadauera mortuorum absorta retinuit, cum ante id tempus sepulta reuomere consueuisset.

Est autem hoc insigne crucis illius mirabile, quod cum sit in ecclesia inclusa, nullo fixorio firmatur, uerum in aere stans sine

<sup>a</sup> prouenit CXQ

<sup>a</sup> Dominum . . . confitentis] in Cipro CXQ

<sup>2</sup> Portraits exuding oil are a fairly frequent phenomenon in medieval legend, but the famous icon of Seidnaya is of particular interest, because of the rich cultural exchanges which mark the history of its legend. This legend originated in Syria as an Arab story, associated with the Melchite convent of Seidnaya. It was transmitted to Europe by the Latin Christians: the earliest Latin version circulated in about the middle of the twelfth century (see E. Cerulli, *Il Libro etiopico dei Miracoli di Maria e le sue fonti nelle letterature del medio evo latino* (Rome, 1943), pp. 270–2). Over the next three centuries the legend was frequently retold in the west, acquiring many embellishments (see e.g. Matthew Paris, *Chronica maiora*, ed. H. R. Luard (RS lvii (1872–83), ii. 484–8). At the same time the legend travelled through Egypt to Ethiopia (see Cerulli, *op. cit.*, pp. 231–89; *The Book of the Saints of the Ethiopian Church*, transl. E. A. W. Budge (Cambridge, 1928), i. 34–6). For a recent study and bibliography, see L. Minervini, 'Leggende dei cristiani orientali nelle letterature romanze del medioevo', *Romanze Philology*, xlix (1995), 1–12, at pp. 6–12.

The image was said to be one of Luke's portraits (cf. *Otia*, iii. 25, n. 6). According to the original version of the story, a monk one day lodged at the convent of Seidnaya on his way to Jerusalem, and the abbess asked him to bring her back a portrait of the Virgin. He forgot this errand, but heard a voice as he left the city reminding him of it. He went back and bought a portrait, which then protected him against thieves and wild animals on his journey. At this he decided to keep it, but when he entered a boat the wind carried him to Damascus. There he stayed at the convent again, but did not make himself known; when he saw that the icon was sweating oil, he tried to leave with it, but could not get

flesh, instead of milk there distils oil, which is beneficial for healing the sick.<sup>2</sup> We have learnt in what manner and by what divine ordinance this came about from many people, since it is well-known by hearsay as well as from written accounts.

47. *The Cross of the Thief who Acknowledged the Lord on the Cross*

On the island of Cyprus is the cross of the thief who acknowledged the Lord, to whom the Lord said: 'Today you shall be with me in paradise.'<sup>1</sup> It was originally set up in the open air for the following reason. At the time of the finding of the Holy Cross, St Helena, the mother of the emperor Constantine and the daughter of Coel, king of Great Britain,<sup>2</sup> made the crossing via Cyprus on her way back to Rome with the precious treasure of the nails of the cross, and with flasks of the blood and water which had flowed from the Lord's side while he was hanging on the cross. At that time the earth of Cyprus could not keep down any corpses.<sup>3</sup> The people complained about this extraordinary phenomenon and the corruption of the air, and so it came about that, at their entreaty, she left the cross on the island of Cyprus. Its power enabled the earth to keep down the dead bodies it swallowed, while up to that time it had habitually disgorged any that were buried in it.

Now here is an outstanding marvel which pertains to that cross: although it is now shut inside a church, it is not fastened to any out. Eventually he confessed to the abbess, who received the portrait with great joy. The monk stayed and ministered to the icon for the rest of his life.

The convent became a major centre of pilgrimage. Western versions of the legend report that the icon was venerated by Christians and Muslims alike; this remains true even today (see William Dalrymple, *From the Holy Mountain* (London, 1997), pp. 187–91).

<sup>1</sup> Luke 23: 43. The so-called Good Thief of Luke's passion narrative occupied a notable place in apocryphal literature: see e.g. *Evangelia apocrypha*, ed. Tischendorf, pp. 192–3 and 361–2.

<sup>2</sup> A British tradition made St Helena the daughter of Coel of Colchester (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *HRB*, c. 78 (= ed. Griscom, v. 6)); however, there is no historical evidence for this. Helena was actually born almost certainly at Drepanum in Bithynia, later renamed Helenopolis by her son. In 324 she journeyed to the Holy Land, and a tradition which apparently arose at the end of the fourth century (it is first referred to by Ambrose in his sermon *De obitu Theodosii* cc. 41–8 (*CSEL* lxxiii. 393–7 = *PL* xvi. 1399–1402), dating from 395), attributed to her the finding of the True Cross together with the crosses of the two thieves.

<sup>3</sup> The idea of an island on which no corpse could be buried may be compared with the establishment of Delos as a holy island on which no one was to die or be buried; cf. also *Otia*, i. 14, n. 4.

firmamento, osculum porrigentibus se offert, contactum manuum fugit. Si attemptatur manibus, statim mouetur et fugam facit, nunc ad latus declinans, nunc in altum tendens.<sup>4</sup>

xlvi. *De aqua que<sup>a</sup> numquam bullit*

Est in regno Arelatensi et castro de Pirioliti<sup>b1</sup> aqua limpidissima, usui mortalium plurima commoda. Huius miranda erit complexio, quod cum ad plenum caro<sup>c2</sup> omnisque generis legumina decoquat, numquam tamen bullire potest. Vnde prouenit quod ignoti et transeuntes, hec ignorantes, aque bullicionem expectantes, post diutinos ignes longasque moras carnes aut pices cacabo immissos reperiunt sic comminutos et excoctos quod minus sapidi ex nimia decoctione redduntur.

xlix. *De facie<sup>a</sup> Domini impressa rupi<sup>b</sup>*

Miliario uno a Nazareth contra meridiem<sup>1</sup> ostenditur locus qui dicitur Saltus Domini, eo quod Iudei, ira turbati eicientesque Iesum extra ciuitatem, duxerunt eum ad supercilium montis ut precipitarent eum. Ille autem transiens per medium illorum, ibat.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>a</sup> que supplied by author N      <sup>b</sup> Puioliti XQ, Puiolen I      <sup>c</sup> caro NACXQ; carnes I

<sup>a</sup> facie supplied by author N      <sup>b</sup> De . . . rupi] De Salto Domini CXQ; De facie Domini impressa ruppi uel de Salto Domini I

<sup>4</sup> The mainstream account of St Helena's finding of the three crosses on Calvary contains no mention of the cross of the Good Thief being left on Cyprus (see e.g. *AASS*, Aug. iii. 548–611). But this relic, which was preserved in the monastery of Stavro Vouni, attained great fame in the later Middle Ages; see J. Hackett, *A History of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus* (London, 1901), pp. 439–51. The earliest description of it is by Abbot Daniel, a Russian Christian who visited Cyprus c. 1106–7. He affirms that it was suspended in mid-air, but does not mention the impossibility of burying the dead. The next account, however, by Willebrand of Oldenburg (who saw it in 1211), says that it swung to and fro in the air, and had the virtue of keeping the dead in their graves. Many subsequent travellers mentioned it, including 'Sir John Mandeville', William of Boldensele, and Jacopo da Verona. Neither of the two early accounts was Gervase's source here; he may be reporting a crusader's story.

When the Mamelukes invaded Cyprus in 1426, a body of troops plundering the monastery of Stavro Vouni discovered that the cross was supported by some springs concealed within it.

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Piolenc, near Orange.

support, but standing in the air without a prop, it offers itself to people who come forward to kiss it, while it shuns the touch of hands. If anyone tries to take it in their hands, it immediately moves and makes its escape, sometimes swerving to the side, other times rising up high.<sup>4</sup>

48. *Water which Never Boils*

In the kingdom of Arles, and in the village of Pirioliti,<sup>1</sup> there is some water that is very clear, and well-fitted for human consumption. Its quality will arouse wonder, for although it cooks thoroughly meat<sup>2</sup> and vegetables of every kind, it can never boil. And so it happens that strangers and travellers, not realizing this and expecting the water to boil, find after long heating and tedious waiting that the pieces of meat or fish which they had put in the pot are so reduced and overdone that they are rendered virtually inedible by their excessive cooking.

49. *The Imprint of the Lord's Face on a Rock*

One mile from Nazareth towards the south,<sup>1</sup> a place is pointed out which is called the Lord's Leap, because the Jews, overcome with rage, thrust Jesus out of the city and brought him to the brow of a hill, meaning to cast him down headlong. But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way.<sup>2</sup> And in his descent the Lord pressed

<sup>2</sup> *I's carnes* would seem to be a scribal correction of *caro*, apparently used here as a neuter noun.

<sup>1-1</sup> ostenditur . . . eius impressa notantur (p. 650) Cf. Comestor, *Evan.*, c. 72 (*PL* cxcviii. 1574). The Saltus Domini is mentioned in many of the medieval descriptions of the holy places, as for example in those of Fretellus (1137 and 1148), John of Würzburg (c. 1160–70), and Theoderic (c. 1172). None of these mentions the imprint of Christ's form; however, this was such a favoured object of devotion that it was eventually completely obliterated (J.-A.-S. Collin de Plancy, *Dictionnaire critique des reliques et des images miraculeuses* (Paris, 1821), ii. 322).

Imprints left by holy people or gods are an ancient and widespread phenomenon: for a bibliography, see *MI* A972.1. This is one of many instances recorded with reference to Jesus: the same phenomenon supposedly occurred with, for example, the column on which he was scourged, and a rock on which he rested his shoulders on the Mount of Olives (see Theodosius, *De situ terrae sanctae*, cc. 7 and 21 (ed. Geyer, pp. 141 and 146)); cf. also the legends in *Otia*, iii. 23–5.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Luke 4: 29–30.

Descendens itaque Dominus impressit se rupi, cedensque ei rupes fecit locum quasi latibuli, in quo adhuc uestigia lineamentorum<sup>c</sup> eius impressa notantur.<sup>1</sup>

1. *De statua et herba fimbrie*<sup>a</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In *Ecclesiastica hystoria* legitur quod quidam fecit statuam auream<sup>2</sup> in honore Saluatoris, et post statuam ipsius Martha illic sanata est.<sup>3</sup> Ibi quoque nascebatur herba quedam, ita plerumque cressens quod tangebatur fimbriam uestimenti ymaginis; eratque tante uirtutis quod quicumque ex ea sumebat,<sup>b</sup> a languore quo tenebatur liberabatur. Et de hac intelligendum putant quod dicit Ambrosius in sermone *De Salomone*. Enumerans enim beneficia Christi circa genus humanum, post aliqua premissa subdidit: 'Dum languidum<sup>c</sup> sanguinis fluxum siccatur in Marcha, dum demones expellit de Maria, dum corpus rediuiui<sup>d</sup> spiritus calore constringit in Lazaro.'<sup>1</sup> Quod enim dicitur in ewangelio,<sup>e</sup> dum iret Iesus ad filiam Iairi<sup>f</sup> archisinagoge<sup>g</sup> suscitandam, mulierem per duodecim annos fluxum sanguinis passam ad tactum fimbrie uestimenti eius curatam,<sup>4</sup> ad Martham non referunt, sed ad aliam mulierem cuius nomen tacetur;<sup>5</sup> sed de hiis latius diximus in tractatu *De uita Beate Virginis et discipulorum et eorum transitu*.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>c</sup> lineamentorum MSS; rugarum uestimentorum Comestor

<sup>a</sup> et . . . fimbrie] aurea CXQ; et herba fimbrie uel de statua aurea I Comestor <sup>b</sup> sumeret <sup>c</sup> sanat *written in margin by author after languidum N* <sup>d</sup> rediuiui *supplied by author (correction) N* <sup>e</sup> ewangelio *supplied by author (correction) N* <sup>f</sup> Iairi] miri N <sup>g</sup> archisinagoge CQI

<sup>1-1</sup> In . . . constringit in Lazaro.] This passage is taken from the Comestor, *Evan.*, c. 61 and Additio 1 (PL cxcviii. 1569–70); he in turn was drawing on Eusebius-Rufinus, *HE* vii. 18, ed. Mommsen, pp. 672–3). On the development of the legend, see Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, pp. 197–205 and 250\*–73\*; see also Liebrecht, pp. 123–5. There was apparently a bronze group at Paneas (Caesarea Philippi), representing a man with a woman kneeling before him, beside which a medicinal herb grew. Dobschütz remarks (p. 198): 'Offenbar war es eine Votivstele, eine Adorantin vor irgend einem Heilgotte darstellend, mag dabei an Asklepios oder an einen phoenicisch-syrischen Doppelgänger desselben gedacht sein.' By the time of Eusebius it had been given a Christian interpretation, and was said to have been set up in thanksgiving by the woman who was healed of an issue of blood. By the end of the fourth century we are told by Asterius of Amaseia that the statues had disappeared (Dobschütz, p. 255\*). It seems that, since the legend had now become well known, the people of Paneas then pointed out another statue, this one just of a man, as the one in the legend: later accounts not derived from Eusebius know of only one statue (Dobschütz, p. 199).

himself against a rock, and the rock yielded to him, and formed as it were a hiding-place; and the imprinted traces of his features can still be observed there.<sup>1</sup>

50. *A Statue and the Herb at its Hem*

<sup>1</sup>In the *Ecclesiastical History* one reads that someone fashioned a golden<sup>2</sup> statue in honour of our Saviour; and Martha was healed there, behind his statue.<sup>3</sup> A certain herb also established itself there, showing a tendency to grow so as to touch the hem of the statue's garment; this herb possessed such great virtue that whoever ate of it was released from any ailment which hampered them. And people think that what Ambrose says in his sermon *On Solomon* is to be understood as referring to this herb. For in an enumeration of Christ's services to the human race, after mentioning various other things he added: 'when he dried up the enfeebling issue of blood in Martha, when he drove out the evil spirits from Mary, when he invigorated the body of Lazarus with the warmth of restored breath.'<sup>1</sup> For they do not take as referring to Martha the gospel account of how, while Jesus was on his way to raise up the daughter of Jairus, ruler of the synagogue, a woman who had suffered from an issue of blood for twelve years was healed at a touch of the hem of his garment;<sup>4</sup> but they take it as referring to another woman, whose name is not divulged.<sup>5</sup> However, we have discussed these matters more fully in our treatise *The Life of the Blessed Virgin and her Disciples and their Passing Away*.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The tradition, including the Comestor, is virtually unanimous in describing the statue as made of bronze: *auream* therefore seems to be a mistake on Gervase's part for *aeream*. The only other variant is in a version deriving from Theodosius, *De situ terrae sanctae*, c. 2 (ed. Geyer, p. 138): there the statue is said to be *electrina* (cf. *Otia*, ii. 23, at n. 16).

<sup>3</sup> The Comestor's text at this point reads: 'et propius statuam Marthae ubi sanata est.' Leibniz and Liebrecht both suggest the emendation *Martham quae* for Gervase's *Martha*. However, it seems likely that Gervase, or an intermediate source, knew the version of the story in which there was only one statue, and altered the Comestor's text accordingly.

The woman in this legend, nameless in Eusebius-Rufinus, was named as Martha by the Comestor following Pseudo-Ambrose, *Sermo 46 De Salomone* (PL xvii. 698: see below, n. 5, and cf. *Otia*, iii. 25, n. 1.)

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Matt. 9: 18–26; Mark 5: 22–43; Luke 8: 41–56.

<sup>5</sup> i.e. some people think that *two* women were healed of an issue of blood: one of them Martha, who was healed by the herb in this story, and the other the nameless woman of the gospels. This sentence is not in the Comestor's text.

<sup>6</sup> This work, presumably the same as that referred to in iii. 25, is lost.

li. *De balsamo*<sup>a</sup>

In Siria <sup>1</sup>regio est Ydumea pinguisima, ubi palmarum plurimum et balsamum nutritur; cuius inciso lapidibus accutis robore, stillantem lacrimam ex uulneribus colligunt.<sup>1</sup> Cuius bonitas sic probatur: si ponderat opobalsamum<sup>b</sup> plus duplo uel triplo quam terebintium, f. 68<sup>r</sup> purum est; si minus | aut equaliter, sofisticatur.<sup>2</sup>

lii. *De medicabilibus balneis*<sup>a</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Philipus in termino Iudee septemtrionali<sup>b</sup> constituit ciuitatem quam uocauit Cesaream Philippi, in memoriam Tyberii Cesaris et sui nominis, et est in regione Fenicis, ubi ad radicem Libani oriuntur duo fontes, Ior et Dan; quorum riuuli, sociati sub montibus Gelboe sub urbe Cedar, secus medicabilia balnea, Iordanem faciunt, nomen eius quasi ex suis nominibus componentes. Tamen Ieronimus<sup>2</sup> dicit quod ciuitas illa olim dicta est Dan, ubi uitulum aureum posuit Ieroboam,<sup>3</sup> a qua riuus preterfluens dictus est Iordanis, quasi ex nomine fontis et ciuitatis cognominatus; que ciuitas nunc Paneas<sup>c</sup> dicitur. Porro Iosephus<sup>4</sup> dicit ultra Cesaream .cxx. stadiis modicum lacum esse, qui a rotunditate Fiala dicitur, semper plenus et numquam exuberans. Ibi oritur Iordanis, et paulo post a terra sorbetur, ad radicem Libani iterum ebuliens. Quod primus Philippus tetrarcha deprehendit: nam missis in Phialam paleis, eas apud Paneum<sup>d</sup> redditas inuenit; Paneum autem<sup>e</sup> uocat Iosephus fontem

<sup>a</sup> et eius probatione *add. after balsamo CXQ*      <sup>b</sup> opobasamum *N*

<sup>a</sup> De . . . balneis] De fluuio succrescente *CXQ*; De medicabilibus balneis uel de fluuio succrescente *I*      <sup>b</sup> septemtrionali *N*      <sup>c</sup> Pineas *N*      <sup>d</sup> Paneam *β*  
<sup>e</sup> aut *N*

<sup>1-1</sup> Cf. Comestor, *Libri Mach.*, c. 8 (*PL* cxcviii. 1528); Josephus, *Ant.* xiv. 54; *Bell.* i. 138.

<sup>2</sup> Balsam was often mixed with other resins and sold as pure. Gervase returns to the balsam-tree in *Otia*, iii. 78, and Appendix i. 30.

<sup>1-1</sup> Philipus . . . confluentibus, conficitur Iordanis (p. 654)] Cf. Comestor, *Evan.*, c. 85 (*PL* cxcviii. 1580); Eusebius-Rufinus, *HE* vii. 17 (ed. Mommsen, p. 671). In the margin alongside this passage in *N* 'Hystoria ecclesiastica' was written by the rubricator; 'ecclesiastica' was then deleted and rewritten by the author. However, the Comestor's *Historia scholastica* was Gervase's immediate source here; the medicinal baths are not

51. *Balsam*

In Syria is <sup>1</sup>the very rich region of Idumaea, where a large number of palm-trees flourish, and also the balsam-tree. People cut open the trunk of this tree with sharp stones, and collect the gum-drop which exudes from the incisions.<sup>1</sup> Its quality is tested as follows: if the balsam weighs more than twice or three times as much as turpentine, it is pure; if it weighs less or the same, it is adulterated.<sup>2</sup>

52. *Some Medicinal Baths*

<sup>1</sup>Philip built a city on the northern boundary of Judaea which he called Caesarea Philippi, to preserve the memory of Tiberius Caesar and of his own name; it is in the region of Phoenicia, where two springs, the Jor and the Dan, rise at the foot of Lebanon. Their streams, joining together beneath the mountains of Gilboa near the city of Kedar, alongside some medicinal baths, form the Jordan; they also give it its name, which is a compound, so to speak, of both of theirs. But Jerome<sup>2</sup> says that that city is the place once called Dan, where Jeroboam set up a golden calf,<sup>3</sup> and the stream flowing past was called the Jordan after it, named as it were after the spring and the city, the city now being called Paneas. Moreover, Josephus<sup>4</sup> says that a hundred and twenty stades beyond Caesarea there is a small lake, which is called Phiala, or 'the Bowl', from its roundness. It is always full but never overflows. The Jordan has its source there, but after a little it sinks into the ground, bubbling up again at the foot of Lebanon. Philip the tetrarch was the first to prove this: he threw chaff into Phiala, and found that it bobbed up again at Paneum; for

mentioned by Eusebius. Philip the Tetrarch (son of Herod the Great) made improvements at Paneas, the modern Baniās, and renamed it Caesarea Philippi; cf. Josephus, *Ant.* xviii. 28, and see *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Classical Sites*, ed. Richard Stillwell (Princeton, 1976), s.v. Paneas (p. 670); the site had not been excavated at the time of publication of this volume.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jerome, *Commentaria in Ezechielem*, viii. 27.19 (*CCSL* lxxv. 374 = *PL* xxv. 258). Dan was generally reckoned to be both the name of one of the springs of the Jordan, and the name of a place a little to the west of Paneas, or another name for Paneas itself.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 3 Kgs. (1 Kgs.) 12: 29.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Josephus, *Bell.* iii. 506-15. The Greek stade is equal to 606¾ English feet. Phiala is the modern Birket Ram, about four miles south-east of Paneas. Paneum (or 'Pan's grotto'), near Paneas, is the source of the Lesser Jordan; there is not in fact any connection between it and Phiala.

sub Libano. Consimili ebulliendi genere dicit<sup>5</sup> supra Seleuciam ex quodam lacu riuum nasci, quem uocat maiorem<sup>f</sup> Iordanem. Sic ex duobus riuus, ad locum qui dicitur aureum templum Iouis<sup>g</sup> confluentibus, conficitur Iordanis.<sup>1</sup> Sic et Nilum<sup>h</sup> ex paradiso natum, et absortum, sub Athlante nasci diximus.<sup>6</sup>

Sane mare Galilee<sup>7</sup> lacus est, qui fit Iordane influente; et dicitur mare, cum sit aqua dulcis, ydiomate Hebreorum, qui omnem aquarum collectionem *tharsis*, id est mare, uocant. Dicitur autem Galilee quia preterfluit Galileam, et quandoque mare Tyberiadis, quia ciuitas hec famosa illi imminet; sed et stagnum Ienesareth ex accidenti dicitur: quandoque enim, crispantibus undis, generat ex se auram; extenditurque .cxl. stadiis in longitudine et quadraginta in latitudine. Dicit tamen Iosephus<sup>8</sup> eam<sup>i</sup><sup>9</sup> sic dictam<sup>j</sup> a modica regione Genesara quam preterfluit, quam etiam dicit admirabilem: nam tota diuersissimi<sup>k</sup> generis arbustis consita, nulli eorum ubertatem suam negat aut temperiem. Sunt illic nuces que maxime frigoribus gaudent; sunt et palme quas nutrit calor estiuus; sunt ficus et oleae quibus aura mollior est destinata: ut<sup>l</sup> quasi repugnancia bona contentione<sup>m</sup> terre studio foueantur. Hanc dicit Iosephus irrigari fonte quem nominat<sup>n</sup> Capharnaum,<sup>10</sup> quem plerique uenam esse Nili opinantur, quia coracinum piscem<sup>11</sup> generat, nusquam preter Nilum repertum.<sup>7</sup>

### liii. De signis que apparuerunt in morte Iulii Cesaris<sup>a</sup>

Inter mundo miranda, uice digressionis, signa que apparuerunt in morte Iulii Cesaris annectere dignum duxi, ut habeant deliciose aures

<sup>f</sup> maiorem *MSS*; minorem *Comestor*      <sup>g</sup> aureum templum Iouis *MSS and Comestor*; aurei templum bouis *Josephus*      <sup>h</sup> Nilum *supplied by author N*  
<sup>i</sup> eam *MSS*; eum *Comestor*      <sup>j</sup> dictam *MSS*; dictum *Comestor*      <sup>k</sup> diuersissimi *ACI and Comestor*; diuersissimis *NXQ*      <sup>l</sup> ut *supplied by author N*  
<sup>m</sup> contentione *Comestor*; contentioso *Nß*; contencio se *A*      <sup>n</sup> quem nominat *MSS*;  
qui cadit in *Comestor*

<sup>a</sup> que . . . Cesaris] in morte Iulii Cesaris apparentibus *CXQ*

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Josephus, *Bell.* iv. 2–5; Josephus, and the *Comestor*, actually say that it is the Lesser, not the Greater, Jordan which is fed by the springs from above Seleucia. There was some confusion, even in Josephus, as to whether the lesser and greater rivers were from two sources, or were the river above and below the Sea of Galilee respectively. The ‘golden temple of Jupiter’, here taken over from the *Comestor*, is a corruption of the ‘temple of the golden calf’ in Josephus (see apparatus).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Otia*, i. 11, and ii. 3 (pp. 182–3).

<sup>7–7</sup> lacus . . . preter Nilum repertum] Cf. *Comestor*, *Evan.*, c. 40 (*PL* cxcviii. 1560–1).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Josephus, *Bell.* iii. 516–20. The plain of Gennesaret is north-west of the lake, between Capernaum and Magdala.

Josephus calls the spring beneath Lebanon Paneum. He says<sup>5</sup> that the stream which he calls the Greater Jordan bubbles up in a similar way, having its source in a lake above Seleucia. Thus the Jordan is formed from the two streams flowing into each other near the place called the Golden Temple of Jupiter.<sup>1</sup> We have already described how the Nile similarly has its source in paradise but then sinks back into the earth, to emerge again near Atlas.<sup>6</sup>

The Sea of Galilee<sup>7</sup> is in fact a lake, which is produced by the Jordan flowing into it. It is called a sea, even though the water is sweet, in accordance with Hebrew usage: they call any collection of water a *tharsis*, that is, a sea. It is called the Sea of Galilee because it washes against Galilee, or sometimes the Sea of Tiberias, because this famous city overlooks it; it is also called the Lake of Gennesaret from the circumstance that every so often the waves roughen and it generates a breeze from itself (*generat ex se auram*). It is a hundred and forty stades long, and forty across. Josephus,<sup>8</sup> however, says that it<sup>9</sup> takes its name from the little region of Gennesaret against which it washes. He also says that this region is a source of wonder, for it is planted throughout with many different kinds of trees, and it does not deny its richness or temperateness to any one of them. There are nut-trees there which thrive especially in a cold climate; there are also palm-trees which flourish in summer heat; there are fig-trees and olive-trees for which a milder atmosphere is prescribed: so that by a happy rivalry, things that would seem to be incompatible are fostered by the kindness of the land. Josephus says that it is watered by a spring which he calls Capernaum;<sup>10</sup> many are of the opinion that this is a tributary of the Nile, because it produces the coracin fish,<sup>11</sup> which is found nowhere apart from the Nile.<sup>7</sup>

### 53. The Signs which Appeared on the Death of Julius Caesar

In the course of describing the things that cause wonder to the world, I have deemed it fitting to add by way of a digression the signs which

<sup>9</sup> The feminine *eam* would seem to be a mistake; the *Comestor* has *eum*, presumably referring to *lacus* a few lines above.

<sup>10</sup> Gervase's version here suggests a direct acquaintance with Josephus, who says that the spring is called Capernaum, whereas according to the *Comestor* it ‘falls down to Capernaum’ (see apparatus).

<sup>11</sup> The coracin, so-called because of its raven-black colour (from *κόραξ*, a raven), resembled an eel (cf. Martial, *Epigrammata*, xiii. 85; Pliny, *Hist. nat.* ix. 24. 57 and ix. 32. 68).

quod de tanto principe hauriant et corda principum de miranda nouitate reddantur attonita. <sup>1</sup>Exacto siquidem regno per reges septem, annis .ccxl., post sub<sup>b</sup> consulibus annis .cccclxiii., obiit Cesar, anno etatis sue quinquagesimo nono; <sup>2</sup> corpusque eius pro rostris combustum est, ac in urna<sup>d</sup> deaurata super Iuliam petram Numidici lapidis ad altitudinem uiginti pedum reconditum, <sup>1</sup> ut supra, decisione secunda, titulo *De situ Rome*, <sup>3</sup> diximus. <sup>4</sup>Centesimo igitur die ante mortem eius, fulmen cecidit iuxta statuam ipsius in foro, et de nomine eius superscripto C litteram capitalem abrasit. Nocte precedente diem obitus, fenestre thalami eius cum tanto strepitu sunt aperte ut, exiliens stratis, ruituram domum existimaret. Eadem die, cum iret in Capitolium, date sunt ei littere indices mortis imminentes; que, dum referretur a<sup>e</sup> Capitolio stillis confossus, <sup>f</sup> inuente sunt in eius manu, nondum solute. Die sequente apparuerunt tres soles in oriente, qui paulatim in unum corpus solare coacti sunt, significantes quod dominium Lucii Antonii<sup>g</sup> <sup>5</sup> et Marci Antonii et<sup>h</sup> |

f. 68<sup>v</sup> Augusti in monarchiam rediret; uel potius quod noticia trini Dei et unius toti orbi notificanda ueniebat. Bos etiam ad arantem in hec uerba prorupit, dicens in breui magis desituros<sup>6</sup> homines quam frumenta.<sup>4</sup>

liv. *De ligno dominice<sup>a</sup> crucis et piscina probatica*

Tradit antiquitas quod in edificatione templi inuentum est lignum nulli usui commodum in ipsius templi constructione:<sup>b</sup> aut enim

<sup>b</sup> sub supplied by author N      <sup>c</sup> nono MSS; sexto Comestor      <sup>d</sup> urna supplied by author N; in urna deaurata om. Comestor  
<sup>e</sup> a I (presumably a scribal correction); in NACXQ; a Capitolio om. Comestor      <sup>f</sup> stillis confossus MSS; occisus Comestor  
<sup>g</sup> Lucii Antonii MSS; Marci Lepidi Comestor      <sup>h</sup> et [f. 68<sup>v</sup>] (Marci Antonii del.) et N  
<sup>a</sup> dominice om. CXQ      <sup>b</sup> constructone N

<sup>1-1</sup> Exacto . . . uiginti pedum reconditum] Cf. Comestor, *Libri Mach.*, c. 16 (PL cxcviii. 1531-2).

<sup>2</sup> The Comestor correctly says that Caesar died in his fifty-sixth year; cf. Suetonius, *Divus Julius*, c. 88.

<sup>3</sup> *Otia*, ii. 8, pp. 268-9.

<sup>4-4</sup> Centesimo . . . homines quam frumenta] Cf. Comestor, loc. cit. The portents of Caesar's death received treatment at the hand of many authors, including Cicero, Virgil, Ovid, Pliny, Plutarch, and Suetonius. The thunderbolt which struck the letter C from the inscription was in fact a portent of the death of Augustus, not Julius Caesar, according to Suetonius (*Divus Augustus*, c. 97). For the other portents mentioned here, cf. Suetonius,

appeared on the death of Julius Caesar, in order that my discerning listener may derive some profit from so great a ruler, and the hearts of princes may be rendered dumbfounded at an unprecedented marvel. Well then, <sup>1</sup>the kingdom of Rome came to an end after two hundred and forty years under seven kings, and after four hundred and sixty-four years under the rule of consuls, Caesar died, in the fifty-ninth year of his life.<sup>2</sup> His body was burnt before the rostra, and the ashes were deposited in a gilded urn set on top of the Julian rock, a block of Numidian stone twenty feet high,<sup>1</sup> as we said above, in Book II, in the chapter *The Topography of Rome*.<sup>3</sup> <sup>4</sup>So then, on the hundredth day before his death, a thunderbolt fell close to his statue in the forum, and erased the first letter, C, from his name in the inscription. On the night preceding the day of his death, his bedroom windows were flung open with such a crash that he jumped out of bed, believing that the house was about to fall down. On the day itself, when he was on his way to the Capitol, a letter was given to him warning of his impending death; when he was being carried back from the Capitol, riddled with stab-wounds, it was found in his hand, still unopened. On the following day three suns appeared in the east, but little by little they were brought together into one solar body, signifying that the rule of Lucius Antonius,<sup>5</sup> Marcus Antonius, and Augustus would be reduced to a monarchy; or rather, that knowledge of the triune God was arriving, to be made known to the whole world. Also an ox burst into speech, telling the ploughman that soon they would be putting men in the ground<sup>6</sup> rather than corn.<sup>4</sup>

54. *The Wood of the Lord's Cross and the Sheep-Pool*

There is an ancient tradition that, in the building of the temple, a piece of wood was found which was suited to no purpose in the construction of the temple itself, for it was either too short or too long

*Divus Julius*, c. 81; Julius Obsequens, *Liber prodigiorum*, ed. O. Rossbach (Leipzig, 1910), p. 178; see also S. Weinstock, *Divus Julius* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 342-6.

<sup>5</sup> The third member of the triumvirate, besides Mark Antony and Octavian (Augustus), was M. Aemilius Lepidus; he is correctly named by the Comestor (see apparatus). Lucius Antonius (Mark Antony's younger brother) was consul in 41 BC, but never a triumvir.

<sup>6</sup> The future participle of the rare verb *desero*, to sow or plant deeply.

breuius erat aut longius quam requirebatur. <sup>1</sup>Veniens ergo regina Saba, uidit in spiritu, in domo saltus que Nerota<sup>c 2</sup> dicebatur, lignum dominice crucis, et nunciauit Salomoni, cum iam recessisset ab eo, quod in eo moreretur quidam, pro quo occiso perirent Iudei, perderentque locum et gentem. Timens Salomon effodit illud in terra, ubi post facta est probatica piscina. Appropinquante enim tempore Christi superenatauit, quasi prenuncians Christum; et exinde cepit, ut dicunt, mocio que fiebat angelo descendente, et qui primus languens<sup>d</sup> in aquam descendebat, sanus fiebat a quacumque infirmitate.<sup>1</sup> Et hoc lignum asserunt esse crucem Domini.<sup>3</sup> (Sed et alii dicunt Adam de paradiso tulisse pomum uel surculum ligni uetiti, ex cuius semente fuit crux,<sup>4</sup> ut unde mors oriebatur, inde uita resurgeret,<sup>5</sup> ut legitur super Matheum in glosa.) Sed hec<sup>e</sup> auctorem<sup>f</sup> certum<sup>g</sup> non habent quo certum sit quo tempore mocio ceperit, aut

<sup>c</sup> Nethota Comestor    <sup>d</sup> langues N    <sup>e</sup> Sed hec] Sane XQ    <sup>f</sup> actorem  
N    <sup>g</sup> certum om. XQ

<sup>1-1</sup> Veniens . . . a quacumque infirmitate] Cf. Comestor, *Evan.*, c. 81 (PL cxcviii. 1579); 3 Kgs. (1 Kgs.) 10: 1-13 and 7: 2-8; John 5: 2-4.

Legends concerning the history of the wood of the cross before the time of Christ seem to have been unknown before the twelfth century, but evolved very rapidly in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries from simple beginnings to a long and elaborate history. Their development was traced by W. Meyer in 'Die Geschichte des Kreuzholzes vor Christus', *Abhandlungen der Philosophisch-Philologischen Classe der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, xvi (2) (Munich, 1882), 101-65; see also A. Mussafia, 'Sulla leggenda del legno della croce', *Sitzungsberichte der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, lxiii (Vienna, 1870), 165-216; and on the iconographical tradition, J.-L. Herr, 'La Reine de Saba et le bois de la croix', *Revue Archéologique*, 4th series, xxiii (1914), 1-31.

The legend as it appears in the *Historia scholastica* is in its earliest form, the first of the nine versions distinguished by Meyer; in this version the wood is traced back to the time of Solomon, or David at the earliest. The information in Gervase's first sentence, that the wood could not be used in the building of the temple, is found in Meyer's second and third versions, represented by Godfrey of Viterbo and Johannes Beleth; these both take the story back to paradise, but do not mention the tree of knowledge.

Gervase is the earliest known source of the fourth version, which emerges in the sentence in parentheses, interrupting his borrowing from the Comestor. The distinguishing feature of this version is that the wood of the cross is said to have been derived ultimately from the tree of knowledge. This tree had long been seen as a type of the cross (e.g. Venantius Fortunatus: 'ipse lignum tunc notauit, damna ligni ut solueret', from the hymn 'Pange, lingua, gloriosi'); but the legend of the prehistory of the cross now asserted that the wood was actually derived from it. In *Otia*, iii. 105, where Gervase presents this version again, he attributes it to the Greeks; cf. *Legenda aurea*, c. 68; *Mandeville's Travels*, i. 8 and ii. 234.

The tree of knowledge tended to be identified with the tree of life, forming a single significant tree, such as is found in other myths of paradise (e.g. the Yggdrasil of Norse mythology). For a study of the Christian tree, see E. S. Greenhill, 'The Child in the Tree', *Traditio*, x (1954), 323-71. The tree of life also lent itself to be seen as a type of the cross

for what was required. <sup>1</sup>Then when the queen of Sheba came, she saw in the spirit, in the house of the forest which was called Nechota,<sup>2</sup> the wood of the Lord's cross; and she sent word to Solomon, after she had left him, that someone would die on it, and that in retribution for his murder the Jews would perish, and lose their country and their people. Solomon was afraid, and buried that piece of wood in the ground, on the spot where the sheep-pool later came to be built. Then when the time of Christ was drawing near, it floated up to the surface, as if to announce his coming; and it was then, so they say, that the troubling of the water began: this used to occur when an angel went down into it, and the first invalid to step down into the troubled water was made whole from whatever disease he had.<sup>1</sup> And they say that this piece of wood became the Lord's cross.<sup>3</sup> (But others say that Adam took an apple, or shoot, of the forbidden tree from paradise; he planted it, and from it grew the tree from which the cross was made,<sup>4</sup> so that, as death came from that tree, so too life should be restored from it,<sup>5</sup> as one reads in the gloss on Matthew.) But there is no reliable authority for these things, to establish when the troubling of the water began or at what hour of the day it used to occur; rather, the

(e.g. Honorius, *Speculum ecclesiae* (PL clxxii. 943): 'Porro lignum sancta crux uitae intellegitur, de qua fructus aeternae uitae tollitur'), and was likewise subsequently identified with the tree from which the cross was derived.

Liebrecht (p. 125) mentions another version of the legend, according to which God pulled up the tree of knowledge after the Fall and flung it over the wall of paradise. A thousand years later Abraham found it and planted it in his garden, whereupon a voice from heaven proclaimed that the Saviour would be crucified on the wood of that tree. This is Meyer's fifth version (p. 120); and further variations occur in the remaining four versions. In its developed form the legend enjoyed great popularity in vernacular redactions.

<sup>2</sup> Jacques Barrière identified this as a Hebrew word contained within the expression *bait-nechotah*, found in 4 Kgs. (2 Kgs) 20: 13 and Isa. 39: 2, meaning literally 'treasure-house'. Jerome, however, translated it as 'domum aromatum' or 'cellam aromatum' (D.V.: 'the house of his aromatical spices'), and indeed in both the passages in which the word occurs, the building is said to contain spices and precious ointments. According to an earlier chapter of the *Historia scholastica*, the lower part of the house of the forest was called *nephota* (*sic*), 'id est pigmentaria, in qua reponebantur aromata et pigmenta ad usus templi et domus regiae' ('that is, the spicery, in which the perfumes and spices for use in the temple and the royal palace were stored') (*III Reg.*, c. 22, PL cxcviii. 1367). Barrière (*Contribution*, pp. 53-4) suggests that two different buildings are here being confused; alternatively, it may be that the word *nechota* was deemed applicable to both.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Comestor, *III Reg.*, c. 26 (PL cxcviii. 1370).

<sup>4</sup> See n. 1 above, and iii. 105.

<sup>5</sup> This is a liturgical text, which is found for instance in the Preface of the mass 'de sancta Cruce' in Alcuin's *Liber sacramentorum*, c. 6 (PL ci. 454); cf. Innocent III, *Sermones de tempore*, i (PL ccxvii. 317).



qua temporis hora fiebat; quin potius continuus languentium aduentus incertitudinem hore monstrat.<sup>h 6</sup>

lv. *De uermiculo*<sup>a</sup>

In regno Arelatensi<sup>b</sup> et confinio maritimo est arbor, cuius sarcina precium habet duodecim nummorum Mergoriensium;<sup>1</sup> eius fructus in flore precium facit quinquaginta librarum; eius cortex ad honus bestie precium habet quinque solidorum. Vermiculus<sup>2</sup> hic est, quo ununtur<sup>c 3</sup> preciosissimi regum panni, siue serici ut examiti,<sup>d 4</sup> siue lanei ut scarlata;<sup>5</sup> et est mirandum quod nulla uestis linea colorem uermiculatum recipit, sed sola uestis que ex uiuo animanteque uel quouis animato decerpitur. Vermiculus autem ex arbore ad modum ilicis et quantitatem dumi,<sup>e</sup> pungitiua folia habente, prodit, ad pedem nodulum faciens mollem, ad formam ciceris,<sup>f</sup> aquosum; et cum exterius colorem habeat nebule et roris coagulati, interius rubet. Et cum ungue magisterialiter decerptus ne, tenui rupta pellicula, humor inclusus effluat, postquam exsiccat, corio includitur: cum enim tempus solstitii estiuu aduenerit, ex se ipso uermiculos generat, et nisi coriis subtiliter consutis includerentur, omnes fugerent aut in nihilum euanescerent. Hinc est quod uermiculus nominatur, propter dissolutionem quam in uermes facile facit, ex natura roris Madialis a quo

<sup>h</sup> monstrat *N*

<sup>a</sup> De uermiculo] De arbore uermiculi *CXQ*, De uermiculi arbore *I* <sup>b</sup> Aurelatensi *N* <sup>c</sup> ununtur corrected by author from tinguntur *N*; tinguntur *ACβ*  
<sup>d</sup> exaniiti *N* <sup>e</sup> dumi supplied by author(?) *N* <sup>f</sup> ciceris *N*

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Comestor, *Evan.* c. 81 (*PL* cxcviii. 1579). Gervase seems to be combining two different sections of his source here. After recounting the tradition concerning the queen of Sheba, the Comestor comments: 'Sed hoc non est authenticum.' Earlier, he has said concerning the disturbing of the sheep-pool: 'De hac motione, incertum est quando coeperit. Quod autem incertum esset, quando moveri debebat, inde perpenditur, quod languidi semper erant ibi, qui ad certam horam convenirent tantum si sciretur' ('Concerning this troubling, it is uncertain when it began. That it was uncertain when the water was due to be troubled is deduced from the fact that the sick were always there; they would have assembled only at the time appointed if they had known it').

<sup>1</sup> The 'monnaie melgrienne' produced by the counts of Melgueil from the early tenth century was the most widely-used coinage of the French Midi: see A. Engel and R. Serrure, *Traité de numismatique du Moyen Age* (Paris, 1894), ii. 456–7; J.-P. Poly, *La Provence et la société féodale 870–1166: Contribution à l'étude des structures dites féodales dans le Midi* (Paris, 1976), pp. 228 and 232 f. The value of the coins varied greatly, but the point here is that the tree was most highly prized for its 'berries'.

continuous presence of the sick is evidence of the uncertainty of the hour.<sup>6</sup>

55. *Vermilion*

In the kingdom of Arles, on the coastal strip, there is found a tree, whose timber fetches the price of twelve Melgoriensian pence<sup>1</sup> per load; its fruit when it is ripe commands the sum of fifty pounds; its bark fetches the price of five shillings for as much as a pack-animal can carry. This is the kermes,<sup>2</sup> with which the costliest clothes of kings are dyed,<sup>3</sup> whether they are silken like samite,<sup>4</sup> or woollen like scarlet;<sup>5</sup> it is a remarkable fact that no linen cloth absorbs the colour of vermilion, but only cloth which is taken from a living creature or from one which has lived. Now the kermes comes from a tree shaped like an ilex, the size of a thorn-bush, with prickly leaves. At the foot of its trunk it produces a soft, moist nodule, in the shape of a chick-pea; on the outside it has the colour of mist and condensed dew, but on the inside it is red. It is gathered with a finger-nail by skilled workers, taking care lest the delicate membrane should burst and the fluid contained in it run out; then, once it has dried out, it is enclosed in a skin: for when the season of the summer solstice has arrived, it generates little worms from itself, and unless they were confined in finely-stitched skins, they would all escape or vanish into nothingness. It is for this reason that vermilion is called *uermiculus* ('little worm'), because it readily undergoes dissolution into worms, owing to the nature of the May dew from which it is generated; and so it is

<sup>2</sup> i.e. the kermes oak (*Quercus coccifera*), on which the kermes lives. The kermes is 'the pregnant female of the insect *Coccus ilicis*, formerly supposed to be a berry; gathered in large quantities from a species of evergreen oak in S. Europe and N. Africa, for use in dyeing, and formerly in medicine; the red dye-stuff consisting of the dried bodies of these insects' (*OED*). A scribal note in the margin of *Q* reads: 'Prouinciales hanc granam uulgariter appellant *lo uermelli*': i.e. vermilion. From the end of the eleventh century a monopoly over the vermilion-trade enriched the land-owners and traders of the region; see Duchesne, *Livre*, p. 162, n. 152.

<sup>3</sup> With regard to the author's correction of *tinguntur* to *unguntur*, Annie Duchesne (*Livre*, p. 163, n. 153) records an observation by M. Pastoureau that: 'ce dernier verbe a le sens de teindre dans le vocabulaire des métiers de la ganterie et de la parfumerie, la fin du Moyen Age,' and suggests that the word was prompted by the association of vermilion with luxury goods.

<sup>4</sup> Samite was a rich silk fabric, sometimes interwoven with gold.

<sup>5</sup> The word scarlet in medieval usage denoted rich cloth, often but not necessarily red.



generatur; unde et illo tantum mense colligitur. Arbor autem uermiculum generans uulgo *auals*<sup>6</sup> nuncupatur.

Ivi. *De serico et unde et qualiter prodeat*<sup>a</sup>

Nunc annectamus de natura bombycis,<sup>1</sup> que non minus erit admiranda. Est enim a sui principio quasi semen sinapis minutissimum, cumque tempus aduenit, panniculis inclusum, coactum, illud semen in<sup>b</sup> sinu dominarum ac uirginum tenetur; beneficio caloris uiuificatum, foliis mori superponitur.<sup>c</sup> Sicque mira insitaque nature celeritate folia rodit, et super tabulam uermiculi extensi nutrimento foliorum mori in breui crescunt ad grossorum uermium quantitatem. Quid plura? Cum tempus operandi aduenit, globo serico<sup>d</sup> continuantes ieiunium sericum ex se conficiunt, et post pauca in ipso,<sup>e</sup> ad instar papilionum alati et in aeris libertatem iam recipiendi, globum penetrant quem fecerunt; et dum auolare<sup>f</sup> parant, comprehensi<sup>g</sup> masculi feminis miscentur, qui tamdiu caudatim copulati in sue libidinis estu sine omni cibo uiuunt donec expirent, et sic femina f. 69<sup>r</sup> semen exserit cum morte. | Proiectis igitur parentum bustis, grana generationis<sup>h</sup> colliguntur et, in entecis reposita, in uere eo quo premisimus ordine uiuificantur. Color autem serici natiuus croceus est, et cum decoquitur albissimum recipit candorem, facile cuiusuis coloris susceptibilis per adoptionem.

<sup>a</sup> De . . . prodeat] De bombycibus qui faciunt sericum XQ; De bombycibus que faciunt sericum uocatis mainetis C; De bombycibus serico et unde et qualiter prodeat I <sup>b</sup> in supplied by author (?) N <sup>c</sup> supponitur β <sup>d</sup> globo serico supplied by author N; om. XQ <sup>e</sup> in ipso] tempore X, tempora Q <sup>f</sup> auolare N <sup>g</sup> compensi N <sup>h</sup> generationis supplied by author N

<sup>6</sup> In *Lou Tresor dou Felibrige ou Dictionnaire Provençal-Français* (Paris, 1878), Frédéric Mistral gives the kermes oak the names of 'avaus, avausse, abals, agaus' (s.v. *Avaus* (quercus coccifera)).

<sup>1</sup> This description of the life-cycle of the silkworm (*Bombyx mori*) may be compared with that supplied by Neckam in his *De naturis rerum* (ii. 164). The native Chinese

only gathered in that month. The tree which produces vermilion is called *avals*<sup>6</sup> by the local people.

56. *Silk: Where it Comes From, and How it is Produced*

Let us now go on to treat of the nature of the silkworm,<sup>1</sup> which will prove no less a cause of wonder. At the beginning of its life-cycle it resembles a tiny mustard-seed. When the time comes, that seed is placed in little cloths, wrapped up, and kept in the bosom of ladies and girls; the beneficial effect of the warmth brings it to life, and it is then laid on the leaves of a mulberry tree. And so, with the remarkable swiftness that is characteristic of it, it devours the leaves; the little grubs, spread out over a board, soon grow on the nourishment of those mulberry leaves to the size of fat worms. Why draw out my account? When the time comes for them to do their work, they entirely stop eating, and produce silk from themselves to form a silken cocoon; after spending a little time inside it, they break out of the cocoon which they made, winged like butterflies and now ready to enjoy the freedom of the air. But while they are preparing to fly off, the males are seized in an embrace by the females and copulate with them, living with their hindparts joined together in the heat of their desire, without any food, all the time until they expire; and so the female deposits the seed as she dies. The carcasses of the parents are then swept away, and the seeds of new life are gathered up and stored in boxes; in the spring they are brought to life in the manner which we described above. The natural colour of silk is saffron, but when it is boiled it takes on a pure white sheen, and readily accepts any other colour by adoption.

silkworm was introduced to the west by two Persian monks, at the behest of the emperor Justinian. 'They effected [this] by concealing the eggs of the silkworm in a hollow cane. From the precious contents of that bamboo tube, brought to Constantinople about the year 550, were produced all the races and varieties of silkworm which stocked and supplied the western world for more than twelve hundred years' (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edn. (Cambridge, 1911), s.v. *Silk*, xxv. 97). The cocoon consists of one continuous white or yellow silk thread, averaging about 1,000 yards in length.

lvii. *De domina<sup>a</sup> castri de<sup>b</sup> Esperuer<sup>c,d</sup>*<sup>1</sup>

Frequens est ut angeli Satane in angelos lucis se transforment<sup>2</sup> et in humanis mentibus aliquid diabolice inmissionis nutriant. Ad istorum agnitionem<sup>e</sup> quiddam admiratione dignissimum subtexui, quod a uiris probatissime ac sincere religionis accepi.

Erat in regni Arelatensis finibus, episcopatu Valentino, castrum Esperuer<sup>f</sup> nomine. Huius castri domina in assiduam consuetudinem<sup>g</sup> duxerat statim inter missarum sollempnia post euangelium ecclesiam egredi;<sup>h</sup> nec enim poterat consecrationem dominici corporis presentialiter sustinere. Cum per multos annos id compertum uir eius, dominus castri, habuisset, nec tante presumptionis causam sedulus inuestigator inuenisset, uno aliquo die sollempni, finito ewangelio, egrediens domina per uirum et clientulos eius inuita ac renitens detinetur; statimque sacerdote uerba consecratoria proferente, domina spiritu diabolico leuata auolat, partemque capelle secum in precipitium ducens, ulterius in partibus illis uisa non est. Sed et pars turris cui capella initebatur adhuc superstes rerum fert testimonium.<sup>3</sup>

Hinc tibi, felix Auguste, doctrina sumenda est circa eos qui circa diuina sacramenta deuoti sunt, et contra illos qui fornicantur a Deo,<sup>i4</sup> contempnentes sacramenta per manus nostri temporis sacerdotum ministrata, quasi ad ueritatem uirtutemque sacramentorum dignitas aut indignitas operetur ministrancium. Profecto heretici sunt hii, qui solem contempnunt transeuntem per immunda loca.<sup>5</sup> Quisquis ergo ad baptismum uenit per fidem, Deo saltem decimam sui laboris

<sup>a</sup> domina supplied by author N      <sup>b</sup> de supplied by author at end of line; also written by scribe on next line N; om. CXQ      <sup>c</sup> Esperuer N      <sup>d</sup> et eius exitu add. after Esperuer CXQ      <sup>e</sup> anitionem N      <sup>f</sup> Esperuer N      <sup>g</sup> consuetudinem N      <sup>h</sup> ingredi XQ      <sup>i</sup> a Deo N; adeo ACβ

<sup>1</sup> L'Éparvier or L'Épervier, near Valence.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. 11: 14.

<sup>3</sup> This tale is similar to a family legend of the Plantagenets, as it occurs in the metrical romance *Richard Coer de Lion*, vv. 197–234 (ed. K. Brunner, *Wiener Beiträge*, xlii (1913), 90–1): Richard's mother is said to have been a demon, who flies off through the roof of the church when King Henry attempts to detain her to witness the elevation of the host; cf. Gerald of Wales, *De principis instructione*, iii. 27, and Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, iii. 12. For references to other similar stories, see Liebrecht, p. 126.

The lady of L'Éparvier may also be compared with Mélusine, whose story is told in its earliest form by Gervase (i. 15). Elements of both are found in a story told by Walter Map (*De nugis narialium*, iv. 9). Walter records a number of other tales concerning the dealings of supernatural women with mortal men (ii. 11–13 and iv. 10–11). See also Marie de France, *Lai de Lanval* (*Lais*, pp. 58–74); Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum naturale*, ii. 126–7; and *Gesta Romanorum*, c. 160 (taken from this chapter).

Gervase uses this story as an *exemplum* illustrating the importance of assiduous

57. *The Lady of the Castle of L'Éparvier*<sup>1</sup>

It often happens that the angels of Satan transform themselves into angels of light,<sup>2</sup> and foster something of diabolical origin in human minds. To aid their recognition, I have recorded below something richly deserving to be marvelled at, which I heard from men of completely proven and sincere religion.

There was, in the confines of the kingdom of Arles, in the diocese of Valence, a castle called L'Éparvier. The lady of this castle had formed an unfailing habit of leaving the church in the middle of the celebration of mass, immediately after the gospel: for she could not bear to be present at the consecration of the Lord's body. Her husband, the lord of the castle, had been aware of this for many years, but in spite of persistent questioning he had not discovered the reason for such great effrontery. Then one feast-day, at the end of the gospel, when the lady was on her way out she was held back, unwilling and struggling, by her husband and his retainers. Straightaway, as the priest pronounced the words of consecration, the lady was carried off by a diabolical spirit and flew away, taking part of the chapel with her, so that it fell down; and she was seen no more in those parts. But part of the tower which buttressed the chapel is still standing, to bear witness to these events.<sup>3</sup>

From this, happy Augustus, you should take instruction, learning to favour people who are devoted to the divine sacraments, while shunning those who commit fornication against God<sup>4</sup> and despise the sacraments administered at the hands of the priests of our time, as if the worthiness or unworthiness of the ministers decided the validity and effectiveness of the sacraments. They are heretics indeed, these people who despise the sun when it passes through unclean places.<sup>5</sup> Therefore whoever has undergone baptism should, as a faithful Christian, offer to God at least a tenth of his labour and

attendance at mass. In the exhortation which follows he is reacting to the antisacerdotalism and heresy that were rife in southern France, as well as inculcating in the emperor a proper respect for the Church. For a detailed study of this chapter, see R. Chanaud, 'Le Chevalier, la fée et l'hérétique: Une ancêtre valentinoise de Mélusine, la dame du château de l'Éparvier', *Le Monde Alpin et Rhodanien*, xiii (1985), 31–54.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ps. 72 (73): 27; Hos. 4: 12.

<sup>5</sup> This image was used by the mid-twelfth century master Roland to illustrate the point that if a host is consumed unworthily (e.g. by a mouse), the body of Christ suffers no injury (*Die Sentenzen Rolands nachmals Papstes Alexander III*, ed. P. F. A. M. Gietl (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1891), p. 235).

offerat primiciasque cogitationis, secundum illud: 'Primum querite regnum Dei';<sup>6</sup> decimasque soluat sue diete. Saltem dum corpus consecratur dominicum et offertur pro nobis ad Deum<sup>j</sup> Patrem, unica hora stet cum Christo in cruce pro nobis pendente: oret cum orante, uigilet cum uigilante,<sup>7</sup> dum pro ipso patrociniatur eius aduocatus, a iudicis presentia non recedat. In ecclesia nichil preter orandum meditetur, nichil<sup>k</sup> loquatur, nichil uagis oculis intueatur. Non sit solo euangelio contentus, non oratione, non epistola, non canticis: hec enim ad illud summum preambula sunt, et non sunt illud quod sequitur, quod queritur, et quod creditur. Omnis consummationis finis querendus est. Cum enim Deus suos dilexisset, in finem dilexit illos:<sup>8</sup> finis, non pugna, coronat.

Nil credas actum cum quid superesset<sup>l</sup> agendum.<sup>9</sup>

Si cum essenio<sup>10</sup> nuncius<sup>m</sup> domini uenisti ut offeras quod mittitur,<sup>11</sup> numquid dicto salutationis uerbo et proposita esenii dominici<sup>n</sup> qualitate, ipso quod mittitur non porrecto ac responso gratiarum non audito, redibis prudenter? Profecto offerre uenis per orationem quod sacerdos offert per communicationem: utquid esenio non porrecto summo Patri refugisti? Hoc inquam esenium recte dixerim ab esu. Hic enim est<sup>o</sup> paschalis transitus ad esum agni<sup>12</sup> mysticum per Iesum ordinatus. Transit enim per medium castrorum nostrorum agnus qui tollit peccata mundi.<sup>13</sup> Transit enim per os sacerdotis ita quod os non comminuitur ex eo;<sup>14</sup> et sicut in uerbis consecratoriis a sinu Patris mittitur ut descendat ad manus sacerdotis, ita in communicatione redit et ascendit per hos sacerdotale ad Deum Patrem, nostras et a nobis et pro nobis factas preces in eius conspectum oblaturus. Hinc est quod ab ipso Domino dicitur:<sup>p</sup> 'Hoc facite in meam commemorationem';<sup>15</sup> quocienscumque enim hoc feceritis, mortem Domini annunciabitis donec ueniat.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>j</sup> Dominum *add. before* Deum XI      <sup>k</sup> nichil *supplied by author(?)* N  
<sup>l</sup> superest XQ      <sup>m</sup> nuncius *supplied by author* N      <sup>n</sup> Domini XQ      <sup>o</sup> est enim N      <sup>p</sup> dicitur *om.* XQ

<sup>6</sup> Matt. 6: 33.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Matt. 26: 41; Eph. 6: 18.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. John 13: 1.

<sup>9</sup> The line in Lucan (*Pharsalia*, ii. 657) reads: 'Nil actum credens cum quid superesset agendum.'

<sup>10</sup> *Essenium, encenium* etc. occur as medieval spellings of the word *xenium* (ξένιον), a gift.

<sup>11</sup> The verb *mittitur* ('is sent') continues the image of a gift sent by one's master, but the meaning 'is sacrificed' is also suggested by the context, referring to the mass (*missa*); cf. the penultimate paragraph.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Exod. 12: 4.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. John 1: 29.

the first-fruits of his thoughts, in accordance with the saying: 'Seek first the kingdom of God';<sup>6</sup> and he should render him a tenth of his time each day. At least while the Lord's body is being consecrated and offered on our behalf to God the Father, he should stay just for one hour with Christ hanging on the cross for us: he should pray with him as he prays, and watch with him as he watches;<sup>7</sup> while his advocate is pleading for him, he should not withdraw from the judge's presence. In church he should think of nothing except his prayers, say nothing, and look at nothing, not allowing his eyes to wander. He should not be content with the gospel alone, nor with the prayer, nor with the epistle, nor with the canticles: for these are only the preliminaries leading up to the climax, and they are not the same as what follows, what is desired, and what forms the object of our faith. The complete perfection of consummation is to be sought. For when God loved his own, he loved them to the end:<sup>8</sup> the end, not the battle, brings the crown.

Believe nothing done when anything remains to do.<sup>9</sup>

If you have come as your master's envoy bearing a gift,<sup>10</sup> in order to offer what he has sent,<sup>11</sup> will you be acting wisely if, after speaking the word of greeting and proclaiming the worth of your master's gift, you go away again without having presented what he has sent, or heard the response of gratitude? Surely you come to offer through prayer what the priest offers through communion: so why have you rushed off before the gift has been presented to your Father on high? I have used this word *esenium* for gift advisedly, I assure you, derived as it is from *esus*, or eating. For this is the feast of the Passover, ordained by Jesus for the mystical eating (*esus*) of the Lamb.<sup>12</sup> The Lamb that takes away the sins of the world<sup>13</sup> passes through the midst of our camp. For he passes through the mouth of the priest, in such a way that a bone of him is not broken;<sup>14</sup> and just as during the words of consecration he is sent from the Father's bosom to come down into the priest's hands, so at the communion he returns and goes back up through the priest's mouth to God the Father, to bring into his presence our prayers, offered both by us and for us. This is why the Lord himself says: 'Do this in memory of me';<sup>15</sup> for as often as you do this, you will show the Lord's death, till he comes.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Cf. John: 19: 36; Exod. 12: 46; Num. 9: 12.

<sup>15</sup> Luke 22: 19; 1 Cor. 11: 24; spoken by the priest in the eucharistic canon.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. 11: 26.

f. 69<sup>v</sup> | Quisquis ergo fugis non completa hostia, ipsam que mittitur pro te hostia<sup>a</sup> tibi prodesse posse non credis, quasi uenisses ut imperatorem uisitares, uisque cursoribus eius, recessisses. Pueri Domini sunt et nuncii Gregorius in introitu quem cecinit, Paulus in epistola, propheta in lectione, modulatio gradualis et alleluya. Tuba dominica sonat in ewangelio; uerum inter secreta sacerdotis opera Christus ipse descendit, tanto districtius occurentem te sibi diiudicans quanto secretius te uidet intus, renes et corda perscrutans.<sup>18</sup>

Ecce quod peccato pessime illius muliercule de qua diximus capella corruit, ipsaque inter manus tenentium eam euanuit. Sed et ipsum castrum dirutum saniore consilio sedem mutauit et nomen: translati enim sunt incole ad castrum quod Carpeil noncupatur.

lviii. *De militibus qui apparent<sup>a</sup>*

In Catalonia est rupes in aliquantam planiciem extensa, in cuius summitate circa meridianam horam conspiciuntur milites arma gestantes seseque more militum hastis impellentes. Si uero ad locum quis accesserit, nihil prorsus huiuscemodi<sup>b</sup> rei apparet.<sup>1</sup>

lix. *De Wandlebiria<sup>a</sup>*

In Anglia, ad terminos episcopatus Eliensis, est castrum Cantubricha nomine, infra cuius limites e uicino locus est quem Wandalebiriam dicunt, eo quod illic Wandali, partes Britannie seu Christianorum peremptione uastantes, castra metati sunt. Vbi uero ad monticulum apicem fixere tentoria, planicies in rotundum uallatis circumcluditur, unico ad instar portalis aditu patens ad ingressum.<sup>1</sup> In hanc campi

<sup>a</sup> hostiam C (presumably a scribal correction)

<sup>a</sup> qui apparent] apparentibus CXQ      <sup>b</sup> huiusce Cβ

<sup>a</sup> De Wandlebiria] De milicia Osberti filii Hugonis CXQ

<sup>17</sup> The noun has been attracted into the nominative case, instead of the expected accusative, by the relative clause.      <sup>18</sup> Cf. Ps. 7: 10 (9); Jer. 17: 10; Rev. 2: 23.

<sup>1</sup> For other apparitions which can only be seen from a distance, cf. *Otia*, iii. 41–3. Liebrecht (p. 126) connects these spectral knights with the German legend of the Wild Hunt; other examples of visions and sounds of armed hosts are given by Hartland, *Fairy Tales*, pp. 233–5; cf. also *Otia*, ii. 12, nn. 42 and 43.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Wandlebury Ring on the Gogmagog Hills: see B. R. Hartley, 'The Wandlebury

Therefore if ever you leave when the sacrifice is not complete, you do not believe that the sacrifice<sup>17</sup> which is being offered for you is able to do you good. It is as if you had come to see the emperor, and after seeing his attendants you had gone away again. Gregory in the introit which he has sung, Paul in the epistle, the prophet in the reading, the singing of the gradual, the alleluia—all these are the servants and the messengers of the Lord. The Lord's trumpet sounds in the gospel; but during the mysterious actions of the priest, Christ himself comes down, judging you as you come before him the more severely as he sees the more deeply into your inmost being, trying the hearts and reins.<sup>18</sup>

Let me tell you that as a result of the sin of that wicked woman of whom we spoke, the chapel collapsed, and she herself vanished, slipping through the hands of the people who were holding her. The castle itself was also destroyed, and by a wise decision its site and name were changed: the residents moved to the castle which is called Charpey.

58. *A Vision of Knights*

In Catalonia there is a crag which levels out to form a fair-sized plateau. On its summit at about midday knights are seen wearing armour and charging each other with spears as knights do. But if anyone goes near the place, nothing at all of this kind of thing is visible.<sup>1</sup>

59. *Wandlebury*

In England, near the outskirts of the diocese of Ely, there is a town called Cambridge. In its territory, not far from the town, is a place which they call Wandlebury, because the Vandals pitched camp there when they were laying waste whole areas of Britain, cruelly slaughtering the Christians. Now in the place on top of a slight hill where they set up their tents, a plateau is enclosed by earthworks forming a circle, open for access by a single gate-like approach.<sup>1</sup> There is a

Iron Age Hill-Fort, Excavations of 1955–6', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, 1 (1957), 1–27; G. Goetink, 'The Wandlebury legend and Welsh romance', *ibid.* lxxvii (1988), 105–8, and references; P. H. Reaney, *Place Names of Cambridgeshire* (Cambridge, 1943), pp. 88–9.

planiciem, ab antiquissimis temporibus colitur fama que uulgo testatur, post noctis conticinium,<sup>2</sup> lucente luna, si quis miles ingreditur exclamat: 'Miles contra militem ueniat!', statim ex aduerso miles occurret, qui ad congregandum paratus, concurrentibus equis, aut resistentem deicit aut deicitur. Verum ad cautelam preambulum est quod intra aditus illius septa solus miles habet ingredi, ab exteriore conspectu sociis non artandis.

Ad huius rei fidem, rem gestam et multis uulgo cognitam subiungo, quam ab incolis et indigenis auditui meo subieci. Erat in Britannia maiore, paucis exactis diebus, miles in armis strenuissimus, omnibus uirtutibus dotatus, inter barones paucis secundus in potentia, nullique<sup>b</sup> inferior in probitate, Osbertus Hugonis nominatus.<sup>c</sup> Hic aliquo die castrum memoratum ut hospes ingreditur, et cum in hyemis intemperie post cenam noctu familia diuitis ad focum, ut potentibus moris est, recensendis<sup>d</sup> antiquorum gestis operam daret et aures accomodaret, tandem occurrit ab indigenis pretaxatum mirabile recensitum. Vir ergo strenuus, agens ut quod auribus hauserat rei ipsius experientia probaret, unum de nobilibus armigeris eligit, quo comite locum adiit. Ad ostensum locum loratus miles apropians sonipedem ascendit, dimissoque domicello, campum solus ingreditur. Exclamat miles ut<sup>e</sup> alterum inueniat, et ad uocem ex opposito<sup>f</sup> miles, aut instar<sup>g</sup> militis, celer occurrit, pereque ut uidebatur armatus.

Quid plura? Ostensis clipeis, directis hastis, equi concurrunt, equites impulsibus mutuis concutiuntur, et elusa iam alterius lancea ictuque euanescente per lubricum, Osbertus aduersarium suum potenter impellit ad casum. Cadens, et sine mora resurgens, ut Osbertum per lora conspicit<sup>h</sup> equum ex causa lucratiua abducere,<sup>i</sup> lanceam succutit, et dum eam modo iaculi missilis emittit, femur Osberti ictu atrocissimo transfodit. Ex aduerso miles noster, aut pre

f. 70<sup>f</sup>

gaudio uictorie ictum<sup>j</sup> uulnusque non sentiens, | aut dissimulans, disparente aduersario, campum uictor egreditur. Equum lucratum

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Otia*, ii. 12, n. 42.

<sup>3</sup> Probably the Osbert Fitz Hugh who founded a priory at Westwood early in the reign of Henry II (see D. Knowles and R. N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses* (London, 1971), p. 105); he is also mentioned in charters of 1137-9 and 1140-4 (see *Regesta regum Anglo-Normannorum*, ed. H. A. Cronne and R. H. C. Davis (Oxford, 1968), iii, nos. 437 and 964). In an otherwise faithful reproduction of this story in the *Gesta Romanorum* (c. 1155), the hero is called Albert.

widely-attested report, going back to very ancient times, that if a knight goes onto this plateau at dead of night<sup>2</sup> when there is a moon shining, and shouts: 'Let a knight come against a knight!', a knight will immediately come forward to meet him, ready to engage in combat; their horses charge together, and he either overthrows his opponent or is overthrown himself. But there is a condition to be fulfilled first: the knight has to go through that entrance into the enclosure on his own, though there is nothing to prevent his companions from looking on from outside.

To lend credibility to this matter, I am going to describe an exploit well known to many people, which I got the local inhabitants to recount to me. There was in Great Britain, a little time ago, a knight most gallant in arms, endowed with all the virtues, second to few among the barons in power, and inferior to none in prowess. His name was Osbert Fitz Hugh.<sup>3</sup> One day this man came to stay in the town of which I have spoken. It was the harsh winter-season, and in the evening after dinner the household of his wealthy host gathered round the hearth and, as is the custom among the nobility, turned their attention to recounting the deeds of people of old, or else settled down to listen. In due course the marvel I have mentioned came up, and was described by the residents. And so, being a man of prompt action, and wanting to test by experience the truth of the tale he had listened to so avidly, he chose one of the noble squires, and with this companion set off for the place. When he got near to the designated spot, the knight, clad in mail, mounted his steed; he dismissed the squire, and entered the field alone. He duly shouted to discover the other, and at the sound of his voice a knight, or something like a knight, came rapidly towards him from the other side, similarly armed, as it appeared.

To tell it briefly, they put up their shields, they aimed their spears, their horses charged together, and the riders struck each other with an exchange of blows; at this point Osbert, having avoided the lance of the other knight, whose blow missed its mark thanks to some slippery ground, powerfully knocked his adversary to the ground. He fell, but rose again in a trice, and when he saw Osbert leading his horse away by the reins as the spoils of the fight, he brandished his lance, and hurling it like a javelin he pierced Osbert's thigh with a cruel blow. On his side our knight, either not feeling the blow and the wound in the joy of victory, or pretending not to, emerged from the field victorious, while his adversary disappeared. He handed over to the

armigero tradit, statura grandem, leuitate agilem, et in apparentia pulcherimum.

Regredienti uiro nobili turba familiaris occurrit, euentum miratur, casum deiectionis militis gratum habens et strenuitatem tam illustris baronis commendans. Exiit Osbertus<sup>k</sup> arma militaria, et cum caligas ferreas disalceat, unam sanguinis coagulo uidet oppletam: stupet familia de uulnere, sed dominus indignatur timere. Concurrunt<sup>l</sup> excitus populus, et quos ante sompnus presserat, excrescens admiratio ducit ad uigilandum. Testis triumphis equus, freno non demisso, tenetur ad publicum conspectum expositus, oculis toruis, ceruice erecta, pilo nigro, sella militari totoque substernio itidem<sup>m</sup> nigro. Iam gallicantus aduenerat, et equus saltibus estuans, naribus ebulliens, pedibus terram pulsans, loris<sup>n</sup> quibus tenebatur diruptis, in natiuam se recipit libertatem: fuga facta, insecutus<sup>4</sup> disparuit.<sup>5</sup>

Et nobilis noster id inusti uulneris perpetuum habuit monumentum quod<sup>o</sup> singulis annis, illo eodem noctis renouate momento, uulnus in superficie cura superductum recrudescerebat. Vnde factum est quod post annos paucos miles illustris transfretauit et, sub multiplicata pugnandi contra paganos strenuitate, uitam diuino ministerio, animam Deo reddidit.<sup>6</sup>

#### lx. De cornu potacionis<sup>a, b</sup>

Accedit<sup>1</sup> aliud<sup>f</sup> non minus mirandum in Britannia maiori, satis diuulgatum. Erat in comitatu Claudii Cestrie silua uenatoria, apris, ceruis, omnique uenatione secundum Anglie condicionem copiosa. In huius nemoroso saltu erat monticulus, ad staturam hominis in apicem exurgens, in quem milites aliique uenatores ascendere consueuerunt cum, estu ac siti fatigati, aliquod instancie sue querebant remedium. Verum ex loci ac rei conditione, relictis a longe sociis solus quiuis

<sup>k</sup> Osbertur N      <sup>l</sup> cucurrit N      <sup>m</sup> itidem supplied by author (correcting inde) N; inde CXQ      <sup>n</sup> loris supplied by author N      <sup>o</sup> quos N

<sup>a</sup> potacionis supplied by author N      <sup>b</sup> potacionis] et etiam pincerna C, et pincerna siluestri XQ      <sup>c</sup> aliud supplied by author N

<sup>4</sup> The participle *insecutus* here has a passive sense (cf. *Otia*, iii. 24, n. 8).

<sup>5</sup> As Liebrecht points out (p. 128), the disappearance of a supernatural creature temporarily trapped in our world is a regular phenomenon. On fairy horses, see M. O. Howey, *The Horse in Magic and Myth* (London, 1923), pp. 1-16.

<sup>6</sup> Despite the manner in which Gervase tries to pass the tale off as of fairly recent occurrence, it seems only possible to class it with other Nordic legends of fights between heroes and demons' (Oman, 'The English folklore', p. 9); for other examples of such fights,

squire the horse he had taken as his spoils; it was large in stature, sprightly in movement, and very handsome in appearance.

The household came trooping out to meet the noble gentleman on his return, and marvelled at what had happened. They rejoiced at the fall of the defeated knight, and praised the valour of this baron who had so distinguished himself. Osbert took off his knightly armour, and when he was undoing his iron shoes, he saw that one was full of clotted blood: his friends were shocked at the wound, but the lord disdained to fear. The townsfolk were roused and gathered round; even people who had been sound asleep were soon brought wide-awake by the mounting excitement. The horse, the proof of his triumph, was being held with its bridle unslackened, exposed to public view: its eyes were wild, its neck stiff, its coat black; the knight's saddle and the whole saddle-cloth were likewise black. But as soon as the first cock crowed, the horse, bucking violently, foaming at the nostrils, and pounding the ground with its hooves, broke the reins by which it was held, and regained its native freedom: it took flight and, though pursued,<sup>4</sup> was lost to sight.<sup>5</sup>

Our noble friend had a permanent token of that indelible wound: every year, at that same moment of the night when it came round again, the wound broke open afresh, although it had healed over on the surface. And so it came to pass that after a few years the distinguished knight crossed the sea and, fighting with redoubled courage against the pagans, gave his life to divine service and his soul to God.<sup>6</sup>

#### 60. A Drinking-Horn

Here is<sup>1</sup> another thing, no less wonderful and quite widely known, which happened in Great Britain. There was a hunting-forest in Gloucestershire teeming with boars, stags, and every kind of game commonly found in England. In a leafy glade of this forest was a hillock, which rose to a man's height at its highest point. Knights and other hunters used to climb up on top of this hillock whenever, worn out with heat and thirst, they sought some relief for their discomfort. Now given the right combination of place and circumstances, if

see Liebrecht, pp. 126-8. The motif of a wound breaking open every year is also found in the Arthurian legend; cf. *Otia*, ii. 12, n. 41.

<sup>1</sup> Gervase uses the words *accedit* and *accidit* almost interchangeably; cf. iii. 70.

ascendit, cumque solus quasi ad alterum loquens diceret 'Sitio,' statim ex improviso e latere propinator astabat, celebri cultu, uultu yllari, manu exposita cornu grande gestans, auro gemmisque ornatum, sicut apud antiquissimos Anglos usus habet uice calicis. Nectar ignoti set suauissimi saporis offerebatur; quo hausto, totus calescentis corporis estus et lassitudo fugiebat, ut non laborasse, sed laborem arripere uelle quis crederetur. Sed et sumpto nectare, minister mantile ad ora siccanda porrigebat, et expleto suo ministerio disprens, nec mercedem pro obsequio nec colloquium pro inquisitione expectabat.

Hoc multis annositatis antique curriculis apud uetustissimos celeberrimum ac cotidianum agebatur, cum uno aliquo die miles e uicinitate<sup>d</sup> illa uenator illuc accessit et, postulato potu et sumpto cornu, non illud ut consuetudinis ac urbanitatis erat pincerne restituit, sed ad proprium usum retinuit. Verum dominus eius, comes illustris Claudii Castri, comperta rei ueritate, dampnauit predonem; et cornu<sup>e</sup> illud excellentissimo proauo tuo, regi Henrico uetustiori, donauit, ne tanti mali fautor<sup>f</sup> fuisse censeretur si domestice proprietatis thesauro rapinam alienam congesisset.<sup>2</sup>

lxi. *De neptunis qui homines deludunt*<sup>a</sup>

Sicut inter homines quedam mirabilia natura producit,<sup>b</sup> ita spiritus, in humanis corporibus aeriis que assumunt ex diuina permissione,<sup>1</sup> ludibria sui faciunt. Ecce enim Anglia demones quosdam habet (demones, inquam, nescio dixerim an secretas et ignote generationis effigies), quos Galli neptunos, Angli portunos nominant.<sup>2</sup> Istis

<sup>d</sup> e uicinitate *CI*; est (esset *X*) in ciuitate *NAXQ*      <sup>e</sup> cornu *N*      <sup>f</sup> factor *N*

<sup>a</sup> qui . . . deludunt] siue portunis *CXQ*      <sup>b</sup> produxit *N*

<sup>2</sup> The forest in which this story is set is probably the forest of Dean. Oman remarks: 'It is clear that Gervase conceived the servant as a sort of fairy, but the mention of the mound suggests a barrow and funeral libations, recorded thus by a muddled folk memory' ('The English folklore', p. 7).

Stories of thefts from fairies are common in northern folklore: for a bibliography for England, see Baughman, *MI*, F350-2; see also I. M. Boberg, *Motif-Index of Early Icelandic Literature* (Copenhagen, 1966), F352. E. S. Hartland devoted a chapter of *The Science of Fairy Tales* to 'Robberies from Fairyland' (pp. 135-60), and comments (p. 145): 'the stolen article is usually . . . a cup or a drinking-horn.' A similar story, also associated with Henry I, is recorded by Gervase's older contemporary William of Newburgh (*Historia rerum Anglicarum*, i. 28). Liebrecht (pp. 128-30) gives references to other parallel stories, and also points a comparison with Gervase's account of the horn received from St Simeon (iii. 70).

anyone strayed a long way from his companions and climbed it alone, and then, though alone, said 'I'm thirsty,' as if he were speaking to someone else, at once, to his surprise, there would be a cupbearer standing at his side, in rich attire, with a merry face, and holding in his outstretched hand a large horn, adorned with gold and jewels, such as is used by the old English as a drinking-vessel. Some nectar of an unfamiliar but delicious taste would be offered to him. When he had drunk it, all the heat and weariness of his sweating body would leave him, so that anyone would believe, not that he had just been engaged in action, but that he was eager to start. When he had consumed the nectar, the server would provide him with a napkin with which to wipe his lips; and then, his ministrations completed, he would disappear without waiting for a reward for his services or for conversation to satisfy curiosity.

This came to be of well-known and daily occurrence among the old population, for many cycles of the years gone by. Then one day, when a knight from that vicinity was out hunting, he came to the place and, having asked for a drink and taken the horn, he did not restore it to the cupbearer as custom and manners demanded, but kept it for his own use. However, when his lord, the illustrious earl of Gloucester, discovered the truth of the matter, he condemned the thief; and he presented that horn to your excellent great-great-grandfather, King Henry the Elder, lest he should be deemed to have connived at such a great wrong if he had added another's stolen goods to the treasure of his own household property.<sup>2</sup>

61. *Neptunes which Delude Human Beings*

Just as nature produces certain marvels in the world of humans, so spirits perpetrate their jokes in human bodies made of air, which they put on with God's permission.<sup>1</sup> For instance, England has certain demons (though I admit that I do not know whether I should call them demons, or mysterious ghosts of unknown origin), which the French call neptunes, and the English portunes.<sup>2</sup> It belongs to their

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Otia*, iii. 86, at n. 6.

<sup>2</sup> It seems likely that the names *neptuni* and *portuni* were adopted from Latin and applied to divinities or spirits already established in popular belief, owing to a similarity in the sound of their names rather than any association with the sea or harbours. The creatures described here can be identified with the French nutons or lutins, and the Scottish brownies; they belong to the class of friendly house-spirits, along with nisses,



f. 70<sup>v</sup> insitum est quod simplicitatem fortunatorum colonorum amplectuntur, et cum nocturnas propter domesticas operas agunt uigilias, subito | clausis ianuis ad ignem calefiunt, et ranunculas e<sup>c</sup> sinu proiectas, prunis impositas, comedunt. Senili uultu, facie corrugata, statura pusilli, dimidium pollicis non habentes,<sup>3</sup> panniculis consertis induuntur; et si quid gestandum in domo fuerit aut honerosi operis agendum, ad operandum se ingerunt, cicius humana facilitate expediunt. Id illis inditum<sup>d</sup> est ut obsequi<sup>e</sup> possint et obesse non possint. Verumptamen unicum quasi nocendi modulum habent. Cum enim<sup>f</sup> inter ambiguas noctis tenebras Angli solitarii quandoque equitant, portunus nonnumquam inuisus equitanti se copulat, et cum diucius comitatur euntem, tandem loris arreptis equum in lutum ad manum ducit; in quo dum infixus uolutatur, portunus exiens cachinnum facit, et sic huiuscemodi<sup>g</sup> ludibrio humanam simplicitatem deridet.<sup>4</sup>

### lxii. *De grant*<sup>a</sup>

Est in Anglia quoddam demonum genus quod suo ydiate *grant* nominant, ad instar pulli equini<sup>b</sup> anniculi, tibiis erectum, oculis scintillantibus. Istud demonum genus sepiissime comparet in plateis in ipsius diei feruore aut circa solis occiduum, et quociens apparet, futurum in urbe illa uel uico portendit incendium. Cum ergo sequente die uel nocte instat periculum, in plateis discursu facto, canes prouocat ad latrandum, et dum fugam simulat, sequentes canes ad insequendum spe uana consequendi inuitat. Huiusmodi<sup>c</sup> illuso cumuicaneis de ignis custodia cautelam facit, et sic officiosum

<sup>c</sup> e supplied by author N      <sup>d</sup> inditum *AQI*; indicium N (correcting indicum), *CX*  
<sup>e</sup> obsequii N      <sup>f</sup> enim om. *XQ*      <sup>g</sup> huiusce *Cβ*

<sup>a</sup> et incendiis add. *CXQ*      <sup>b</sup> equi *XQ*      <sup>c</sup> -modi om. N

kobolds, and hobgoblins: see Liebrecht, p. 131; Lecouteux, *Les Nains et les elfes*, pp. 174–8; Kittredge, *Witchcraft*, pp. 214–25; Burne and Jackson, *Shropshire Folk-Lore*, pp. 44–54; cf. also Gervase's account of poltergeists in i. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Oman ('The English folklore', p. 5, n. 5) suggests that the MSS must be corrupt here, since little people half an inch high could not have been of any real use about a house. However, it seems unnecessary to apply realistic criticism of this kind. The MSS are in agreement, and Gervase clearly intended to describe the *portuni* as very small.

<sup>4</sup> It was a common caprice of fairies to lead people astray at night: it was, indeed, the chief occupation of the Will-o'-the-Wisp (on which see R. C. Maclagan, 'Ghost Lights of

nature to take pleasure in the simplicity of happy peasants. When peasants stay up late at night for the sake of their domestic tasks, suddenly, though the doors are closed, they are there warming themselves at the fire and eating little frogs which they bring out of their pockets and roast on the coals. They have an aged appearance, and a wrinkled face; they are very small in stature, measuring less than half a thumb,<sup>3</sup> and they wear tiny rags sewn together. If there should be anything to be carried in the house or any heavy task to be done, they apply themselves to the work, and accomplish it more quickly than it could be done by human means. It is a law of their nature that they can be useful but cannot do harm. However, they do have one way of being something of a nuisance: when on occasions Englishmen ride alone through the uncertain shadows of night, a portune sometimes attaches himself to the rider without being seen, and when he has accompanied him on his way for some time, there comes a moment when he seizes the reins and leads the horse into some nearby mud. While the horse wallows stuck in the mud, the portune goes off roaring with laughter, and so with a trick of this kind he makes fun of human simplicity.<sup>4</sup>

### 62. *Grant*

There is in England a certain kind of demon which they call *grant* in the native idiom. It is like a yearling colt, prancing on its hind-legs, with sparkling eyes. This kind of demon very often appears in the streets in the heat of the day or at about sunset, and whenever it is seen, it gives warning of an imminent fire in that city or neighbourhood. When danger is looming on the following day or night, it sets the dogs barking by running to and fro in the streets, and feigning flight, lures the dogs on its tail to pursue it in the vain hope of catching it. An apparition of this kind makes the townspeople take care to guard their fires, and thus, while this obliging variety of

the West Highlands', *Folk Lore*, viii (1897), 220–35). Robert Burton in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (ed. H. Jackson (London, 1932), i. 195–6) speaks of '*ambulones*, that walk about midnight on great heaths and desert places . . . Sometimes they sit by the highway side, to give men falls, and make their horses stumble and start as they ride . . . and if a man curse or spur his horse for stumbling they do heartily rejoice at it; with many such pretty feats.' It was typical of these creatures to go off laughing when they had played their pranks, just as Shakespeare's Puck 'misleads night-wanderers, laughing at their harm' (*A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, ii. 1. 39).



demonum genus, dum<sup>d</sup> conspicientes terret, suo aduentu munire ignorantes solet.<sup>1</sup>

lxiii. *De dalfinis*<sup>a</sup>

Quisquis marini fluctus inuestigator extitit aut ipsius maris explorator, audiat et constanter affirmet nullam in nostra habitatione terrena repertam cuiusuis animantis effigiem cuius<sup>b</sup> similitudinem<sup>c</sup> non liceat in piscibus oceani Britannici ab umbilico<sup>d</sup> superius speculari.<sup>1</sup> Illic piscis monachus ad medium uentrem squama monachali piscem tegit; illic rex piscis est coronatus; illic miles armatus equitat; illic canis, rictum oris aperiens; illic porcus, quem dalfinum nominant, quem de genere militum esse uulguis auctumat, porcina sibi inter fluctus maris transmutata latenter effigie.

Narrant enim naute in mari Mediterraneo, quod nostrum dicimus, aliquo die, nauis pelagum sulcante, dalfinos innumeros nauim circuire; cumque ex iuuenili agilitate quidam ex nautis dalfinum telo uulnerasset, aliis dalphinis maris fundum petentibus, de subito inaudita tempestas nauim inuoluit. Nautis iam de uita desperantibus, ecce quidam ad formam equitis equo super mare aduehitur, et pro liberatione<sup>e</sup> omnium uulneratorem dalfini sibi postulat exponi. Inter pressuras naute positi, et periclitari timent, et socium exponere morti crudelissimum putant: sue quippe saluti consulere cum aliene uite dispendio infame faciunt. Tandem uulnerator ipse, dum mauult omnes unius pena liberari, dum sunt innocentes, quam propter suam leuitatem tantum populum periculum pati, ne ex ipsius tuicione

<sup>d</sup> dum om. XQ

<sup>a</sup> De dalfinis] De dalphino pisce marino (et ciconiis C) CXQ      <sup>b</sup> ad add. after  
cuius XQ      <sup>c</sup> similitudinem N      <sup>d</sup> umbilico N      <sup>e</sup> liberatone N

<sup>1</sup> Grant is another name for the river Cam (see e.g. J. Bosworth and T. Northcote Toller, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* (London, 1898), s.v. *Grantan-brycg*); Liebrecht therefore argues (p. 133), from the frequent appearance of water-spirits in the form of a horse (see *MI F420*. I. 3. 3), and also their frequent connection with fire, that the grant is such a water-spirit.

The idea of a spirit whose appearance serves to warn of imminent danger has been commonly known in Britain. For instance, Walter Scott wrote of the water-kelpy: 'The [Highland] River-demon, or River-horse, for it is that form which he commonly assumes, is the Kelpy of the Lowlands, an evil and malicious spirit, delighting to forbode and to witness calamity' (n. xxxii on 'The Lady of the Lake', in *The Poetical Works of Walter Scott*, ed. J. L. Robertson (repr. London, 1951), p. 290); cf. R. C. Maclagan ('Ghost Lights of the West Highlands', *Folk Lore*, viii (1897), 221) on the Gaelic *manadh*, or warning, and

demon frightens anyone who sees it, its coming regularly serves to protect people who would otherwise have been unaware of their danger.<sup>1</sup>

63. *Dolphins*

Anyone who has made a study of salt water or conducted explorations of the sea itself should listen to this, and staunchly confirm that there is no form of any creature found living among us on dry land whose likeness, from the navel upwards, may not be observed among the fish of the ocean off Britain.<sup>1</sup> There the monk-fish covers itself to the middle of its belly with a scaly cowl; there the king-fish is found, wearing its crown; there the knight-fish rides in armour; there the dog-fish is seen, opening wide its jaws; there too is the pig-fish, which they call a dolphin: the people say that this fish is born as a knight, and puts on its piggish appearance secretly among the waves of the sea.

Indeed, there is a sailors' story of how one day in the Mediterranean Sea (which we call our sea), while a ship was ploughing over the deep, countless dolphins came and circled round it. Then one of the sailors, out of youthful exuberance, wounded a dolphin with a javelin. At this the other dolphins made for the bottom of the sea, and an unprecedented storm suddenly enveloped the ship. The sailors were beginning to despair of their lives when, see! a figure resembling a knight was coming towards them over the sea on horseback. He demanded that the one who had wounded the dolphin should be given up to him in exchange for the deliverance of them all. The sailors, trapped between two evils, both feared to incur danger, and thought it extremely cruel to expose their comrade to death: in their reckoning, it was dishonourable to consider their own safety at the expense of another's life. But the one who had inflicted the wound preferred that all should be delivered by the punishment of one (for they were indeed innocent), than that such a large company should undergo danger as a result of his own irresponsibility. Finally

C. S. Burne ('Staffordshire Folk and their Lore', *Folk Lore*, vii (1896), 371) on 'knockers' in mines.

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Neckam (*De naturis rerum*, ii. 25) also mentions the knight-fish and the monk-fish. The belief that all creatures on land had their marine equivalents was an ancient one (see e.g. Pliny, *Hist. nat.* ix. 2. 7-8 and ix. 4. 10-11), and was still current when Camden wrote his *Britannia* (Liebrecht, pp. 134-5).

efficiantur nocentes, exponit se morti quam meruit, et libens, ex inuita electionis uoluntate, ascendit militis equum ex posteriore dorsi parte.

Abit<sup>f</sup> miles, sic super aquam gradiendi semitam eligens sicut in fixo solo gressus firmarentur. In longinquam in breui transcurso regionem aduectus, in lecto preciosi apparatus militem reperit quem ut dalfinum pridem uulnerauerat;<sup>2</sup> et dum a ductore suo telum uulneri infixum iubetur extrahere, mandatis parens, uulneris auxilium dextra nociua tulit. Eo facto, reducitur nauta celeri cursu ad nauim; redditusque sociis rerum gestarum seriem pandit, et per ipsius factum morti addicti, ex contrario facto eius liberantur. Hinc est quod exinde naute dalfinos persequi cessant. Sunt enim uenture tempestatis indices, et indignum esset illis penam infligere, per quos imminētis habetur periculi cautela.<sup>3</sup>

Sic<sup>g</sup> ciconias asserunt in remotis orbis partibus homines esse, et apud nos in auium specie uiuere.<sup>4</sup> De quibus mirandum<sup>h</sup> iudico quod in<sup>i</sup> | hyeme fluminibus se immergunt, in quorum fundo nonnumquam a piscatoribus dormientes extrahuntur. Nosque taliter e gurgite tractas uidimus ad ignem caleferi uelut a graui sompno expergefactas, et uite reddi, cum antea more lapidum insensibiles uiserentur. Sic et yrundines quercubus<sup>j</sup> infixae concauis dormiendo yemem transigunt.

#### lxiv. *De serenīs maris Britannici*<sup>a</sup>

Ad hec in mari Britannico serene scopulis insidere uidentur, que caput femineum, capillos lucidos et proceros habent, ubera muliebria, omniaque feminee forme membra usque ad umbelicum; cetera in

<sup>f</sup> abiit AXQ      <sup>g</sup> infra titulo de ciconiis written in margin by rubricator N  
<sup>h</sup> mirandum supplied by author N      <sup>i</sup> in [f. 71<sup>r</sup>] in N      <sup>j</sup> quercubus supplied by author N

<sup>a</sup> maris Britannici] bene cantantibus CXQ

<sup>2</sup> A belief in spirits who live in a luxurious abode at the bottom of the sea is also found in northern Scotland. These spirits are likewise said to put on a sea-creature's shape, often that of a seal, when they leave their abode: cf. Liebrecht, p. 134; Keightley, *Fairy Mythology*, pp. 167–71. The persistence of a wound delivered to a human being in the shape of an animal after human form has been resumed is, as Liebrecht points out (p. 137), a well-known motif; cf. *Otia*, iii. 93, at n. 6, and iii. 120, at n. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Dolphins have traditionally been regarded as benevolent creatures; for a bibliography, see *MI* B473.

<sup>4</sup> On storks, cf. *Otia*, iii. 73, at n. 7, and iii. 97. The idea that storks spend the winter in Egypt in human form partially accounts for the reverence paid to them in northern

therefore, lest they should incur guilt by protecting him, he exposed himself to the death which he deserved, and freely, of his own reluctant but voluntary choice, climbed on to the horse's back behind the knight.

The knight rode off, picking out as firm a path over the water for his horse to step on as if its paces were supported on solid ground. The sailor was taken to a far-distant region, though the journey only took a short time; there, on a couch of costly furnishing, he found the knight whom he had wounded earlier as a dolphin.<sup>2</sup> On being ordered by his escort to draw out the javelin stuck in the wound, he obeyed the command, and brought healing to the wound with the very hand that had done the hurt. With this accomplished, the sailor was speedily conveyed back to the ship. Once restored to his comrades, he described the sequence of events, and they, who had been sentenced to death by his action, found themselves reprieved by his reversal of the deed. That explains why, ever since then, sailors have no longer attacked dolphins. For indeed, dolphins give notice of a coming storm, and it would be unworthy to inflict pain on them, thanks to whom a warning is received of impending danger.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly they say that storks are human beings in remote parts of the world, and live among us in the semblance of birds.<sup>4</sup> What I judge remarkable in their regard is that in winter they immerse themselves in rivers, and sleep on the river-bed; sometimes they are dragged up from there by fishermen. And we have seen them, when they have been hauled out of deep water in such a way, grow warm by a fire as if they were being roused from a heavy sleep, and come back to life, although before they seemed as insensible as stones. So, too, swallows pass the winter asleep, clinging to hollow oaks.

#### 64. *The Sirens of the British Sea*

As well as these creatures, sirens are seen in the sea off Britain, sitting on the rocks. They have a female head, long, shining hair, a woman's breasts, and all the limbs of the female form down to the navel; the

Europe, and has given rise to many stories: see Liebrecht, p. 157 f.; *Marvels of the East*, p. 27 f.; Wolf, *Beiträge zur Deutschen Mythologie*, p. 165 f.; A. Paupert, 'Le Conte de la cigogne dans les Évangiles des Quenouilles', *Métamorphose et bestiaire fantastique au Moyen Age*, ed. L. Harf-Lancner (Paris, 1985), pp. 137–62; and for further bibliography, *MI* B775, D155. 1, and D624. 1. For transformations in general, see *Otia*, i. 15, n. 8.

pisces finiuntur. He cantu dulcissimo sic nautarum transeuntium corda penetrant quod, suavi aurium pruritu<sup>b</sup> admodum delectati, officii sui fiunt immemores, et incauti naufragium persepe patiuntur.<sup>1</sup>

lxv. *De sagacitate<sup>a</sup> animalium*

Licet etiam de quibusdam animalium naturis admirandum sit, tamen ea miranda tantum credimus que rarum habent conspectum, cum ipsa uidentium assuetudo admirationem tollat quam raritas intuentium inducebat.

Ecce miranda asperioli sagacitas, qui cum aquam transuadare propter sui modicitatem non sufficiat, frustulo ligni se superponit,<sup>b</sup> et erecta cauda uelum facit, quo duce a subueniente flatu flumen possit transcurrere.<sup>1</sup>

Sed et coturnices, cum ad yemandum insulas maris calidiores petunt, continuum uolandi laborem miro temperantie consilio adiuuant, dum unam ad instar ueli alam erigunt, et uicissim<sup>c</sup> permutatis alis sibi subueniunt.

Ad hec in Subalpina Gallia, inter altissimas rupes, camusii nascuntur, hyrcos sapientes et corio delictiore prestantes; cuius<sup>2</sup> uenatio ex inconsideratis precipitiis pendet. Cum enim uenatorem presentium, uno ad collis apicem seruante custodiam, ut auditis compertisque uenatorum insidiis custos exsufflando sternuttat, grex totus exilit, rupes arduas occupat. Cum ergo uenator a collibus camusios elicit, unum ex consortibus suis inter arcta semitarum ad latus montis constituit, ut transeuntem feram, a currendo transeundoque prepeditam, ad precipitium inter conuallium suspensa deducat. Verum ex insita cautela camusius, sollicito oculo, si quam modicam lucis intercapedinem inter montem et semite obstructorem

<sup>b</sup> pruriti NI

<sup>a</sup> sagacitate] diuersis naturis CXQ      <sup>b</sup> superponit AC; supponit Nβ  
<sup>c</sup> uicissim N

<sup>1</sup> The siren in classical mythology was half-bird and half-woman (e.g. Ovid, *Met.* v. 552). However, as early as the late seventh or early eighth century, she appears in mermaid form in the *Liber monstruorum* (see E. Faral, 'La Queue de poisson des sirènes', *Romania*, lxxiv (1953), 433–506). The idea of a beautiful woman with a fish's tail is already found in Horace, *Ars poetica*, v. 4 (quoted by Neckam, *De naturis rerum*, ii. 25). From the mid-twelfth century the fish-woman is well established, although the bird-woman is still found as well; see F. McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries* (Chapel Hill, 1960), pp. 166–9.

rest of their body tails off as a fish. With the immense sweetness of their singing these creatures so penetrate the hearts of passing sailors that they succumb utterly to the sensuous enticement of their ears; they become forgetful of their duty, and very often suffer shipwreck through carelessness.<sup>1</sup>

65. *The Resourcefulness of Animals*

Although a number of animals' natures are deserving of wonder, yet we believe that only those which are rarely seen cause wonder, since the very fact of seeing something regularly takes away the wonderment it could inspire when it had rarely been seen before.

Take the marvellous resourcefulness of the squirrel. When it is not able to ford a watercourse on account of its smallness, it ensconces itself on a little piece of wood and, raising its tail, makes a sail, by whose propulsion it can get across the stream with a helping breeze.<sup>1</sup>

And quails, when they are heading for the warmer islands of the sea to pass the winter there, ease the continuous effort of flying by a remarkable measure to conserve their energy: they raise one wing like a sail, and give themselves relief by alternating from one wing to the other.

To give another example, in Subalpine Gaul, among the highest peaks, chamois are found. They taste like goats, but are superior to them in having a finer hide. The hunting of this animal<sup>2</sup> is based on a strategy involving dangerous precipices. They know in advance when a hunter is on his way, for one of them keeps guard on top of a hill; when the sentry hears and notes the menacing approach of hunters, he snorts and brays, and then the whole herd starts up and occupies the high crags. So the hunter sets about luring the chamois down from the hills; meanwhile, he stations one of his companions on a narrow path on the mountain-side, in order that, when a beast comes that way, he may prevent it from running away or passing by, and drive it down to a precipice among the sheer drops of those valleys. But if the chamois, exercising its inbred alertness, sees with its watchful eye any small crack of light between the mountain and the man obstructing the path, it directs its attack there: lowering its

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Neckam, *De naturis rerum*, ii. 124.

<sup>2</sup> Leibniz changed *cuius* to *quorum* (p. 98r), to avoid Gervase's abrupt change to the singular here.

uiderit, illuc impetum dirigit et, demissis cornibus, quemcumque obicem reperit aut precipitat aut cornu transfigit.<sup>d</sup>

Porro apud Polloniam<sup>3</sup> onagrorum frequens est uenatio, quorum eadem est fere natura que et asinorum: sunt enim asini siluestres, cornua habentes ad modum damarum, melancolice complexionis; dum siccitatem habent innatam, sitibunda sunt. Cum ergo uenatorum cornua intonantia presentunt, ad fontes properant, aque inmenso haustu se saciant, ut siccitatem, ex calore currentis adauctam, sumpti potus humiditate temperent. Enimuero canibus urgentibus, paulatim gradum sistunt; et superuenientes tanta inundatione per nares inuoluunt<sup>e</sup> quod et execatos diucius a sequendo retardant, et inter oculos obductos ad fugam citatam se accingunt. De hiis ad litteram in psalmo dicitur: 'Expectabunt<sup>f</sup> onagri in siti sua.'<sup>4</sup>

#### lxvi. *De monte Cathalonie*

Rem nouam atque insolitam sed salubri consilio plenam agredimur, et cautelam incautis facile prestantem. Est in Cathalonia, episcopatu Gerundensi, mons excelsus ualde, cui nomen Canagum<sup>1</sup> accolere indiderunt. Huius ambitus arduus et pro magna parte inaccessibilis ad ascensum; in cuius summitate<sup>a</sup> lacus est, aquam continens subnigram et in fundo imperscrutabilem. Illic mansio fertur esse demonum, ad modum palatii dilatata et ianua clausa; facies tamen ipsius mansionis, sicut ipsorum demonum, uulgaribus est incognita ac inuisibilis. In lacum si quis aliquam lapideam aut alias solidam proiecit<sup>b</sup> materiam, statim<sup>c</sup> tamquam offensis demonibus tempestas erumpit.<sup>2</sup> Est in quadam apicis particula nix perpetua, glacies continua; cristalli illic copia, et nulla unquam solis presentia. Ad f. 71<sup>v</sup> huius montis radicem fluuius est, | aureas habens harenas, unde ex eius arenis aurum quod uulgo *palleol*<sup>3</sup> nominant<sup>d</sup> elicatur. In huius

<sup>a</sup> transfigit *supplied by author N*      <sup>e</sup> inuolunt *N*      <sup>f</sup> expectabunt *N*

<sup>a</sup> submitate *N*      <sup>b</sup> proiecerit *XI*      <sup>c</sup> statim *N*      <sup>d</sup> nominat *CQ*

<sup>3</sup> It is clear from Gervase's description of Poland in Book II that he had had a first-hand description of that country from a native of Poland (see ii. 7, n. 38); this information on the Polish onagers may have come from the same source.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. 103 (104): 11 (translation: D.V.). Gervase presumably took the Vulgate *expectabunt* to mean 'shall await [their hunters]'.  
<sup>1</sup> Mont Canigou, in the French Pyrenees, north-west of the border town of La Junquera, would seem to be the mountain in question.

antlers, whatever impediment it meets it either hurls over the precipice or impales on an antler.

Further, in Poland<sup>3</sup> onagers are often hunted. These animals are virtually identical to asses in their nature: they are in fact wild asses, with antlers like deer, and of a melancholic constitution. Since they have an innate dryness, they are thirsty creatures. Consequently, when they hear the warning of hunters' horns being sounded, they rush to the springs and fill themselves with an enormous draught of water, so that when their dryness is increased by the heat of running, they may counterbalance it with the wetness of the drink they have taken. Then, with the dogs pressing hard upon them, they gradually slacken their pace; when the dogs overtake them, they overwhelm them with such a great deluge from their nostrils that they both hinder them from pursuing them for some time by blinding them, and give themselves the chance to run away quickly while the dogs' eyes are darkened. A psalm in its literal meaning says of these: 'The wild asses shall expect in their thirst.'<sup>4</sup>

#### 66. *A Mountain in Catalonia*

We are coming to a matter which is strange and uncommon, but full of sound counsel, and a sure means of persuading the thoughtless to be more careful. There is in Catalonia, in the diocese of Gerona, a very high mountain, to which the people who live nearby have given the name Canigou.<sup>1</sup> This mountain is steep-sided all the way round, and its ascent is from most angles impossible. On its summit there is a lake containing blackish water, in which it is impossible to see the bottom. There is said to be an abode of demons there, a vast palatial establishment behind a closed door; however, the appearance even of the building, just like that of the demons themselves, cannot be seen or recognized by ordinary people. If anyone throws a block of stone or some other solid object into the lake, a storm immediately erupts, as if the demons were offended.<sup>2</sup> At one point on the summit there is permanent snow and continual ice; an abundance of crystal is found there, and the sun never reaches it. At the foot of this mountain there is a river with golden sand; gold-dust, which the people call *palleol*,<sup>3</sup> is

<sup>2</sup> See *Otia*, iii. 89, n. 2.

<sup>3</sup> The word *palleol*, meaning gold-dust, was formed from *palea* (chaff); see Latham, *Revised Medieval Latin Word-List*, s.v. *palea*.

montis consistentia et circuitu argentum foditur, et multiplex fertilitas erumpit. Ex opposito quoque, ad septem leucas, mons est Grim nomine, maris littori inherens.

Nunc quid in hiis locis nuper contigerit<sup>e</sup> lector attendat. Erat in coniuncta monti uilla, Iunchera nomine, uir agricola Petrus de Cabinam nuncupatus. Hic uno aliquo die, cum domi rebus domesticis intenderet et eiulatu filie paruule continuo et impacabili turbaretur, tandem, ut offensis mos est, filiam suam demonibus commendat. Commendationi incaute paratus receptator occurrit, et inuisibili raptu demonum turbo puellam abducit.

Completo iam ab hiis septennio, dum ad radicem montis indigena quidam iter arriperet, uidet hominem celeri cursu transeuntem, qui flebili uoce plangebat: 'Heu me', inquit, 'miserum! Quid agam, qui tanto pondere premor?' Requisitus ab alio<sup>f</sup> uiatore que sit tanti causa doloris, respondit se in monte Canagum iam septennium transegisse sub commendatione demonum, qui ipso cotidie pro uehiculo utebantur. Et ut auditor rei tam incredibili fidem adhiberet, argumentum certissimum iunxit, esse in seruili commendatione demonum in eodem monte puellam, filiam Petri de Cabinam, e uilla Iunchera horiundam; de puelle huius educatione tedium facientes demones, ipsam libenter commendatori suo restituerent, si modo pater eam in monte reposceret. Stupet auditor, incertus an sileat incredibilia an loquatur iniuncta. Eligit ut patri statum filie denunciaret, et uillam memoratam intrans, patrem puelle repperit, de diutina filie amissione querelantem. Inquirat causam plangendi,<sup>g</sup> et audita rei fide, adicit se que premisimus ab illo quo uice uehiculo demones utebantur audisse, consultius dicens esse ut, ad loca designata ueniens, sub diuini<sup>h</sup> nominis attestatione ad restitutionem amisse filie demones adiuraret.

Auditis nuncii uerbis, pater obstupuit, et dum intra se cogitat quid deliberatius agat, eligit consilio nuncii fidelis se supponere. Montem ascendit, per loca lacus discurrit, demones ut commendatam filiam reddant adiurat, et tandem quasi repentino flatu filia prodit:<sup>i</sup> procera

<sup>e</sup> contingerit *N*      <sup>f</sup> illo *ACXQ*      <sup>g</sup> planoendi *N*      <sup>h</sup> diuini *supplied by*  
*author N*      <sup>i</sup> prodit *ACβ*; *prodiit N*

sifted from its sand. Silver is mined within and around this mountain, and many different crops spring from the fertile soil. There is also a mountain called Grim opposite it, at a distance of seven leagues, cleaving to the sea-shore.

Now let the reader pay heed to what happened recently in these parts. In the village called La Junquera next to the mountain, there was a farmer whose name was Peter de Cabinam. One day when this man was attending to his domestic tasks at home, he was finding his little daughter's constant and unappeasable crying exasperating. In the end, as people often do when they are annoyed, he told his daughter to go to the devil. His unthinking commendation brought a quick response from a being who was ready to receive her, and a whirlwind of demons laid invisible hands on the girl and carried her off.

Seven years after these events, while a local man was making his way along the foot of the mountain, he saw someone passing by at a rapid pace; this person was bewailing his lot in a voice full of tears: 'Alas, woe is me!', he said, 'what am I to do, crushed as I am under such a heavy burden?' On being asked by the other traveller what was causing him such great grief, he replied that he had now spent seven years on Mont Canigou in the power of the demons, who used him every day as a vehicle. And in order that his hearer should attach credence to such an incredible thing, he added incontrovertible proof, telling him that there was a girl on that same mountain who was enslaved to the demons as the result of an oath: she was a native of the village of La Junquera, the daughter of Peter de Cabinam. The demons were tired of bringing this girl up, and would gladly restore her to him who had sent her to them, if only her father would ask for her back on the mountain. His hearer was amazed, and hesitated as to whether he should keep these incredible things to himself, or tell them as he had been charged to do. He decided to report to the father the state of his daughter, and on his arrival at the village in question, he found the girl's father, lamenting his long-lost daughter. He asked the reason for his weeping, and listened to his faithful account of what had happened; he then told him that he had heard the things we have related above, from the man whom the demons were using as a vehicle, saying that the father would be well-advised to go to the appointed place and adjure the demons, invoking the Divine Name, to restore his lost daughter.

When her father heard the messenger's words, he was dumb-founded; he engaged in an inward meditation as to what was the wiser course of action, and eventually decided to follow the advice of his reliable messenger. He climbed the mountain, and ran to and fro on the shores of the lake, adjuring the demons to restore the daughter he had sent to them. At last, as if on a sudden gust of wind, his daughter

statura, arida, tetra, oculis uagis, ossibus et neruis et pelle uix herentibus, horrenda aspectu, ydiomate nullo intellecta, et uix aliquid humanum sapiens aut intelligens.

Receptam prolem pater admirans et dubius an alendam retineat, episcopum Gerundensem adit, euentum tristem pandit, quid agendum ei sit sollicitus exquirat. Episcopus, ut<sup>j</sup> uir religiosus ac exemplo bono commissum sibi gregem informans, puellam in omnium exponit aspectu, reique seriem pandens, predicando docuit subditos ne de cetero sua demonibus commendent, eo quod 'aduersarius noster dyabolus tanquam leo rugiens circuit,<sup>k</sup> querens quem deuoret,<sup>4</sup> et quosdam ut datos mactat et sine spe reddendi incarcerationis sibi peculiat, quosdam ut commendatos<sup>l</sup> macerat ad tempus et affligit.

Nec diu post, ille quo demones pro uehiculo utebantur, consimili patris obtestatione liberatus, in medium exit. Et quia cum raptus erat maioris perfectiorisque discretionis extiterat, fidelius ac intelligibilis que apud demones gerebantur exposuit. Asserebat<sup>m</sup> iuxta lacum in subterraneo specu palacium esse latum, in cuius aditu ianua est, et intra ianuam interior<sup>n</sup> quedam obscuritas, ad quam cum mutuo applausu demones, postquam orbis partes percurrerint, conueniunt, et quid egerint maioribus suis nunciant. Verum hanc palacii consistentiam nullus preter ipsos et eos qui perpetuo donationis<sup>o</sup> iugo | in demonum transierunt proprietatem intrauit,<sup>p</sup> hiis qui demonibus commendantur exteriorem ianuam obseruantibus.

Ex hiis informari possumus ne familiam demonibus commendemus, qui cautiuis insidiantur ut rapiant, rapiant<sup>q</sup> pauperem<sup>r</sup> dum attrahunt eum.<sup>5</sup> Estque ualidissimum dictorum argumentum quod inter montes memoratos perpetua uiget uentorum ex opposito sibi concertantium tempestas, et rara illic reperitur aut nulla unquam tranquillitas.<sup>s 6</sup>

<sup>j</sup> ut om. XQ      <sup>k</sup> circuit supplied by author N      <sup>l</sup> ut commendatos] incommendatos N  
<sup>m</sup> asserabat N      <sup>n</sup> interiorum XQ; murorum I  
<sup>o</sup> donationis supplied by author N      <sup>p</sup> intrauit AX; intrant NQI; intrat C  
<sup>q</sup> rapiant om. XI      <sup>r</sup> pauperem N      <sup>s</sup> tranquillitas N

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 1 Pet. 5: 8.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ps. 98 (10): 9.

<sup>6</sup> This story apparently persisted in the area: a similar tale is recorded in Pujedo's *Cronaca de Catalunya* of 1609 (see Sébillot, *Folk-Lore*, ii. 410). The universal fear of being carried off by spirits can lend a sinister seriousness to execrations such as 'The devil take you'; cf. Chaucer's *Friar's Tale* (ed. F. N. Robinson (2nd edn. Oxford, 1974), p. 93). Liebrecht (pp. 137-9) cites similar beliefs among the Swedes, the Serbs, and the Russians, and adduces a tale from Roger de Hoveden's *Chronica* (vol. ii, pp. 302-3), which describes how a pregnant woman prayed to the devil; he attended to her, but then carried off her son. Further stories of people being snatched away by spirits are found in *Otia*, iii. 85 and 86; in the former a period of seven years is likewise mentioned, as the time for which a

appeared. She was elongated in stature, emaciated, hideous, with rolling eyes, her bones and sinews and skin hardly holding together, dreadful to behold; she had acquired no form of speech by which to communicate, and hardly understood or recognized anything human.

The father was shocked at the child he had regained, and being uncertain whether he ought to keep her in his care, he went to see the bishop of Gerona; he told him his sad story, and asked anxiously what he ought to do. The bishop, being a religious man, and eager to instruct the flock entrusted to him with a salutary warning, set the girl in the sight of all: unfolding the sequence of events, he taught his subjects in a sermon that they should never again tell their own to go to the devil, because 'our adversary the devil is going about as a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.'<sup>4</sup> Some people, when they are freely given to him, he destroys and makes his own, imprisoning them with no hope of restoration; while others, who are simply sent to him, he torments and afflicts just for a time.

Not long afterwards, the man whom the spirits were using as a vehicle was released as a result of a similar appeal by the father, and came back into their midst. And because when he had been seized he had been of greater, more mature discernment, he was able to give a more reliable and intelligible description of what went on among the demons. He maintained that in a subterranean cave beside the lake there was a spacious palace: 'at its entrance there is a door, and beyond the door an inner darkness, in which the demons gather to greet each other after they have traversed the regions of the world, and report to their superiors what they have done. But no one apart from themselves, and those who have passed into the demons' possession in the everlasting bonds of a gift, has ever gone inside this palace; those who are only sent to the demons remain outside the door.'

We can be taught by these things not to commend anyone in our household to the demons; for they stealthily lie in wait to catch the poor, to catch him while they draw him to themselves.<sup>5</sup> And there is a very strong argument for the truth of these sayings, in that between the mountains of which I have spoken there rages a constant tempest of winds striving against each other, and tranquillity is rarely or never found there.<sup>6</sup>

woman might be obliged to serve the dracs as a nurse. Walter Scott reproduces Gervase's story (*Minstrelsy*, ii. 315-17), and comments with regard to the inhabited lake on top of a mountain that a similar superstition 'is common to almost every high hill in Scotland'; cf. Sébillot, loc. cit.

lxvii. *De Lirinensi monasterio*<sup>a</sup>

Est in regno Arelatensi, ad confinium episcopatus<sup>b</sup><sup>1</sup> in maritima, insula maris angusto interuallo a terra communi distincta, quam Lirinensem nominant, ubi ab antiquissimis temporibus polluisse legimus monachorum religionem. In hanc maris insulam nullus unquam uermis ingreditur; quod nescio religioni tantorum sanctorum patrum debeatur, an ipsius soli complexioni attribuat<sup>2</sup>.

lxviii. *De astucia uulpis*

Cum naturalem uulpecule astuciam audimus,<sup>a</sup> nihil aliud agimus nisi quod uitam nostram<sup>b</sup> ad prudentiam augendam informamus. Ecce quod uulpes, ut se<sup>c</sup> sentit pulicum pungentium amara lue grauari, aquam accedit, et retrogrado incessu caude summitatem aque immergit. Pulices igitur, ut humorem sentiunt, sicciorem partem corporis fugiendo occupant; sicque dum corpus a natibus<sup>d</sup> aque paulatim infigit, pulices ad ultimam rictus partem ascendere compelluntur. Cum ad labra deducta fuerit infelix turba, ut os totum humectat, stuppe uel alii cuiuis<sup>e</sup> molliori materie, quam paulo ante uulpes colectam in ore posuerat, pulices insiliunt; et cum sentit<sup>f</sup> astutum animal ipsas<sup>g</sup> triste mutasse asilum, stuppam ore proicit, et sic aqua exiit et peste nociua liberatur.<sup>1</sup>

lxix. *De Laikibrais*<sup>a</sup>

Est in Britannia maiori silua, multiplici uenationis genere copiosa, que Carleolensem respicit ciuitatem. In huius quasi medio uallis est

<sup>a</sup> Lirinensi monasterio] insula Lirinensi Cβ      <sup>b</sup> e]episcopatus N

<sup>a</sup> audiuius AXI      <sup>b</sup> nostram supplied by author N      <sup>c</sup> se om. CXQ

<sup>d</sup> a natibus supplied by author N      <sup>e</sup> cuiuis supplied by author N      <sup>f</sup> cum senti] consentit N      <sup>g</sup> sic MSS for ipsos

<sup>a</sup> Laikibrais corrected by author from Laikibrait N

<sup>1</sup> Q adds *Antipolitani qui nunc Grassensis* after *episcopatus*. The seat of this diocese was originally at Antibes; it was transferred to Grasse in 1244 (Gams, *Series episcoporum*, p. 554).

<sup>2</sup> The monastery of Lérins (a small island opposite Cannes) was originally founded by St Honoratus of Arles c.410. An important intellectual centre in the fifth century, it numbered Vincent of Lérins, St Caesarius of Arles, and St Hilary among its monks; in

67. *The Monastery of Lérins*

In the kingdom of Arles, near the boundary of the coastal diocese,<sup>1</sup> there is an island separated from the mainland by a narrow sea-channel: they call it the Isle of Lérins. We read that a community of monks has led a flourishing religious life there from earliest times. No snake ever comes onto this sea-girt island: I do not know whether this is due to the religious observance of such great and holy fathers, or whether it is to be attributed to the soil's own constitution.<sup>2</sup>

68. *The Fox's Cunning*

When we hear of the natural cunning of the little fox, it can only lead us to shape our own lives towards a growth in practical wisdom. Mark, then, that when a fox feels itself being tormented by the bites of a disagreeable plague of fleas, it goes to a river and, walking backwards, dips the tip of its tail into the water. The fleas, therefore, when they feel the wetness, run from the tail and take refuge in a drier part of the body; and so as it sinks its body little by little from the rump upwards into the water, the fleas are forced to climb up towards the very edge of its jaw. Once the unlucky band has been driven to its lips, it submerges its whole face: then the fleas leap into the tow or some other softish substance which the fox had picked up a little before and placed in its mouth. When the cunning animal feels that they have exchanged their uncomfortable refuge, it spits out the tow from its mouth, and thus comes up out of the water freed from the troublesome pest.<sup>1</sup>

69. *Laikibrais*

In Great Britain there is a forest, rich in many kinds of game, which looks down on the city of Carlisle. Roughly in the middle of this

Hilary's *Sermo de vita S. Honorati*, iii. 5 (PL I. 1237), he reports that with the arrival of St Honoratus the island was no longer troubled by snakes. The life of the monastery was interrupted by the Saracen occupation in c.732, but resumed in the late tenth century, and it once again became a flourishing community. See S. Pricoco, *L'Isola dei santi: Il cenobio di Lerino e le origini del monachesimo gallico* (Rome, 1978); F. Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich, 4.-8. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1988<sup>2</sup>). For other islands which enjoyed a freedom from snakes, see *Otia*, ii. 10, n. 70.

<sup>1</sup> This play of the fox is known the world over: see *MI* K921.



montibus circumsepta iuxta stratam publicam. In hac, inquam, ualle cotidie ad horam unam diei auditur classicum campanarum dulce resonans; unde indigene loco illi deserto nomen imposuerunt in idiomate Wallico<sup>b</sup> Laikibrais.<sup>1</sup>

lxx. *De cornu sancti Symeonis*

Accedit miro mirabilius in eadem silua. Erat in eiusdem silue continentia uilla Pendred nomine, ex qua miles oriundus, cum in nemore semotus ab hominum strepitu uenaretur, subita tonitruui, fulguris, et corruscationis tempestate turbatur. Cum hinc inde fulmina<sup>a</sup> siluam succenderent, conspicit in conspectu tempestatis caniculam grandem pertransire, ex cuius faucibus fulminabat ignis. Territo tali ac tam stupenda uisione militi ex insperato occurrit miles, cornu uenatorium manu baiulans. Occurrenti miles timore plenus occurrit, et dum que sit causa timoris aperitur: 'Heus,' inquit superueniens consolator, 'pelle timorem! Ego sum sanctus Symeon, quem inter fulgura supplex inuocasti. Hoc tibi dono cornu ad perpetuam tui familieque tue munitionem, ut quocienscumque fulmina timueritis aut tonitrua, cornu intonetis, statimque omnis imminentis periculi formido euanescat, nec ulla sit fulminandi potestas intra<sup>b</sup> terminos cornualis exauditionis.' Ad hec inquit sanctus Symeon si quid miles noster uiderit quod stuporem ei induxerit aut admirationem. Respondit interrogatus se caniculam uidisse ex oris rictibus fulminantem, quam cum insequeretur sanctus Symeon euanuit, cornu ad rei geste memoriam, et perpetuam familie tuitionem, apud militem derelicto; quod a multis uisum est et admiratum. Est enim procerum et more cornu uenatorii recuruum,

<sup>b</sup> Wallico *N* (corrected by author from Gallico), *A*; Gallico *Cβ*

<sup>a</sup> flumina *N*      <sup>b</sup> intra supplied by author *N*

<sup>1</sup> R. C. Cox, in 'Tarn Wadling and Gervase of Tilbury's "Laikibrait"', (*Folk Lore*, lxxxv (1975), 128–31), identifies Laikibrais with the now-extinct body of water known as Tarn Wadling, once in the forest of Inglewood, a forest renowned as a medieval hunting ground (cf. *Otia*, iii. 71); the tarn lay close by the Roman road between Carlisle and Penrith (Gervase's *strata publica*?). A local tradition associated Tarn Wadling with a village which was submerged as a result of the wickedness of the inhabitants, and Cox shows that the name Laikibrais (also spelt Lay ki braic (*I*), Laiquibrane (*XQ*), etc.), resembles an Old French equivalent for 'lake that cries'; it may be, therefore, that the correction of *Gallico* to *Wallico* (see apparatus) was a mistake on the author's part. Cox remarks that 'the tradition of a body of water in which bells are engulfed and yet are heard

forest there is a valley surrounded by hills near a public highway. In this valley, I say, every day at seven in the morning a gently-sounding peal of bells is heard; and so the locals have given that lonely place the name of Laikibrais in the Welsh tongue.<sup>1</sup>

70. *The Horn of St Simeon*

Here is something even more marvellous which occurred in the same forest. Within the confines of that forest there was a town called Penrith. A knight who hailed from there was hunting in the wood far from the din of human habitation, when he was thrown into confusion by a sudden storm accompanied by thunder and flashes of lightning. While thunderbolts were setting the forest ablaze on every side, in the eerie light of the storm he caught sight of a huge dog running along with fire darting from its jaws. The knight was quaking in terror at such a vision, so ghastly it was, when another knight came towards him out of the blue, carrying a hunting-horn in his hand. As he came nearer our knight ran to meet him, full of fear. He explained why he was afraid, whereupon the one who had joined him comforted him, saying: 'Well, banish your fear! I am St Simeon, whom you invoked in supplication amidst the lightning. I am giving you this horn to protect you and your household for ever, so that whenever you are frightened by thunder or lightning, you may sound the horn, and immediately all your dread of impending danger will vanish, and within ear-shot of the horn lightning will have no power to harm you.' After this St Simeon asked if our knight had seen anything which had aroused astonishment or wonder in him. To this question he replied that he had seen a dog with fire flashing from its gaping jaws, and St Simeon vanished in pursuit of it, leaving the horn with the knight as a memorial of the event, and as a permanent protection for his household; and it has been seen and admired by many. It is long, with the usual curved shape of a hunting-horn; it looks as if it to peal is a common folklore motif often associated with demonic forces or the punishment of some human impiety.' In support of the identification, he cites 'the claim of Adam de Felton, Prior of St Mary's Carlisle and his fellow canons to the tithes for fish caught "in lacu de Terwathelan qui dicitur Laykebrayt"', recorded in the Pleas of the Forest of Inglewood of 13 Edward I.

On bells in English folklore, see Thiselton-Dyer, *English Folk Lore*, pp. 263–9. See also Burne and Jackson, *Shropshire Folk-Lore*, pp. 64–7 and 73–6, for a number of variants of the legend of wickedness punished by a flood and commemorated by sunken bells; cf. Sébillot, *Folk-Lore*, ii. 338–40 and 449–53.

quasi de cornibus bubali sit consortum. Porro canicula de qua meminimus in eiusdem uille confinio domum sacerdotis ingressa, per opposita sibi hostia transitum faciens, domum cum minus legitime genita familia succendit.<sup>1</sup>

lxxi. *De feris silue de Carduil*<sup>a</sup>

Succedit in eadem silua Carleoli miranda nouitas, quin imo f. 72<sup>v</sup> admiranda | uetustas. Cum enim silua sit ceruorum infinita multitudine copiosa, frequenter euenit quod, ubi paulo ante innumera ferarum uisa fuit multitudo, post horas paucas, si tota fuerit per-lustrata unicam feram non reddet, cum nec deperdit<sup>b</sup> multitudinis regressus cognosci possit aut egressus.<sup>1</sup>

lxxii. *De serpentibus*<sup>a 1</sup>

Seleucia Babiloniam pergentibus subiacet regio in Sidonia, in qua serpentes nascuntur immensi atque horrendi, habentes bina capita,

<sup>a</sup> De . . . Carduil] De silua fatata per horas CXQ      <sup>b</sup> deperitite N

<sup>a</sup> De serpentibus] De onagris cornutis CXQ

<sup>1</sup> The phantom dog in this chapter leads Liebrecht to connect it with the Wild Hunt (p. 140). On the English barguest, or barghast (i.e. a spectre usually seen in the form of a large black dog), cf. S. O. Addy, *Household Tales with Other Traditional Remains* (London, 1895), p. 137; E. S. Hartland, *English Fairy and Other Folk Tales* (London, 1890), pp. 234–44.

As Oman points out ('The English folklore', p. 14), 'the blowing of a horn as a protection during a thunderstorm is paralleled by the widespread medieval practice of ringing church bells at such times.' As to the identity of the saint, it seems unlikely (*contra* Duchesne) that the Simeon of Luke 2: 25–35 would be mistaken for a knight in an English forest; Oman suggests that: 'The choice seems to lie between two hermit saints of the name of Simeon who are commemorated at Mantua (26 July) and at Trier (1 June) respectively. The former, an Armenian, visited Britain in the course of an extensive tour in Western Europe and died in 1016. The latter . . . died in 1035, but is not known to have got nearer to this country than Normandy.' It may be, however, that we have here a local saint whose memory has not otherwise been preserved.

<sup>1</sup> As in the last two chapters, the forest in question is Inglewood, and as Cox points out ('Tarn Wadling and Gervase of Tilbury's "Laikibrait"', *Folklore*, lxxxv (1974), 129–30), its legendary significance as a place of wonder and as an area abundant in game is attested by the setting of King Arthur's hunting exploits there in the romances *The Weddyng of Syr Gawen and Dame Ragnell* and *The Awntyrs off Arthure at the Terne Wathelyn*.

<sup>1</sup> The text from here to iii. 81 is taken from the *Letter of Pharasmanes to Hadrian*. This

was fashioned from the horns of a wild ox. As for the dog which we mentioned, it entered the house of a priest on the outskirts of the same town, passing through the doors though they were shut against it, and it set fire to the house together with his unlawfully begotten family.<sup>1</sup>

71. *The Game in the Forest of Carlisle*

Next we have a wonderful novelty, or rather an old wonder, which occurs in the same forest of Carlisle. For although the forest is teeming with an endless supply of stags, it often happens that where, a little before, a countless host of animals was seen, a few hours later, even if the whole forest is scoured it will not yield a single one; but neither is it possible to perceive the retreat or departure of the vanished multitude.<sup>1</sup>

72. *Serpents*<sup>1</sup>

There is a region in Sidonia, on the route travelled by people on their way from Seleucia to Babylonia, in which huge and horrible serpents

letter, a fictional account of the marvels of Asia, must originally have been written in Greek (although no Greek version of it is known), for it draws exclusively on Greek sources, and distances are measured in stades. Pharasmanes, or Pharsman II, was the ruler of Iberia (now Georgia) in the time of Hadrian. The letter had been translated into Latin by the seventh century, when it was used as a source by Isidore of Seville (c. 570–636). After that it was pillaged by many authors, and formed an important source for Alexander books; cf. *Otia*, i. 10, n. 9; i. 14, n. 4.

The letter survives in several Latin versions which differ considerably among themselves. Three of them (from the ninth- or tenth-century BN MS nouv. acq. lat. 1065, ed. Omont, 1913; from an edition by Graff, 1826–9, based on a lost eighth- or ninth-century MS once in Strasbourg; and from the eleventh-century BL MS Cotton Tiberius B V, ed. Cockayne, 1861), together with Gervase's version from Leibniz's edition, were printed with a study of their interrelationship by E. Faral in 'Une source latine de l'histoire d'Alexandre: la lettre sur les merveilles de l'Inde', *Romania*, xliii (1914), 199–215 and 353–70. Another Latin version, in the early twelfth-century MS Bodley 614 (a better copy of the version in MS Cotton Tiberius B V), was printed by M. R. James in *The Marvels of the East*, pp. 15–24, along with the versions from the Cottonian MS, the Paris MS, and the *Otia*. There are also extant two translations into Anglo-Saxon and one into French: see *Marvels of the East*, pp. 51ff.; Ross, *Alexander Historiatus*, pp. 32–3; S. Rypins, *Three Old English Prose Texts*, EETS (OS) clxi (1924); and for a synoptic edition of the Latin, Anglo-Saxon, and French versions, see C. Lecouteux, *De rebus in oriente mirabilibus (Lettre de Farasmanes)* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1979).

The fullest version of the letter, and the only one to retain the epistolary prologue and

[See p. 696 for n. 1 cont.]

quorum oculi lucent uelut lucerna.<sup>b 2</sup> Nascuntur et onagri cornuti et forma maximi.

Huic confinis Arabia iungitur, inculta propter serpentes cerastes<sup>3</sup> nuncupatos, cornua arietina habentes, quibus homines uulnerant et perimunt. Illic multitudo piperis nascitur, quod ibidem serpentes custodiunt. Verum homines, cum maturum piper comperiunt, loca incendunt et sic serpentes igne fugant; et ita, mutato colore<sup>c</sup> natiuo, piper nigrum fit ab incendio.<sup>4</sup>

lxxiii. *De equinocephalis*<sup>a 1</sup>

Seleucie a parte dextra euntibus ad mare Rubrum sunt uicinales diuisiones. Ibi nascuntur equinocephali, iubas<sup>b 2</sup> equorum habentes, ualidissimi, immensis dentibus, flammam spirantes.

Vicinali diuisione<sup>3</sup> coheret ciuitas hominibus plena.<sup>c</sup>

A dextra parte descenditur ad Egyptum. Hinc ad insulam in qua nascuntur nutrientes<sup>d</sup> barbam usque ad genua, qui nuncupantur idrofagi,<sup>4</sup> quia pisces crudos comedunt.

<sup>b</sup> sic MSS for lucerne      <sup>c</sup> calore N

<sup>a</sup> equicenofalis NAI      <sup>b</sup> id est comas add. by author above iubas N      <sup>c</sup> space left after plena NQ      <sup>d</sup> nutrites N

epilogue, is found in the Paris MS, and it is to this that the text in the *Otia* is most closely related. It is noteworthy that, while the Strasbourg MS entitles the text: 'Epistola Premonis regis ad Trajanum imperatorem' (Hadrian is often called Trajan in ancient documents), and the other MSS do not present the text as a letter, the Paris version begins: 'Diuo Adriano: Fermes diuo Adriano salutem'. The rubricator of N twice wrote down the margin the words: 'Fermes ad Adrianum imperatorem.' The Paris MS is often corrupt; Gervase's text is generally better, but a fair number of the corruptions are common to both. It seems therefore that Gervase used a better copy of the version found in the Paris MS.

Gervase omits the first and last paragraphs of the letter, which contain the epistolary formulas, and he transposes the content of paragraphs ii to x (Faral's numeration) to the end (iii. 82). At two points (on the balsam-tree and the phoenix) he adds material from other sources. Otherwise the changes he makes generally have the aim of improving the style, cutting out uninteresting details such as statements of distances, abridging prolixity, and paraphrasing obscurity.

This chapter reproduces paragraphs xi and xii of the letter.

<sup>2</sup> For these serpents, called *amphisbaena* because of their two heads, cf. Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xxx. 35. 85; Solinus, *Collect.* xxvii. 29; Lucan, *Pharsalia*, ix. 719; and Isidore, *Etym.* xii. 4. 20. A phrase from the letter: 'cuius oculi lucent uelut lucerne' ('lucerna' in Gervase and the Paris MS), appears in Isidore, but not in any previous Latin description. The serpents are mentioned in the *Historia de preliis* (ed. Zingerle, p. 256).

Gervase incorporated many of the marvels described in this letter in the geographical

are found: they have two heads, and their eyes shine like lamps.<sup>2</sup> Onagers are also found there, a horned variety, of huge dimensions.

Bordering on this land is its neighbour Arabia, uncultivated on account of the serpents called cerastes.<sup>3</sup> They have rams' horns, with which they gore and kill people. A great quantity of pepper grows there, over which the serpents in the region keep watch. But when people have established that the pepper is ripe, they set fire to the area, and thus get rid of the serpents by burning them out; and as a result the natural colour of the pepper changes, and it becomes black from the fire.<sup>4</sup>

73. *Equinocephali*<sup>1</sup>

To the right of Seleucia for those heading towards the Red Sea are some marches, where equinocephali are found: these creatures have horses' manes.<sup>2</sup> They are very strong, with huge teeth, and they breathe out flames.

A city full of people draws its life from this no man's land.<sup>3</sup>

To the right is the route down towards Egypt. From here one comes to an island in which people live who grow their beards down to their knees. They are called hydrophagi,<sup>4</sup> because they eat raw fish.

section of the *Otia*; the two-headed serpents and the horned onagers are found in ii. 4, at n. 27.

<sup>3</sup> The name *κεράσσης* means 'horned'; cf. Solinus, *Collect.* xxvii. 28; Isidore, *Etym.* xii. 4. 18.

<sup>4</sup> The description of how pepper turns black is found in Isidore (*Etym.* xvii. 8. 8); it does not appear in any earlier Latin text, apart from the letter. This legend also found a place in the *Historia de preliis* (ed. Zingerle, p. 254), and in the *Letter of Prester John* (ed. Zarncke, p. 912); cf. *Otia*, ii. 3, at n. 22.

<sup>1</sup> Gervase omits the statement of distance which forms paragraph xiii of the letter. This chapter starts at paragraph xiv and ends half-way through paragraph xvii of the Paris text. Gervase's *equinocephali* ('horse-headed', formed from a mixture of Latin and Greek) must be the result of an attempt to eliminate an earlier corruption: the creatures appear as *quinococephali* in the Paris MS, but the original Greek would have been *κυνοκέφαλοι* ('dog-headed'). They figure in the *Historia de preliis* (ed. Zingerle, p. 254).

<sup>2</sup> The word *iubas* is the first of three words to be glossed by the author in this chapter, the other two being *centrios* and *sure* (see apparatus); the glosses do not appear in any of the other MSS.

<sup>3</sup> The MSS of Gervase and the Paris MS agree in the reading *diuisione*; the dative would have seemed easier, but the whole phrase is obscure.

<sup>4</sup> *Hydrophagi* ('water-eaters') is a corruption of the Greek *ἰχθυοφάγοι* ('fish-eaters'); again, the Paris MS is closer, though still corrupt, with *idtofagi*. These creatures appear in the *Epistola Alexandri ad Aristotelem* (ed. Boer, p. 32; cf. *Otia*, Appendix i. 21).

Est in eadem insula flumen Gargarum, trans quod nascuntur formice mirmidones,<sup>e5</sup> magnitudine catulorum, habentes pedes senos, et centrios<sup>f6</sup> quasi locuste marine; dentes canum habent, colore nigre, aurumque custodiunt, quod proferunt de subterraneis ad lucem. Cum uero hominem aut animal quodlibet attigerint, ad ossa deuorant. Suntque uelocissime,<sup>g</sup> ut magis uolare quam gradi censeantur. He sole oriente usque in horam quintam sub terra aurum fodiunt, et exinde in lucem producunt, quod ab artificibus ingeniose extrahitur. Ducunt enim camelos quam plures et camelas cum pullis suis, et cum ad ripam transeundi fluminis peruenerint, ad riparios cespites pullos alligant. Transito itaque flumine cum utriusque sexus camelis, camelabus aurum imponunt, que onuste et<sup>h</sup> amore pullorum allecte cursu festino transuadant. Comperientes igitur homines insequentium agmina formicarum, relictis ad fluuium et ad deuorandum expositis camelis masculis, celeri transitu flumen peragunt. Sane formice, predonum captura fraudate, obiectorum camelorum deuoratione retardantur, et fluuiio contradicente prepedite, faciunt quod possunt dum deuorant camelos quos inueniunt. Sic fit ut aurum illud obrizum ad nos usque perueniat.

Inter has autem uias colonia est ex irrigatione Nili fertilis facta. Nilus enim implet Brisonem, Egypti fluuium, cuius beneficio terra inundata ad fertilitatem reuocatur. In his Brisonis fluuii confiniis elefantes nascuntur affluenter; homines quoque longa femora ad mensuram duodecim pedum habentes: reliquum corpus itidem duodecim pedum longitudine terminatur. Horum brachia candida usque ad humeros, sure<sup>i</sup> nigre, pedes rubei, capud rotundum, nasus procerus. Hii homines certis temporibus in ciconias transformantur, et apud nos quotannis fetum faciunt.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>e</sup> mirmidiones *N*      <sup>f</sup> id est medias partes *add. by author alongside centrios N*  
<sup>g</sup> uelocissimi *Aβ*      <sup>h</sup> et supplied by author *N*      <sup>i</sup> sure supplied by author  
 (correcting sine), id est crura *add. by author in margin N*; sine *β*

<sup>5</sup> The word *mirmidones* comes from *μυρμηδόνες*, a Doric word for ants (see Hesychius, s.v.). On this tale of gold-guarding ants, see B. Laufer, 'Die Sage von den goldgrabenden Ameisen', *T'oung Pao*, Series 2, ix (1908), 429–52; G. C. Druce, 'An account of the *Μυρμηκολέων* or Ant-lion', *Antiquaries Journal*, iii (1923), 347–64; J. Needham *et al.*, *Science and Civilisation in China* (Cambridge, 1954–), v. 4. 33, 338–9; *MI* B756. This story, well known to the Greeks from its appearance in Herodotus (iii. 102–5), is found in Latin literature as early as Pomponius Mela (iii. 62). It reappears frequently in various forms in medieval literature: cf. Pseudo-Hugh of St Victor, *De bestiis et aliis rebus*, ii. 29 (*PL* clxxvii. 76), *The Letter of Prester John*, redaction D (ed. Zarncke, p. 911), and the *Historia de preliis* (ed. Zingerle, p. 255). The French explorer Michel Peissel has claimed that the 'ants' are in fact marmots, mountain rodents which still push gold-bearing sand to

On the same island is the river Gargarum, beyond which are found giant ants<sup>5</sup> as big as puppies, each with six feet, and a body<sup>6</sup> like a lobster's; they have dogs' fangs, and are black in colour. They hoard gold, which they bring up to the light from underground. If ever they catch a human being or any living creature, they gnaw them down to the bones. They are very fast-moving, so that they appear to fly rather than walk. From sunrise until eleven o'clock they mine gold underground, and from that time on they bring it out into the light. It is ingeniously extracted from them by tricksters. For people take as many camels as possible, together with their mates and their young, and when they reach the bank of the river that has to be crossed, they tie the baby camels to clumps of bushes on the bank. They then cross the river with the camels of both sexes, and load the gold onto the female ones. These, loaded down, but enticed by the love of their young, make rapid headway in crossing the water. Then the men, as soon as they perceive columns of ants coming after them, leave the male camels by the river as an easy prey to be devoured, and hastily cross to the other side of the water. And in fact the ants, cheated as they have been by the robbers' looting, are hindered by their consumption of the camels left in their way, and impeded by the obstacle of the river, so that all they can do is devour the camels which they find. It is by such means that that pure gold reaches us.

In the midst of these routes there is a settlement rendered fertile by the irrigation of the Nile. For the Nile swells the Briso, a river of Egypt, and the land, flooded by the beneficial action of this river, is reclaimed to fertility. In this basin of the river Briso elephants are found in great numbers. There are also human beings with thighs as much as twelve feet long, the rest of whose body does not exceed the same length of twelve feet. Their arms are white up to the shoulders, their calves are black, their feet red, their head round, and their nose long. These people turn into storks in certain seasons, and every year they produce their young in our midst.<sup>7</sup>

the surface from their burrows in the Himalayas; the marmot was known as a 'mountain ant' in ancient Persian (see *The Times*, 4 December 1906, p. 12).

<sup>6</sup> James (*Marvels of the East*, p. 43 n.) takes *centrios* to mean 'stings', but Gervase's gloss (see apparatus) shows that he understood it to mean the body, or trunk, of the ant.

<sup>7</sup> This paragraph is very obscure in the letter (where it forms the beginning of section xvii), and Gervase does his best to make it intelligible. The river Briso has a long tradition: cf. *Geographi Graeci minores*, ed. C. Müller (Paris, 1855), i. 364. It is stated on Walckenaer's authority in de Xivrey's *Traditions tératologiques* (p. 315) to be the river Mareb in Abyssinia. On the stork people, cf. *Otia*, iii. 63, n. 4.

lxxiv. *De bestiis Brisonis*<sup>a 1</sup>

In eisdem Brisonis fluuii partibus nascuntur bestie celeres ad instar equorum; pedes leonum habent, colla equina, longitudinem<sup>b</sup> pedum tricenorum, uastitatem pedum duodecim, edificio amplo. Si quis huiusmodi bestias persequi uoluerit, sanguinem suum a quolibet seseque adimens fugit, et ab eis omnino non<sup>c</sup> nocetur; et yppofogi appellantur.

lxxv. *De hominibus sine capite*<sup>1</sup>

Est et alia insula in Brisone fluuio, ubi nascuntur homines sine capite, habentes oculos et os in pectore; longitudo eorum pedum duodecim, latitudo et uastitas pedum septem, corporis color auro similis. Ibi quoque nascuntur dracones immensi, quorum longitudo centum pedum et quinquaginta latitudo, et grossisies ad quantitatem maximarum columpnarum.<sup>b</sup>

lxxvi. *De mulieribus barbatis*<sup>1</sup>

A parte dextra euntibus ad mare Rubrum<sup>2</sup> ciuitates due sunt, Fenix et Ioracia, ubi mansio est hominum plurimum locupletum, a quibus ad Indiam<sup>a</sup> et<sup>b</sup> Arabiam directiones<sup>3</sup> fiunt. Hi tenent Rubri maris imperium. Illic nascuntur margarite et maxime et optime forme.

f. 73<sup>v</sup> Circa eadem loca sunt | mulieres horrende, barbate usque ad mamillas; caput habent planum, pellibus uestiuntur, uenatrices

<sup>a</sup> fluuii *add. after* Brisonis CXQ      <sup>b</sup> longitudinem N      <sup>c</sup> non *supplied by* author N

<sup>a</sup> natis *add. after* hominibus CXQ      <sup>b</sup> columpnarum N

<sup>a</sup> Indiam *supplied by* author N      <sup>b</sup> ad *add. after* et XQ

<sup>1</sup> This chapter corresponds to section 4 of paragraph xvii in the letter; the monsters are named *yppofogi* (i.e. *hippophugi*, 'runaway horses') in both. The phrase 'celeris ad instar equorum' in Gervase's text seems more apt, in view of their name, than 'colores (sic, for colore) similes equorum' in the Paris MS. The second sentence is problematic, but it seems that 'a beast of this kind' must be the subject of the verbs *fugit* and *nocetur*, in spite of the plural *bestias*; it is thus the fact that they run away as fast as horses that is emphasized, so depriving any hunter of their blood (though the construction of *a* and the ablative with *adimo* is not normal). The Paris MS has the even more difficult: 'sanguinem

74. *The Beasts of the Briso*<sup>1</sup>

In the same regions of the river Briso there are beasts as swift as horses, which have lions' paws and horses' necks, and are thirty feet long, twelve feet broad, and heavily built. If anyone tries to hunt a beast of this kind, it runs away so fast that no hunter can catch it or take its life; it suffers no harm from hunters at all. These creatures are called hippophugi.

75. *People with No Head*<sup>1</sup>

There is also another island in the river Briso, where headless people are found, who have their eyes and mouth on their chest; they are twelve feet tall, and seven feet wide and deep, and the colour of their body is like gold. Huge serpents are also found there, a hundred feet long and fifty feet wide, and as thick as massive columns.

76. *Bearded Women*<sup>1</sup>

On the right-hand side on the way to the Red Sea<sup>2</sup> there are two cities, Phoenix and Joracia, where exceedingly wealthy people live. From them there are direct routes<sup>3</sup> to India and Arabia. These people hold sway over the Red Sea. Pearls are found there, both large and finely-formed.

In the same vicinity there are frightful women with beards down to their breasts; they have a flat head, and wear skins, for they are

suam a quolibet se sequi adimens sugit', apparently meaning that the hunter takes the blood of every beast and sucks it; other versions make the creatures run so fast at the sight of a pursuer that they sweat blood.

<sup>1</sup> Gervase here presents a neater but otherwise close reproduction of sections 5 and 6 of paragraph xvii. Headless people are common to all the accounts of monstrous races; in antiquity they were called *blemyae* or *blemyes* (see e.g. Pomponius Mela, viii. 48; Pliny, *Hist. nat.* v. 8. 46; Solinus, *Collect.* xxxi. 5; Isidore, *Etym.* xi. 3. 17); cf. *Otia*, ii. 3, at n. 29.

<sup>1</sup> Gervase omits the brief and unremarkable paragraphs xviii and xix, and combines paragraphs xx and xxi in this chapter. Again, his version is close to that of the letter but is superior in its Latinity.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. the Indian Ocean; cf. *Otia*, ii. 3, n. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Gervase's *directiones* corresponds to *collationes* in the letter, both somewhat puzzling.

sunt, pro canibus bestias nutriunt ad uenandum, ad instar ac quantitatem leopardorum.<sup>4</sup>

lxxvii. *De feminis<sup>a</sup> que habent dentes aprinos<sup>1</sup>*

Sunt et uicini montes in quibus<sup>b</sup> nascuntur mulieres<sup>c</sup> que dentes habent aprinos, capillos usque ad talos, et in lumbis caudas bouinas; alte sunt pedibus septem, corpus pilosum ut camelus.<sup>2</sup>

In hoc sane confinio colonia optime fertilis est, in qua manebat Darius,<sup>3</sup> rex Persarum, ubi plurima ubertate amenitateque fruebatur. In illa quoque uicinitate reges plurimi sunt ad oceanum, quorum nomina uel numerum<sup>d4</sup> ignoramus. Verumptamen hoc testamur, quod ab inde redeuntes conspeximus plurimis ac pretiosis donariis remuneratos.<sup>5</sup>

lxxviii. *De Ethiopia et palaciis duobus<sup>a1</sup>*

Iuxta terminos memoratos sunt flumina ex quibus lapides preciosi eliciuntur, ubi gemme fiunt naturales. Gens autem illa Etyopum nomine censetur.<sup>2</sup>

Iuxta hos quoque oceani fines nascuntur Soraci, qui aput alios Tritonides,<sup>3</sup> quasi diuini, appellantur, a quibus de omni interrogatione responsum accipitur.

<sup>a</sup> feminis] mulieribus CXQ      <sup>b</sup> in quibus] ubi XQ      <sup>c</sup> mulieres supplied by author N  
<sup>d</sup> numerum supplied by author N; om. XQ

<sup>a</sup> De . . . duobus] De palacio solis et lune CXQ

<sup>4</sup> The rulers of the Red Sea and the bearded women also appear in *Otia*, ii. 4, at n. 115.

<sup>1</sup> Paragraphs xxii and xxiii are reproduced here, but omitting the second half of paragraph xxii, in which the epistolary form emerges.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Otia*, ii. 3, at n. 42.

<sup>3</sup> James remarks (*Marvels of the East*, p. 49) that this mention of Darius may derive from the Alexander-romance.

<sup>4</sup> It seems likely that *numerum* was omitted from or illegible in the author's copy of the letter. In *N*, the author supplied the missing word in a space left by the scribe, but *β* probably never received the word: hence its omission from *X* and *Q*, while *I*, as often, shows signs of conflation with *N* or one of its descendants.

<sup>5</sup> In the Paris MS the final sentence reads: 'Ad quos qui forte peruenerint remunerati dimittuntur.' Thus Gervase is basically drawing on the letter here; it is debatable whether his stronger affirmation in the first person is a literary device to lend conviction, or

huntresses, and rear wild beasts of the shape and size of leopards to serve as hunting-dogs.<sup>4</sup>

77. *Women who have Boars' Teeth<sup>1</sup>*

There are also mountains nearby in which women are found who have boars' teeth, hair down to their ankles, and cows' tails at the base of their spine; they are seven feet tall, and their body is hairy like a camel.<sup>2</sup>

In this region there is an immensely fertile settlement. Darius,<sup>3</sup> king of the Persians, lived there, and delighted in the abundant richness and loveliness of the place. Also in that vicinity there are a great many kings towards the ocean, whose names and number<sup>4</sup> we do not know. However we are certain of this, that we have seen people returning from there rewarded with many precious gifts.<sup>5</sup>

78. *Ethiopia and the Two Palaces<sup>1</sup>*

Near the territories of which we have been speaking there are rivers containing precious stones which anyone can pick up; for natural gemstones are found there. The race which lives in those parts is known by the name of the Ethiopians.<sup>2</sup>

Also near these ocean-bounds live the Soraci, whom others call the Tritonides,<sup>3</sup> a name signifying their divinity. From them one receives a reply to any question.

whether it was prompted by genuine encounters with people who had travelled in the east.

<sup>1</sup> The first two paragraphs of this chapter comprise a slightly shorter version of paragraphs xxiv and xxv of the letter in the Paris MS. The third paragraph corresponds to paragraph xxvi of the letter, both versions containing corruptions. The rest reproduces paragraph xxvii, with some additional information interpolated.

<sup>2</sup> There is some confusion here; cf. the Paris MS: 'Sunt namque et alia flumina ubi pretiosi lapides nascuntur, unde gemme naturales sunt nigre: hoc genus Ethiopes appellantur,' while the Strasbourg MS reads: 'Sunt ibi serpentes in quibus lapides pretiosi nascuntur. Et illic sunt Ethiopes, nigri homines.' The blackness, either of the gems or of the Ethiopians, has been omitted from Gervase's text.

<sup>3</sup> In Greek mythology Triton was a merman, son of Poseidon and Amphitrite; in some legends the name is generic rather than personal. The letter reads *apud uos*: Gervase's *alios* is an example of the changes he introduced in order to suppress the epistolary format.

Sunt et circa eadem loca palacia<sup>4</sup> duo, unum solis, alterum lune. Illud solis die mediocriter calet et nocte feruet.<sup>5</sup> Illic nascuntur homines habentes sexdecim pedes in longitudine, septem uero in latitudine, caput magnum, auriculas quasi alas, corpus candidum; et cum homines uiderint, auriculas protendunt ita ut eos uolare credas.<sup>6</sup>

In hiis terminis colonia est solis, ad modum insule, in longitudine habens stadia ducenta et in latitudine totidem. Colonia ergo solis, muro cincta, Eliopolis nuncupatur, in structura aerea ac ferrea opere alterato.<sup>7</sup> Illic arbores sunt lauro et oliue consimiles, ex quibus thus et opobalsamum distillando nascuntur.

<sup>8</sup>Dicitur autem balsamus arbor, balsamum distillans humor, carpobalsamum<sup>c</sup> fructus, silobalsamum lignum quod inciditur, opobalsamum liquor quem in foramine concauitatis pendere cernimus, sic dictus ab *ope*, quod est concauitas (unde opida dicuntur a cumcauitate uallorum que de Ope, id est terra,<sup>d</sup> fiunt). Sane Dioscorides dicit balsamum fruticem esse ad<sup>e</sup> quantitatem tantum duorum cubitorum, crescentem circa Babiloniam, in campo<sup>9</sup> in quo sunt septem fontes; si autem ad alium locum transfertur, nec florem nec fructum facit. In estate rami eius exciduntur aliquantulum, sicque gutta exit et<sup>f</sup> in suppositum uas uitreum stillat ad quadraginta libras.<sup>8</sup>

In eodem loco due sunt edes satis consimiles, ex auro quadrato<sup>g</sup><sup>10</sup> et

<sup>b</sup> sic MSS for alternato      <sup>c</sup> carpobalsamum ed.; carpobalsamum NACQI;  
caipobalsamum X      <sup>d</sup> de add. before terra β      <sup>e</sup> adj et N      <sup>f</sup> et supplied  
by author N      <sup>g</sup> quadrato Letter (Paris text); quadrate MSS

<sup>4</sup> Instead of *palacia*, or *latera* as the letter reads, *lacus* is required; the other versions are nearer with *laci* or *loci*. James comments: 'The paragraph can be traced back to the account of the springs in the Oasis of Zeus Ammon, of which Aristotle told, according to Antigonus, *Mirab.* 144. They are also in *Itin. Alexandri* 50' (*Marvels of the East*, p. 28).

<sup>5</sup> Here Gervase and the Paris MS both omit a phrase, which can be restored from the other versions; the Strasbourg text reads: 'nocte frigidus, die calidus est; qui uero lunae, nocte calidus et die est frigidus.' Gervase has attempted to make sense of his original by the insertion of *mediocriter*.

<sup>6</sup> 'The Panotii of the large ears are regular members of the band of marvels. They go back to Skylax at least and are called *Ἐνωτοκοίται* and *Ἰστροκίνοι* (sic for *Ἰστροκίνοι*) (*Marvels of the East*, p. 28). In the letter, their ears are described as being 'quasi vanno similes' ('like a winning fan'), instead of 'quasi alas'.

<sup>7</sup> The phrase 'opere alterato' appears only in Gervase, and may represent an attempt on his part to make sense of his source; the Paris text reads: 'In qua colonia est Solis, nomine Eliopolis, muro cincta in structura aerea et ferrea altercatos stadia .ccc.'

<sup>8-8</sup> Dicitur . . . ad quadraginta libras] This paragraph, supplying information on the balsam-tree (already described in *Otia*, iii. 51, q.v.), has been inserted by Gervase in the middle of paragraph xxvii of the letter. The first sentence (including the confusion of *ὀπός*, 'juice', with *ὀπή*, 'hole') is derived from Isidore (*Etym.* xvii. 8. 14). For the rest he names Dioscorides as his authority. Dioscorides describes the balsam-tree in *Περὶ ὕλης*, i. 19, but as Barrière remarks (*Contribution*, p. 76, n. 838), Gervase's account seems to be based on a

In the same region there are also two palaces,<sup>4</sup> one of the sun, the other of the moon. That of the sun is moderately warm by day and white-hot by night.<sup>5</sup> People live there who are sixteen feet tall and seven feet wide, with a large head, ears like wings, and a white body. When they catch sight of ordinary people they have a way of extending their ear-lobes so that you think they are flying.<sup>6</sup>

In this distant land is the sun's abode, in the form of an island, two hundred stades in length and the same in width. Surrounded by a wall, this abode of the sun is called Heliopolis; it is built of bronze and iron in alternating work.<sup>7</sup> There are trees there which resemble the laurel and the olive; these produce frankincense and balsam, which ooze from them in drops.

<sup>8</sup>Now *balsamus* is the name of the balsam-tree, and *balsamum* the name of the resin which exudes from it, while the fruit is called *carpobalsamum*, the wood in which the incision is made is called *xylobalsamum*, and the gum which we see dripping down in the hollowed-out fissure is called *opobalsamum*, from *ὀπή*, which means 'a hollow' (and so towns are called *oppida* from the hollowness of the entrenchments which are dug out of *Ops*, that is, the earth). Dioscorides says that the balsam-tree is a bush no more than two cubits high, which grows in the vicinity of Babylon, on a plain<sup>9</sup> on which there are seven springs; if it is transplanted to another site, it produces neither flower nor fruit. In summer a small incision is made in its branches, and from this a drop oozes out and falls into a glass vessel placed underneath; eventually forty pounds of gum is collected.<sup>8</sup>

In the same place there are two temples, very much alike; they are constructed of cinnamon and blocks<sup>10</sup> of gold. One temple is three

faulty Latin translation of the text. Dioscorides says that the balsam-tree grows only in Judaea and Egypt, and that the quantity of opobalsamum collected each summer does not exceed six or seven *χόας*; it seems that the translator mistook *χόας* for the accusative plural of *χρή* ('stream': hence the seven springs) rather than *χόας* (= *congius*, a liquid measure of nearly six pints). See Dioscorides, *De materia medica*, ed. M. Wellmann (Berlin, 1907), i. 24-6; 'Der Longobardische Dioscorides des Marcellus Virgilius', K. Hoffman and T. M. Auracher, *Romanische Forschungen*, i (1883), 65-6; H. Mihaescu, 'La version latine di Dioscoride', *Ephemeris Dacoromana*, viii (1938), 298-348.

<sup>9</sup> The Babylon in question is the Egyptian city of that name; Annie Duchesne (*Livre*, p. 166, n. 202) identifies the plain as 'le champ de Matarieh', which attracted pilgrims because it was believed to have been traversed by the Holy Family at the time of the Flight into Egypt.

<sup>10</sup> The word order suggests that the reading *quadrato*, from the Paris MS, is preferable; however, *quadrate* gives a slightly easier meaning (*viz* 'square', referring to the temples).



cinamomo constructe. Longitudo unius edis et latitudo pedum trecentorum .lxxv., parietes nouem. In hac est arula<sup>b</sup> ex margaritis et cilindris instructa, latitudine pedum septuaginta. Ibidem lectulus solis ex auro obrizo confectus et ebore, lapidibus preciosissimis interiectis, cuius fulgor radiat ad palatii interioris consistentiam.<sup>11</sup> Est in eadem ede uinea aurea, cuius uitis ex auro facta et confixa, et eius uitis pauimentum ex lapidibus preciosissimis et cilindris; in uitibus aureis pendent racemi ex margaritis et unionibus. Edes contigua domus est sacerdotis, ex auro strata. Sacerdos uero thure uescitur<sup>c</sup><sup>12</sup> et ex opobalsamo uiuit; sub uitibus in pauimento dormit. Extraneo nulli aditum pandit nisi qui apud Eliopolim commorabitur.<sup>j</sup><sup>13</sup>

lxxix. *De fenice*<sup>1</sup>

Ad confinium Eliopolis mons est Adans,<sup>a</sup> inascensibilis propter sui celsitudinem, in quo auis est caput habens aquile, pennas maximas similes luppe.<sup>2</sup>

f. 73<sup>v</sup> In hoc quoque monte | auis est fenix, amplam habens uittam<sup>b</sup> in capite, cristam similem orbiculari caude pauonis. In hac aue deliciae solis esse<sup>c</sup> referuntur: innumeris uiuit annis, ex sola, ut tradunt, diuinitate processit, ideoque amomo thureque uiuens, nido insidet ex margaritis ac unionibus conserto. Ex se nidoque combusto renascitur, unde semper uiuere predicatur,<sup>3</sup> secundum illud Ouidii:

<sup>b</sup> aurula N    <sup>i</sup> uescitur CQ; uestitur NAXI    <sup>j</sup> Hic inserendum capitulum de arboribus solis et lune written by Peiresc at the end of this chapter in I; i.e. item 8 of the addenda was to be inserted here (see Appendix i. 8)

<sup>a</sup> Adans NAI; Athlans C; ad followed by a space XQ; adamans Letter (Paris MS)  
<sup>b</sup> id est eplam add. by author above uittam N    <sup>c</sup> esse supplied by author N

<sup>11</sup> The unusual word *consistentiam*, used by Gervase in a similar sense in iii. 66 (penultimate paragraph), does not occur in the letter; the Paris MS reads: 'quippe fulgur eius radiat pedes .xvi.'

<sup>12</sup> Frankincense and balsam also constituted the diet of the phoenix (cf. *Otia*, iii. 79); on the association of such a diet with long life, see J.-P. Albert, *Odeurs de sainteté: La mythologie chrétienne des aromates* (Paris, 1990), pp. 101–27.

<sup>13</sup> This description of Heliopolis is, as Faral remarks ('Une source latine', p. 364), closely related to the Alexander-texts. The temple with its altar of gold and precious stones is found in Pseudo-Callisthenes, iii. 28 (ed. Kroll, p. 129). James points out (*Marvels of the East*, p. 29) that the sun's couch and the golden vine appear in the Syriac version of

hundred and sixty-five feet broad and long, with walls nine feet high. Inside it there is an altar seventy feet wide, built of pearls and cylindrical stones. There too is the sun's couch, made of pure gold and ivory, inlaid with precious stones; its splendour irradiates the whole interior<sup>11</sup> of the palace. In the same temple there is a golden vineyard, in which a vine made of gold is fixed in place; its bed is made of precious cylindrical stones, and on the golden vine-branches there hang clusters of pearls, large and small. The temple next door is the dwelling-place of the priest; it is paved with gold. The priest lives on a diet<sup>12</sup> of frankincense and balsam; he sleeps on the jewelled floor under the vines. He opens the door to no stranger, unless the person is going to remain in Heliopolis.<sup>13</sup>

79. *The Phoenix*<sup>1</sup>

In the neighbourhood of Heliopolis is Mount Adans, unscalable on account of its height. On it lives a bird with an eagle's head and very large feathers like a hoopoe.<sup>2</sup>

Also found on this mountain is the phoenix, a bird with a wide fillet on its head, and a crest with a rounded spread like that of a peacock's tail. It is said that the sun takes delight in this bird: it lives for countless years, and sprang, so they say, from the Godhead alone; and so, living on amomum and frankincense, it sits in a nest which is studded with pearls, large and small. It is reborn from the combustion of itself and its nest, and for this reason it is said to live for ever,<sup>3</sup> in accordance with the lines of Ovid:

Alexander's *Letter to Aristotle*, and also in Meusel's text of Pseudo-Callisthenes (but not in the Latin version of the *Letter to Aristotle*, nor in other versions of Pseudo-Callisthenes); they also figure in the oldest redaction of the *Historia de preliis* (ed. F. Pfister (Heidelberg, 1913), p. 112). The Latin version of the *Letter to Aristotle* gives a similar account of the priest's manner of life (*Epistola*, ed. Boer, p. 49).

For the cylindrical stones of the altar, cf. Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xxxvii. 34. 113; Juvenal, *Sat.* ii. 61; and for other golden trees, see Liebrecht, pp. 140–2.

<sup>1</sup> This chapter corresponds to paragraph xxviii in the Paris MS.

<sup>2</sup> The word *luppa* or *lupa*, found in the Paris MS as well as in Gervase, appears to be a variant of *hupa* or *upupa*, a hoopoe; cf. F. Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française* (Paris, 1881–1902), where *lupoge* is defined 'espèce de huppe'. Other versions of the letter name this bird as, of course, the griffin.

<sup>3</sup> Gervase's account of the phoenix is close to that of the letter but without its stylistic and grammatical faults. See also *Otia*, iii. 78, n. 12.

Vna est, que reparat seseque reseminat, ales:  
Assirii<sup>d</sup> fenica uocant; non fruge, nec herbis,  
Sed thuris lacrimis et succo uiuit amomi.<sup>4</sup>

lxxx. *De flammis solis orientis*<sup>a,b 1</sup>

Sunt ad montis huius confinium alii montes, quos Olimpum et Smaragdon uulgo nominant.<sup>c</sup> Hii sole oriente flammam emittunt usque in horam quintam.

Circa montes hos mare feruet, quod coloniam Eliopolis tangit. Illud non dixerim transire, sed nec respicere humanus oculus aliquamdiu potest.

Porro in colonia Eliopolis homines sunt religiosi et deorum cultores in gente sua. Nec procul ab illis homines sunt deos spernentes, Egyptii quidem.

In eorum quoque confinio sunt homines caprarum cornua et pedes habentes, quos alii Gorgones, alii Gaulales nominant.<sup>2</sup>

lxxxi. *De hominibus qui pedes habent octenos et totidem oculos*<sup>a 1</sup>

Si quis dimensionem terrarum perscrutari parauerit, attendat non omnia nos corporali uisione probasse que scripsimus, quin immo quedam ex alienis libris transumpta,<sup>b</sup> quedam ex uirorum proborum relatione conguessimus, nihil mendacium linguis aut mimorum fallacii contribuentes.

Vt ergo premisimus,<sup>2</sup> a finibus Antiochie, cui Dirus<sup>c</sup> fluuius

<sup>d</sup> Asserii *N*

<sup>a</sup> orientis supplied by author *N*      <sup>b</sup> De . . . orientis] De montibus flammantibus in ortu solis *CXQ*      <sup>c</sup> nominabant *XQ*

<sup>a</sup> De . . . oculos] De hominibus suniis (*X*; simis *CQ*; for simiis) et gallinis que comedentes urunt *CXQ*      <sup>b</sup> transumpta (p added by author) *N*      <sup>c</sup> Dirus] Farfar *CXQ*

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ovid, *Met.* xv. 392–4. These lines, already quoted in ii. 4 (p. 198), were added by Gervase to his source.

<sup>1</sup> Gervase here combines paragraphs xxix to xxxiii in one chapter, presenting an improved version of the text in the letter. The other versions all end at paragraph xxviii.

<sup>2</sup> The Gorgones and the Gaulales are mentioned by Isidore (*Etym.* xiv. 6. 9 and ix. 2. 124), but they are not the creatures described here. The letter reads (paragraph xxxiii) 'qui Gegotones appellantur'. It then reverts to the first person and epistolary form for the

One bird there is, which renews and regenerates itself:  
The Assyrians call it the phoenix. It lives, not on seeds or green food,  
But on drops of frankincense and the juice of amomum.<sup>4</sup>

80. *The Flames of the Rising Sun*<sup>1</sup>

There are other mountains near this one, which are commonly called Olympus and Smaragdon: these emit flames from sunrise until eleven o'clock.

Around these mountains the sea is boiling hot, because it touches the domain of Heliopolis. It is not possible for the human eye to look on that sea for any length of time, let alone for anyone to cross it.

Further, in the domain of Heliopolis there are people who are religious and worship gods in their own way. Not far from them are people who scorn the gods; these are the Egyptians.

Also in their vicinity there are people with goats' horns and hooves, whom some call the Gorgons, others the Gaulales.<sup>2</sup>

81. *People who have Eight Feet and as Many Eyes*<sup>1</sup>

If anyone is proposing to explore the extent of the world, let him take note that we have not examined with our own eyes all the things that we have written about, but we have included in our collection some things culled from other people's books, and some based on the report of honest men; we owe nothing, however, to the tongues of liars or the falsehoods of players.

And so, as we have said before,<sup>2</sup> from the boundaries of Antioch, epilogue: Gervase therefore omits the second half of paragraph xxxiii and paragraphs xxxiv and xxxv.

<sup>1</sup> Here, after Gervase's introductory remarks, we find the content of paragraphs ii to v and vii to x of the letter; paragraph vi is omitted. The letter begins with many indications of distance, although the pretence that the work is a serious geographical treatise soon fades out; Gervase omits nearly all of the statistics, twice substituting 'mansiones plereque' for specific distances.

<sup>2</sup> Antioch is mentioned several times in *Otia*, ii. 4. On p. 200 the river Pharpar is (wrongly) said to flow past it; *CXQ* read *Farfar* for *Dirus* here. C. Lecouteux (*De rebus in oriente mirabilibus (Lettre de Farasmanes)* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1979), p. 59) suggests that the town referred to may be Antiocheia on the Douros, a tributary of the Tigris mentioned by Zosimus (cf. *RE* v. 320). However, it seems clear that Gervase took it to be Antioch in Syria, which is in fact on the Orontes. The geographical information in the letter bears only the most tenuous links with reality.

subiacet, deserta sanctis hominibus copiose<sup>d</sup> repleta spaciosa<sup>e</sup> patent.<sup>3</sup> A quibus usque ad Oliuiam<sup>4</sup> insulam, et usque ad fines Euftratis, mansiones plereque sunt. Hec insula multitudinem habet ouium. Et exinde colonia magna et negociatoribus exposita. Illic de uelleribus ouium ac caprarum tunice birrique<sup>f5</sup> fiunt. Hinc transeuntibus ad meredim occurrit ciuitas oppulentissima quam Arcimedium dicunt. Illic terra<sup>g</sup> fertilis et in fructibus opulenta.<sup>6</sup>

Porro a Babilonia usque Mesopotamiam stadia sunt sexaginta, lacus piscosus.<sup>7</sup> Et exhinc usque<sup>h</sup> Damascum<sup>8</sup> mansiones plereque. A sinistra uero euntibus ciuitates occurrunt duodecim: Vallata, Melennio, Cleopatra,<sup>i</sup> Termasia, Marmuio,<sup>j</sup> Maragdom, Casia, Possidonia, Nidia, Amdan, Eleudiana, Flauius. Exhinc ad castellum Filonie transitus est, ubi galline sunt quales apud nos, colore similes, sed qui eas prandere uoluerit corpus suum comburet.<sup>9</sup> Sunt et illic homines quasi simii, qui ut sonum audierint fugiunt; pedes habent octenos totidemque oculos, cornua bina. Quos qui perimere uoluerit, diligenter se muniat armaturis.<sup>10</sup>

Ixxxii. *De pratis que mouentur ad tactum pedum, et montibus Wallensibus*<sup>a, b</sup>

Licet terra solidum habeat fundamentum, sepe tamen euenit quod aquis superfertur, unde mobilitatem quandam trahit. Ecce in regno Arelatensi, prouincia Aquensi, est castrum Podii Michaelis, et ad castrum confinium pratum quoddam occurrit quod, statim ut primo

<sup>d</sup> copiosa N      <sup>e</sup> sapciosa N      <sup>f</sup> birrique ed.; et birri Letter (Paris MS);  
bissique CXQI, N (corrected from bis sicque)      <sup>g</sup> terra supplied by author(?) N  
<sup>h</sup> ad add. after usque AXQ      <sup>i</sup> Elcopatra X, Eleopatra Q      <sup>j</sup> Marmino AXQ

<sup>a</sup> Wallensibus supplied by author N      <sup>b</sup> De . . . Wallensibus] De prato quod aquis superfertur et tremat, et de montibus Wallensibus CXQ

<sup>3</sup> The phrase 'hic locus sanctus est' in the letter (ii) is interpreted by Gervase in terms of hermits in a desert.

<sup>4</sup> Olinum in the letter (iii). Lecouteux (loc. cit.), following Omont, suggests that this may be the island of Olabus in the Euphrates; but here again the fictional character of the letter should be borne in mind. 'An island full of sheep as big as oxen figures in the voyage of St Brandan as one of the first he came to' (*Marvels of the East*, p. 26).

<sup>5</sup> The letter (iv) has *birri* for Gervase's *bissi* (see apparatus), and '*birri* must be correct, *byssus* is not made of wool' (*Marvels of the East*, p. 42).

<sup>6</sup> After *opulenta* the scribe of N left the rest of the line blank, and the rubricator wrote in the space: 'Supra titulo de Caldea et Siria'. Babylonia and Mesopotamia (see below) feature

alongside which city the river Dirus flows, there stretches out a vast desert filled to overflowing with holy people.<sup>3</sup> From there to the island of Olivia,<sup>4</sup> and to the boundary formed by the Euphrates, it is many days' journey. This island has a great number of sheep. And then one comes to an important settlement on the traders' routes. There tunics and cloaks<sup>5</sup> are made from the fleeces of sheep and goats. On the journey from here to the south one comes across a very rich city which they call Arcimedia. There the land is fertile and rich in produce.<sup>6</sup>

Next, it is sixty stades from Babylonia to Mesopotamia. Here there is a lake full of fish.<sup>7</sup> And from here to Damascus<sup>8</sup> is many days' journey. To the left of the route twelve cities are passed: Vallata, Melennio, Cleopatra, Termasia, Marmuio, Maragdom, Casia, Possidonia, Nidia, Amdan, Eleudiana, and Flavius. From here a route leads across to the fort of Filonia, where there are hens which resemble the ones with which we are familiar, and are of a similar colour, but anyone who tries to eat them will burn his body.<sup>9</sup> There are also people there like apes, who run away as soon as they hear a sound; they each have eight feet and as many eyes, and a pair of horns. If anyone wants to kill them, he should protect himself carefully with armour.<sup>10</sup>

82. *Meadows which Move at the Touch of Feet, and the Welsh Mountains*

Although the earth has a solid foundation, nevertheless it often happens that it rests on water, whence it derives a certain instability. For instance, in the kingdom of Arles, in the province of Aix, is the town of Puimichel. On the edge of the town one comes upon a certain

in ii. 4, but in the section preceding *De Caldea, Arabia, et Siria*; Damascus is, however, mentioned in that section, as are a number of the marvels described in the letter.

<sup>7</sup> In paragraph vii the letter reads: 'locus honestus et plus quam locupletes (*sic for locuples*)'. 'Gervase has read *lacus* for *locus* and altered accordingly' (*Marvels of the East*, p. 42).

<sup>8</sup> *Damnas* in the letter (viii).  
<sup>9</sup> These hens also appear in Pseudo-Callisthenes (ii. 36), and in Alexander's Letter to Olympias (ed. de Xivrey, *Traditions tératologiques*, p. 362). In most versions of Pseudo-Callisthenes (e.g. ed. C. Müller (Paris, 1877), p. 88), and in the other MSS of the letter (which read *prendre*, *comprendre*, or *apprehendere* for Gervase's *prandere*), the hens burnt anyone who touched, rather than ate, them; the *Letter to Olympias*, however, reads ἤθλιον ('ate').

<sup>10</sup> For the ape-people, cf. *Historia de preliis* (ed. Zingerle, p. 256).

attentatur ingressu, totum ab extremis limitibus exurgit et contremiscit. Vnde hanc indigene cautelam contraxerunt quod, quociens predonum sentiunt insultum, omnia animalia prout illi imponunt, et cum superueniunt hostes et ad extrahendam predam accinguntur, statim terre motatione territi fugiunt.

f. 74<sup>r</sup> Set et, quod plurimum | mirandum est, in terra Walensium intra terminos Britannie maioris, montes excelsi fundamenta sua in saxis durissimis statuerunt, et in cacumine tanta aquositate terra crustatur quod, ubi uix pedem fixeris, terram ad iactum lapidis moueri sensies. Vnde superuenientibus hostibus, Galenses, terram illam glutinosam sua transilientes agilitate, impetus hostiles aut eludunt aut cum dampno hostium constanter expectant.

### lxxxiii. *De angelis percutientibus*<sup>a1</sup>

In Hispania ex antiquissima consuetudine optinuit quod septenis annis solent angeli percutientes terre illius habitatores inuadere. Vnde nuper<sup>b</sup> contigit,<sup>c</sup> cum quidam de regno illustris<sup>d</sup> regis Aragonensis uir nobilis Petrus, Latro nominatus ex cognomine, miles equidem<sup>e</sup> strenuus et potens, cum commilitonibus suis in aula iaceret, singulis stratis suos dormientes capientibus, circa secundas noctis uigilias, aliis sompno datis, ipse solus oculis clausis uigilabat. Inter hec noctis conticinia<sup>2</sup> duo Mauri domum tacito gressu subintrant, accenso lumine, ut potentibus mos est in cameris inter sompnos perpetuum lumen habere. Mauri inter se conferunt, quolibet spiculum suum tenente. 'Heus,' inquit, 'quare dormientes non percutis?' At ille statim uibrato iaculo missili unum ex militibus sub pectore perfodit; et cum ut alterum percutiat inuitatur a socio, respondit se in illum nullam nocendi habere potestatem, eo quod die illo feniculum<sup>3</sup>

<sup>a</sup> De . . . percutientibus] De uirtute feniculi CXQ <sup>b</sup> nuper om. XQ  
<sup>c</sup> contigit NX <sup>d</sup> illustris N <sup>e</sup> equidem] et quidem N

<sup>1</sup> These destroying (lit. 'striking') angels may be compared with the angel of 2 Kgs. (2 Sam.) 24: 16 f. and 1 Chr. 21: 15 f., with the archer Apollo (e.g. Homer, *Iliad*, i. 55 ff.), and with other representations of death and sickness as the result of a visitation from a higher power (cf. Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, pp. 1182–5). But, as Liebrecht points out (p. 142), the Arab presence was still strong in Spain at this time, and it seems likely that this story is related to the Arab belief in spirits armed with bows and arrows which were sent by God to inflict punishments; if the spirits were black, their wounds were mortal, if white, they were not. The spirits in this story are black: for the word *Maurus* used, like *Aethiops*, do denote an evil spirit, cf. *Legenda aurea*, c. 27 (ed. Graesse, pp. 127 and 129).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Otia*, ii. 12, n. 42.

meadow. As soon as one tries to take a single step onto this meadow, the whole thing heaves and quakes from its furthest boundaries. Consequently the locals have adopted this precautionary measure: whenever they are expecting an attack of robbers, they put all their livestock in that meadow; when the enemy arrive and are making ready to haul off their booty, the movement of the earth terrifies them, and they promptly run away.

Also—and this is exceedingly wonderful—in the land of the Welsh within the frontiers of Great Britain, the high mountains have their bases set firm on a very hard bedrock, but on their peaks the earth floats on such a quantity of water that, when you have hardly set foot on it, you will feel the ground shift a stone's throw. And so, when enemies come on the scene, the Welshmen go leaping over that squelchy ground with their native nimble-footedness, and either elude enemy attacks, or steadfastly await them to the enemy's loss.

### 83. *Destroying Angels*<sup>1</sup>

In Spain the custom has long held sway that regularly, every seven years, destroying angels attack the inhabitants of that land. In connection with this an incident occurred recently involving a certain nobleman, Peter, surnamed Latro, a subject of the renowned king of Aragon, and evidently a valiant and noble knight. He was lying in the hall with his comrades, after they had all settled down to sleep; it was about the second watch of the night, and the others were fast asleep: he alone was still awake, though his eyes were shut. At this silent hour of the night<sup>2</sup> two Moors stole into the room, with silent tread, by the light of the lamp (for it is customary for the nobility to keep a lamp burning in their rooms all the time they are asleep). The Moors conferred together, each with a spear in his hand. 'Hey,' said one, 'why don't you strike them while they're asleep?' And the other, promptly brandishing his spear, pierced one of the knights below his chest; but when he was urged by his companion to strike the second knight, he replied that he had no power to do him harm, because he had come into contact with fennel<sup>3</sup> that day. Hearing these things, the

<sup>3</sup> On the world-wide belief that certain herbs act as an antidote to spells and enchantments, see *MI* D1385.2; Kittredge, *Witchcraft*, pp. 119–22 and 214; Sébillot, *Folk-Lore*, iii. 480–3. Liebrecht remarks (pp. 142–3) that the belief in the power of fennel persisted in the region of the Pyrenees, and quotes de Nore's comment that in the Basque country 'le fenouil est la plante salutaire qui préserve de l'influence maligne des sorciers' (*Coutumes*, p. 128).

tetigerit. Hec audiens uir nobilis et, oculis apertis, illos intuens, sub immoderato timore noctis silentia transegit.

Cumque ad auroram percussus ex<sup>f</sup> graui sompno excitaretur, planctu ingenti uulneris inflictis dolorem in latere testificatur; cumque nihil preter liuorem in loculo inuenisset, et a Petro Latrone causam doloris audisset, aduocato sacerdote, post confessionem accepto uiatico, infra paucos dies positus est ad patres suos. Ex hiis apud Hispanos et Cathalanos inoleuit quod cotidie feniculum in mane tangunt aut gustant, et tres nodulos feniculi equis suis ad frenum aut capistrum illigant, ne cuiusuis maliuoli fascinatione moriantur.

Nec miretur lector si uerborum tantam uim inesse dicimus ut fascinari lingua malorum possint subiecte bestie,<sup>4</sup> cum ad ianuam nobis sit in ciuitate uestra<sup>g</sup> Arelatensi, princeps sacratissime, ciuis de Burriano,<sup>h</sup> cuius commendatio tam infectiua est quod, si quem equum aut aliud animal domesticum laudauerit, statim aut mortem aut mortis periculum incurrit. Cui consentit poeta cum dixit:

Nescio quis teneros uerbis mihi fascinat agnos.<sup>6</sup>

Set et in ciuitate Arelatensi, cum ante non multos annos bone memorie illustris rex Aragonensis Ildefonsus<sup>7</sup> presens esset, multa copia militum stipatus, et, ut moris est Hispanis et Prouincialibus, milites in equis faleratis arma gestarent, dum in medio stadii cursorii quidam miles uelocitate pennigera transiret, astans alius miles nobilis, girans faciem ad currentem, ad uerba subito dicta equum depulsum tanta celeritate corruere<sup>i</sup> fecit quod nec a casu resurgere nec aliquem membrorum motum liberum habere potuit. Respiciens ergo ascensor equi militem quem uulgius huiusmodi facinationis sciebat artificem, coram positus nobilibus et dominabus orat ne<sup>j</sup> in hoc articulo suas ulciceretur iniurias de pridem contractis inimiciciis. Pietate motus nobilis, cui satis erat publicate uindictae habuisse testimonium, in

<sup>f</sup> ex *AX*, e *Q*; est altered by author to et *N*      <sup>g</sup> nostra *CXQ*; om. *I*      <sup>h</sup> space  
left after Burriano *NC*      <sup>i</sup> corruerere *N*      <sup>j</sup> nec *NQ*

<sup>4</sup> The commonest form of *fascinatio* was to be 'overlooked' by someone with an 'evil eye', but verbal spells were also feared: 'Some men, by bespeaking (muttering a spell), can pull up a horse in full gallop, silence a watch-dog, stanch blood, keep fire from spreading' (Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, p. 1814). Domestic animals, and especially horses, have always been thought to be in special danger (cf. F. T. Elworthy, *The Evil Eye* (London, 1895, repr. New York, 1958), p. 10). At this date such magic spells were not necessarily associated with witchcraft, but from the eleventh century onwards they were increasingly regarded as the work of those who were in league with the devil; see the chapter 'Maleficium' in Hole, *Witchcraft* (pp. 54–69).

<sup>5</sup> A quarter of Arles; see Duprat, 'Légendes saintes de Provence', 1941, p. 91, n. 5.

nobleman opened his eyes, and seeing the Moors, he passed the silent hours of the night in a state of extreme fright.

At dawn, when the one who had been struck was roused from a deep slumber, he gave evidence of the pain of the wound he had received in his side with a loud groan. He found nothing but a bruise on the spot, but learned the cause of his pain from Peter Latro. A priest was therefore summoned, and after making his confession he received the last sacraments; within a few days he was laid to rest with his forefathers. As a result of this it has become the custom among the Spaniards and Catalans to touch or eat fennel every day in the morning, and to tie three bunches of fennel to their horses' bridle or halter, so as not to die from some ill-wisher's enchantment.

And the reader should not be surprised if we state that there is so much power in words that domestic animals can be bewitched by the speech of evil people.<sup>4</sup> For on our very doorstep, in your city of Arles, most worshipful Prince, there is a citizen of Borian<sup>5</sup> whose commendation is so noxious that if he praises any horse or other domestic animal, it immediately incurs either death or danger of death. With this the words of the poet accord:

Someone is bewitching my tender lambs with his words.<sup>6</sup>

Also in the city of Arles, when Alfonso of good memory, the renowned king of Aragon,<sup>7</sup> was here a few years ago, attended by a great retinue of knights, and, as the custom is among the people of Spain and Provence, the knights were sporting their arms on richly-caparisoned horses, one knight was riding past in the middle of the race-course with the speed of a bird, when another noble knight standing by turned to face him as he galloped past, and suddenly speaking some words, made the horse stumble and fall. It had been going at such a pace that it was unable either to get back onto its feet or to gain any free movement in its limbs. Then the horse's rider saw the knight, who was widely known as a practitioner of this kind of enchantment, and in the presence of the assembled lords and ladies, he begged him not to avenge at this juncture the grievances he nursed from their long-standing enmity. Moved by a sense of justice, the nobleman, who was satisfied with having gained the testimony of

<sup>6</sup> The line in Virgil (*Ecloues*, iii. 103) refers to the evil eye: 'Nescio quis teneros oculus mihi fascinat agnos.'

<sup>7</sup> This was Alfonso II, king of Aragon and count of Barcelona 1162–96, also count of Provence from 1167 (see above, p. xxx). He was frequently present in Provence; cf. *Otia*, iii. 92, at n. 6.

f. 74<sup>v</sup> alteram partem toto girato corpore, ad contraria uerba eadem facilitate equum restituit qua deiecerat; sicque equus, prehabito dolore totus | in sudorem solutus, beneficio malefici<sup>8</sup> dietam suam currendo uictor-  
iose perfectit.<sup>9</sup>

lxxxiv. *De aucipite*<sup>a1</sup> *regis Scotorum*

Cum hec et hiis similia tue celsitudini, princeps serenissime, memoramus, nichil aliud agimus nisi quod tue sollicitudinis seria ociorum parentesi<sup>b</sup> temperamus, que licet uanitati linguose possint ascribi, sustinenda tamen sunt ex eo quod non modicam ad multa prestare possunt doctrinam aut cautelam.

Vidimus equidem illustrem sancte memorie regem Scotorum Guillelmum<sup>2</sup> (quem auus tuus,<sup>c</sup> excellentissimus rex Anglorum Henricus uetustus, rebellem uicit et captum diu tenuit, iterumque debite sue dicioni subiecit) quendam secum habuisse aucipitem,<sup>d</sup> qui solo uerborum laqueo grues aliasue quaslibet aereas aues capiebat, ad pronunciationem uerborum suorum prostratas.

lxxxv. *De lamiis et dracis et fantasiis*<sup>a</sup>

Accedit<sup>b</sup> circa mundi huius mirabilia questio de lamiis et dracis, ex quibus lamie<sup>1</sup> dicuntur esse mulieres que noctu domos momentaneo

<sup>a</sup> ancipite CX, N? <sup>b</sup> quedam figura written by author alongside parentesi N tuus om. N <sup>d</sup> ancipitem CX, N?

<sup>a</sup> fantasiis] nocturnis fantasmatis CXQ <sup>b</sup> accidit XQ

<sup>8</sup> The phrase 'beneficio malefici' contains a play on words ('by the good deed of the evil-doer') as well as meaning 'with the help of the enchanter.'

<sup>9</sup> The phenomenon which Kittredge calls 'paralyzing or adhesive magic' (*Witchcraft*, p. 202) occurs in popular tales the world over, especially in relation to horses: see *MI D2072*. o. 2. 1; also Kittredge, *Witchcraft*, nn. 108–10 on pp. 515–16. It is a common feature of the stories that the enchanter lifts the spell when asked to; the sweat of the horse is also often mentioned (e.g. Mrs E. Gutch and M. Peacock, *Examples of Printed Folk-Lore Concerning Lincolnshire*, County Folk-Lore, v (London, 1908), p. 73; Hole, *Witchcraft*, p. 179; *cad.*, *English Folklore* (London, 1940), p. 121). For another story concerning the enchantment of a horse, see *Otia*, iii. 28.

<sup>1</sup> Here and below the reading of *N* could be either *au-* or *an-*: *auceps* (= *auis-ceps*) is preferable, though both forms occur in medieval Latin; for *anceps* meaning 'falconer', see Latham, *Revised Medieval Latin Word List*, s.v. *accipiter*.

<sup>2</sup> William (I) the Lion, king of Scotland 1165–1214, joined the rebellion of Henry the Young King, Richard, Geoffrey, and their mother Eleanor against Henry II and John in

public revenge, turned his whole body round the other way, and speaking the opposite words, revived the horse as easily as he had overthrown it. And so the horse, which had broken out in a sweat all over from the pain it had suffered, with the help of the enchanter<sup>8</sup> completed its day's races, galloping to victory.<sup>9</sup>

84. *The King of Scotland's Fowler*<sup>1</sup>

When we relate these things and others like them to Your Highness, most serene Prince, all we are doing is lightening the burden of care which you have on your mind by means of a pause for relaxation. They may be dismissed as idle chatter, but they ought to be given a hearing, because they can provide no trifling instruction or warning with regard to many things.

We ourselves witnessed that the renowned king of Scots, William of blessed memory<sup>2</sup> (whom your grandfather, the excellent king of the English, Henry the Elder, conquered when he rebelled, held captive for a long time, and subjected once more to his rightful sway), kept a fowler with him, who used to catch cranes or any other birds of the air by a snare of words alone: at the mere utterance of his words, they fell to the ground.

85. *Lamias, Dracs, and Phantasms*

In a discussion of the marvels of this world, the subject of lamias and dracs also comes up for consideration. Of these, lamias<sup>1</sup> are said to be

1173–4. He was captured at Alnwick in July 1174, and from the treaty of Falaise, 8 December 1174 (ratified at York in August 1175), to King Richard's quit-claim of 5 December 1189, William acknowledged the king of England as overlord of Scotland (see *HBC*, p. 57). William died in 1214, the year of the Battle of Bouvines; at the time of the writing of this passage, therefore, Otto did indeed have a burden of care.

<sup>1</sup> In Greek mythology Lamia, a daughter of Belus and Libya, was loved by Zeus, and the jealous Hera stole her children; Lamia had no recourse against the gods, but her revenge was to take and kill other human children. In later belief lamias were usually thought to be shape-shifting creatures with a snake's body and a woman's head, combining the roles of succubus and vampire as well as stealing children; see Lea, *Materials*, pp. 109–11, and for further bibliography, *MI B29*. 1 and *G262*. 1. 2. The Hebrew Lilith, of Isaiah 34: 14, similarly a menace to children, was identified with the lamia in the Middle Ages (e.g. Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum naturale*, xix. 65). The stealing of human beings, and of children in particular, came to be regarded as a common activity of supernatural creatures: see Liebrecht, pp. 135–6; cf. *Otia*, iii. 66 and 86.

Gervase seems to use the word lamia here to mean any kind of female nocturnal menace:

discursu penetrant: dolia relent,<sup>2</sup> cophinos, catinos, et olas perscrutantur,<sup>c</sup> infantes a cunis extrahunt, luminaria accendunt, et nonnumquam dormientes affligunt.<sup>3</sup>

Set et drachos<sup>4</sup> uulgu assereit formam hominum assumere, primosque in forum publicum aduentare sine cuiusuis agnitione. Hos perhibent in cauernis fluuiorum mansionem habere, et nunc in specie aureorum anulorum supernatantium aut ciphorum mulieres allicere ac pueros in ripis fluminum balneantes; nam dum uisa cupiunt consequi, subito raptu coguntur<sup>d</sup> ad intima delabi. Nec plus hoc contingere dicunt aliquibus quam feminis lactantibus, quas draci rapiunt ut prolem suam infelicem nutriant; et nonnumquam post exactum septennium remunerate ad hoc nostrum redeunt emisperium, que etiam narrant se in amplis palatiis cum dracis et eorum uxoribus in cauernis et ripis fluminum habitasse.

Vidimus equidem huiuscemodi feminam raptam dum in ripa<sup>e</sup> fluminis Rodani panniculos ablueret, ciphon ligneo superenatante, quem dum ad comprehendendum sequeretur, ad altiora progressa, a draco introfertur; nutrixque facta filii sui sub aqua, illesa rediit, a uiro et amicis uix agnita, post septennium. Narrabat eque miranda, quod hominibus raptis draci uescebantur, et se in humanas species transformabant. Cumque uno aliquo die pastillum anguillarem pro parte dracus nutrici dedisset, ipsa, digitos<sup>f</sup> adype linitos<sup>g</sup> ad oculum unum et unam faciem casu ducens, meruit limpidissimum sub aqua ac subtilissimum habere intuitum. Completo ergo sue uicis termino, cum ad propria rediisset, in foro Bellicadri summo mane dracum obuium habuit, quem agnitum salutauit, de statu domine ac alumni sui questionem faciens. Ad hec dracus 'Heus,' inquit, 'quonam oculo mei cepisti agnitionem?' At illa oculum uisionis indicat, quem adipe pastilli pridem perunxerat; quo uisperto, dracus

<sup>c</sup> perscrutantur *N*      <sup>d</sup> cogantur *XQ*      <sup>e</sup> ripam *CXQ*      <sup>f</sup> pastilli *add.*  
after digitos *XQ*      <sup>g</sup> linitos] perunctos *XQ*

she is an ancestress of the witch, but we do not find here the idea, essential to the later notion of witchcraft, of a pact with Satan. In the next chapter Gervase identifies lamias with *striae* and *mascae* (see *Otia*, iii. 86, n. 1).

<sup>2</sup> Du Cange (s.v. *relere*) accepted the emendation of *relent* to *vel et* proposed by Leibniz (p. 987). However, Priscian knew the word *releo* (*Institutiones grammaticae*, v. 57, ed. M. Hertz (Leipzig, 1855-9), i. 178), and it would seem to be an alternative form of the present of the rare verb *relino* (unseal), used in the perfect by Terence in the line: 'Releui dolia omnia, omnis serias' (*Heauton Timorumenos*, iii. 1. 51).

<sup>3</sup> The lamia is here credited with the characteristics of the nightmare, a terrible hag or demon which presses people in their dreams; sometimes it acts as an incubus or succubus, and sometimes it rides horses or people until they are exhausted or dead; see L. Laistner,

women who steal into houses by night for a brief raid: they unseal<sup>2</sup> barrels, pry into baskets, pots, and pans, snatch babies from their cradles, light the lamps, and sometimes molest people in their sleep.<sup>3</sup>

As for dracs,<sup>4</sup> the common folk claim that they put on human form, and that their leaders come to a crowded market-place without anyone recognizing them. They say that they make their home in the depths of rivers, and at times, in the semblance of gold rings or goblets floating on the surface, they lure women and children bathing on river-banks into their clutches; for in the act of trying to catch the objects they have seen, they are suddenly seized and dragged down to the bottom. They say that this happens to nursing-mothers more than anyone else, for the dracs carry them off to nurse their own wretched progeny. Sometimes after seven years have passed the women are given some remuneration and return to this world of ours. They then describe how they have lived in spacious palaces with the dracs and their wives in the hollows and banks of rivers.

We ourselves have seen a woman of this kind who was carried off while she was washing clothes on the bank of the river Rhône. A wooden goblet was floating on the water, and she went after it, hoping to lay hold of it; but when she waded out into deeper water, she was pulled down by a drac. She became his son's nurse under the water, but returned unharmed, though scarcely recognized by her husband and friends, after seven years. She likewise reported remarkable things, claiming that the dracs used to feed on human beings whom they had seized, and turn themselves into human shape. One day, when a drac had given the nurse an eel pasty as her portion, she chanced to put her fingers smeared with fat up to one eye and one side of her face, and as a result came to have very clear and keen underwater vision. Then, when her term of duty was completed and she had gone back to her own life, very early one morning she met this drac in the market-place of Beaucaire; recognizing him, she greeted him, and inquired after the well-being of her mistress and her young charge. At this the drac said: 'Hey! with which eye were you able to recognize me?' She indicated the eye with which she saw him, the one which she had once smeared with the fat of the pasty. Having

*Das Rätsel der Sphinx* (Berlin, 1889); E. Jones, *Der Alptraum* (Leipzig and Vienna, 1912); Kittredge, *Witchcraft*, pp. 218-21 and 525-6.

<sup>4</sup> On dracs, see Du Cange (s.v. *dracus*), who cites the expression 'fa le drac' for 'faire le diable'. A belief in creatures called dracs has persisted in Languedoc, though they are no longer the powerful spirits of medieval belief, but rather mischievous kobolds (see Liebrecht, p. 135; de Nore, *Coutumes*, p. 84; Sébillot, *Folk-Lore*, ii. 343).



digitum oculo mulieris infixit, sicque de cetero non uisus aut agnoscibilis diuertit.<sup>5</sup>

Sed et<sup>h</sup> in Rodani ripa, sub continentia domus milicie<sup>6</sup> ad portam borealem ciuitatis Arelatensis, quedam fluminis abyssus est, sicut sub rupe castri Tarasconensis<sup>i</sup> ubi, tempore beate Marthe (Christi hospite, Lazari ac Magdalene<sup>7</sup> sororis), tarascus,<sup>8</sup> serpens de genere pessimi illius Leuiathan oceanalis anguis, occultabatur, ut homines per Rodanum sibi incorporaret. In his ergo locis profundissimis affirmant drachos sepiissime de nocte lucida in specie humana uideri. Vnde paucis annis exactis, uox ex ipso Rodani profundo prodiens per continuum triduum publice audiebatur, in loco extra portam ciuitatis quam diximus, quasi specie hominis per ripam discurrere: 'Hora preterit<sup>j</sup> et homo non uenit!' Die igitur tertia, cum circa horam nonam acrius hominis illa species uocem memoratam exaggeraret, festino cursu iuuenis quidam ad ripam adueniens totus imbibitur; et ita uox illa de f. 75<sup>f</sup> cetero audita non fuit.<sup>9</sup> |

<sup>h</sup> et om. Cβ      <sup>i</sup> Transconensis N      <sup>j</sup> preterit CXQ

<sup>5</sup> For a bibliography of this type of story, which is of very frequent occurrence, see *MI* F235. 4. 1; also Baughman, *MI* F235. 4. 1(a), where this type is treated in all its details, though not all the examples cited follow the pattern exactly; cf. *MI* F420. 5. 4. 1 and F420. 5. 2. 2; F372 and F372. 1. E. S. Hartland in 'Peeping Tom and Lady Godiva' (*Folk Lore*, i (1890), 207–26, reproduced as 'Fairy births and human midwives' in *The Science of Fairy Tales*, pp. 59–92) names Gervase as the earliest writer to record a story of this type, and suggests a connection with stories of the blinding of people who have seen something they ought not to have seen, as in the tale of Peeping Tom. Sébillot (*Folk-Lore*, ii. 344) also reproduces Gervase's story, with the comment: 'Cet épisode se retrouve dans les récits contemporains, mais les fées des houles et les Margot-la-Fée, au lieu de toucher l'oeil devenu clairvoyant par l'onction d'une pommade magique, le crévent, l'arrachent, ou même rendent aveugle l'indiscret en lui crachant à la figure.'

<sup>6</sup> i.e. 'la maison des Chevaliers du Temple' (E. Fassin, 'Gervais de Tilbury, maréchal du royaume d'Arles', *Le Musée, Revue Arlésienne, historique et littéraire*, 2nd series, xxii (1875), 172).

<sup>7</sup> From the time of Gregory the Great, Martha's sister, Mary of Bethany, was commonly identified with Mary Magdalene (*XL Homiliae in Evangelia*, xxv. 1 and 10 and xxxiii. 1, *PL* lxxvi. 1189, 1196, and 1239). She was already traditionally associated with the repentant woman of Luke 7: 36–50 (Tertullian, *De pudicitia*, xi. 1, ed. E. Dekkers, *CCSL* ii (1954), 1301). This confusion of identities was limited to the Latin West. For the legend of the coming of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus to Provence, see *Otia*, ii. 10, n. 29.

<sup>8</sup> La Tarasque was an amphibious monster which lived in and about the Rhône; it used to sink ships, and devour the inhabitants of the district. The *Vita S. Marthae* of Pseudo-

established which it was, the drac thrust his finger into the woman's eye, and so from then on he went about without being seen or recognized.<sup>5</sup>

Again on the bank of the Rhône, in the vicinity of the knights' palace<sup>6</sup> near the north gate of the city of Arles, there is a very deep stretch in the river, just as there is underneath the precipice of the town of Tarascon, where, in the time of the blessed Martha (who gave hospitality to Christ, the sister of Lazarus and the Magdalene<sup>7</sup>), 'la Tarasque',<sup>8</sup> a monster of the breed of the evil sea-serpent Leviathan, hid itself in order to fill its stomach with human beings passing by the Rhône. Well, they claim that on a clear night dracs are often seen in human form in these deep places. What is more, a few years ago for three days in a row a voice crying: 'The hour has passed and the man has not come!' was heard by many people, issuing from the very depths of the Rhône, in the place outside the city-gate which we have described, while what looked like a human figure was seen running to and fro on the bank. Then on the third day, when at about three o'clock that human figure was screaming the same words with even greater urgency, a young man came running hotfoot to the bank and was completely swallowed up; and so that cry was heard no more.<sup>9</sup>

Marcella (written around the turn of the thirteenth century) narrated how Martha subdued the monster with holy water and a cross so that she could bind it with her girdle, and then the people killed it (ed. Mombricitus, p. 235). Pseudo-Marcella's story is reproduced by Vincent of Beauvais (*Speculum historiale*, ix. 99) and Jacobus de Voragine (*Legenda aurea*, c. 105); another (later) version is found in the *Vita beatae Mariae Magdaleneae et sororis eius Marthae*, falsely attributed to Rabanus Maurus. All these texts are presented, with a discussion of the legend, by L. Dumont in *La Tarasque: Essai de description d'un fait local d'un point de vue ethnographique* (Paris, 1951); see especially pp. 150–4 and 164–8. The cult of St Martha did much to promote the rising importance of Tarascon as a political and religious centre; following the 'discovery' of her relics in 1187, a new church was dedicated to her there in 1197 by Imbert d'Aiguières, archbishop of Arles; see above, p. xxix, n. 26; Dumont, op. cit., pp. 147–8; Duprat, 'Légendes saintes de Provence', 1940, pp. 127–8; 1941, pp. 101–2.

<sup>9</sup> This story of a mysterious voice issuing from a river also occurs elsewhere: see Liebrecht, p. 136; Sébillot, *Folk-Lore*, ii. 344; and *MI* D1311. 11. 1. The story features in the Scottish ballad 'The Water-Kelpie', recorded by Walter Scott (*Minstrelsy*, iv. 334–50). Scott comments (pp. 345–6): 'A very common tale in Scotland is here alluded to by the poet . . . the original story is found in Gervase of Tilbury.—In the parish of Castleton, the same story is told, with this variation, that the bystanders prevented, by force, the predestined individual from entering the river, and shut him up in the church, where he was next morning found suffocated, with his face lying immersed in the baptismal font.'

lxxxvi. *De lamiis et nocturnis laruis*<sup>a</sup>

Lamias, quas uulgo mascas aut, in Gallica lingua,<sup>b</sup> strias<sup>1</sup> nominant, fisici dicunt nocturnas esse ymaginationes, que ex grossitie humorum animas dormientium turbant et pondus faciunt.

Verum Augustinus ipsas ex dictis auctorum<sup>c</sup> ponit demones esse, qui ex animabus male meritis corpora aerea<sup>d</sup> implent.<sup>2</sup> Dicuntur autem lamie, uel pocius lanie, a laniando, quia laniant<sup>e</sup> infantes.<sup>3</sup> Larue<sup>4</sup> uero quasi larium<sup>5</sup> exemplaria fantastica, que ymagine et figuras hominum representant,<sup>f</sup> cum non sint homines, sed<sup>g</sup> diuina quadam et secreta permissione hominum illusiones. Sicut enim circa corpus, ita circa animum uel animam hominum, demones nihil nisi ex diuina possunt permissione operari.<sup>6</sup>

Vt autem moribus ac auribus hominum satisfaciamus,<sup>7</sup> constituamus hec esse feminarum ac uirorum quorundam infortunia,<sup>h</sup> quod de nocte celerrimo uolatu regiones transcurrunt,<sup>8</sup> domos intrant, dormientes opprimunt, ingerunt sompnia grauia, quibus planctus

<sup>a</sup> De . . . laruis] De fantasmatis quas (que C) strias nominant (uocant C) CXQ  
<sup>b</sup> lingua supplied by author N    <sup>c</sup> auctorum N    <sup>d</sup> aera N    <sup>e</sup> laniant N  
<sup>f</sup> representant N    <sup>g</sup> sed supplied by author N    <sup>h</sup> in fortuna N

<sup>1</sup> For *masca* and *stria* or *striga*, see Du Cange, s.vv. There is considerable confusion in the medieval terminology for hags and demons and the differentiation of each kind, for notions varied greatly from place to place and time to time: see Liebrecht, pp. 143–6; Lea, *Materials*, pp. 108–98; Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, p. 1082; MacCulloch, *Medieval Faith and Fable*, p. 24. In Provence the word *masca* apparently designated male or female nocturnal spirits: the scribe of Q wrote in the margin at the beginning of iii. 93: 'De nocte discurrentibus quos et quas nos prouinciales *mascas* appellamus.' The words *masca* and *stria* seem to have been more or less interchangeable: the *Leges Rothari*, for example, have 'strigam quod est masca' (197), and 'strigam quae dicitur masca' (377) (*MGH Leges in folio*, iv (1868), 342 and 394). The terms *lamia*, *masca*, and *stria* all frequently denoted demons or witches particularly associated with the stealing or devouring of children: see Kittredge, *Witchcraft*, pp. 224–5, and 531, n. 103; cf. *Otia*, iii. 85, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> In this chapter Gervase draws extensively on Augustine's *De ciuitate Dei*. The idea that human souls become *lares* if they have been good, *lemures* or *laruae* if bad, and *di manes* if their deserts are doubtful, was put forward by Apuleius (*De deo Socratis*, 15), and vigorously attacked by Augustine (*Civ.* ix. 11, *CSEL* xl (1). 423 = *PL* xli. 265). Gervase here confuses lamias and larvas.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Isidore, *Etym.* viii. 11. 102.

<sup>4</sup> In general in the Middle Ages larvas were thought to be house-spirits which might frighten children but were not necessarily malicious. Sometimes the classical idea that the larva was the soul of an evil human being is reproduced (e.g. Isidore, *Etym.* viii. 11. 101), but 'medieval glosses explain larva as *wicht* or *schrat*, names of the rough, hairy kobold, or brownie' (MacCulloch, *Medieval Faith and Fable*, p. 41; cf. Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, p. 915).

<sup>5</sup> In Roman religion the *lares* were originally beneficent household spirits, but later

86. *Lamias and Nocturnal Larvas*

Physicians maintain that lamias, which are popularly known as *masks* or, in the French language, *stries*,<sup>1</sup> are simply nocturnal hallucinations which, as a result of a thickening of the humours, disturb people's spirits in their sleep and cause heaviness.

Augustine, on the other hand, cites an opinion expressed by earlier authors, that they are demons which were once ill-deserving souls and now occupy airy bodies.<sup>2</sup> They are called lamias, or rather lanias, from *laniare* (to mangle), because they mangle babies.<sup>3</sup> Larvas,<sup>4</sup> on the other hand, are the spectral manifestations as it were of *lares* (household spirits):<sup>5</sup> they present themselves in the likeness and shape of human beings, although they are not human, but merely appear so by some mysterious divine permission. For with respect to the human body, and likewise the human mind or soul, demons can do nothing except by divine permission.<sup>6</sup>

But to gratify popular belief and my listeners' ears,<sup>7</sup> let us allow that it is the wretched lot of some men and women to cover great distances in a swift nocturnal flight;<sup>8</sup> they enter houses, torment people in their sleep, and inflict distressing dreams on them, so

tended to be identified with the spirits of the dead, as in Apuleius; Gervase, however, says that they are not human, and regards them as household demons.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* ii. 23, vii. 35, x. 21, and xviii. 18 (*CSEL* xl (1). 96–7, 352–3, and 481, and xi (2). 289 = *PL* xli. 71, 224, 298 and 574).

<sup>7</sup> Having put forward the ideas that lamias and larvas are hallucinations, or dead people's souls, or supernatural beings, Gervase now records the folk-belief that certain human beings turn into these creatures at night. As he admits, he has the entertainment of his audience as much at heart as their instruction.

<sup>8</sup> According to a very old pagan tradition, bands of people, usually women, used to fly through the air at night, in the train of a goddess, variously named as Diana, Herodias, Dame Holda, Perahtha, etc. Liebrecht (pp. 173–211) argues that this superstition belongs to the cycle of the Wild Hunt. The belief was condemned as a diabolically-inspired delusion in the canon *Episcopi*, issued by Regino of Prum c.906, but falsely presented as a canon of the Council of Ancyra of 314 (*PL* cxxxii. 352); it was also condemned in the anonymous penitential known as the *Corrector*, incorporated, as was the canon *Episcopi*, in the *Decreta* of Burchard of Worms in c.1025 (*Decreta*, xix. 5, *PL* cxi. 962 and 963–4); the *Corrector* has also been published separately in a critical edition by J. H. Schmitz, *Die Bussbücher und das kanonische Bussverfahren* (Düsseldorf, 1898), ii. 403–67; these condemnations are reproduced by Hansen, *Quellen*, pp. 38–42. The idea of night-riders is mentioned by a number of subsequent writers, most of whom discredit it (see Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, pp. 1050–61); but it persisted, and came to take on the sinister connotations of the witches' sabbath (see Lea, *Materials*, pp. 170–98). Eventually the witch-hunters bypassed the condemnation of belief in night-riders by asserting that devil-worshipping had not existed when the canon *Episcopi* was promulgated, but had since come into being; thus by the fourteenth century the Inquisition had the power to punish such nocturnal jaunts.

excitant. Sed et comedere uidentur et lucernas accendere, ossa hominum dissoluere, dissolutaque nonnumquam cum ordinis turbatione compaginare, sanguinem humanum bibere, et infantes de loco ad locum mutare.

Audiuimus quippe a uiro nobili et per omnia christianissimo, domino Ymberto, Arelatensi archiepiscopo,<sup>9</sup> affini nostro, sancte probateque<sup>i</sup> fidei presule et uite perfectioris, quod cum lactens esset, multaque parentum diligentia custoditus, et christianissima matre editus, nocte una in cunis positus et fasciatus ante lectum parentum, circa medie noctis crepundias<sup>j</sup><sup>10</sup> flere auditur. Subita expergefactione excitata mater ad cunas manus apponit, nec inuenit infantem quem apprehendat. Tacite rem considerans, et loqui timet et silencia diutina non sustinet. Accensa candela, dum infantem per deuia quesitat, ipsum in uolutabro aque que de ablutione pedum serotina effusa fuerat reperit, uolutantem sine ploratu, fasciatum, et ad lumen matri parumper arridentem. Quid ultra? Nutrici et marito rem ad oculum monstrat, et hoc ab alio quam a nocturnis fantasmatis actum nemo cogitabat. Nam et ubi huiusmodi fantasmatum solet esse discursus, a multis compertum habetur infantes in mane, ianuis clausis, extra domos et cunabula in plateis esse repertos.

Sed et dolia uino plena in ipso cellario nostro uidimus nonnumquam, extracta clepsedra, uinum nullum effundere, nulloque conatu aliud preter aerem in ipsis inueniri; uerum post oram ita reperiuntur<sup>k</sup> obpleta quod nichil deerat ad perfectionem.<sup>11</sup>

Si queritur quid sibi uelint hec audita sepissime ac miranda, respondeo quod ait beatissimus omnium questionum inuestigator Augustinus, id totum diuini iudicii secretis attribuendum, quia:<sup>l</sup> 'Facit angelos suos spiritus et ministros suos ut flammam ignis.'<sup>12</sup>

<sup>i</sup> sancteque probate ACXI      <sup>j</sup> crepundias Aβ      <sup>k</sup> inueniebantur XQ  
<sup>l</sup> quia supplied by author (?) (correcting qua) N; qua AI; qui CQ; quam X

<sup>9</sup> Imbert d'Aigüières, archbishop of Arles 1190–1202; see above, p. xxix, n. 26. A somewhat similar story is told by Walter Map, *De nugis curialium*, ii, 14.

<sup>10</sup> In classical Latin *crepundia* (neuter plural, not feminine, as here) generally means a child's rattle; in medieval Latin the word in various forms means a cradle, or cradle-songs (see Latham, *Revised Medieval Latin Word-List*, s.v. 2 *crepita*). Here the word may have taken on the sense of *creperum* or *crepusculum*, to convey the idea of darkness (cf. 'noctis creperum', Symmachus, *Epistolae*, i, 7).

<sup>11</sup> The larva is here a mischievous house-spirit; cf. MacCulloch, *Medieval Faith and Fable*, p. 41; Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, p. 500.

<sup>12</sup> Ps. 103 (104): 4; cf. Aug. *Civ.* xv. 23 (CSEL xl (2). 109 = PL xli. 468), and n. 6 above. Augustine quotes the verse of the psalm, which begins: 'Qui facis . . .', in an

causing them to cry out. Apparently they also eat, and light lamps, take people's bones apart, and sometimes, when they have dismembered them, put them back together again in the wrong order; they drink human blood, and move babies from place to place.

Here is a story which we heard from a man of noble birth, who was a very good Christian in every respect, the lord Imbert, archbishop of Arles;<sup>9</sup> a relation of ours by marriage, he was a prelate of holy and proven faith, and led a life of great perfection. When he was a newborn baby, watched over with great solicitude by his parents (and he was the son of a truly Christian mother), he was lying in his cradle one night, wrapped in swathing bands, at the foot of his parents' bed, when in the dark hours<sup>10</sup> of the middle of the night he was heard to cry. His mother, roused by the sudden stir, stretched out her hands to the cradle, and found no baby there to pick up. She pondered the matter, saying nothing: she was afraid to speak, but at the same time could not bear the continuing silence. So she lit a candle, and in the course of searching high and low for her baby, she found him in a puddle of water; it was the water which had been poured away the previous evening after being used for the washing of feet. He was wallowing there without crying, wrapped in his swathing bands, and presently smiling at his mother in the light. What more is there to tell? She brought her nurse and her husband to see what had happened, and no one imagined that anyone but nocturnal spectres was responsible for this act. And indeed it is known from many people's experience that it is quite usual, when a raid of spectres of this kind occurs, for children to be found in the morning out in the streets, removed from their houses and their cradles even though the doors were locked.

Also, we have seen barrels full of wine in our own cellar from which on occasions no wine could be drawn when the tap was released, and for all our efforts nothing but air could be found inside them; but an hour later they were found to be so full that there were no grounds for complaint.<sup>11</sup>

If anyone asks the meaning of these wonders of which one so often hears, I reply with the words of Augustine, that most blessed investigator of all questions; he says that the whole matter should be referred to the mysteries of divine justice, because: 'He makes his angels spirits and his ministers a burning fire.'<sup>12</sup> Just as he endows the

adapted form, beginning: 'Qui facit . . .'; Gervase dispensed with the relative pronoun, but the memory of it destabilized the reading of his preceding 'quia' (see apparatus).

Sicut enim bonos angelos aereis corporibus induit ad ministerium suum familiarius exercendum, ita et demones corporum formis<sup>m</sup> fantasticis et laruatis, quasi larium, hoc est domorum, familiaritatem in figura tenentibus indui sustinet, ut quod mandatum in bonis operatur ad bonum, hoc eius patientia mali operentur ad nostre infirmitatis illusionem ac penam.

Si queris cuius nature sint ista fantasmata, respondeo quod ait Apuleius Platonius, inter philosophos summus: <sup>13</sup>breuiter enim diffiniens inquit demones esse genere animalia, animo passiuia, mente rationabilia, corpore aerea, tempore eterna. Porro, ut ait Augustinus, quod genere sunt animalia non est magnum, nam et hec pecora sunt; quod mente sunt rationabilia,<sup>n</sup> non est supra nos, nam et nos id | sumus; quod tempore eterna, quid boni est, cum non sint beata? Quippe melior est temporalis felicitas quam misera eternitas. Quod animo sunt passiuia, hoc nostre miserie signum nobiscum commune<sup>o</sup> habent; quod corpore aerea, quanti estimandum est, cum omni corpore<sup>p</sup> preferatur anima qualiscumque nature? Et ideo religionis cultus qui debetur ex animo nequaquam debetur ei rei que inferior est animo.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>14</sup>Sane de moribus demonum loquens, idem Platonius dixit eos eisdem quibus homines animi perturbationibus agitari, irritari iniuriis, obsequiis donisque placari, gaudere honoribus, diuersis sacrorum ritibus oblectari, et in eis<sup>q</sup> si quid neglectum fuerit commoueri. Inter cetera etiam dicit ad eos pertinere diuinationes augurum, aruspicum,<sup>r</sup> uatum, atque somniorum; ab his quoque esse miracula magorum;<sup>14</sup> mediosque in aere inter Deum et homines constitutos, ut uota hominum longa distancia locorum suspensa Deo representent. Enimuero, ut elegantissime concludit Augustinus, <sup>15</sup>frustra Appuleius et quicumque ita sentiunt hos demonibus detulerunt honores, sic eos medios inter celum ethereum terramque constituentes<sup>t</sup> ut, quia 'nullus<sup>t</sup> deus miscetur homini,'<sup>16</sup> ut Platonem

<sup>m</sup> formis supplied by author N      <sup>n</sup> rationabilia N      <sup>o</sup> commune supplied by author N  
<sup>p</sup> sic MSS for corpori      <sup>q</sup> eis I, Augustine; eos NACXQ  
<sup>r</sup> aruspicum N      <sup>t</sup> constituentes supplied by author N      <sup>t</sup> ullus N

<sup>13-13</sup> breuiter . . . inferior est animo] Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* viii. 16 (CSEL xl (1). 381-2 = PL xli. 241); see also *ibid.* ix. 8 and ix. 12 (CSEL xl (1). 419-20 and 424-5 = PL xli. 263-4 and 265-6); Apuleius, *De deo Socratis*, 13.

<sup>14-14</sup> Sane . . . esse miracula magorum] Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* viii. 16 (CSEL xl (1). 381 = PL xli. 241); Apuleius, *De deo Socratis*, 12-14, 6.

<sup>15-15</sup> frustra . . . concessa qui apponent (p. 728) ] Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* viii. 18 (CSEL xl (1). 384 = PL xli. 242-3); Apuleius, *De deo Socratis*, 4, 6.      <sup>16</sup> Cf. Plato, *Symposium*, 203A.

good angels with airy bodies to enable them to fulfil their ministry in closer communion with us, so too he allows demons to put on illusory and spectral (*laruatae*) bodily shapes, the shapes as it were of *lares*, that is, of household spirits, so that they present a familiar appearance. This means that the mandate which works for good in good spirits, evil spirits use by his leave to mock and punish our weakness.

If you ask what the nature of these spectres is, I answer with the words of Apuleius the Platonist, a giant among philosophers: <sup>13</sup>in a brief definition he says that demons are animals by species, subject to passions by disposition, rational in mind, airy in body, eternal in life-span. But then, as Augustine says, it is no great thing that they are animals by species, for so are the beasts; it is not a mark of superiority over us that they are rational in mind, for we are that too; and what good is it that they are eternal in life-span, since they are not blessed? Assuredly, temporal happiness is better than an eternity of wretchedness. That they are subject to passions by disposition is something they have in common with us, and it is a sign of our wretchedness; and what is the value of their airy body, when a soul of whatever kind is worth more than any body? It is for this reason that religious worship, which should be paid by the spirit, is by no means due to something which is lower than the spirit.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>14</sup>This same Platonist, speaking of the character of demons, said that they suffer the same emotional disturbances as human beings. They are annoyed by affronts, they are placated by flattery and gifts, they enjoy receiving honours, they take pleasure in the various rituals of worship, and they get upset if anything is overlooked in them. Among the activities that belong to them he includes divination by means of augurs, soothsayers, prophets, and dreams; he also says that they are responsible for the miracles performed by magicians.<sup>14</sup> He locates them in the air as mediators between God and humankind, with the office of presenting to God the prayers of human beings, which would otherwise be unable to negotiate the long reaches of space. But in fact, as Augustine concludes most judiciously, <sup>15</sup>Apuleius and all those who hold such opinions have made fools of themselves in conferring these honours upon demons, setting them in an intermediate realm between the ethereal heaven and the earth, so that they may convey the prayers of human beings to the gods in return for being offered sacrifices, and similarly bring back to human beings the favours for which they seek; all this because 'no god has direct contact with a human being,'<sup>16</sup> as they claim that Plato said.

dixisse perhibent, isti ad deos preces perferant hominum dum sacrificia recipiunt, et itidem ad homines referant impetrata que poscunt. Indignum enim putauerunt qui hec tradiderunt miscere<sup>u</sup> homines diis et deos hominibus, dignum autem misceri demones diis et hominibus, hinc petita qui<sup>v</sup> 17 allegent, inde concessa qui<sup>w</sup> appor- tent.<sup>x</sup> 15

<sup>18</sup>At enim urgens<sup>y</sup> et artissima causa cogit demones medios inter deos et homines agere, ut ab hominibus deferant desiderata et a diis referant impetrata.<sup>z</sup> Preclara igitur sanctitas Dei, que<sup>a</sup> non miscetur homini supplicanti, et miscetur demoni arroganti; non miscetur homini confugienti ad diuinitatem, et miscetur demoni fugienti<sup>b</sup> diuinitatem; non miscetur homini petenti ueniam, et miscetur demoni suadenti nequiciam!<sup>18</sup>

Cum de huiusmodi demonum aut angelorum malorum corporibus queritur, respondeo me cum Augustino dubitare<sup>19</sup> an, secundum illud propheticum: 'Qui facit<sup>c</sup> angelos suos spiritus et ministros suos ut flamam ardentem,<sup>20</sup> ignee sint corporeeque nature, an mystice hoc de bonis tantum sit intelligendum, quia spirituali igne caritatis debent feruere. Apparuisse tamen angelos in talibus corporibus ut non solum uideri, sed etiam tangi possint, eadem scriptura uerissima, ut ait Augustinus, testatur.<sup>21</sup> Et exinde fama creberrima: multi enim experti sunt, et ab expertis audierunt certissime, quibus est fides adhibenda, se uidisse Siluanos et Panes,<sup>d</sup> 22 quos incubos<sup>23</sup> nominant, Galli uero Dusios<sup>e</sup> 24 dicunt. Non hinc audeo aliquid definire,<sup>f</sup> utrum aliqui

<sup>u</sup> sic MSS for misceri      <sup>v</sup> qui Augustine; que MSS      <sup>w</sup> qui Augustine; que MSS  
<sup>x</sup> apporment Augustine; appetant NAB, appetent C      <sup>y</sup> urgens supplied by author N  
<sup>z</sup> et . . . impetrata] supplied by author N      <sup>a</sup> que MSS; qui Augustine  
<sup>b</sup> fugienti MSS; fngenti Augustine      <sup>c</sup> fa] facit N      <sup>d</sup> Panes Augustine; peanos NCQI, peanos A, panos X  
<sup>e</sup> dulxios N      <sup>f</sup> definire N, Augustine; diffinire ACβ

<sup>17</sup> Here and in the following phrase, instead of Augustine's 'qui' (antecedent: 'demones'), the MSS of Gervase have 'que'; the mistake doubtless arose from the proximity of the neuter participles 'petita' and 'concessa', which in fact supply the objects of the relative purpose clauses.

<sup>18-18</sup> At enim . . . demoni suadenti nequiciam!] Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* viii. 20 (*CSEL* xl (1). 387 = *PL* xli. 244). After the first sentence of this paragraph, the Platonist with whom Augustine is arguing repeats the assertion: 'nullus deus miscetur homini,' as being the reason why demons have to act as mediators; Gervase's omission of this obscures the train of thought here.

<sup>19-19</sup> an, secundum . . . corporis tactuque sentitur (p. 730) Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xv. 23 (*CSEL* xl (2). 109-10 = *PL* xli. 468).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Ps. 103 (104): 4.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. e.g. Gen. 19: 1-22; Judg. 6: 12-22.

<sup>22</sup> Supernatural lovers were frequently regarded as rustic spirits: cf. the *Corrector* (*PL*

Those responsible for this idea thought it improper for human beings to mix with gods and gods with human beings, but quite proper for demons to mix with both gods and human beings, so as<sup>17</sup> to present humankind's petitions, and bring back the answers of the gods.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>18</sup>But an urgent and compelling reason requires demons to act as mediators between the gods and humankind, to convey requests from human beings and to bring back favours from the gods.' God's holiness is indeed a remarkable thing! It has no dealings with a suppliant human being, but it does have dealings with an arrogant demon; it will have nothing to do with a human being seeking refuge in his divinity, but it does treat with a demon fleeing from his divinity; it has no dealings with a human being seeking pardon, but it does treat with a demon urging iniquity!<sup>18</sup>

When the question of the bodies of demons and bad angels of this kind arises, I answer that, like Augustine, I am not sure<sup>19</sup> whether those words of the prophet: 'Who makes his angels spirits and his ministers a burning fire',<sup>20</sup> mean that the nature they possess is one of corporeal fire, or whether this is to be interpreted in a mystical sense, referring to the good angels alone, and meaning that they should burn with the spiritual fire of love. Yet the same infallible scripture testifies, as Augustine points out, that angels have appeared in bodies of such a kind that they could not only be seen, but also touched.<sup>21</sup> And there is, too, a widespread folk-belief in a phenomenon which many people have experienced themselves, or have heard reliably described by others with first-hand experience, whose word is trustworthy: these people claim to have seen Silvani and Pans,<sup>22</sup> which are the creatures people call incubi;<sup>23</sup> the French word for them is *duses*.<sup>24</sup> I do not presume to make a definitive statement on cxl. 971; Hansen, *Quellen*, p. 41), where succubi are referred to as 'agrestes feminae, quas sylvaticas vocant'. Silvanus was an agricultural deity; the Greek pastoral god, Pan, was identified with the Italian Faunus (some of the MSS of Augustine read *Faunos* here).

<sup>23</sup> In the Middle Ages, under the influence of the Church, the universal folk-belief in unions between mortals and supernatural creatures shaded into the idea of demon incubi and succubi (see MacCulloch, *Medieval Faith and Fable*, pp. 45-7; Kittredge, *Witchcraft*, pp. 115-23; Lea, *Materials*, pp. 145-62; Loomis, *White Magic*, p. 77 and notes; *MF* 471. 2 and F471. 2. 1; Brednich, *Enzyklopädie*, iv. 793-80 and 954-64). Gervase records two stories of such unions in the *Otia* (i. 15 and iii. 57).

Perhaps largely as a result of Augustine's scepticism in the passage on which Gervase is drawing here, the belief in incubi was slow to become established. The *Corrector* (loc. cit.) condemns such a belief as a delusion. But by c. 1100 it had become accepted, based partly on popular tradition and partly on the traditional interpretation of Gen. 6: 1-4 (see n. 26 below). Supernatural lovers came to be seen as visitations from the devil: see e.g. the stories reported in the early thirteenth century by Caesarius of Heisterbach (*Dialogus miraculorum*, iii. 6-12 and v. 46).

<sup>24</sup> The Gallic *Dusii* mentioned by Augustine (cf. Isidore, *Etym.* viii. 11. 103) are said by

spiritus elemento aereo corporati possint hanc agere<sup>g</sup> uel<sup>h</sup> pati libidinem, ut quoquomodo feminis se inmiscant aut ab hominibus talia paciantur. Nam hoc etiam elementum, cum agitur<sup>i</sup> flabellum,<sup>j</sup> sensu corporis tactuque sentitur.<sup>19</sup>

Hoc equidem a uiris omni exceptione maioribus cotidie scimus probatum, quod quosdam huiusmodi laruarum, quas fadas nominant, amatores audiuimus, et cum ad aliarum feminarum matrimonia se transtulerunt, ante mortuos quam cum superinductis carnali se<sup>k</sup> copula immiscuerint; plerosque in summa temporali felicitate uidi-  
mus stetisse, qui, cum ab huiuscemodi fadarum se abstraxerunt amplexibus aut illas publicauerunt eloquio, non tantum temporales successus sed etiam misere uite solatium amiserunt.

Quid sibi hec uelint nescio, et querentibus id solum respondeo: 'Iudicia Dei abissus multa.'<sup>25</sup> Vnum tamen scio, quod <sup>26</sup>angeli Dei  
f. 76<sup>f</sup> nullo tempore sic labi potuerunt, dicente apostolo Petro: 'Si<sup>l</sup> enim Deus angelis pecantibus non pepercit, sed carceribus caliginis inferere<sup>m</sup> retrudens tradidit in iudicio puniendos reseruari;<sup>26</sup> uerum hi qui cum diabolo minus superbierunt ad huiusmodi illusiones reseruati sunt<sup>n</sup> ad hominum penam.

lxxxvii. *De stagno piscoso cum nulli prohibetur<sup>a</sup>*

In Anglia stagnum est quod uulgo Wulferesmere, quasi mare Wulferi regis,<sup>1</sup> nominatur. Quod cum omnibus piscantibus passim exponitur,

<sup>g</sup> agi XQ      <sup>h</sup> agere uel om. Augustine      <sup>i</sup> agitur Augustine, N (corrected by author from agitur); agitur XQ      <sup>j</sup> flabellum MSS; flabello Augustine      <sup>k</sup> se supplied by author N      <sup>l</sup> sic XQ      <sup>m</sup> inferi Augustine      <sup>n</sup> sunt supplied by author N

<sup>a</sup> cum . . . prohibetur] et eius mirabili CXQ

Hincmar of Rheims to be spirits which trick women into having intercourse with them by putting on the appearance of the men they love (*De diuortio Lotharii regis et Theutbergae reginae*, MGH, *Concilia*, iv, Supplement 1, p. 206 = PL cxxv. 717); later he applies the word to demons putting on either sex (p. 213 = col. 725). For the thirteenth-century Dominican, Thomas of Cantimpré, they are wood- or mountain-spirits (*De apibus*, ii. 57. 17 and 23). For the origin and history of the word (which survives in English in the expression 'What the deuce'), see Lecouteux, *Les Nains et les elfes*, pp. 169–74.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Ps. 35 (36): 7 (6).

<sup>26-26</sup> angeli . . . iudicio puniendos reseruari] Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xv. 23 and xi. 33 (GSEL xl (2). 110 and xl (1). 562 = PL xli. 468 and 346); 2 Pet. 2: 4 (where the Vulgate reads: ' . . . sed rudentibus inferni detractos in tartarum tradidit cruciandos, in iudicium reseruari'). The 'filii Dei' of Gen. 6: 1–4, who took wives from among the 'filias hominum',

this basis as to whether some spirits with bodies made from the element of air can arouse or experience lust, so that somehow or other they mate with women or undergo the like from men. But certainly, even this element is perceived by the bodily sensation of touch when a fan is set in motion.<sup>19</sup>

But here is something we do know, confirmed daily as it is by men who are above all reproach: we have heard that some men have become the lovers of larvas of this kind, which they call fays, and when they have transferred their affections with a view to marrying other women, they have died before they could enjoy carnal union with their new partners. And we have seen many men who had attained the summit of worldly happiness, but then, as soon as they renounced the embraces of fays of this kind, or spoke about them in public, they lost not only their worldly prosperity, but even the solace of a wretched life.

I do not know what these things mean, and if anyone asks me, my only answer is this: 'The judgments of God are a great deep.'<sup>25</sup> But one thing I know, that <sup>26</sup>the angels of God could never have fallen like the ones of whom the apostle Peter says: 'For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but thrust them down to the dungeons of nether darkness and delivered them to be reserved for punishment at the judgment;<sup>26</sup> it must be, then, that those who sided with the devil but whose pride was less grievous were reserved to provide phantoms of this nature to punish humankind.

87. *A Lake which is Full of Fish when it is Prohibited to No One*

There is a lake in England which is known locally as Wulferesmere, that is, the mere of King Wulphere.<sup>1</sup> When access is provided on all

were rendered as ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ in the LXX. The myth that the angels lusted after human women formed the traditional rabbinical interpretation of this passage, first presented fully in the apocryphal book of Enoch, 6: 2 ff. (see Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, ii. 191). It was the oldest interpretation of Jude 6 as well as of 2 Pet. 2: 4. Augustine refuses to accept that the good angels could have acted in this way; he refers to 2 Pet. 2: 4 to the angels who fell with Satan, and takes the 'filii Dei' of Gen. 6 to be the sons of Seth. Gervase concludes that some of the fallen angels were not imprisoned in hell, but were allowed to torment human beings.

<sup>1</sup> Probably Wulphere, the second of the four sons of Penda, and king of the Mercians from 658 until his death in 675 (cf. *HBC*, p. 16).



piscibus habundat; cum homines ab eius piscatione artantur, aut rarus in eo aut nullus<sup>b</sup> piscis inuenitur. Est autem locus in confinio Gallie.<sup>c 2</sup>

lxxxviii. *De alio stagno*<sup>a</sup>

Est et in eadem regione Haueringemere,<sup>b</sup> quod si quis nauigans dum transit<sup>c</sup> proclamauerit: 'Phrut<sup>d</sup> Haueringemere<sup>e</sup> and alle thophe<sup>f</sup> ouer the fere!', statim correptus subita tempestate submergitur cum nauigio. Sonant autem hec in Latina lingua obprobrium, ac si dicatur stagno illi, quod uocatur Haueringemere<sup>g</sup> (id est mare Haueringi:<sup>h</sup> Angli siquidem, ut Ebrei, omnem aquarum concursum mare dicunt, unde mare Tyberiadis dicitur):<sup>1</sup> 'Phrut tibi, mare, et omnibus qui te transfretant!<sup>2</sup> Et satis mirandum quod aque huiusmodi concipiunt<sup>i</sup> indignationes.<sup>3</sup>

lxxxix. *De fonte qui plueret facit*<sup>a</sup>

Est in prouincia regni Arelatensis<sup>1</sup> fons quidam<sup>b</sup> perlucidus, in quem si lapidem uel lignum aut huiuscemodi materiam proieceris, statim de fonte pluuiam ascendit, que prohicientem totum humectat.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>h</sup> ullus *N*      <sup>c</sup> Guallie *AI*

<sup>a</sup> De . . . stagno] De mari Aueringo *CXQ*      <sup>b</sup> Haueringemere (m *add. by author*) *N*  
<sup>c</sup> transit *supplied by author* *N*      <sup>d</sup> sic *X*; prhut *N*      <sup>e</sup> Haverigemere *N*  
<sup>f</sup> thophe *NQI*, tho ye *A*, thope *CX*, for tho the      <sup>g</sup> Haurigemere *N*  
<sup>h</sup> Hauringi *N*      <sup>i</sup> concipiunt *N*

<sup>a</sup> De . . . facit] De fontis aspergine *CXQ*      <sup>b</sup> quidem *NAQ*

<sup>2</sup> As Burne and Jackson point out (*Shropshire Folk-Lore*, p. 72), this is one of several tales reflecting 'some ancient notion that the waters and their produce ought to be free to all comers'. They suggest (pp. 69–72) that this lake may be identified with Ellesmere, the subject of many legends, most of which have the notion of wickedness punished by a flood as their theme, which wickedness always consists in restricting the use of the water.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Comestor, *Evan.*, c. 40 (*PL* cxcviii. 1560); *Otia*, iii. 52, n. 7.

<sup>2</sup> On the French and English expletive *phrut*, Oman ('The English folklore', n. 26) refers to the notes in H. T. Riley, *Memorials of London and London Life* (London, 1868), p. 27, and T. Wright, *Political Songs of England*, Camden Society Publications, vi (London, 1839), 381–2. Gervase's translation of the insulting formula is correct, but the form of the English was distorted in the MSS; it should read: 'and alle þo þe over

sides to anyone who wants to fish in this lake, it teems with fish; but when people are prohibited from fishing there, few, if any, fish are found in it. This place is in the Welsh marches.<sup>2</sup>

88. *Another Lake*

Haueringemere is also in this region. If anyone who is sailing on this lake shouts out while he is crossing it: 'Phrut Haueringemere and alle þo þe over þe fere!', he is immediately caught in a sudden storm, and sinks along with his boat. For in the Latin language these words convey an insult, as if it were being said to that lake, which is called Haueringemere (that is, the Sea of Havering: for the English, like the Hebrews, call any concourse of water a sea (*mare*), as in the case of the Sea of Tiberias):<sup>1</sup> 'Phrut to you, sea, and to all who sail over you!<sup>2</sup> Quite remarkable it is, for water to take offence in this way.<sup>3</sup>

89. *A Spring which Produces Rain*

In the province of the kingdom of Arles<sup>1</sup> there is a very clear spring. If you throw a stone or stick or any object of this kind into it, rain immediately gushes up from the spring, and completely drenches the person who threw something in.<sup>2</sup>

þe fere.' The OE and ME thorn is often written as th, or else confused with p, by Anglo-Norman scribes copying from English texts. *Fere* derives ultimately from the OE verb *faran*, to go.

<sup>3</sup> Burne and Jackson (*Shropshire Folk-Lore*, p. 72) tentatively identify this lake with Newton Mere, near Ellesmere, while Oman ('The English folklore', p. 14) suggests Hanmer, Co. Flint. The marvel echoes the common belief in spirits which dwell in water and are not to be offended (cf. *Otia*, iii. 66, at n. 2, and iii. 89). It is also a very old and widespread belief that the weather can be influenced by acts performed on or near certain bodies of water. For further examples, see Liebrecht, pp. 146–9; Sébillot, *Folk-lore*, ii. 223–30 and 464–5; Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, pp. 596–99 and 1086–8.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. in the province of Arles, which formed part of the kingdom of which Arles was the capital.

<sup>2</sup> This brief account is related to the widespread stories of waters whose spirits take offence if something is thrown into them, and raise a storm: cf. *Otia*, iii. 66, at n. 2; Sébillot, *Folk-lore*, ii. 225; Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, p. 597; G. Milin, 'Geoffroi de Monmouth et les merveilles du lac de Linligwan: l'émergence d'un nouvel imaginaire culturel', *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale*, xxxviii (1995), 173–83, at p. 178.



xc. *De cimiterio Elisii Campi<sup>1</sup> et illuc aduectis<sup>a</sup>*

Insigne mirum ac ex diuina uirtute miraculum audi, princeps sacratissime. Caput<sup>b</sup> regni Burgundionum, quod Arelatense dicitur, ciuitas<sup>c</sup> est Arelas, antiquissimis dotata priuilegiis. Hanc ordinatus ab apostolis Petro et Paulo Trofimus,<sup>2</sup> Iesu Christi discipulus,<sup>d</sup> comitante eum apostolo Paulo cum transiret in Yspanias, ad fidem Christi conuertit. Et post pauca, associatis sibi Lazaro Marsiliensi episcopo (quem Deus suscitauerat),<sup>e,3</sup> Maximino Aquensi, Eutropio Aurasicensi, Georgio Vellaicensi,<sup>f</sup> Saturnino Tholosano,<sup>g</sup> Marciale Limouicensi,<sup>h</sup> Sergio Paulo Narbonensi, Frontone Petragoricensi,<sup>4</sup> sanctissimis episcopis et Iesu Christi ex septuaginta duo discipulis,<sup>5</sup> deliberauit cimiterium sollempne ad meridianam urbis partem constituere, in quo omnium orthodoxorum corpora sepulture traderentur,<sup>i</sup> ut sicut ab Arelatensi ecclesia tota Gallia fidei sumpsit exordium, ita et mortui in Christo undecumque aduecti sepulture communis haberent benefitium. Facta itaque consecratione sollempni per manus sanctissimorum antistitum, ad orientalem partem, ubi nunc est ecclesia ab ipsis in honore Beate Virginis consecrata,<sup>6</sup> illis Christus, pridem in carne familiariter agnitus, apparuit, opus

<sup>a</sup> et illuc (illud I) aduectis NI; om. ACXQ <sup>b</sup> caput supplied by author N  
<sup>c</sup> ciuitas supplied by author N <sup>d</sup> discipulus N <sup>e</sup> Lazaro . . . suscitauerat] om. ACβ; in N, marked at four points with the sign // above line; in margin: de rubro incausto fuerunt illa uocabula (author's hand: then two words crossed out) lineata per medium (also author's hand(?), but different ink) <sup>f</sup> Georgio Vellaicensi marked // above line in N; om. ACβ <sup>g</sup> Tholosano written in red N <sup>h</sup> sic XI; Limozinensi N <sup>i</sup> traderentur A, corrected by author(?) from traduntur N; traduntur Cβ

<sup>1</sup> i.e. 'the Elysian Field': Gervase was the first to render 'Les Aliscamps' thus into Latin; it was subsequently adopted as the regular Latin form of the name (Duprat, 'Légendes saintes de Provence', 1941, p. 127). This famous cemetery was founded in Roman times, but had been taken over by the Christians by the fourth century. The name of *Aliscamps* or *Aliscans* only came to be associated with it after the mid-eleventh century, when a cemetery of that name, whose locality was left vague, was celebrated in a *chanson de geste* (*Aliscans* or *Alescans*); the earliest texts in which the cemetery at Arles is given this name (the *Liber de miraculis Sancti Jacobi*, and Pseudo-Turpin's *Historia Karoli Magni et Rotholandi*) date from the mid-twelfth century. A body of legend was then engendered, centring on the story of Christ's appearance as it is repeated here, as a result of which Les Aliscamps became perhaps the most renowned of all medieval cemeteries. See Duprat, 'Légendes saintes de Provence', 1940, p. 197; 1941, p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> On St Trophimus, see *Otia*, ii. 10, n. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. John 11. Lazarus of Marseilles and George of Velay appear only in N (see apparatus), where they may have been added to bring the list into line with the one given in the account of the consecration of Notre-Dame de la Mer (cf. *Otia*, ii. 10, n. 29); they are not included in what is otherwise an identical list in the *Vita S. Marthae* of Pseudo-Marcella (ed. Mombritius, p. 340; ed. C. Chabaneau, *Revue des Langues Romanes*, xxxiii

90. *The Cemetery of Les Aliscamps<sup>1</sup> and the Dead Brought There*

Hear a remarkable wonder, most worshipful Prince, a miracle indeed, caused by divine power. The capital of the kingdom of Burgundy, known as the Arelate, is Arles, a city endowed with ancient privileges. It was Trophimus,<sup>2</sup> a disciple of Jesus Christ, ordained by the apostles Peter and Paul, who converted it to faith in Christ, in the company of Paul the apostle, who was then on his way to Spain. A short time later, in collaboration with the holy bishops Lazarus of Marseilles (whom God had raised from the dead),<sup>3</sup> Maximinus of Aix, Eutropius of Orange, George of Velay, Saturninus of Toulouse, Martial of Limoges, Sergius Paulus of Narbonne, and Fronto of Périgueux,<sup>4</sup> all of whom were among the seventy-two disciples of Jesus Christ,<sup>5</sup> he decided to found a sacred burial ground on the south side of the city, where the bodies of all the faithful might be given burial. His idea was that, just as the evangelization of all Gaul had started from the church of Arles, so too those who died in Christ should be brought there from all around and have the comfort of being buried together. Accordingly a solemn consecration was performed at the hands of the holy bishops, whereupon Christ, already well-known to them in the flesh, appeared to them on the eastern side, where the church still stands which was consecrated by these same bishops in honour of the Blessed Virgin.<sup>6</sup> He blessed their work, and bestowed this gift on the cemetery and those who would be

(1889), 101–3, at p. 102). Although Gervase makes no mention of Martha here, he is clearly indebted to Pseudo-Marcella for his account of the consecration of the cemetery and the special blessing bestowed on it by Christ; Pseudo-Marcella in turn was drawing on Pseudo-Turpin or the *Liber de miraculis Sancti Jacobi*, both of which contain an identical list of bishops, except that Eutropius is designated bishop of Saintes ('Xanctonensis') rather than Orange (Pseudo-Turpin, c. 28, ed. Meredith-Jones, pp. 212–13; *Le Guide du pèlerin de Saint Jacques de Compostelle*, ed. J. Viellard (Macon, 1938); cf. Duprat, 'Légendes saintes de Provence', 1940, pp. 193–5; 1941, p. 106).

<sup>4</sup> These bishops were all reputed to have been the first incumbents of their respective sees. According to Gregory of Tours (*HF* i. 30, ed. Krusch and Levison, pp. 47–8), Saturninus, Martialis, and Paulus, as well as Trophimus, were among the seven bishops sent to preach among the Gauls in the mid-third century. By Gervase's time all these bishops were said to have been among the seventy-two disciples, and to have reached Provence in the boat which brought the saints of Bethany (cf. *Otia*, ii. 10, n. 29).

<sup>5</sup> Luke 10: 1 (Vulgate); seventy in A.V.).

<sup>6</sup> The cemetery had as many as thirty churches in the Middle Ages. The chapel dedicated to the Mother of God annexed to the church of Saint-Honorat is named as the site of Christ's appearance in a spurious circular of Michel de Mouriez, archbishop of Arles 1202–17 (*Gallia Christiana novissima*, iii (Arles, 1900), 310–12; Duprat, 'Légendes saintes de Provence', 1941, p. 110).

eorum sua benedictione perfondens, dato cimiterio ac illis sepeliendis munere, ut quicumque inibi sepelirentur, nullas in cadaueribus suis diabolicas paterentur illusiones, secundum quod in euangelio legitur quosdam demones habitare in sepulcris; unde dicitur: 'Exeunte Iesu de nauis, occurrit de monumentis homo in spiritu immundo, qui domicilium habebat in monumentis.'<sup>7</sup>

Ex huiusmodi ergo dominice benedictionis munere, necnon propter sacratissimorum uirorum consecrationes, apud omnes maioris auctoritatis Galliarum principes ac clericos inoleuit quod maxima potentum pars que in Galliis, aut circa Pireneos montes aut Alpes Penninas, in pugnis paganorum moriebantur,<sup>8</sup> illic<sup>j</sup> sepulturam habent; et quidam in plaustris, alii in curribus, nonnulli in equis, plurimi per dependulum fluentis Rodani ad cimiterium Campi Elisii deferebantur, ubi Vivianus et comes Bertrannus et Astulfus<sup>k</sup> et innumeri proceres requiescunt.<sup>9</sup>

Est ergo omni<sup>l</sup> admiratione dignissimum quod nullus in thecis positus mortuus ultimos ciuitatis Arelatensis terminos (quos Rochet-tam nominant) potest quantalibet ui uentorum aut tempestate conpulsus preterire, sed infra semper subsistens in aqua rotatur, donec applicet aut ad ripam fluminis ductus cimiterio sacro inferatur.<sup>10</sup>

Mirandis magis miranda succedunt, que oculis conspeximus, sub innumera utriusque sexus hominum multitudine. Solent, ut premisimus, mortui in doleis bituminatis ac in thecis<sup>m</sup> corpora mortuorum a longinquis regionibus per aquam fluminis Rodani dimitti, cum pecunia sigillata, que cimiterio tam sacro, nomine elemosine, confertur.<sup>11</sup> Vno ergo aliquo die, nundum decennio delapso, dolium cum mortuo suo descendit inter illud angustum quod ex alternis<sup>n</sup> ripis<sup>o</sup> castrum Tarasconense et castrum Belliquadri prospetat. Exilientes<sup>p</sup> adolescentes Belliquadri dolium ad terram trahunt et, relicto mortuo,

<sup>j</sup> illic XQ; illuc NACI      <sup>k</sup> Adstulfus N      <sup>l</sup> omni supplied by author N  
<sup>m</sup> in thecis Liebrecht; entecis MSS      <sup>n</sup> alterius NXQ      <sup>o</sup> ripis altered to rupis,  
 parte inserted after it by author N      <sup>p</sup> et castrum . . . Exilientes] supplied by author N

<sup>7</sup> Mark 5: 2-3.      <sup>8</sup> Note the plural verb with a singular subject.

<sup>9</sup> The words *Gesta Caroli* are written in the margin of N at this point. This may be a reference to the chronicle of Pseudo-Turpin, which bears this title in some MSS; in c. 29 (ed. Meredith-Jones, pp. 216-17) a list is given of those among the dead at Roncevaux who were buried at Les Aliscamps. Liebrecht (pp. 153-4) suggests that the three names mentioned by Gervase are variants of Ivorius, Bernardus de Nublis, and Estultus of Langres, from Pseudo-Turpin's list. But *Vivianus* must surely be Vivien, the nephew of William of Orange, whose death in a battle at 'Aliscans' was celebrated in the *chansons de geste* *Le Covenant Vivien* and *Aliscans*; Vivien's supposed tomb at Les Aliscamps was a

buried in it: no diabolical apparitions would have any power over the bodies of the people buried there. For one reads in the gospel that certain evil spirits live among tombs, as in the passage: 'When Jesus came out of the ship, there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs.'<sup>7</sup>

Consequently, since the Lord had conferred such a blessing on it, and also on account of its having been consecrated by such holy men, it became the burial-place favoured by all the more important secular rulers and clergy of Gaul; as a result, the great majority of the nobles who died<sup>8</sup> fighting the pagans in Gaul, in the region of the Pyrenees or the Pennine Alps, are buried there. They were conveyed, some in wagons, others in chariots, a few on horseback, and many floating down the current of the Rhône, to this cemetery called Les Aliscamps: Vivien, Count Bertrand, Aistulf, and countless other famous men rest there.<sup>9</sup>

Now it is an utterly remarkable fact that no corpse laid in a coffin can pass the furthest suburb of the city of Arles (which they call La Roquette), no matter how great be the force of winds or storm driving it, but it goes round in circles in the water, staying all the time within the boundary, until it comes to land or is hauled to the river-bank and taken into the holy cemetery.<sup>10</sup>

To add to this marvel, here is something even more marvellous which we saw with our own eyes, in the presence of a numberless multitude of men and women. As we have said, it is customary for the bodies of the dead to be sent down from distant regions on the water of the river Rhône, in tarred casks or coffins, with some money sealed inside, intended as an alms for this most holy cemetery.<sup>11</sup> One day, then, less than ten years ago, a cask with its body inside floated down through the narrow stretch which is overlooked by the town of Tarascon on one bank and the town of Beaucaire on the other. Some youths from Beaucaire leapt out and dragged the cask to land. They

place of pilgrimage. William of Orange had another nephew named Bertrand, who is presumably Gervase's *comes Bertrannus*; *Astulfus* is probably the count of Langres. On this cycle of legends, see J. Bédier, *Les Légendes épiques* (Paris, 1908), i. 365-85; L. Stoff, *Arles à la fin du Moyen-Age* (Paris, 1986), pp. 75-6.

<sup>10</sup> Corpses were indeed sent down the Rhône for burial at Les Aliscamps, and the legend that they stopped automatically by the cemetery was well-known. For related folk-material, cf. Liebrecht, pp. 149-53; Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, pp. 830-5; Sébillot, *Folk-Lore*, ii. 148-55. This episode is discussed briefly by Schmitt, *Les Revenants*, p. 106.

<sup>11</sup> The alms-payments fell to the abbeys of Saint-Césaire at Arles and Saint-Victor at Marseilles. This was a cause of grief to the cathedral chapter of Arles; for the part Gervase played in bringing the conflict to an end, see above, p. xxxiii.

pecuniam reconditam rapiunt. Repulsum dolium inter impetuosi amnis<sup>9</sup> fluctus subsistit, et nec ui fluminis precipitis nec iuuenum impulsibus potuit descendere, uerum rotans et in se reuoluens, eosdem circinabat<sup>r</sup> fluminis fluctus. Iam ipsius celati facti signa prodierunt in publicum, et comitis Tolosani in castro baiulus diuina mente concepit aliquid iniurie mortuo ab incolis castris fuisse inflictum. Perquirat sollicitus, inuestigatores mittit, et secretos sceleris huius exploratores conducit. Tandem 'qui scrutatur corda et renes, Deus,'<sup>12</sup> ante cuius oculos nichil latere potest, factum publicat; statimque<sup>s</sup> uicarius<sup>t</sup> comitis pecuniam reponi iubet cum mortuo, delinquentesque pena graui affligit. Restituto censu, confestim mortuus sine omni inpellentis adiutorio<sup>u</sup> uiam aggreditur, et infra modicam oram apud ciuitatem Arelatem applicans, sepulture honorifice traditur.

xc. *De nuce que sex aut septem facit nucleos<sup>a</sup>*

Est in regno Arelatensi, episcopatu Aquensi, castro Ponteuens, nux quedam quam a cornice plantatam ferunt, sicut mos est auibus nucleos nunquam proicere uel leuatos deperdere. Nux hec in arborem grandem excreuit, et cum alie eius generis arbores fructificant, hec globum<sup>b</sup> facit ad instar pomi uel pinee; quo fracto, sex aut septem aut decem quandoque nuclei eliciuntur.

xcii. *De equo Giraldi de Cabreriis<sup>1</sup>*

Sunt qui fantastica non credunt, et quorum causam nesciunt, materiam non mirantur. Diximus<sup>2</sup> laruarum usum ac lamiarum<sup>a</sup> frequentem esse; nunc ergo iocundum quid, et circa hec diuulgatum

<sup>9</sup> amnis *N*      <sup>r</sup> circinabat *CXQ*      <sup>s</sup> statimque *N*      <sup>t</sup> uicarius *supplied by author N*  
<sup>u</sup> adiutorio *supplied by author N*

<sup>a</sup> sex . . . nucleos] facit decem nucleos (nucleos esse decem *C*) in testa *CXQ*  
<sup>b</sup> globium *N*

<sup>a</sup> usum ac lamiarum *supplied by author N*

<sup>12</sup> Ps. 7: 10 (9); cf. Rev. 2: 23.

<sup>1</sup> Probably the famous Guiraut or Guerau III Ponç de Cabrera, one of the first Catalan troubadours known to us by name: see Bezzola, *Origines*, iii. 341; M. de Riquer, *Història de la literatura catalana* (Barcelona, 1964), i. 63 f. If Guiraut died, as is thought, in 1170, the

left the corpse, but stole the money which had been stowed away with it. Then they pushed the cask back. However, it stood still in the midstream of the fast-flowing river, and neither the force of the rushing torrent nor the shoving of the youths could make it float on down; instead, rotating and spinning round on itself, it circled the same patch of river. By now, although the deed had been accomplished in secret, signs of it had become publicly manifest. The count of Toulouse's bailiff in the castle sensed by divine inspiration that some injury had been inflicted on the dead man by inhabitants of the town. He made diligent enquiries, sent out investigators, and hired secret spies to uncover this crime. At length 'he that searches the hearts and reins, God,'<sup>12</sup> from whose eyes nothing can be hidden, made the deed known. The count's bailiff immediately ordered the money to be put back in with the corpse, and inflicted a severe punishment on the transgressors. Once its property had been restored, without further delay the corpse went on its way, needing no helping push, and within a short time came to land at the city of Arles and was given honourable burial.

91. *The Nut-tree which Produces Six or Seven Kernels*

In the kingdom of Arles, in the diocese of Aix, and the village of Pontevès, there is a nut-tree which they say was planted by a crow, in the way birds have of sometimes throwing nuts down or dropping ones they are carrying. This nut grew into a huge tree, and when other trees of its kind bear fruit, this one produces a globe like an apple or a pine-cone; if this is broken open, six or seven or sometimes ten kernels are got out of it.

92. *The Horse of Guiraut de Cabrera<sup>1</sup>*

There are some people who do not believe in anything supernatural, and even if they do not know the reason for things, they do not marvel at their existence. We have said<sup>2</sup> that people frequently encounter larvas and lamias; now therefore let us interpose a pleasing story: it is

events described here probably took place in 1167, when Alfonso II was in Arles; Gervase presumably heard the story from his wife's family.

<sup>2</sup> *Otia*, iii. 85 and 86.

ac pene toti orbi cognitum, interseramus. Erat temporibus nostris in Cathalonia miles nobilissimis<sup>b</sup> ortus natalibus, milicia strenuus, elegantia graciosus, cui nomen Giraldus de Cabreriis. Hic equum habebat in bonitate singularem, uelocitate inuincibilem et, quod sine exemplo mirandum fuit, in omnibus angustiis consiliosum.<sup>3</sup> Huic nobilis nomen indidit ut Bonus Amicus uocaretur;<sup>4</sup> solo pane triticeo in conca uescebatur argentea, et culcitra de pluma pro substernio utebatur. Quociens artissimo quoquam negotio uir nobilis urgebatur, tamquam ad cuiusuis disertissimi consilium, ad equum confugiebat. Verumtamen quibus uerbis quibusue signis aut motibus ad intellectum responsa formabat, hominibus<sup>c</sup> preter dominum suum erat incognitum. Sed hoc apud omnes probatissimum fuit, etiam apud hostes capitales, quod nullius preter equum usus consilio, in omnibus prospere agebat; omnes eludens et a nullo<sup>d</sup> elusus, a nemine uictus, et a multis persequentibus fugiebat | dum<sup>e</sup> uolebat, et inter crebros ictus fugabat quos eligebat ad pugnam. Erat miles in iuuentute sua, iocundus, hylaris, musicis instrumentis plurimum instructus, a dominabus inuidiose desideratus. In palatio nostro (quod ex uestri munere uestraque gratia ad nos rediit per sententiam curie imperialis, princeps<sup>e</sup> excellentissime, propter ius patrimoniale uxoris nostre),<sup>5</sup> in presentia pie memorie Ildefonsi, illustris regis quondam Aragonensis,<sup>6</sup> et socrus nostre,<sup>7</sup> que singulari laude precellebat inter dominas sui confinii, necnon in conspectu multorum procerum, miles sepe dictus uiolam<sup>8</sup> trahebat, domine chorum ducebant, et ad tactum cordarum equus incomparabilibus<sup>f</sup> circumflexionibus saltabat.

Quid plura? Quid dicam nescio. Si uerus equus fuit, unde in eo consilium, intelligentia, fidesque etiam in disertissimo admiranda?<sup>g</sup> Si fadus erat, ut homines asserunt, aut genus quoddam mixtum demonibus, qualiter comedebat? Et ad ultimum, perempto domino

<sup>b</sup> nobilissimis CXQ; nobilissimus AI, -isimus N      <sup>c</sup> hominibus] omnibus XQ  
<sup>d</sup> dun N      <sup>e</sup> principes N      <sup>f</sup> incomparabilis XQ      <sup>g</sup> admiranda N

<sup>3</sup> On wise horses in folklore, see Liebrecht, p. 154; Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, pp. 392 and 655–64; Howey, *The Horse in Magic and Myth*, p. 156.

<sup>4</sup> The name *Bonus Amicus* is reminiscent of the names of other beneficent beings, e.g. Robin Goodfellow; for further examples, see Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, pp. 266, 283, and 500. The horse as the hero's loyal friend may be compared with Achilles' Xanthus (*Iliad*, xix. 400–21), and Alexander's Bucephalus (Pliny, *Hist. nat.* viii. 64. 154).

<sup>5</sup> See above, pp. xxix–xxx.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. above, p. xxx, and *Otia*, iii. 83, n. 7. Alfonso's itinerant court was often to be found in Provence. Provençal influence is evident in the flowering of Catalan literature in his time; indeed Alfonso himself performed as a troubadour.

well-known in these parts, and news of it has reached practically the whole world. There was a knight in Catalonia in our times, of very high birth, dashing in warfare, and gracious in manners, whose name was Guiraut de Cabrera. This man had a horse of outstanding quality, unrivalled in speed and—an unprecedented marvel—full of sound advice in any distress.<sup>3</sup> The nobleman gave this horse the name of Good Friend.<sup>4</sup> It fed only on wheat-bread from a silver bowl, and it had a feather-mattress to lie on. Whenever the noble gentleman was hard-pressed in any difficult situation, he would have recourse to his horse, just as if he was asking the advice of a particularly discerning person. However, the words, signs, or motions by which it made its answers understood remained unknown to people other than its master. This, though, was abundantly clear to all, even to his mortal enemies: acting on the advice of no one apart from his horse, he prospered in all his affairs. He could trick everyone and was himself tricked by none; no one could get the better of him, and he could either escape, when he wished, from a host of pursuers, or, amidst a rain of blows, put to flight those with whom he chose to do battle. This knight was in the prime of life, charming, lively, highly skilled on musical instruments, and madly desired by the ladies. In our palace (which was restored to our possession by right of our wife's inheritance through your generosity and kindness, most excellent Prince, by a ruling of the imperial court),<sup>5</sup> in the presence of Alfonso of pious memory, the late renowned king of Aragon,<sup>6</sup> and of our<sup>7</sup> mother-in-law, who excelled among the ladies of her connection in her matchless repute, and in the sight of many other illustrious people, the knight of whom I have been speaking used to play the fiddle:<sup>8</sup> the ladies led the dance, and at a touch of the strings the horse would join in with extraordinary capers.

Why go on? I do not know what to say. If it was a real horse, where did it get its sound judgment from, its intelligence, and its loyalty, which would have been remarkable qualities even in the wisest person? If it was a fay, as people say, or if the demons had a part in its nature, how did it eat? Well, in the end its master was killed by

<sup>7</sup> Leibniz and Liebrecht read *vestrae* here, but the reading of *N*, and also of  $\beta$ , is *nostrae*. It was therefore Gervase's mother-in-law, not Otto's, who was present, which fits with the conjectured date of 1167.

<sup>8</sup> The most prestigious stringed instrument in Europe before c.1300; played with a bow and built in many sizes and shapes. See C. Page, *Voices and Instruments of the Middle Ages* (London, 1987), pp. 7–8, 53–74, and 177–9.

suo ab armigero suo, precio per Maximinum<sup>h</sup> corrupto—eo quod, ipso flebotomato, alium equum ascenderat—numquam post hec cibum sumpsit, sed ceruice ad parietem<sup>i</sup> colisa, mirabiliter ac miserabiliter interiit.

xciii. *De fantasiis nocturnis opiniones*<sup>a</sup>

Sunt qui dicant<sup>b</sup> huiusmodi fantasias ex animi<sup>c</sup> timiditate et melancholia<sup>d</sup> hominibus apparere<sup>e</sup> uideri, sicut in freneticis et laborantibus maioribus emitriteis solet euenire. Alios asserunt tales<sup>f</sup> ymaginationes uidere in sompniis tam expresse quod sibi ipsis uigilare uidentur,<sup>g</sup> ut quibusdam id confessis contigisse Augustinus in libro *De ciuitate Dei* refert.<sup>1</sup>

Sed contra hec mouet me quod mulieres agnosco, uicinas nostras, que processerant in diebus suis,<sup>2</sup> que mihi proponebant se de nocte uidisse clientulas et clientulos<sup>3</sup> discoopertos cum uerecundia; que etiam referebant ea que de nocte gerebantur a nobis in longe remotis partibus. Nonnumquam non uisas flagellationes nocturnas in paruulis nostris curabant;<sup>4</sup> asserebantque se, dormientibus uiris<sup>h</sup> suis, cum cetu lamiarum celeri penna mare transire, mundum percurrere, et si quis aut si qua illarum in tali discursu Christum nominauerit, statim, in quocumque loco et quantumuis periculoso<sup>i</sup> fuerit, corrui.<sup>5</sup> Vidimus equidem in regno Arelatensi mulierem e castro Belliquadri oriundam ex consimili causa<sup>j</sup> inter medias Rodani undas cecidisse,<sup>k</sup> et usque ad umbilicum humectatam, de nocte media absque uite periculo, sed non sine timore, euasisse. Scimus quasdam in forma gattarum a furtiue uigilantibus de nocte uisas ac uulneratas, in crastino uulnera truncationesque membrorum ostendisse.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>h</sup> proprium nomen *written by author above* Maximinum N <sup>i</sup> parietem N

<sup>a</sup> De . . . opiniones] De uisionibus fantasticis et orationibus CXQ <sup>b</sup> dicunt ACβ  
<sup>c</sup> animi *supplied by author (?)* N <sup>d</sup> melancholia N <sup>e</sup> apparere N <sup>f</sup> tales  
<sup>g</sup> *supplied by author* N <sup>h</sup> uideatur N <sup>i</sup> uiris N <sup>j</sup> periculosum QI  
<sup>k</sup> causas N <sup>k</sup> concidisse XQ

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xviii. 18 (CSEL xl (2). 289–92 = PL xli. 574–6. For an exhaustive treatment of visions by Augustine, see *De Genesi ad litteram*, xii. 12–31 (CSEL xxviii (1). 395–426 = PL xxxiv. 463–80).

<sup>2</sup> Liebrecht (p. 154) compares this expression to *proiectae aetate*. These nocturnal visitors are often described as *uetulae*: cf. Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, p. 1060.

<sup>3</sup> These terms are suggestive of the bands of night-riders who formed the retinue of a goddess such as Diana; cf. *Otia*, iii. 86, n. 8.

his squire, who had been bribed by Maximinus—the squire was able to kill him because he had mounted another horse, while this one was having its blood let—and from then on it never took food, but died an awesome and wretched death by dashing its neck against the wall.

93. *Opinions concerning Nocturnal Phantasms*

Some people maintain that an anxious and melancholic temperament can make people think they are seeing phantasms of this kind; the same thing often happens with people who are delirious and suffering a violent attack of fever. And they claim that others see hallucinations like these in their dreams with such vividness that they believe they are awake: Augustine, in his book *City of God*, reports how some people admitted that this had happened to them.<sup>1</sup>

But there are other opinions which I cannot dismiss, since I know women, neighbours of ours, well-advanced in years,<sup>2</sup> who used to tell me that they had seen in the night-time troops of men and women,<sup>3</sup> stripped naked, to their shame; they also reported what we were doing at night in far distant places. Sometimes they tended wounds which our children had sustained from unseen nocturnal whippings.<sup>4</sup> They maintained that, while their husbands were asleep, they crossed the sea and travelled round the world in a swift flight with a band of lamias; if any man or woman among them spoke the name of Christ on such an excursion, he or she immediately fell to the ground wherever they were, no matter how dangerous it was.<sup>5</sup> We ourselves saw, in the kingdom of Arles, a woman from the town of Beaucaire who fell into the midst of the waters of the Rhône for this very reason. She was soaked up to her waist, but escaped in the middle of the night without danger to her life, though not without a fright. We know that some women have been seen and wounded in the form of cats by people keeping a secret watch by night, and the next day they have exhibited wounds and missing limbs.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Nakedness and whippings feature in similar accounts given by old women, recorded in the thirteenth century; e.g. Étienne de Bourbon, *Anecdotes*, pp. 323–4 (no. 368), reproduced by Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum morale*, iii. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Night-riding is regarded here as clearly unchristian, but there is as yet no mention of devil-worshipping.

<sup>6</sup> The belief that anyone but God could change a creature's shape was condemned along with the belief in night-riding in the canon *Episcopi* (Hansen, *Quellen*, p. 39) and again in the *Corrector* (Hansen, *Quellen*, pp. 40–1); but it persisted, and came to be associated particularly with witches (Kittredge, *Witchcraft*, pp. 174–84 and 491–503). The form the

Si hec ita non esse crederet Ambrosius, frustra in ymnis<sup>1</sup> notasset:

Procul recedant sompnia  
Et noctium fantasmata,<sup>7</sup>

et iterum:

Gallo canente spes redit,  
Egris salus refunditur,  
Mucro latronis conditur,  
Lapsis fides reuertitur.  
Hoc excitato<sup>m</sup> Lucifer  
Soluit polum caligine,  
Hoc omnis errorum chorus  
Viam nocendi deserit.<sup>8</sup>

Et quia de spinis uuas colligere bonum esset, et de tribulis ficus<sup>9</sup> dulce, licet inusitatum, audiat lector urbanum contra nocturnas pollutiones et ymaginationes, timores ac<sup>n</sup> lamias, antidotum: cum cubas, orationem cum uersiculo sancti Iohannis Baptiste, et orationem sancti Iohannis Euangeliste cum uersiculo, et orationem sancti Antonii cum uersiculo ad ultima uerba dicas, et, ut a uiris religiosissimis<sup>o</sup> audiui uerissimo experimento compertum, nulla hoc obseruantem ymaginatio polluet, nulla polutio maculabit, nullus hostis uersuti timor concutiet.

Sunt autem hi uersiculi: 'Fuit homo missus a Deo,' etc.<sup>10</sup> Oratio: f. 77<sup>v</sup> 'Perpetuis<sup>p</sup> nos, Domine, beati Iohannis | Baptiste<sup>q</sup> tuere presidiis, et quanto fragiliores sumus, tanto magis necessariis attolle subsidiis.'<sup>11</sup> Item uersiculus in honore sancti Iohannis Euangeliste: 'Valde honorandus<sup>r</sup> est beatus Iohannes,' etc.<sup>12</sup> Oratio: 'Ecclesiam tuam quesumus Domine Deus benignus illustra, ut apostoli tui Iohannis et euangeliste

<sup>1</sup> ymnis supplied by author N      <sup>m</sup> excitatus Ambrose      <sup>n</sup> ac supplied by author N  
<sup>o</sup> religiosissimus N      <sup>p</sup> perpetuis ACβ, corrected in red to Petrus N      <sup>q</sup> Baptiste supplied by author N      <sup>r</sup> honorandus] homo N

witch put on most often was that of the cat, and she was frequently to be recognized by her lack, in human form, of a limb which she had lost in cat-form. In fact, such wounds were accepted in evidence at witch-trials as scientific proof of shape-shifting (MacCulloch, *Medieval Faith and Fable*, p. 79). For a bibliography, see *MI D702*. 1. 1 and G252; and for the same idea in relation to werewolves, see *Otia*, iii. 120, n. 5.

<sup>7</sup> From the famous evening hymn 'Te lucis ante terminum', falsely attributed to Ambrose (*PL* xvii. 1185, no. 24 = Walpole, *Early Latin Hymns*, p. 299).

<sup>8</sup> From the hymn 'Aeterne rerum conditor' by Ambrose (*PL* xvi. 1409, no. 1 = Walpole, *Early Latin Hymns*, pp. 30–4). The first two lines quoted also occur in a hymn to be sung at Lauds on the Fourth Sunday of Lent, beginning: 'Noctis tempus iam praeterit', found in the *Breviarium Gothicum* (*PL* lxxxvi. 446).  
<sup>9</sup> Cf. Matt. 7: 16; Luke 6: 44.

If Ambrose had not believed that these things happened, it would have been pointless for him to have written in his hymns:

May dreams and nightly phantasms  
Keep far away from us,<sup>7</sup>

and again:

At cockcrow hope returns once more,  
The sick regain their ebbing strength,  
The robber's sword is sheathed again,  
And faith returns to cheer the lapsed.  
At this awakening Lucifer  
Sets free the sky from dark and gloom,  
At this all companies of sin  
Desert the way of evil deeds.<sup>8</sup>

And because it would be good to gather grapes from thorns, and it would be pleasing, though unusual, to gather figs from thistles,<sup>9</sup> let me give you, reader, an excellent antidote for nocturnal contaminations and hallucinations, terrors and lamias: when you go to bed, say the prayer of St John the Baptist with its versicle, and the prayer of St John the Evangelist with its versicle, and the prayer of St Antony with its versicle, right through to the end. For I have heard from truly religious men that it has been established from reliable experience that no hallucination will disturb anyone who adopts this custom, no contamination will defile him, and no fear of our crafty Enemy will assail him.

Now these are the versicles: 'There was a man sent from God,' etc.;<sup>10</sup> then the prayer: 'Defend us, Lord, with the perpetual protection of St John the Baptist, and sustain us with the aid that is the more needful according as we are frail.'<sup>11</sup> Next the versicle in honour of St John the Evangelist: 'Worthy of great honour is the blessed John,' etc.;<sup>12</sup> and the prayer: 'Lord God, we beseech you, in your kindness enlighten your Church, in order that, illumined by the

<sup>10</sup> From the office for the Nativity of John the Baptist (24 June) (*CAO*, i. 250–3, ii. 470–4, iii. 231, iv. 189 and 487).

<sup>11</sup> One of the most ancient prayers of the western church. It appears in the Verona MS known as the Leonine Sacramentary, where it is associated with Sts Hippolytus and Pontianus (*Sacramentarium Veronense*, ed. L. C. Mohlberg (Rome, 1956), p. 100, no. 795); but it is usually a collect for the Beheading of John the Baptist (29 August), as, for instance, in the Gelasian Sacramentary (*Liber Sacramentorum Romanae Ecclesiae Ordinis anni circuli*, ed. L. C. Mohlberg (Rome, 1950), p. 156, no. 1010).

<sup>12</sup> From the office of St John the Evangelist (27 December) (*CAO*, i. 44–7, ii. 76–9, iii. 526, iv. 446 and 503).

illuminata doctrinis,<sup>5</sup> ad dona perueniat sempiterna, et ab omnibus muniatur<sup>f</sup> aduersis.<sup>13</sup> Item uersiculus de beato Antonio cum antiphona: 'Vox sonat: Antoni, quia fortis ad arma fuisti, extollam toto nomen in orbe tuum. Ora pro nobis, beate Antoni,' etc.<sup>14</sup> Oratio: 'Deus qui beato Antonio confessori tuo, per uiam uirtutum incedenti, lumen tue uisitationis<sup>u</sup> ostendisti, concede propicius ut ipsum pro nobis intercessorem senciamus in celis, cuius uite exemplo irradiamur in terris.'

Si causam queris quare istorum sanctorum memoria tanti circa talia sit meriti, respondeo contraria contrariis curari: et ita uirginitas labis nescia pollutionem fugit et fugat. In Antonio quis dubitat tantam fuisse sancte perfectionis constantiam quod a Deo speciale donum meruerit super demonibus agnoscendis et expellendis, ut ait beatissimus<sup>v</sup> Atanasius in *Vita beati Antonii*?<sup>15</sup> Ad hec a uiro sancto accepi<sup>w</sup> optimum esse post ista remedium atque solatium ymnum qui apud Anglos in quadragesimali tempore cantatur ad completorium: 'Cultor Dei, memento'.<sup>16</sup>

xciv. *De arbore que siliquas facit*

In regno Arelatensi, ad confinium urbis Massiliensis, arbor est que fructum facit ad modum fabarum, et in ipsa siliqua nichil preter lapides inuenies.

xcv. *De coruo de Claireuo*<sup>a1</sup>

De brutis animalibus tacere non possumus, quibus nonnumquam superuenire uidemus humane cuiusdam sapientie uigilantiam. Ecce

<sup>5</sup> doctrina N      <sup>f</sup> muniatur corrected by author from muniatur N; muniatur AXQ  
<sup>u</sup> uisitatonis N      <sup>v</sup> beatissimus supplied by author N      <sup>w</sup> accepit N

<sup>a</sup> de Claireuo] om. I; et eius sagacitate CXQ

<sup>13</sup> A collect for 27 December, also found (in a slightly different version) in the Leonine Sacramentary (ed. Mohlberg, p. 164, no. 1283), and in most subsequent mainstream sacramentaries. The final phrase ('et ab omnibus muniatur aduersis') seems to be peculiar to Gervase's version.

<sup>14</sup> This versicle and the following prayer are not to be found in any of the standard liturgies, and may represent a local observance; St Antony enjoyed great popularity in the Middle Ages. The reference in the prayer is presumably to the Lord's appearance to him

teachings of your apostle and evangelist John, it may attain to everlasting gifts, and be fortified against all adversities.<sup>13</sup> And then the versicle of St Antony with the antiphon: 'A voice proclaims: Antony, because you have been strong in the fight, I shall extol your name in all the earth. Pray for us, blessed Antony,' etc.;<sup>14</sup> and the prayer: 'God, who showed the light of your presence to your confessor the blessed Antony, who walked in the way of virtue, mercifully grant that we may know him as our intercessor in heaven, by the example of whose life we are enlightened on earth.'

If you want to know why the commemoration of these saints is so effective in such matters, my answer is that opposites are cured by opposites: and so virginity which knows no stain both flees from and puts to flight defilement. Who can doubt that Antony was so steadfast in holy perfection that he earned the special gift from God of being able to recognize and drive out evil spirits, as the most blessed Athanasius says in his *Life of St Antony*?<sup>15</sup> In addition, I have it from a holy man that, after these observances, the best remedy and comfort is the hymn which is sung by the English at compline during Lent: 'Remember, worshipper of God'.<sup>16</sup>

94. *A Tree which Produces Pods*

In the kingdom of Arles, near the city of Marseilles, there is a tree which produces fruit like beans, and inside the pod you will find nothing but pebbles.

95. *The Raven of Clairevum*<sup>1</sup>

We cannot pass over in silence the fact that we sometimes see a concern for human wisdom of some kind manifesting itself in brute

in a ray of light, putting to flight the demons which were tormenting him (Athanasius, *Vita Antonii*, c. 10, ed. Hoppenbrouwers, p. 90 = PG xxvi. 860).

<sup>15</sup> In his biography of St Antony, Athanasius presented him above all as victorious over the devil and his ministers; in chapters 35–43 Antony teaches on the recognition and driving out of demons (ed. Hoppenbrouwers, pp. 125–35 = PG xxvi. 893–908).

<sup>16</sup> This hymn, by no means limited to English use, consists of the last 7 of the 38 stanzas of Prudentius' *Cathermerinon* vi (Walpole, *Early Latin Hymns*, p. 130; Prudentius, *Carmina*, CCSL cxxvi (1966), pp. 33–4).

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Claviers, near Draguignan, or Clavans, near Grenoble.



enim in regno Arelatensi coruus erat,<sup>b</sup> qui tantam habebat discretionem quod ostiles insidias explorabat et, transcursis montibus et castris<sup>c</sup> terminis, si quid erat repentinum aut insidiosum, loquebatur. Ad aleas pecuniam mutuabat, quam inter rupes occultauerat. Hic cum dominam castris nimis familiarem cuidam<sup>d</sup> comperisset, post multas domine denuntiationes factas, ad ultimum adulterium domino prodidit, sicque factum est ut, ab adultero ictu<sup>e</sup> sagitte percussus,<sup>f</sup> periret.<sup>2</sup>

xcvi. *De iudicio cignorum*

Quanta matrimonio legitimo fides debeatur, leges humane que castitati ac pudicitie fauent sua monstrant censura. Nec solum id legibus que constringunt hominum<sup>a</sup> uitam conuincitur esse puniendum quod contra fidem thori committitur, sed quod mirabilius est, etiam aues zelant compares suas, et suo stimuli naturalis iudicio puniunt illas que<sup>b</sup> adulterantur. Ecce quod in regno Anglorum, episcopatu Londoniensi et comitatu Essexe,<sup>c</sup> est castrum Angra nuncupatum, quod bone memorie Ricardus de Luci,<sup>1</sup> domini aui uestri illustris regis Anglorum in Anglia<sup>d</sup> quondam iusticiarius, construxit. Vno aliquo die cum ad exedras palacii milites se misissent ad prospiciendum, ecce multitudo cignorum in prato domibus subiecto conuenit, et cum quasi concilio<sup>e</sup> facto ad inuicem diu uocibus suis contulissent, unus e<sup>f</sup> medio, sicut mos est accusatori uel eius patrono, longo garritu querelam deponit, et cum ad unam partem |

f. 78<sup>r</sup>

<sup>b</sup> erat supplied by author N      <sup>c</sup> space left after castris NQ      <sup>d</sup> cuidem N  
<sup>e</sup> ictus N      <sup>f</sup> percussus N

<sup>a</sup> homini AXQ      <sup>b</sup> illasque N      <sup>c</sup> sic QI; Essexi altered by author from  
Essexe N      <sup>d</sup> in Anglia om. XQ      <sup>e</sup> consilio ACβ      <sup>f</sup> e supplied by  
author N      <sup>g</sup> adultii N

<sup>2</sup> Birds are often credited with a concern for human doings, acting as messengers or informers. The story of Coronis, whose infidelity was betrayed to Apollo by a raven, was well-known from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (ii. 542–632); it forms the matter of Chaucer's *Manciple's Tale*. In his article, 'Ovide, Gervais de Tilbury, et les "fresques" de Sorgue' (*Revue Archéologique*, xxi (1944), 187–9), C. Picard suggested that both this chapter of the *Otia* and some frescoes dating from c.1400 from Sorgue, near Avignon, were directly

beasts. For instance, in the kingdom of Arles there was a raven, which possessed such great discernment that it used to seek out enemy ambushes and, flying over the mountains and the boundaries of the local castle, it would report anything unlooked for or treacherous. It used to gamble at dice, using money which it had hidden away among the rocks. This bird discovered that the chatelaine was being too familiar with a certain man. After issuing many warnings to the lady, it finally reported the adultery to her husband; and so it happened that the bird was struck down, shot with an arrow by the lady's lover, and died.<sup>2</sup>

96. *The Swans' Court of Justice*

The human laws which promote chastity and purity show by their severity what total fidelity is owed to lawful matrimony. But not only is any act which violates the fidelity of the marriage-bed proved to be a punishable offence by the laws which govern human life, but, what is more remarkable, the birds too are jealous of their mates, and by their own jurisdiction, born of a natural instinct, they punish female birds which commit adultery. Here is an example: in the kingdom of England, in the diocese of London and the county of Essex, there is a castle called Ongar, built by Richard de Luci<sup>1</sup> of good memory, at one time justiciar in England for my lord your grandfather, the renowned king of the English. One day when the knights had gone to look at the aviaries of the house, there before them a large number of swans assembled in the meadow beneath the castle, and formed a kind of council. After they had conferred noisily together for a long time, one of them stood out in their midst and made a long squawking accusation, acting just like a plaintiff or his advocate. Some swans on one side were posing as judges, and eventually they ordered the female in question to be brought forward. Two of them, sent by the judges, set the accused in the middle. After much hooting on all sides in the way of allegations, in the end the judges decided the case, and exposed the one found guilty of adultery to the whole flock. The

inspired by Ovid's story. Certainly Gervase was well-acquainted with the *Metamorphoses*, but this chapter has all the appearance of a local legend.

<sup>1</sup> Ongar was a castle in western Essex, not far from Tilbury. Richard de Luci may not have been the first builder; he did, however, own the castle from at least 1157, until he was deprived of it in 1176; see *HBC*, p. 71; *VCH*, Essex, i. 297 and ii. 211; Türk, 'Nugae curialium', pp. 32–5.

cignorum cetus, deplumat dampnatam, et sic frigori expositam mortis addicunt<sup>h</sup> supplicio.<sup>2</sup>

xcvii. *De ouo coruino supposito ciconie*<sup>a</sup>

Mira loquar et uniuerso ciuitatis nostre Arelatensis notissima populo. Ex antiquissimis diebus in usu habent ciconie in muris ac turribus urbis nidificare. Cum ergo oua expedisent ad pullos, quidam leuitate animi ductus<sup>b</sup> ouum coruinum ouis ciconie supposuit; et sic, excitatum calore ouum inter cetera,<sup>c</sup> pullum fecit secundum nature debitum coruinum. Coruus prodit, et intuitus ciconius pullum a suo genere plurimum dissimilem, proclamationem facit ad sui numeri cetum. Congregantur ciconie, producitur rea delata, instituitur uice accusationis rostrorum strepitus, et ostensus ille pullus, nature debite inconueniens, pro testimonio presumptiuo<sup>d</sup> recipitur, et sufficit ad condemnationem<sup>e</sup> matris suppositiue. Nudati ergo mater et pulus putatius pluma naturali, simul ad iudicium precipitati de turre excellenti, mortem inciderunt.<sup>1</sup>

Intuere, felix Auguste, quantam doctrinam ex auium garritu licet sumere, dum a cignis sententia formatur ex reatus euidencia, et a ciconiis<sup>f</sup> presumptio uiolenta iudicium extorquet, utrisque ad castitatem seruandam et incestum puniendum studentibus. Quid igitur infelicitas nostri temporis merebitur supplicii, ubi lasciuiam pro laude suscipitur, adulterium argumentosum probitatis indicium effertur, furtiuos habuisse dominarum aut uirginum amplexus milicie insignis est incitamentum? Videant, inquam, et intelligant milites nostri mirandum auium iudicium, et a brutis addiscant que obseruent. 'Nocet empta furore uoluptas',<sup>2</sup> ubi laus criminosa sordescit et uirtus libidinis habet titulum.<sup>3</sup> Tanto hec arcius uitanda iudico,<sup>g</sup>

<sup>h</sup> adiciunt CXQ

<sup>a</sup> Chapter om. XQ      <sup>b</sup> ductus supplied by author N      <sup>c</sup> cetera supplied by author N  
<sup>d</sup> presuptiuo N      <sup>e</sup> conde(a written above e, but e not expunged)mp- nationem N      <sup>f</sup> ciconiis N      <sup>g</sup> iudicio ACI

<sup>2</sup> Many other medieval stories tell of the punishment of adultery by animals or birds, most often storks: see the next chapter, and cf. Neckam, *De naturis rerum*, i. 64; Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum naturale*, xvi. 48; Jacques de Vitry, *Exempla*, 234 (ed. Crane, pp. 97–8); Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, x. 60; *Gesta Romanorum*, cc. 82 and 181. In all these stories it is the female bird which is punished.

<sup>1</sup> Storks are the subject of many legends: cf. *Otia*, iii. 63, n. 4. For another account of an

assembly of swans sprang at the condemned creature, stripped her of her feathers, and having thus exposed her to the cold, delivered her up to the punishment of death.<sup>2</sup>

97. *The Raven's Egg which was Put in a Stork's Nest*

I am going to tell of a strange happening, very well known to the entire population of our city of Arles. From times long past storks have made a habit of building their nests in the walls and turrets of the city. Once, when they had laid their eggs and were awaiting the emergence of their chicks, someone, in a fit of high spirits, placed a raven's egg among the eggs of a stork; and so, when the stork's warmth caused the egg to hatch along with the others, it produced a raven's chick, following the law of nature. The raven emerged; and when the male stork saw a chick quite different from his own kind, he gave vent to loud cries, summoning an assembly of his fellow-storks. The storks gathered, the defendant was produced, and a clattering of beaks took the place of an accusation. When the chick which failed to conform to its expected nature was displayed, it was accepted as presumptive evidence, and sufficed for the condemnation of its supposed mother. Then the mother and her putative offspring were stripped of their natural plumage, and the two of them, for their punishment, were hurled from a high tower, and thus met their death.<sup>1</sup>

Mark, happy Augustus, what an important lesson one may draw from the chattering of birds, when sentence is passed by swans on the evidence of guilt, and a hot-headed assumption elicits a judgment from storks, the birds in both cases being concerned to preserve chastity and to punish impurity. What punishment, therefore, will the wretched state of affairs of our time deserve, when licentiousness is held up for praise, adultery is exalted as a sure sign of worth, and it is a spur to distinguished knighthood to have known the clandestine embraces of married women or young girls? Let our knights, I say, see and understand the remarkable jurisdiction of birds, and learn from brute beasts what to honour. 'Pleasure bought with passion does harm',<sup>2</sup> where honour is defiled by guilt and lust calls itself virtue.<sup>3</sup>

assembly of storks attacking one of their number, see Pliny, *Hist. nat.* x. 31. 62; cf. Wolf, *Beiträge zur Deutschen Mythologie*, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Horace, *Epist.* i. 2. 55. The line in Horace reads: 'Sperne uoluptates; nocet empta dolore uoluptas.'

<sup>3</sup> Lit. 'virtue has the title of lust'.

quanto publicatius<sup>4</sup> aguntur, et<sup>h</sup> ab omnium cognitore Domino secretius puniuntur.

xcviii. *De caseo putrefacto*<sup>a</sup>

Considera, semper felix Auguste, quante labis sit crimen adulterii. Quicumque nocte se adulterino coitu polluerit, in crastino si ex lactis coagulo caseum fecerit, sine salis beneficio, nec per unum diem seruare poterit quod operatus est a uermibus incorruptum. Si queris tanti miraculi auctoritatem, respondeo cotidianam rerum euentiam pro<sup>b</sup> probatione sufficere.

xcix. *De mortuo qui occidit uxorem quondam suam*<sup>a</sup>

Nec tantum a uiuis, sed etiam a mortuis zelum immaculati thori seruatum nouimus. Erat enim in regno uestro Arelatensi et prouincia ac comitatu Aquensi, uir nobilis, genere illustris, moribus insignis, | militia priuilegiatus: Guillelmus de Mustiers. Vxorem duxerat pereque illustrem et apud homines graciousam, cautam, et castam, ex qua susceptis liberis, diem clausit extremum. Hic cum supremam ordinaret uoluntatem, uxori sub fide coniugali iniunxit ne cuidam secundo nuberet, quem inimicum capitalem habuerat, adiciens si cum illo contraheret, eam mortario salsorio quod ad oculum erat se ipsam interfectorum. Paruit indictae uiduitati domina, pre instancia doloris animo turbato, omnem conuentionem gratanter suscipiens.

Quid plura? Defuncto uiro, post decursos aliquot annos superstes uxor, amicorum inducta consilio, nubit militi, capitali mariti prioris hosti, cuius ei nuptias interdixerat. Non oblita fidei promisse nec comminationis adiuncte, sed diu renitens,<sup>b</sup> compulsata est nubere inuito animo; proponentique minas defuncti, ab amicis respondebatur cum mortuis non esse potestatem nocendi. Nupsit domina, et ab

<sup>h</sup> et ACI; expunged N

<sup>a</sup> Chapter om. XQ      <sup>b</sup> pro CI; expunged N, om. A

<sup>a</sup> De . . . suam] De ictu uiri mortui in uxorem suam XQ      <sup>b</sup> renitens supplied by author N

<sup>4</sup> A comparative adverb is here formed from the past participle of *publico*: an example of the freedom with which medieval authors adapted the language to their needs.

These things ought in my opinion to be shunned the more rigorously, the more openly<sup>4</sup> they are done, and the more secretly they are punished by the Lord who knows all.

98. *Rotten Cheese*

Consider, ever happy Augustus, what great defilement comes from the crime of adultery. If anyone has contaminated himself in the night with adulterous intercourse, and makes cheese the next morning from curdled milk, without using salt, he will not be able to preserve what he has made from the corruption of worms even for a single day. If you ask for confirmation of such a great miracle, my answer is that the daily evidence of experience is proof enough.

99. *The Dead Man who Killed his Former Wife*

We know that a jealous concern for an undefiled marriage-bed is nursed not only by the living but also by the dead. In your kingdom of Arles, in the province and county of Aix, there was a nobleman of illustrious family, distinguished character, and high military rank: William de Moustiers. He had married an equally illustrious wife, who was gracious in society, prudent, and chaste. He had children by her, and then the time came for him to die. When expressing his last wish, he enjoined on his wife by her conjugal fidelity that she should not take as a second husband a man whom he had accounted his mortal enemy, adding that if she were to contract a marriage with that man, he would kill her with a salt mortar on which his glance fell. The lady submitted to the life of widowhood he was imposing on her, for her mind was in turmoil with the intensity of her grief, and she was ready to agree to anything.

To cut a long story short, the husband died, and after several years had elapsed, the surviving wife was persuaded, on her friends' advice, to marry the knight who had been her former husband's mortal enemy, whom he had forbidden her to marry. She had not forgotten her promise of fidelity nor the threat which had accompanied it, but after putting up a lengthy resistance, she was pushed into the marriage against her will. When she put forward the threats of the deceased as an objection, her friends replied that the dead have no

ecclesia, contracto matrimonio, domum reducta, ut paulisper cum dominabus consederat, subito clamore prorumpit in hec uerba: 'Heu me miseram, que fidem thori promissam uiolare presumo! Ecce uir meus astat, mortario me perempturus.' Statim in publico tam sollempnis multitudinis conspectu, mortuus mortario erecto dominam ~~excerebrat~~, et licet erigi uiderent omnes mortarium, a quo tamen erigeretur non est qui agnosceret. Sufficiebant ad percussoris agnitionem uxoris ipsum proclamantis testimonium et mors subsequuta.<sup>1</sup>

c. *De hospitalitate cuiusdam*<sup>a</sup>

Quicumque uult attendere quantis meritis hospitalitas sit proseguenda, audiat miram rem<sup>b</sup> ac mirandam, uel potius miraculosam. Erat in regno uestri imperii miles strenuus, hospitalis et largus, ad omnes cum hospitalitate recipiendos expositus, circa familiam bene procurandam curiosus. Cum ad initium ieiunii quadragesimalis, quod uulgo carnipriuuium<sup>1</sup> nominant, uentum esset, nec haberet in substantia extenuatus miles quod die saturationis apponeret tante crapulationi sollempniter debitum, secretario<sup>c</sup> suo occulto suasit consilio ut equum<sup>2</sup> optimum quem habebat secreta manu mactaret, et per frustra<sup>d</sup> concisum coqueret loco carnis vaccine. Imperatis assecretis<sup>e</sup> paruit, et cum in crastino armiger, ex aliunde rediens, equum uellet abstergere ac ut moris est depuluerare, a domino, timente ne proderetur factum esternum, quanto diucius potuit ab ingressu stabuli est quesitis extrinsecis occasionibus prepeditus. Tandem armiger equum audit hynnientem, et accedens, in publicum producit incolumem.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>a</sup> De . . . cuiusdam] De carnipriuuium et equo militis CXQ <sup>b</sup> rem supplied by author N <sup>c</sup> secretario N <sup>d</sup> frustra I <sup>e</sup> a secretis Aß

<sup>1</sup> The fear of ghosts and revenants has given rise to numerous stories of the dead exacting revenge for wrongs done to them by the living: see *MI E221* and *E230*. This chapter is discussed briefly by Schmitt, *Les Revenants*, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> The word *carnipriuuium* denotes either (as here) the last day or days of eating meat immediately before Lent, or sometimes the first days of Lent itself.

<sup>3</sup> The eating of horse-flesh was taboo among all the Aryan peoples, and still tends to be regarded with repugnance: see S. Reinach, 'Pourquoi Vercingétorix a renvoyé sa cavalerie d'Alésia', *Revue Celtique*, xxvii (1906), 1-15. Such a taboo underlies the present anecdote, which may be compared with a story from the life of St Moling: the saint was given horse-meat to eat, but transformed it into mutton (J. Vendryes, 'L'épisode du chien ressuscité dans l'hagiographie irlandaise', *Revue Celtique*, xxxv (1914), 360).

power to harm. The lady was married. After the ceremony she was escorted home from the church, and when she had sat for a little while with her ladies, with a sudden scream she broke out in these words: 'Woe is me, who dare to violate the conjugal fidelity I promised! Look, my husband is here, and he is going to kill me with the mortar.' Straightaway, in full view of such a festive company, the dead man raised the mortar and smashed the lady's skull. Although everyone saw the mortar being raised, no one could see who was raising it. But the testimony of his wife's cry and her subsequent death were sufficient to identify her assailant.<sup>1</sup>

100. *A Certain Person's Hospitality*

If anyone wishes to learn what great rewards are to be gained from the practice of hospitality, let him pay heed to a strange and marvellous, or rather miraculous, occurrence. In this kingdom of your empire there was a gallant knight, hospitable and open-handed, ready to welcome all comers as his guests, and careful to provide well for his household. When it came to the beginning of the Lenten fast, the day which people call Mardi Gras,<sup>1</sup> the knight had reduced his store and did not have anything to serve on that day of rich fare, such as is customarily required for so great a feast. So he persuaded his steward in a secret consultation to slaughter the best horse<sup>2</sup> he had, concealing the deed, and to cut it in pieces<sup>3</sup> and cook it in the place of beef. The steward<sup>4</sup> carried out his instructions. Then the next day his squire came back from a journey, and wanted to dry his horse and rub it down, as the custom is. His lord, fearing that the deed of the day before would become known, hindered him for as long as he could from going into the stable, searching for pretexts to keep him outside. After a while, however, the squire heard the horse neighing. He went in to it, and led it out unharmed for all to see.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See *Otia*, ii. 21, n. 30.

<sup>4</sup> On the word *assecretis*, see *Otia*, ii. 21, n. 41.

<sup>5</sup> The folklore of every nation abounds in stories of resuscitation: see e.g. Liebrecht, p. 158; Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, pp. 184-5 n.; R. Köhler, 'Zu F. Wolf's Proben portugiesischer und catalanischer Volksromanzen', *Jahrbuch für romanische und englische Literatur*, iii (1861), 58-63 and 67-8; F. J. Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (Boston, 1882-98), i. 233-42 and 505-6; W. A. Clouston, *Popular Tales and Fictions* (Edinburgh and London, 1887), ii. 407-12 and 497-9; J. A. MacCulloch, *The Childhood of Fiction* (London, 1905), p. 84, n. 2, and p. 101, n. 2; H. Günter, *Die christliche Legend des Abendlandes* (Heidelberg, 1910), p. 83; and Loomis, *White Magic*, pp. 68, 70, and 84-5. The resuscitation is often a reward for hospitality. The present chapter may be compared

Miraculo tanto iungamus urbanum exemplar. Miles quidam in carnipriuio familie sue equam suam dedit loco carnis bouine. Ignorans rem taciti consilii, familia cibatur et saturatur opulentissime. Set et alter miles, eodem usus consilio, die sancto Pasche consimili cibo familiam refecit. Vtrumque post tempora effluxa ad maioris f. 79<sup>f</sup> domini peruenit | noticiam, nec mora, utroque uocato, dominus solum illum qui in carnipriuio<sup>f</sup> equum coxerat noui equi largitione remunerat; illi qui paschalem sollempnitatem consimili exenio honoraauerat, clausit manus. Requisitus dominus quo iudicio pocius remunerasset unum quam alterum, respondit remuneratum instantia tanta coactum ex temporum condicione, quod in crastino<sup>s</sup> nullum habebat locum consilii, uerum qui die paschali equum coxerat, in crastino potuit precedentis diei supplere defectum.

ci. *De baculo putrefacto ex contactu ueneni*<sup>a</sup>

Quecumque scripta sunt, ad nostram doctrinam scripta sunt, ut ex hiis que non uidemus cautiore simus ad ea que uidebimus, aut ex<sup>b</sup> insidiis fortune incidere poterimus. Erat in regno Arelatensi et castro Tarasconensi<sup>c</sup> (ubi Christi hospita Martha,<sup>1</sup> soror Marie et Lazari, requiescit) bubulcus. Hic, cum sulcaret terram aratro, ut moris est, uirgam aculei decorticatam in manu gestabat, et post horam meridianam serpenterem inuenit tortuosum et curtum. Suo motu animal ueneniferum multiplicatis ictibus cum baculo seu uirga peremit; statimque uirga nigerrimam contrahit infectionem, et cum infectione putredo baculum occupat, qua iam ad manum per uirgam ascendente, baculus proicitur, statimque totus in<sup>d</sup> putredinem dissolutus confringitur.

<sup>f</sup> carinipriuio N      <sup>s</sup> crastinum β

<sup>a</sup> De . . . ueneni (ex . . . ueneni om. I) ] De potentia ueneni CXQ      <sup>b</sup> ex om. XQ  
<sup>c</sup> Terasconensi NX      <sup>d</sup> im N

with a popular story of the rewarding of hospitality shown to a saint, which occurs first in Nennius (*Historia Brittonum*, xxxii; cf. *Alphabet of Tales*, ed. M. M. Banks, EETS (OS) cxxvi (1904), 254–5; Plummer, *Bethada Næm n-Èrenn*, ii. 125, 145, and 157; *Lives of the Saints from the Book of Lismore*, ed. W. Stokes (Oxford, 1890), pp. 197 and 228). Similar stories were told in antiquity concerning hospitality offered to gods, e.g. the tale of Baucis and Philemon (Ovid, *Met.* viii. 611–724; see A. S. Hollis's note on this tale in his edition of *Met.* viii (Oxford, 1970), pp. 106–8).

Let us follow such a great miracle with an elegant variation. A certain knight gave his household his own mare instead of beef for Mardi Gras. The household, not realizing what he had done, since he had made the decision without telling anyone, ate and were richly satisfied. Now another knight, resorting to the same expedient, fed his household with like fare on the holy day of Easter. With the passage of time both deeds came to the knowledge of their overlord, and without delay they were both summoned. Their lord compensated with the gift of a new horse only the one who had cooked his horse on Mardi Gras; to the other, who had honoured the feast of Easter with the same offering, he closed his hands. When asked on what criterion he had compensated the one rather than the other, the lord replied that he had compensated the one who had been caught in such an emergency by the circumstances of the season, because he had no need to be provided for the following day; whereas the one who had cooked his horse on Easter Day could have supplied the lack of the preceding day on the day after.

101. *The Staff which Rotted from Contact with Poison*

All that has been written has been written for our instruction, in order that we may learn from things which we do not see to be more prudent with regard to things which we shall see, or shall be liable to be confronted with by the snares of fortune. In the kingdom of Arles, and the town of Tarascon (which is the resting-place of Martha,<sup>1</sup> the sister of Mary and Lazarus, who received Christ in her home), there was a ploughman. Once when this man was furrowing the ground with his plough, he was carrying a peeled switch in his hand, as the custom is, to serve as a goad, and after the midday hour he came upon a short, twisty snake. On impulse he killed the poisonous creature, raining blows on it with his staff or switch. At once the switch contracted a black infection, and along with the infection rottenness permeated the staff. It was already rising through the switch up to his hand, when he threw the staff down; it immediately rotted away completely and disintegrated.

<sup>1</sup> See *Otia*, ii. 10, n. 29, and iii. 85, n. 8.

cii. *De racemis de Rocamaura*<sup>a</sup>

Est in Rodano<sup>b</sup> castrum Rocamaure,<sup>1</sup> cuius corpus<sup>2</sup> ad imperium iure fluuii, territorium ad regnum Francorum iure limitum pertinere arbitrantur.<sup>c</sup> In huius castri territorio sunt botri quos brumestas<sup>d</sup> uulgu nominat, grossiores acinos<sup>e</sup> habentes. Hi botri florent ut uinee, producunt racemos, et spem sui cultoris eludunt: cum enim ad festum sancti Iohannis Baptiste peruentum fuerit, omni fructu euanescente, nichil in illis quod ad fructum faciat reperitur.

ciii. *De mortuo qui apparet uirgini et mira dicit et annunciat*<sup>a</sup>

<sup>f. 79<sup>v</sup></sup> Multociens et a multis<sup>b</sup> insultatur, cum penas infernales ante oculos ponimus, quod ea que de altero seculo proponimus friuola sunt, adicientes<sup>2</sup> hec adiuuenticia esse. Non ergo credunt quod scriptum legitur, nisi audierint ab aliquo qui uel resurrexerit a mortuis<sup>c</sup> uel uiuentibus appareat post mortem: qualiter enim sciunt qui hec nec uiderunt nec probauerunt? Ad hec respondeo nostri temporis defectum non sustinere ut quadriduani<sup>3</sup> resurgant et annuncient que fiunt aput mortuos. Sed et non omnibus mortuis, quibus datur | ut ad nos in apparentia redeant, permittitur prodere que uident, cum et Paulus, in tertium celum raptus, uiderit archana Dei 'que non licet homini loqui'.<sup>4</sup> Sed et Lazarus 'proditor inferni' dicitur, eo quod multa de

<sup>a</sup> De . . . Rocamaura] De botris qui non fructificant CXQ <sup>b</sup> Rodano] ripa Rodani  
XQ <sup>c</sup> arbitrantur ACβ; arbitratur (altered from arbitur) N <sup>d</sup> brumestes  
XQ <sup>e</sup> id est grana written in margin by author N

<sup>a</sup> De . . . annunciat] Miracula de uisione mortui et eius responionibus CXQ  
<sup>b</sup> mltis N <sup>c</sup> a mortuis] mortuus NI

<sup>1</sup> The castle of Roquemaure, north of Avignon, was built on a limestone ridge in the middle of the Rhône (Duchesne, *Livre*, p. 169, n. 264).

<sup>2</sup> The expression *corpus castri* denotes the castle alone, as distinct from its external appurtenances (*Dict. of Med. Latin from British Sources*, s.v. *corpus* 9b).

<sup>3</sup> In the *Dict. of Med. Latin from British Sources*, Gervase's *brumesta* is included s.v. *bumasta*, which seems to denote a vine distinguished by the largeness of its grapes; but in none of the other contexts cited are the grapes said to disappear.

<sup>4</sup> This chapter is an important text for the history of the notion of purgatory. It has formed the subject of articles by H. Bresc ('Culture folklorique et théologie: Le revenant de Beaucaire (1211)', *Razo*, viii (1988), 65–74), and P. Cherchi ('Gervase of Tilbury and the Birth of Purgatory', *Medioevo Romano*, xiv (1989), 97–110); see also Schmitt, *Les Revenants*, pp. 107–14. In other chapters (i. 17 and ii. 13), Gervase, or his source, seems

102. *The Clusters of Grapes of Roquemaure*

In the Rhône stands the castle of Roquemaure.<sup>1</sup> They judge that the castle itself<sup>2</sup> belongs to the empire, which has rights over the river, while its estate belongs to the kingdom of France, which owns the land-rights. On the estate of this castle there are vines which the people call *brumestae*,<sup>3</sup> producing good fat grapes. These vines flower and produce clusters of grapes as ordinary vines do, but then they cheat their husbandman's expectation: for when it comes to the feast of St John the Baptist, all the fruit vanishes, and nothing which might even grow into fruit is found on them.

103. *The Dead Man who Appeared to a Girl and Spoke to her, Relating Wondrous Things*<sup>1</sup>

It is a common experience with us that, when we paint a picture of the torments of hell, many people pour scorn on us; for they regard what we say about the other world as mere nonsense, even claiming<sup>2</sup> that we have made it all up. This shows that they do not believe what they read in the scriptures, unless they have heard it confirmed by someone who has either risen from the dead or who appears to the living after his death: for how, they say, can people know these things, when they have neither seen them nor had experience of them? My answer to this is that the spiritual weakness of our time does not allow people to rise from the grave after four days<sup>3</sup> and relate the things that happen among the dead. And anyway, not all the dead who are allowed to return to us in a vision are given permission to make known the things they see. Paul, for instance, when he was caught up to the third heaven, saw the secrets of God 'which it is not granted to man to utter'.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand Lazarus is called 'the unveiler of not to know of purgatory as a distinct realm; here, however, he gives a remarkably long and detailed description of it. Le Goff, in *La Naissance du Purgatoire*, argues that the idea of an autonomous purgatory was 'born' in the second half of the twelfth century; certainly the early thirteenth century was a crucial time for its official acceptance by the Church.

<sup>2</sup> An anacoluthon: the participle *adicientes* is used as if the construction had been 'multi insultant' rather than 'a multis insultatur'.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. John 11: 17; the revenant in the story that follows here returned after 'three or five days'.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. 12: 2–4. An apocryphal apocalypse, the *Visio sancti Pauli*, written in Greek in the third century, purports to record Paul's experiences when he was 'caught up to the third heaven'. It made its appearance in Latin in the last years of the fourth century, and

statu inferorum scripserit, quamuis aut liber hic non habeatur aut inter apocryfos censeatur.<sup>5</sup> Dicitur ergo 'proditor inferni' non quod omnia que uidit in inferno prodiderit, sed quia ex multis aliqua prodidit,<sup>d</sup> quatenus diuina potentia dispensatiue permisit. Vt autem<sup>e</sup> incredulis et quasi impossibilitate huc post mortem redeundi excusantibus suam non ignoranciam sed contumaciam satisfaciam, rem nouam et inter nos nuper publicatam edisseram; in cuius nouitate mirentur corda, stupeant animi, membra contremiscant!

Erat anno Domini .mccxi., mense Iulii, anno autem pontificatus domini Innocentii tercii tercio decimo, imperii autem uestri anno secundo, in regno Arelatensi, prouincia ac diocesi Arelatensi, castro Belliquadri, puella uirgoque undennis, ciuibus orta probis et copiosis, fidelibus et industriis. Huic consanguineus erat, ex Aptensi ciuitate oriundus, iuuenis in prima adolescentia, inerbis, strenuus, amabilis; et pro quibusdam etatis sue lubricis excessibus exul a patrio solo factus, Belliquadrum ueniens, non sua culpa set alieno infortunio uulneratur ad mortem. Aspiciens mortem, remisit illatam iniuriam, dimisit occisori, et cum sufficiente contritione et confessione sumpto uiatico, diem functus sepultus est.

Post tres aut quinque dies, de nocte lucente lucerna uigilanti puelle, quam admodum in uita dilexerat, apparuit; a qua salutatur et non sine timore, tum propter facilis<sup>f</sup> etatis pusillanimitatem, tum propter id quod naturaliter mortalibus cordibus insitum est, ut mortuos abhorreant et cum trepidatione mentis expectent. Verum sicut mos est hiis qui diuino nutu mouentur, timorem uirginis consolatur, uerbum blande loquens.<sup>g</sup> Ait enim: 'Consanguinea, ne timeas. Nimia enim et pristina ductus affectione ex diuina permissione ad te uenio, nec | a me in aliquo noceri posse tibi existimes. Tibi

<sup>d</sup> sed . . . prodidit] supplied by author N      <sup>e</sup> aut N      <sup>f</sup> facilis om. β  
<sup>g</sup> loquens CI; loquentis NAXQ

was also translated into Syriac, Coptic, and Ethiopic. Though largely based on the earlier visions of Peter, Elijah, and Zechariah, by the later Middle Ages it had overtaken all others in popularity: at least ten abbreviated Latin redactions were produced, along with many vernacular versions. It exercised a profound influence over the medieval notions of heaven and hell, and some later visions were directly modelled on it, including the Anglo-Irish *St Patrick's Purgatory* (see T. Wright, *St Patrick's Purgatory* (London, 1844)). For the Latin text, edited in several recensions by T. Silverstein, see *Studies and Documents*, ed. K. and S. Lake, iv (London, 1935); for an English translation, see James, *Apocryphal New Testament*, pp. 525–55.

<sup>5</sup> The *Visio Lazari* was perhaps the latest of the apocryphal apocalypses, and it owed much to the *Visio Pauli*. It described what Lazarus saw in hell as narrated by him at the

hell' because he wrote a great deal about the condition of the dead, though this work is either not accepted or is counted among the apocryphal books.<sup>5</sup> He is called 'the unveiler of hell', not because he revealed all the things which he saw in hell, but because out of the many things he saw he revealed some, in so far as the all-powerful divinity granted him permission. But now, with the aim of convincing the incredulous and those who excuse, not their ignorance, but their stubbornness by maintaining the impossibility of returning here after death, I shall relate a strange matter which has recently been made known among us: let hearts be awed, minds be amazed, and limbs tremble at the wonder of it!

It happened in the year of our Lord 1211, in the month of July—the thirteenth year, that is, of the pontificate of the lord Innocent III, and the second year of your imperial rule. In the kingdom of Arles and the province and diocese of Arles, in the town of Beaucaire, there was a young girl of eleven, still a virgin, the daughter of honest and prosperous citizens, who were loyal to the Church, and hard-working. This girl had a cousin who came from the city of Apt, a lad in his first youth, still beardless, a dashing and amiable fellow. He had been exiled from his place of birth for certain transgressions which he had committed in the folly of his youth, and he was on his way to Beaucaire when he was mortally wounded, through no fault of his own, but as a result of a mishap for which he was not responsible. In the face of death, he forgave the injury that had been done him, and sent the man who had killed him on his way; in a proper spirit of repentance he made his confession and received the viaticum, and then died and was buried.

Three or five days later, he appeared in the night to the girl, whom he had loved deeply in life, while she was keeping vigil by the light of a lamp. She greeted him with a certain trepidation, partly because of the timidity of her tender age, and partly because there is an instinct, implanted by nature in the hearts of mortals, to shrink from the dead and respond to their visits in a confused state of mind. But, in the usual way of those who come back by divine consent, he allayed the girl's fear, speaking in gentle tones. He said: 'Cousin, do not be afraid. For I come to you by divine permission, drawn by my old abundant affection for you, and you must not suppose that you can be harmed

house of Simon the Pharisee (cf. John 12: 2), prompted by Simon's doubting of his resurrection. See Max Voigt, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Visionenliteratur im Mittelalter*, Palaestra, cxlvi (Leipzig, 1924), i.



soli mihi<sup>h</sup> loqui permissum est, et per te ad alios responsa mea transfundere.’

Ad hec uirgo loquentem alloquitur: inquit qualiter,<sup>i</sup> cum mortuus sit, huc aut quo pacto redeat. At ille, statim ut audit nomen mortui, stupet, gemit, et uelut uulneratus a uerbo mortis et attonitus, inquit: ‘O dulcissima, numquam uerbum hoc ab ore tuo exeat! Tanta enim est mortis et tam incomparabilis asperitas quod qui semel mortem gustauit nec ipsam uerbi recordacionem sustinere potest quin spiritus in afflictionem quamdam redeat.’

Dum hec inter se uerba mortuus et uirgo conferunt, pater et mater puelle, uigilantes, audiunt uerba uirginis, uocem<sup>j</sup> uero mortui nec audire quidem poterant. Inquirunt a filia quid et cui loquitur.<sup>k</sup> At illa: ‘Nonne uidetis’, inquit, ‘consanguineum meum Guillelmum, pridem defunctum, qui astat et me alloquitur?’ Illi ergo,<sup>l</sup> crucis signo preposito,<sup>m</sup> mirantur et stupent, nichil uidentes, solamque loquentem uirginem audientes.

Nec mora recedit mortuus; et demum septimo die, cum pater et mater uirginis pro recensenda memoria defuncti monasterium sancti Michaelis de Ferigulecto,<sup>6</sup> duobus a loco distans miliaribus, adiissent cum uicinis et<sup>n</sup> amicis, circa horam terciam uirgini solitarie in camera paterna stanti mortuus apparet. Visus a uirgine familiariter salutatur, et dum unde ueniat aut quo comite illuc uenerit inquiritur, respondet se in aere mansionem inter spiritus habere, et penas ignis purgatorii sustinere, adiciens priorem et fratres domus<sup>o</sup> sancti Michaelis eum in hoc instanti aqua suauiissima et plurimum refrigerante aspersisse, suisque sacrificiis et orationibus maximum illi beneficium contulisse.

Inquirit uirgo ut quis eius sit comes ostendat. Ille ergo ad sinistram quasi post tergum profert diabolum cornutum, tetrum aspectu, horridum, spumantem flammam et spirantem incendia. Virgo, ut moris est Prouincialibus, ad aquam benedictam in camera repositam manum mittens, aspersit diabolum, statimque aspersus euanuit, affirmante mortuo quod maximum illa aque benedictae conspersione consecutus est beneficium et incendii remedium.

Sane de hoc igne dicit Gregorius in *Dialogo* quod<sup>7</sup> corporeus est

<sup>h</sup> mihi om. N      <sup>i</sup> qualiter supplied by author N      <sup>j</sup> uocem supplied by author N  
<sup>k</sup> loquatur I (presumably a scribal correction)      <sup>l</sup> ergo supplied by author N  
<sup>m</sup> posito XQ      <sup>n</sup> et supplied by author(?) N      <sup>o</sup> domus supplied by author N

<sup>6</sup> A Benedictine priory between Tarascon and Avignon: see Achard, *Description*, i. 353; Beaunier-Besse, *Abbayes et prieurés*, vii. 141; Cottineau, *Répertoire*, i. 1223.

<sup>7-7</sup> corporeus . . . corporea incorporeum exurat (p. 764) ] Cf. Gregory the Great, *Dial.* iv. 30 (ed. Moricca, p. 272 = iv. 29, *PL* lxxvii. 365).

in any way by me. I am allowed to speak to you alone, and to transmit my replies to others through you.’

At this the girl addressed the speaker: she asked how and on what terms he could come back to this world, since he was dead. But he, as soon as he heard the word ‘dead’, was struck aghast, groaned, and as if hurt and confounded by the mention of death, said: ‘My dearest, may this word never cross your lips! For the bitterness of death is so great and so beyond compare that someone who has once tasted death cannot endure even the mention of the word, without his spirit relapsing into considerable torment.’

While the dead man and the girl were exchanging these words, the girl’s father and mother, who were awake, heard the girl’s words, but could not even hear the dead man’s voice. They inquired of their daughter what she was saying and to whom. She said: ‘Don’t you see my cousin William, who died just recently, but is now standing here and speaking to me?’ They then crossed themselves in stunned amazement, seeing nothing, and hearing only the girl speaking.

Thereupon the dead man withdrew, and did not appear again until seven days later, when the girl’s father and mother had gone with their friends and neighbours to the monastery of Saint-Michel de Frigolet,<sup>6</sup> a couple of miles from their home, to venerate the memory of the deceased. At about nine o’clock in the morning the dead man appeared to the girl while she was standing in her father’s room, all alone. On seeing him, the girl greeted him warmly. She asked him where he had come from, and in whose company he had returned to her. He replied that he had his dwelling in the air among the spirits, and that he was undergoing the torments of the fire of purgatory; he added that at that moment the prior and brothers of the community of Saint-Michel had sprinkled him with water, which was most welcome and brought him much refreshment, and that they had done him enormous good by their masses and prayers.

The girl asked him to show her who his companion was. He brought forward on his left, as if from behind his back, a horned devil of hideous appearance, a frightful creature spitting out flames and breathing fire. The girl, following the custom of the Provençals, flung out her hand to the holy water which was kept in the room, and sprinkled the devil. The moment he was sprinkled he vanished, while the dead man affirmed that he enjoyed the greatest benefit and relief from the fire as a result of that sprinkling of holy water.

Now concerning this fire, Gregory says in his *Dialogues* that<sup>7</sup> it is a

quo torquentur spiritus, quia si incorporeus spiritus in hoc corpore teneri potest quod uiuificat, quare non penaliter et ibi teneatur ubi mortificatur? Sicque fit ut res corporea incorporeum exurat.<sup>7</sup> Et sicut unus sol hos magis, illos minus urit, ita unus ignis Gehenne hos magis, illos minus cruciat;<sup>8</sup> semper tamen urit quos urit.<sup>9</sup>

Iam elabente aliquot dierum spatio, fama uiciniam tangit, et moti confines admiracione<sup>p</sup> ac nouitate uirginem uisitant; et ad gestorum auditorumque probacionem, miles de uico sancti Egidii, notus<sup>q</sup> noster ac familiaris, locum accedit. Post alia multa que per os uirginem ad mortuum transfudit: 'Heus,' inquit, 'uirgo, quere a consanguineo tuo si quis aliquod ei hodie impendit beneficium.' Ad cuius questionem mortuus respondit militem illum duos pro anima sua denarios cuidam pauperi in egressu uille sancti Egidii exhibuisse, quod sibi soli cognitum fuisse miles confitebatur.

Alio die prior Tarasconensis<sup>r</sup> aduenit ut audita rerum ueritate probaret. Cumque uirgini faceret questionem si consanguineum suum pridem uidisset, illa respondit eum<sup>s</sup> statutis et prefixis horis aduenire, adiciens se, dum hec<sup>t</sup> loquebantur, iam aduenientem conspicere. Querit prior: 'Vbinam stat, quid agit, unde uenit,<sup>u</sup> quem comitem ducit?' Virgo respondit quod ad alteram se prior manum mittat, nam pedem eius fere conculcauerat. Questionem proponens uirgo de quesitis, intuetur mortuum ad singula quesita quasi post humerum uerso capite a consiliario, quem ipsa non uidet, responsum<sup>v</sup> expectare. Secreta igitur insinuacione respondit mortuus uirgini se in aere purgatorium pati, sed solito micius; angelum habere comitem. Et cum, rogata a priore ut eum ostendat uirgini, uirgo quereret conspicere, statim producit a dextris hominem albissimum, alis circumseptum, facie splendore infinito choruscantem, cuius nomen esse Michaellem dicit, suum<sup>w</sup> et multarum animarum custodem.

Tandem uirgo proprio motu querit quid sibi uelit quod pridie tam nudus et confractis<sup>x</sup> uestibus apparuit, nunc e diuerso pristinis sit uestimentis indutus. Respondit hec esse uestes suas, quas mater ipsius uirginis pauperibus dederat; quibus antea non poterat indui,

<sup>p</sup> ammiracione N      <sup>q</sup> notus supplied by author N      <sup>r</sup> Terrasconensis N  
<sup>s</sup> cum om. XQ      <sup>t</sup> hec om. XQ      <sup>u</sup> unde uenit supplied here by author; also  
written by scribe after ducit and deleted N      <sup>v</sup> ipsum add. before responsum N  
<sup>w</sup> sue β      <sup>x</sup> conflictis N

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Gregory the Great, *Dial.* iv. 45 (ed. Moricca, pp. 302–3 = iv. 43, *PL* lxxvii. 401).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Gregory the Great, *Dial.* iv. 46 (ed. Moricca, p. 303 = iv. 44, *PL* lxxvii. 401).

corporeal fire by which spirits are tortured, on the grounds that if the incorporeal spirit can be held fast in this body which it vivifies, why should it not also be held fast for punishment in the place where it is mortified? And so it comes about that a corporeal substance burns an incorporeal one.<sup>7</sup> And just as the one sun burns some more and others less, so the one fire of Gehenna tortures some more and others less;<sup>8</sup> those whom it burns, however, it burns all the time.<sup>9</sup>

Within the space of a few days the news spread throughout the vicinity, and people from round about, moved by amazement and by the strangeness of the report, came to see the girl. Among them a good friend of ours, a knight of the town of Saint-Gilles, came to the place, with a view to testing the validity of all that had been done and heard. After putting many other questions to the dead man through the mouth of the girl, he said: 'Now my dear, ask your cousin if anyone has done him a favour today.' In answer to his question the dead man said that the knight himself, on his way out of the town of Saint-Gilles, had given a poor man two silver coins for the sake of his soul; and the knight avowed that that was known to himself alone.

On another day the prior of Tarascon came to test the truth of what he had heard. When he questioned the girl as to whether she had seen her cousin recently, she replied that he came at definite times arranged in advance, adding that, while they were saying these things, she could see him arriving. The prior asked: 'Where is he standing, what is he doing, where has he come from, and what companion has he brought?' The girl answered that the prior should move aside, for he had almost trodden on his foot. While the girl was asking him the prior's questions, she saw the dead man turn his head at each thing he was asked, as if he were looking over his shoulder to receive the answer from an adviser whom she could not see. With this invisible prompting, then, the dead man replied to the girl that he was undergoing purgatory in the air, but was being treated more leniently than was usual; he had an angel for his companion. The prior told the girl to get him to show her the angel, and when the girl asked to see him, he promptly brought forward from his right-hand side a man all in white, enfolded in wings, his face shining with infinite splendour, whose name, he said, was Michael: his guardian, and that of many other souls.

Then the girl asked on her own initiative what it signified that the day before he had appeared so poorly clothed in tattered garments, but now on the contrary he was dressed as he used to be. He replied that these were his own clothes, which the girl's mother had given to

cum nullo beneficio poterat ipsis non distributis adiuuari.<sup>10</sup> Adiecit se penam pati pro cingulo quod cuidam ciui Aptensi non restituerat, dicens se a cinctorio ignis<sup>y</sup> liberari si cingulum illud, in scrinio suo<sup>z</sup> repositum, restitueretur; quod et factum est.

f. 80<sup>v</sup> Item querit prior quid ipse egerit dum castrum Belliquadri intraret. Respondet<sup>a</sup> quod, uino | porrecto in domo Willelmi Bedocii gramatici, prior ipse prius<sup>b</sup> biberit, cum diu conflictum habuisset ad socios quis prius<sup>c</sup><sup>11</sup> bibiturus esset. Querit si quod ipsi prior bonum contulisset. Respondit maximum sibi remedium illatum ex eo quod missas pro eo cantari fecerat. Querit prior quod summum mortuorum sit adiutorium. Respondit<sup>d</sup> sacrificium in missa. Querit: 'Qualiter nouit<sup>e</sup> que hic aguntur?' Respondit spiritum omnia ad<sup>f</sup> oculum habere, nulloque medio a conspectu arceri; ideoque turpitudines maxime uitandas, quia infinitorum spirituum habent conspectum, et uerecundia infinito testimonio adiuuatur.<sup>g</sup>

Querit si uidet Deum et Beatam Virginem et sanctos et<sup>h</sup> bonos et malos. Respondit quod Deum non<sup>12</sup> uidet, et in conspectu est Beate Virginis; sed lucidius exacto purgatorio ipsum conspiciet, et post iudicium infinita speculatione clarius. Porro Manducator<sup>13</sup> dicit quod<sup>i</sup> sancti et<sup>j</sup> angeli in patria Deum uident ut est, id est sicut eis concessum est pro modo, quia sicut est, id est sic sicut est,<sup>k</sup> non uidit neque uidebit illum aliqua creatura, nec anima Christi, quia Trinitas lux est inaccessibilis omni creature et inattingibilis.

Querit in secreto a uirgine prior de uita sua ac conuersacione. Respondit non expedire priori ut exprimat que intus conscientia sua familiarius ac uerecundius agnouit.

Vno aliquo die, dum in conspectu stat uirginis, ait<sup>l</sup> familiarem suum Willelmum<sup>m</sup> de Agenno migrasse a seculo et transire malis sociis<sup>n</sup> stipatum; et cum requireretur<sup>o</sup> si statim aliud seculum ingrediebatur ad purgatorium, respondit quod quandoque migrances

<sup>y</sup> ignis supplied here by author; also written by scribe before a cinctorio and deleted N  
<sup>z</sup> suo supplied by author N    <sup>a</sup> respondit Cβ    <sup>b</sup> prius om. XQ    <sup>c</sup> prior β  
<sup>d</sup> respondit supplied by author N    <sup>e</sup> nouit supplied by author N    <sup>f</sup> ad supplied here by author(?); also written by scribe before omnia and expunged N    <sup>g</sup> adimatur N  
<sup>h</sup> et supplied by author N    <sup>i</sup> Porro . . . quod] om. XQ    <sup>j</sup> et supplied by author N  
<sup>k</sup> id est sic sicut est om. AXI    <sup>l</sup> ad add. after ait Aβ    <sup>m</sup> Willelmum N; filium Willelmi Aβ; filium Guillerum C    <sup>n</sup> sociis supplied by author N  
<sup>o</sup> requireretur N

<sup>10</sup> This constitutes a reversal of the usual folkloric perspective: see C. Lecouteux, *Fantômes et revenants au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1986), p. 228.

<sup>11</sup> The pun on the word *prior* is neater in the MSS derived from β (see apparatus).

<sup>12</sup> Leibniz read *nunc* here (p. 996); there is a certain awkwardness about *non*, but it is the reading of all the MSS collated for this edition.

the poor; he had not been able to wear them before, since he could derive no benefit from them as long as they remained undistributed.<sup>10</sup> He added that he was suffering pain on account of a belt which he had not returned to a certain citizen of Apt; he said that he would be released from a girdle of fire if that belt, which had been left in his chest, were given back; and this was done.

Next the prior asked what he himself had done when he was coming into the town of Beaucaire. The dead man replied that wine had been served in the house of the school teacher, William Bedoch, and that, after engaging in a lengthy dispute with his companions over who was to drink first,<sup>11</sup> the prior himself took the first draught. The prior asked whether he had done him any good, and he replied that he had brought him great relief by having masses sung for him. The prior asked what was the greatest help to the dead; he replied, the sacrifice of the mass. He asked: 'How does he know what is being done on earth?' He replied that a spirit has all things under his glance, and no obstacle can block his vision: shameful deeds should therefore be avoided at all costs, he said, because they are seen by numberless spirits, while modesty is fostered by so many witnesses.

The prior asked whether he could see God, the Blessed Virgin, the saints, and both the good and bad souls. He replied that he could not<sup>12</sup> see God, but the Blessed Virgin was in his sight; when he had completed his spell in purgatory he would see God with a certain degree of clarity, and after the Day of Judgment he would behold him even more distinctly in endless contemplation. In fact the Eater<sup>13</sup> says that in their homeland the saints and angels see God as he is, that is, in the measure in which it is granted to them; for no creature has seen him or ever will see him as he is, that is, as he really is, not even the human soul of Christ, because the Trinity is light inaccessible to every creature, quite out of reach.

The prior entrusted questions to the girl in private concerning his own life and conduct; the dead man replied that it was not in the prior's interests that he should tell him what he already knew well enough, to his shame, in his own conscience.

One day, when the dead man was standing in the girl's presence, he said that his friend William d'Agen had departed this life and was passing on in the company of bad friends. When asked if his friend was going straight into the next world for purification, he replied that

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Comestor, *Evan.*, c. 173 (PL cxcviii. 1631). This is Gervase's only explicit reference to Peter Comestor in the text.

a seculo post diem tertium uel quartum non perueniunt ad locum destinatum. Vt uerbum probetur effectū,<sup>p</sup> curritur ad satis contiguam domum, et illum iam obiisse<sup>q</sup> reperiunt quem dixerat.

Inquisitus per uirginem a uiris litteratis, cum mortis nomen mortui abhorreant, quod nomen sit morti micus imponendum, respondit: 'Migratio a seculo.'

Requisitus ubi sit locus Gehenne, respondit quod infernus<sup>r</sup> sub terra locus est caliginosus, puteus fetidus, horrendus, et illum non ingrediuntur usque<sup>s</sup> post iudicium; uerum dampnati in aliis locis penalibus stant, in pena infernali dampnatoriam et multo duriorem expectantes sententiam.<sup>t</sup> Sic sinus Abrahe locus est iocundus et quietus ubi bonorum spiritus requiescunt, usquequo iudicialis paradisi detur iustificatis ad gloriam.<sup>14</sup> Purgatorius quidem<sup>u</sup> in aere est. Gregorius tamen in *Dialogo*<sup>15</sup> dicit ita:<sup>v</sup> 'Psalmista dicit: "Liberasti animam meam ex inferno inferiori",<sup>16</sup> ut infernus superior in terra, inferior sub terra esse uideatur; et si<sup>w</sup> idcirco<sup>x</sup> infernum dicimus, quia inferius iacet, quo<sup>y</sup><sup>17</sup> terra a celo est, hoc esse infernus debet inferius a terra.'

Multociens requisitus super hiis que haguntur in hoc seculo aut super futuris, inuitus respondit, dicens non requirendum<sup>z</sup> de huiusmodi uilibus et transitoriis, asserebatque sibi permissum ut de spiritualibus responderet, non de terrenis, nisi<sup>a</sup> per uices; semperque interrogatus ad consiliarium, quasi post humerum<sup>b</sup> responsum expectans, flectebatur.

Requisitus si omnia terrena illi oneri erant, respondit leuissimam paleam a spiritu sustineri non posse.

Interrogatus si longo tempore huiusmodi colloquio cum hominibus ei permitteretur, respondit quod non uidebatur ei hoc permittendum ultra id tempus quo ista uirgo maneret.<sup>18</sup> Nempe finito purgatorio, nulla ei cum hominibus huius mundi futura esse uidebatur<sup>c</sup> communio.

Interrogatus cuius licencia huic uirgini apparebat et unde id

<sup>p</sup> effectui N      <sup>q</sup> obiisse supplied by author N      <sup>r</sup> inferius NA      <sup>s</sup> usque  
supplied by author N      <sup>t</sup> sententiam supplied by author N      <sup>u</sup> quidem] quoque  
ACβ      <sup>v</sup> ita] terra X; in terra Q; om. I      <sup>w</sup> sic AXQ      <sup>x</sup> idcirco N  
<sup>y</sup> quo marked //; quod written by author in margin, similarly marked // N  
<sup>z</sup> inquirendum ACβ      <sup>a</sup> nisi supplied by author N      <sup>b</sup> humerum supplied by  
author N      <sup>c</sup> uidebatur supplied by author N

sometimes those who depart this life do not reach their allotted place until three or four days later. To find out whether what he had said was true, someone hastened to the house of the man he had named, which was not far away, and found that he had indeed just died.

Learned men asked the revenant through the girl what milder name should be given to death, since the dead abhor the mention of the word, and he replied: 'Departing this life.'

When asked where Gehenna is situated, he replied that hell is a murky place under the earth, a noisome, frightful pit, where nobody goes until after the Day of Judgment. Meanwhile the damned abide in other places of torment, awaiting in infernal suffering their much harder sentence of damnation. Similarly the Bosom of Abraham is a pleasant and peaceful place where the souls of the just rest, until the reward of paradise is granted to those who are justified for glory.<sup>14</sup> Purgatory, he said, is in the air. Concerning hell, however, Gregory speaks as follows in the *Dialogues*:<sup>15</sup> 'The Psalmist says: "You have delivered my soul out of the lower hell";<sup>16</sup> so it seems that there is an upper hell on the earth, and a lower hell under the earth. And if the reason why we call it the nether world is that it lies beneath, hell ought to be as far<sup>17</sup> beneath the earth as the earth is beneath heaven.'

The revenant was asked a great many questions about what was happening or what was going to happen in this world, but he replied reluctantly, saying that it was not good to ask about worthless and transitory things of this kind; and he asserted that he was allowed to answer questions on spiritual matters, but not on earthly ones, except by turns. At every question that was put to him he would turn to his adviser, looking over his shoulder as if awaiting the answer.

When asked if all material things felt heavy to him, he replied that the lightest straw was an unbearable weight to a spirit.

When asked if he would be allowed to converse with people in this way for a long time, he replied that he thought that this would only be permitted for as long as the girl remained a virgin.<sup>18</sup> Certainly when his purification was complete, he believed that he would have no more dealings with the people of this world.

When asked by whose leave he was appearing to this girl and

<sup>14</sup> Ps. 85 (86): 13.

<sup>17</sup> The author's correction of *quo* to *quod* (see apparatus) reflects a desire to restore the text of Gregory, but by itself it only destroys the sense as it stands. Gregory says: 'quod terra ad coelum est, hoc esse infernus debet ad terram' ('the relation of hell to earth should be the same as that of earth to heaven').

<sup>18</sup> See *Otia*, i. 17, n. 10.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Luke 16: 22; *Otia*, i. 17.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Gregory the Great, *Dial.* iv. 44 (ed. Moricca, p. 301 = iv. 42, *PL* lxxvii. 400).

processerat, respondit istam inter omnes consanguineas a se in seculo nostro magis dilectam, ipsumque<sup>d</sup> inter tristis exitus angustias eam fortiter adiurasse ut omnibus modis, si quo pacto id fieri poterat, ad eam rediret, statum suum illi<sup>e</sup> editurus.<sup>f</sup> ‘Coactus adiuracione,<sup>g</sup> et licenciam a Deo capiens, ad eam ueni; at ipsa, status mei exploratrix, et nouitatis et mirabilium que non nouit amore, in recessu cotidiano ut redeam me adiurat. Causa uero reditus mei est ut per uerba mea infidelitas non credentium ad fidem conuertatur, et fides credencium ad melius accendatur.’<sup>h</sup>

Huic concordat Gregorius in *Dialogo*,<sup>19</sup> dicens: ‘Quantum seculum presens<sup>i</sup> propinquat ad finem, tanto futurum seculum ipsa iam propinquitate tangitur, et signis manifestioribus aperitur. Quemadmodum cum nox incipit finiri et dies oriri, ante<sup>j</sup> solis ortum, simul cum luce aliquo modo tenebre permixte sunt, quousque discedentis noctis reliquie in lucem diei subsequentis perfecte uertantur: ita huius mundi finis iam cum futuri seculi exordio permiscetur, atque ipse f. 81<sup>r</sup> reliquiarum tenebre quadam iam | rerum spiritualium permixtione translucunt, quia quasi in quodam mentis crepusculo hec uelut ante solem uidemus.’

Hec hactenus. Nunc ad arciora diuini consilii secreta me transfero. Erat sacerdos, uir equidem peritus in litteratura, bonus, religiosus, ac timens Deum. Hic inter incia uisionis istius que dicebantur friuola reputans, accessit ad uirginem, per eam ad mortuum uerba transfundens. Rogat ergo uirginem ut apparenti sibi insinuet quatinus, si fieri potest, sacerdoti loquatur, ut non quasi iam per canalem aqua salutaris transeat ad areolas,<sup>20</sup> sed ipse sacerdos uerba responsionis eius absque intermedio excipiat. Quid plura? Petitur: et post moras, impetratur. Hic ergo ad locum conductum ueniens sacerdos arcioribus questionibus inuigilat; et quia nobis plurimum exstitit commendatus et familiaris, questiones nostras illi proponit ut soluat, ex cuius ore sub attestacione et Diuini Nominis obstestacione scripsi que dictito.

Interrogatus respondit se in exitu uite plurimum ac incomparabiliter exhoruisse, et quod tam boni quam mali angeli illi

<sup>d</sup> ipsumque *N* (correcting ipsamque), *Q*: ipsamque *ACXI* ‘illi] sibi *N*  
<sup>e</sup> edicturus *Aß*      <sup>g</sup> aiuracione *N*      <sup>h</sup> et fides . . . accendatur] *om. XX*  
<sup>i</sup> presens supplied by author *N*      <sup>j</sup> oriri ante supplied by author *N*

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Gregory the Great, *Dial.* iv. 43 (ed. Moricca, p. 300 = iv. 41, *PL* lxxvii. 397).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Augustine, *In Ioannis euangelium tractatus*, v. 15 (*CCSL* xxxvi. 50 = *PL* xxxv. 1422).

whence it had proceeded, he replied that he had loved her in our world above all other women in his family, and that, while he was in the throes of his sad parting from life, she had boldly made him swear that, if it were possible in any way, he would be sure to return to her, to make his condition known to her. ‘Constrained by her entreaty, I obtained leave from God and came to her; and every day when I depart she makes me promise to return, wishing to learn all about my condition, and longing to hear of these strange wonders of which she knows nothing. The real reason, though, for my return is the hope that by my words the faithlessness of unbelievers may be turned to faith, and the faith of believers may burn more brightly.’

Gregory supports this in the *Dialogues*<sup>19</sup> when he says: ‘The nearer this world comes to its end, the more the world to come makes itself felt, close as it now is, and reveals itself by ever clearer signs. Just as, when the night begins to end and day to dawn, before the rising of the sun, the darkness somehow mingles with the light, until the remnant of the departing night dissolves completely into the light of the succeeding day: even so the end of this world is now merging with the beginning of the world to come, and the very darkness of its last years is already being penetrated with light by a certain infiltration of spiritual elements; for we see things in a kind of twilight of the mind, as before dawn.’

Enough of these matters. I turn now to more abstruse secrets of divine wisdom. There was a priest, a man of advanced learning, upright, pious, and God-fearing. When these visions first began, this man set little store by the things that were being said, but he approached the girl, and conveyed a message through her to the dead man. He asked the girl to suggest to him when he appeared to her that, if it were possible, he should speak directly to the priest, in order that the life-giving water should not be conducted to the garden through a channel,<sup>20</sup> as had been happening so far, but that the priest himself might hear the words of his response without an intermediary. Why draw things out? The request was made: and after some delay, it was granted. This priest therefore came to an agreed place, and set about investigating some more difficult questions. He is a very esteemed and dear friend of ours, and he put our own questions to the dead man for him to answer. I have written the account which follows here on this man’s testimony, which he made calling the Divine Name to witness, just as I heard it from his own mouth.

To one question the dead man replied that at the moment of leaving this life he was absolutely terrified beyond all measure, and that both good and bad angels appeared to him, but eventually the

apparuerunt, bonis tandem<sup>k</sup> preualentibus, qui eum in purgatorium duxerunt. Adiecit omnem penam morti esse incomparabilem et inequalem, minimamque purgatorii penam quavis corporali pena esse asperiolem.

Interrogatus respondit quod omnes anime saluande intrant purgatorium preter animas sanctorum, qui<sup>l</sup> statim celum suum intrant, quia in hoc corpore mortali suum<sup>m</sup> egerunt purgatorium. Porro dampnandi non<sup>n</sup> intrant purgatorium, nec infernum inferius usque ad diem iudicii, sed in aere penas sustinent infernales sine omni intermissione. Sed et secundum quod peccata grauiora sunt commissa, purgatorium diucius ac grauius durat. Sane in aere est quoddam celum, in quo sunt sancti, remotum a purgatorio, et illic gaudent omnes sancti et laudes canunt<sup>o</sup> Domino. Interrogatus quas laudes canunt, respondit: 'Illud angelicum, "Gloria in excelsis Deo", et nonnumquam pro uiuis precantur.' Dicit etiam quod anime in purgatorio nonnullae hoc canticum canunt, et quedam, uidentes saluacionem suam uenturam in<sup>p</sup> proximo, inter penas purgatorii gaudent, spe patrie aut<sup>q</sup> glorie ad quam tendunt.

Interrogatus respondit quod omnes animas uidet que sunt in purgatorio, et audit quarundam gemitus, et aliarum<sup>r</sup> gaudium que purgatorium compleuerunt. Et nouit quasdam que sint;<sup>s</sup> alias quas in hoc seculo non nouit, non agnoscit in purgatorio. Penas quoque dampnatorum uidet, sed ipsos dampnatos non nouit.

'Gregorius tamen in *Dialogo*<sup>21</sup> dicit quod ex parabola diuitis et Lazari apparet quod boni bonos et<sup>u</sup> mali malos agnoscant, in qua cognitione utrisque cumulus sue retribucionis existit et excrescit; et non solum boni quos hic nouerant agnoscunt, sed etiam quos ante non nouerunt. Quia enim illic omnes cum claritate Deum conspiciunt, quid est quod ibi nesciant, ubi scientem omnia sciunt? Solet etiam egressura<sup>v</sup> anima eos agnoscere cum quibus pro equalitate culparum uel meritorum est in una mansione deputanda.

<sup>k</sup> tamen CXQ      <sup>l</sup> que ACX      <sup>m</sup> suum om. N      <sup>n</sup> non supplied  
by author N      <sup>o</sup> reddunt XQ      <sup>p</sup> in om. N      <sup>q</sup> et ACβ  
<sup>r</sup> aliarum supplied by author N      <sup>s</sup> sunt N      <sup>t</sup> Gregorius . . .  
experto magis consentio (p. 774) om. β; quid est quod ibi nesciant . . . experto magis  
consentio] om. N      <sup>u</sup> et supplied by author N      <sup>v</sup> egressura A and Gregory;  
egressa C

good ones prevailed, and conducted him to purgatory. He added that there is no suffering equal or comparable to death, and that the slightest pain of purgatory is harsher than any bodily suffering.

Questioned again, he replied that all the souls that are to be saved enter purgatory, except the souls of the saints, for the saints enter their own heaven straightaway, since they have already effected their purification in this mortal body. Further, those who are to be damned do not enter purgatory, or the lower hell until the Day of Judgment, but they undergo infernal punishment in the air without any remission. The duration and harshness of purgatory are in proportion to the gravity of the sins committed. There is a celestial realm in the air in which the saints dwell, far away from purgatory, and there they all rejoice and sing praises to God. When asked what praises they sing, he replied: 'That hymn of the angels, 'Glory to God in the highest', and sometimes they pray for the living.' He also said that a number of the souls in purgatory sing this song, and some, seeing the salvation that is to be theirs hereafter, rejoice amidst the torments of purgatory, in hope of the homeland or the glory towards which they are striving.

To another question he replied that he could see all the souls which were in purgatory, and he could hear the groans of some, and the rejoicing of others who had completed their purification. He knew who some of them were; but others whom he had not known in this world, he did not recognize in purgatory. He could also see the sufferings of the damned, but he did not recognize the damned themselves.

However, Gregory says in the *Dialogues*<sup>21</sup> that it is plain from the parable of the rich man and Lazarus that the good recognize the good and the bad the bad: in this recognition good and bad alike gain their proper reward in ever fuller measure. The good recognize not only those whom they knew in this world, but also those whom they did not know before. For since everyone in that realm sees God with unclouded eyes, what knowledge could they lack there, where they know him who knows everything? Also, a soul that is about to leave the body normally recognizes those with whom, due to their equal faults or merits, it is to share a dwelling-place.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Gregory the Great, *Dial.* iv. 34, 36 (ed. Moricca, pp. 278 and 281 = iv. 33, 35, *PL* lxxvii. 373 and 376); cf. Luke 16: 19-31.



Sed et<sup>m</sup> in eodem *Dialogi* libro<sup>22</sup> Gregorius ait quod iustorum perfectorum anime, mox ut huius carnis claustra exeunt, in celestibus sedibus recipiuntur. Vnde Veritas ait: 'Vbicumque fuerit corpus, ibi et aquile',<sup>23</sup> et Paulus: 'Cupio dissolui et esse cum Christo.'<sup>24</sup> Si ergo Christus in celo, et Paulus in celo. Et Apostolus: 'Scimus quoniam si terrestris domus nostra huius habitacionis dissoluatur, quod edificationem habemus ex Deo, domum non manu factam, sed eternam in celis.'<sup>25</sup> Quid ergo crescit eis in iudicio? Respondeo quod tunc corporis beatitudine perfruentur. Similiter impiorum anime in inferno sunt post mortem,<sup>26</sup> sed in quo celo boni et in quo inferno mali ante iudicium, Gregorius non determinat. Ideoque magis experto magis consentio.<sup>l</sup> Item uidet celum et uidet infernum, et stat ubi in uicino utrumque est, ut<sup>x</sup> ex uicinitate sui<sup>y</sup> intendatur gaudium iustorum et tristitia perditorum. Cum uero anime exeunt a corpore, uidet eas uenientes et quo uadunt uidet; non tamen eas agnoscit, quia non nouit illos quorum sunt.

Interrogatus in quo loco<sup>z</sup> habitet, respondit quod mansio eius uicinior est Ierusalem<sup>27</sup> quam loco<sup>a</sup> quo manere solet in seculo.

Interrogatus si sancti omnes habent gloriam plenam, respondit quod quidam habent tantam gloriam quantam possunt ante diem iudicii, alii minus plenam. Nempe beatus Bernardus<sup>b</sup><sup>28</sup> multum in gloria sua defectum patitur, ex eo quod uolentibus festum conceptionis Beate Virginis sollempnizare non consensit. Vnde Gregorius in *Dialogo*:<sup>29</sup> 'Sunt quorundam iustorum anime que a celesti regno quibusdam adhuc mansionibus differuntur, quia de perfecta iusticia quid minus habuerunt.'<sup>c</sup>

Interrogatus si quandoque requiescunt<sup>d</sup> anime in purgatorio,

<sup>m</sup> et C; om. A      <sup>x</sup> ut supplied by author N      <sup>y</sup> sui supplied by author N  
<sup>z</sup> loquo N      <sup>a</sup> loquo N      <sup>b</sup> Ieronimus ACβ; Ieronimus expunged, Bernardus supplied by author N      <sup>c</sup> habent XQ      <sup>d</sup> requiescant AC

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Gregory the Great, *Dial.* iv. 26 (ed. Moricca, p. 263 = iv. 25, *PL* lxxvii. 357).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Matt. 24: 28; Luke 17: 37.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Phil. 1: 23.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. 5: 1.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Gregory the Great, *Dial.* iv. 29 (ed. Moricca, p. 272 = iv. 28, *PL* lxxvii. 365).

<sup>27</sup> The journey of the soul after death began at Jerusalem, the centre of the earth (Ezek. 5: 5; cf. *Otia*, i. 10, n. 25), scene of the crucifixion, and image of the heavenly city (Gal. 4: 26; Rev. 21: 2, 10).

<sup>28</sup> In *N*, *Ieronimus* was expunged, and *B*'s written in the margin by the author; this correction did not, however, find its way into the copies. St Bernard was known to have remonstrated with the canons of Lyons for celebrating the feast of the Immaculate Conception when it did not have Rome's sanction: see *Epistolae*, 174 (458) (*PL* clxxxiii.

Also in the same book of the *Dialogues*<sup>22</sup> Gregory says that the souls of the perfectly just are received in their heavenly abodes as soon as they leave the bonds of this flesh. And so the Truth says: 'Where-soever the body shall be, thither will the eagles also be gathered together',<sup>23</sup> and Paul: 'I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ.'<sup>24</sup> If, then, Christ is in heaven, Paul is in heaven too. The Apostle also says: 'We know, if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, that we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven.'<sup>25</sup> How, then, is their happiness increased on the Day of Judgment? My answer is that they will then enjoy to the full the beatitude of the body. In like manner the souls of the wicked are in hell after death,<sup>26</sup> but in which heaven the good are and in which hell the bad before the Day of Judgment, Gregory does not determine. And so I am more inclined to believe the revenant, who has more first-hand knowledge. He can see, he said, both heaven and hell, and he stands within reach of both, so that as a result of his proximity he can contemplate the joy of the just and the bitterness of the lost. In fact when souls leave the body, he sees them approaching and sees where they go; he does not recognize them, however, because he does not know the people whose souls they are.

When asked where he was living, he replied that his dwelling was nearer to Jerusalem<sup>27</sup> than to the place where he used to live in the world.

When asked if all the saints have attained full glory, he replied that some enjoy as much glory as they are able to before the Day of Judgment, while others have less than their full glory. Saint Bernard,<sup>28</sup> for instance, suffers a great lack in his glory, because he did not agree with those who wanted to celebrate the feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin. So too Gregory says in the *Dialogues*:<sup>29</sup> 'There are souls belonging to some of the just which are kept back from the heavenly kingdom in certain interim dwellings, because they fell short of perfect justice in some way.'

When asked if the souls in purgatory ever rest, he replied that

333-6). The reference to Jerome pertains to the letter, *Cogitis me* (*PL* xxx. 122-42), purporting to be by him, but actually a forgery, almost certainly by Paschasius Radbert (died c.860); see P. Glorieux, *Pour revaloriser Migne* (Lille, 1952), p. 20. The doctrine gradually gained ground among theologians from the early twelfth century onwards, in the wake of the immense popularity of the feast, especially in England; see R. Southern, *St Anselm and his Biographer* (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 290-5; H. Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion* (London, 1963-5), i. 178-9, 222-4.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Gregory the Great, *Dial.* iv. 26 (ed. Moricca, p. 263 = iv. 25, *PL* lxxvii. 356-7).



respondit quod in omni ebdomada a uespera diei sabbati usque in<sup>e</sup> uesperam diei dominice requiescunt a penis,<sup>30</sup> et quando generaliter offertur pro eis sacrificium in missa, omnes quiescunt; cum uero specialiter pro aliqua canitur, illa interim requiem habet integram, alie<sup>f</sup> uero ex generalis beneficii participio remedium habent, sed non in tanta quantitate.

Interrogatus respondit multum prodesse elemosinas, que propter reuerentiam ac memoriam dantur Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, et Beate Virginis, et apostolorum Petri et Pauli.

f. 81<sup>v</sup> Interrogatus respondit se Michaellem habere custodem. Cumque uno die rogaretur ut Michael daret benedictionem | suam uirgini et sacerdoti cum quo loquebatur,<sup>g</sup> respondit quod beatus Michael annuit; et cum extenderet manum Michael ad benedicendum, tantus fulgor uirginem percussit quod ipsum intueri uel sustinere sine stupore non potuit.

Interrogatus respondit quod ipse uidit et<sup>h</sup> bonos et malos angelos, et utrosque uidet sua ministeria complere. Et adiecit quod quilibet christianus habet ad<sup>i</sup> custodiam suam bonum angelum, dum tamen est sine mortali peccato: nam dum est in mortali, recedit ab eo bonus angelus et quasi de illo uerecundiam patitur; penitencia uero suscepta, redit ad custodiam.

Interrogatus respondit<sup>j</sup> corporis effigiem quam pretendit corpus non esse nisi aereum, ipsum asserens non posse pati, sed tantum spiritum; neque posse onus quamuis leuissimum sustinere. Inde est quod cum sacerdos illi stolam superponeret, gratum habuit, sed onus impressum sustinere nequiuit, asserens stolam sacerdotalem uinculum esse diaboli.<sup>31</sup>

Interrogatus si in purgatorio est<sup>h</sup> nox, aut dies continuus, respondit quod uicissim dies et nox, uerum nox non est ita<sup>l</sup> obscura ut hic.

Interrogatus respondit summum bonum esse in hoc seculo, post sacrificium et helemosinas, abstinere a mendaciis.

Interrogatus si Iohannes Baptista, qui in utero sanctificatus Dominum exultando sensit,<sup>32</sup> et uerus precursor et propheta Domini,

<sup>e</sup> in] ad *AB*      <sup>f</sup> alii *NA*      <sup>g</sup> cum quo loquebatur supplied by author *N*  
<sup>h</sup> uidit et *N*; uidet *ACB*      <sup>i</sup> ad supplied by author *N*      <sup>j</sup> respondit supplied by author *N*  
<sup>k</sup> sit *A* (presumably a scribal correction)      <sup>l</sup> ita supplied by author *N*

<sup>30</sup> The sabbath rest in purgatory, a common motif in medieval eschatology, is found in the *Visio Pauli* (c. 44), where Paul obtains this mercy from the Lord; it was also a popular Jewish tradition (see Le Goff, *Naissance*, p. 59, n. 1, transl. Goldhammer, p. 380, n. 44).

every week they enjoy a respite from their sufferings from Saturday evening until Sunday evening,<sup>30</sup> and when the sacrifice of the mass is offered for them all together, they all rest; when a mass is sung for one in particular, that one has complete rest for as long as it lasts, while the others gain some relief through sharing in the general good, but not in such full measure.

To another question he replied that alms which are given to honour and commemorate the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the Blessed Virgin, and the apostles Peter and Paul, are very profitable.

To a further question he replied that he had Michael as his guardian. When one day the request was put to him that Michael should give his blessing to the girl and to the priest with whom he had permission to speak, he replied that the blessed Michael was agreeable. When Michael stretched out his hand to bless them, such a blinding light struck the girl that she could not look at it or endure it without losing her senses.

To another question he replied that he could see the angels, the good ones and the bad ones, and he saw both alike fulfilling their functions. He added that every Christian has a good angel to watch over him, as long, that is, as he is free from mortal sin: for when he is in mortal sin, his good angel withdraws from him and seems to suffer shame on his account; but once he has done penance, his angel returns to his charge.

Questioned again, he replied that the bodily form which he presented was only an aerial body; he said that it was not able to suffer, but only his spirit suffered, and it could not carry any burden, however light. Consequently when the priest tried to put a stole on him, he was grateful, but could not bear the weight which was laid on him; he declared that the priestly stole was a chain of the devil.<sup>31</sup>

When asked whether there is night in purgatory, or whether it is always day, he replied that night and day alternate, but the night is not as dark as it is here.

To another question he replied that the highest good in this world, after the mass and alms-giving, is to refrain from lying.

He was asked whether John the Baptist (who, sanctified in the womb, responded to the Lord by leaping for joy),<sup>32</sup> the true precursor and prophet of the Lord, doubted whether Jesus was the Christ when

<sup>31</sup> i.e. that the priest had the power to bind the devil with his stole; see Barrière, *Contribution*, p. 110, n. 1179; Schmitt, *Les revenants*, p. 112.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Luke 1: 41, 44.

dubitauit an Christus hic esset quando misit<sup>m</sup> ad eum discipulos suos ut interrogarent<sup>n</sup> eum: 'Tu, quis es?',<sup>33</sup> respondit Iohannem non dubitasse, sed ad tollendam dubitacionem discipulorum illos misisse.<sup>o</sup>

Interrogatus si mors ac<sup>p</sup> internicio Albiensium<sup>34</sup> Deo placeret, respondit pridem nullum factum regionis illius tantum Deo placuisse; et adiecit quod bonos Deus uult discerni a malis in suo iudicio. Nam et boni per sustinentiam peccauerunt qui per heresim fidem non maculauerunt; qui uero hic cremantur in corpore, post mortem durius<sup>q</sup> cremantur in spiritu.

Accedit ad enarrata mirandum plurimum et memorandum. Cum enim sanctissimi episcopi Aurasicensis Willelmi<sup>35</sup> aduentum mortuus iste plurimum affectaret, et episcopus ille ad capitulum Cisterciense<sup>r</sup> accessurus sui copiam facere non posset, dicto sacerdoti questiones in scriptis misit episcopus, quas ad probacionem ueritatis<sup>s</sup> et ad<sup>r</sup> instructionem excogitauerat. Vno ergo die, cum mortui responsiones sacerdos noster quarumdam questionum audiret, mortuus astantibus inquit: 'Ecce quod episcopus Aurasicensis questiones mittit, quarum soluciones<sup>a</sup> a me petit fieri: et iam ad hostium nuncius est!' Et cum super quibus questiones uerterentur inquiritur, respondit ex ordine questiones. Et dum hec aguntur, nuncius intrat, cedulam questionibus plenam in sacerdotis nostri manus exponens. Mirantur omnes prescenciam, et dum agilitatem spiritus ponderant, dant admiracioni consilium, et questionum exquirunt et accipiunt per ordinem<sup>v</sup> soluciones.<sup>m</sup> Si uis questiones cum solucionibus<sup>x</sup> nosse, recurre quecumque premisimus fere ab illo loco: 'Interrogatus cuius licencia' etc.<sup>36</sup>

Item<sup>y</sup> interrogatus an unicus esset angelus omnium animarum bonarum custos Michael,<sup>37</sup> respondit quod hoc nomen est officii, non persone, nec<sup>z</sup> unius, sed legionis: sunt enim huius nominis omnes

<sup>m</sup> misit supplied by author N    <sup>n</sup> interrogaret NX    <sup>o</sup> illos misisse supplied by author N    <sup>p</sup> aut NI    <sup>q</sup> diutius XQ    <sup>r</sup> sic XQ; altered by author to Cisterciense N    <sup>s</sup> ueritatis supplied here by author; also written by scribe after instructionem and deleted N    <sup>t</sup> ad supplied by author N    <sup>u</sup> solutionem ACβ    <sup>v</sup> per ordinem supplied by author N    <sup>w</sup> solutionem XQ    <sup>x</sup> responsionibus ACXQ    <sup>y</sup> Item supplied by author N; om. AQI    <sup>z</sup> non N

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Matt. 11: 2–3; Luke 7: 19–20.

<sup>34</sup> On the Albigensians, see *Otia*, i. 2, n. 4. Innocent III had launched the Albigensian Crusade in 1209; the massacres perpetrated at Béziers (July 1209), Carcassonne (August 1209), and Lavaur (May 1211) would still have been a recent memory in July 1211, the date given for the beginning of these conversations.

<sup>35</sup> The Cistercian William Hélie was appointed bishop of Orange c.1205, and died in 1221 (Eubel, *Hierarchia Catholica*, p. 117).

he sent his disciples to him to ask: 'Who are you?'<sup>33</sup> He replied that John did not doubt, but that it was to remove his disciples' doubt that he sent them.

When asked if the death and extermination of the Albigensians<sup>34</sup> were pleasing to God, he replied that nothing that had ever been done in that region had pleased God so much; and he added that God wants the good to be separated from the bad on his Day of Judgment. Indeed even the good who have not stained their faith with heresy have sinned if they have tolerated it; while those who are burned here in the body are burned more severely after death in the spirit.

Here is a most remarkable and memorable happening to add to all I have said. This dead man expressed an earnest desire that William, the saintly bishop of Orange,<sup>35</sup> should come and see him; but as the bishop was due to attend the Cistercian chapter, he could not present himself in person. However, he sent questions in writing to the priest of whom I have spoken; he had devised these questions with a view to testing the revenant's authenticity and gaining instruction. So one day, when our priest was listening to the dead man's replies to various questions, the latter said to the assembled company: 'See here, the bishop of Orange is sending questions which he wants me to answer: his messenger is even now at the door!' The revenant was asked about the subject matter of the questions, and in response he listed them in order. While this was going on, the messenger came in, and put the document containing all the questions into the hands of our priest. Everyone was amazed at the dead man's foreknowledge, and while they pondered on the spirit's capacities, they brought their powers of judgment to bear on their amazement: they sought answers to the questions, and received them one by one. If you want to know the questions along with their answers, reread what we have said above, just from the point: 'When asked by whose leave', etc.<sup>36</sup>

To continue, when he was asked whether Michael<sup>37</sup> alone was the guardian angel of all good souls, he replied that this was the name of the office, not the person, and not of one angel, but of legion: for all

<sup>36</sup> See above, pp. 768–9.

<sup>37</sup> Michael the Archangel, as captain of the heavenly host, vanquished Satan and his band (Rev. 12: 7–12), and hence was honoured as the great protector. He plays a prominent part in the apocryphal literature of both the Old and New Testaments, especially in the Book of Enoch and the Testament of Abraham. The cult of St Michael (feast day 29 September) enjoyed great popularity in medieval Europe, particularly in France; see *Millénaire monastique du Mont Saint-Michel* (Paris, 1971), especially iii. 99–112.

angeli animarum custodes. Interrogatus in uigilia sancti Michaelis, dum questionibus a sacerdote teneretur, quare solito instancius licentiam sibi dari<sup>a</sup> postularet, respondit quod oportebat eum festinare ad instantem sancti Michaelis sollempnitatem, asserens hoc in celis festum esse celebre apud omnes angelos, omnesque archangelos<sup>b</sup> pro huius diei uictoria gloriam<sup>c</sup> et laudes Deo persolvere. Quin immo die isto dicit omnes animas in purgatorio positas quiescere, et custodis sui Michaelis laudibus inseruire.

Quid plura? De futuris interrogatus multa,<sup>d</sup> constanter respondit; sed ea postposui<sup>e</sup> libri nostri contextui interserere, ne uideremur Dei ordinationem preuenire consilio, uel calumpniationibus locum aperire. Verumptamen in quibus Deo placeas, aut e contra in quibus Deo<sup>f</sup> displiceas, princeps serenissime, secreta tibi scriptura, sicut ab eo acceptum habeo, per nuntium fidelem transmittito, ut de bona affectione gratuleris, et de sinistra penitentialem meditationem concipias, et, dum in bonis proficere studebis, mala cauere uel curare festines.

Rem mirandam<sup>g</sup> loquar et usui humanitatis nostre plurimum commodam. Cum huius de quo agitur defuncti auunculus, tum<sup>h</sup> propter inflicta ipsi defuncto mortifera uulnera, de quibus<sup>i</sup> ulcionis occultas parabat insidias, tum propter pristinas et inueteratas inimicicias de longe contractas, inimici<sup>38</sup> eius auunculo et eiusdem filio secretas machinationes nocendi disposuissent, die precedente circa horam uespertinam, solito serius, mortuus noster apparuit consanguine de qua premisimus, predicens quod patri uirginis | et fratri a nominatis hostibus in crastino, circa hostium ecclesie Beate Virginis<sup>39</sup> in Belliquadro site, disponderentur insidie, quibus ordinatum erat ut ambobus uita repentinis ictibus praperetur. Vt autem nulla nocendi potestas esset hostibus ad opus ducenda, iussit patrem dimensionem capitis in candela cerea beato<sup>j</sup> Willelmo<sup>40</sup> deuoueri, dimensionem

<sup>a</sup> dari om. XQ      <sup>b</sup> archangelos β; angelos NC      <sup>c</sup> gloriam supplied by author; et gloriam written by scribe after laudes and deleted N  
<sup>d</sup> multa interrogatus AI; plura interrogatus CXQ      <sup>e</sup> postposuit N      <sup>f</sup> Deo om. ACβ      <sup>g</sup> mirandam (sic) supplied by author N  
<sup>h</sup> tum supplied by author N      <sup>i</sup> quibus] questionibus N  
<sup>j</sup> beato supplied by author N

<sup>38</sup> An anacoluthon: Gervase here substitutes the enemies for the dead man's uncle as the subject of the *cum* clause, leaving the uncle without a verb (apart from *parabat*, which is contained within a relative clause).

<sup>39</sup> i.e. Notre-Dame-des-Pommiers.

<sup>40</sup> William of Orange; see *Otia*, i. 23, n. 21. His shrine in the abbey he founded at

the angels who are guardians of souls bear this name. On the eve of the feast of St Michael, when the priest wanted to detain him for questioning, he kept asking with more than his usual urgency to be allowed to go. When asked why, he replied that he had to hurry for the impending solemnity of St Michael. He said that this feast was celebrated in heaven by all the angels, and that all the archangels rendered glory and praise to God for the victory of this day. Moreover, he said, on this day all the souls consigned to purgatory have a rest, and devote themselves to the praises of their own guardian Michael.

What more do I need to say? He was asked many questions about the future, and he was consistent in the way he answered them; but I have decided not to include those matters in the context of our book, lest we should seem to anticipate God's ordinances by our foreknowledge, or to open the way to plotters. However, I am letting you know, most serene Prince, in a sealed letter carried by a reliable messenger, the ways in which you are pleasing to God, and conversely the ways in which you are not, exactly as I received it from him; I do so in the hope that you will be thankful for God's good favour, and adopt a repentant attitude in response to his displeasure, so that, while striving to advance in what is good, you may be quick to shun or correct whatever is bad.

I am going to tell of something remarkable, and well-fitted to be of service to our humanity. The enemies<sup>38</sup> of the uncle of this dead man of whom we are speaking had devised a secret plot to harm the uncle and his son, both on account of the mortal wounds inflicted on the deceased, to avenge which his uncle was preparing a secret ambush, and also on account of an old deep-seated hostility of long standing. But on the day before, at about the hour for vespers—later than usual—our dead man appeared to his cousin, of whom we have spoken above, and warned her that a trap was being laid for the girl's father and brother the next day, by the enemies whom he named, at the door of the church of the Blessed Virgin<sup>39</sup> which stands in Beaucaire, the plan being to take both their lives by a sudden rain of blows. To ensure that their enemies would bring to the engagement no power to harm them, he gave instructions that the father should dedicate himself to the blessed William<sup>40</sup> by offering him a wax candle the size of his head; while another the size of his son's head

Gellone became a centre of pilgrimage, and by the twelfth century the abbey was known as Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert. This story points to the local popularity of his cult.

uero filii beato Benedicto,<sup>41</sup> qui pontem Auinionensem super Rodanum instituit, in cuius medii transitus compendio<sup>42</sup> et ipse sanctus Benedictus sepultus requiescit, loco a castro Belliquadri per octo ferme miliaria distante. Vt ergo premunitionis huius apertissimum induceret argumentum, adiunxit defunctus quod in crastino inuenirent ad ianuas ecclesie memorate inimicos quos ex nomine designauerat armatos, ut longam malorum deliberacionem executione funesta prosequerentur. Adiecit etiam quod unicuique christiano specialis sanctus ad tuicionem est deputatus, quem si quis sciens inuocauerit et deuocione ac<sup>k</sup> oblacione sua honorauerit, profecto in omni periculo positus celere remedium inueniet. Quid ultra? In crastino<sup>l</sup> pater uirginis et frater inimicos conductos ad hostium basillice armatos reperiunt, quibus, per oblaciones sanctissimo Wilhelmo, fortissimo<sup>m</sup> pro Christo athlete, et piissimo Benedicto premissas, omnis nocendi facultas preclusa fuisse monstratur.<sup>43</sup>

Et quia solet a plurimis non inmerito dubitari utrum uisiones pro sompniis uanis sint reputande, an potius denuntiaciones<sup>n</sup> diuine per spiritus subtiliter facte sint appellande, audiat lector qui nuper me audiente contigerit. Cum propter instantiam negociorum inquisitionibus sigillatim faciendis a mortuo uacare non possem, iniunxi motum animi mei sacerdoti quem prenotauit, ut ad illum uerba mea transferret. Cum ergo die statuto ad respondendum sacerdos<sup>o</sup> ultra horam<sup>p</sup> prefixam moras faceret, post prandium sompno tentus meridiano, apparuit<sup>q</sup> sacerdoti in spiritu excitator qui eum a sompno eduxit. Eademque hora mortuus, ultra Rodanum apparens uirgini sepius<sup>r</sup> memorate, proposuit sacerdotem diem et locum prefixum non obseruasse. Proponente itaque uirgine quod per<sup>s</sup>

<sup>k</sup> et *Aβ* <sup>l</sup> In crastino supplied by author N <sup>m</sup> fortissimo om. *CXQ*  
<sup>n</sup> diuinationes *CXQ* <sup>o</sup> sacerdos supplied by author N <sup>p</sup> horam supplied by author N  
<sup>q</sup> apparuit N <sup>r</sup> sepius supplied by author N <sup>s</sup> quod per supplied by author N

<sup>41</sup> Bénézet was born c.1165, probably in Savoy. He spent his boyhood minding his mother's sheep, until one day, during an eclipse of the sun, he heard a voice telling him to go and build a bridge over the Rhône at Avignon. This he duly did: he began the work in 1177; it was well-advanced when he died in 1184, and was completed in 1188. A chapel was built on the bridge, in which his body lay until part of the bridge was washed away in 1669; his relics were then translated to the church of Saint-Didier in Avignon. Gervase here provides the earliest text in which Bénézet is called *sanctus*; his sanctity was not officially recognized until 1321, but he was the object of enthusiastic veneration even before his death; see Colby-Hall, 'Saint Guillaume de Gellone et saint Bénézet', pp. 66-7 and 69.

<sup>42</sup> *Compendium* can mean 'shortness of way', and that seems likely to be the meaning of the word here (lit. 'on the short cut afforded by which crossing, at its mid-way

should be offered to the blessed Bénézet,<sup>41</sup> who built the bridge of Avignon over the Rhône, half-way across<sup>42</sup> which the saint himself lies buried, the place being about eight miles away from the town of Beaucaire. To provide incontrovertible proof of the need for this precaution, the deceased added that on the next day they would find the enemies whom he had identified by name under arms at the doors of the church in question, intending to crown their lengthy plotting of evil with the deadly deed. He said further that a particular saint is assigned to every Christian to protect him, and if anyone, knowing his protector, calls upon him and honours him with the dedication and offering of himself, he will undoubtedly meet with prompt assistance if he finds himself in any danger. Well, what happened? The next day the girl's father and brother found the enemies of whom they had been warned, ready with their weapons at the door of the church; and thanks to the offerings which they had made beforehand to St William, mighty champion of Christ, and the pious Bénézet, their enemies found that every means of doing them harm was barred to them.<sup>43</sup>

Now since many people tend, not unreasonably, to be unsure whether visions are to be accounted as empty dreams, or should rather be called divine pronouncements delicately conveyed through spirits, let the reader hear what happened recently, as I heard it myself. Since I was unable to find the time, due to pressure of business, to put my own questions to the dead man one by one, I entrusted the tenor of my thoughts to the priest of whom I have already spoken, so that he could convey to him what I had to say. On the day that had been fixed for him to give his answers, the priest was tarrying beyond the appointed time, overtaken by a midday nap after lunch, when a vision came to wake him in the spirit, and roused him from his sleep. At the same hour the dead man appeared to the girl of whom we have often spoken, on the other side of the Rhône, and remarked that the priest had not kept the appointed time and place. When the girl accordingly suggested summoning him by sending a point<sup>t</sup>). Alternatively, *compendium* may refer to the building which housed the tomb of St Bénézet, in the sense of an 'appurtenance' of the bridge. This meaning is cited from an eighth-century source in Latham's *Revised Medieval Latin Word-List*, and is taken by Colby-Hall to be the meaning here ('Saint Guillaume de Gellone et saint Bénézet', p. 65, n. 21; see also pp. 68-9).

<sup>43</sup> The invocation of saints was rejected by the Albigensians, but upheld by the Church; the ritual described here, however, contains a strong element of magic. For a detailed study of this passage, see Colby-Hall, 'Saint Guillaume de Gellone et saint Bénézet'. Another story of a saint's protective power is found in *Otia*, iii. 70.

nuncium illum uocando citaret, respondit sacerdotem alio nuncio preuentum. Nec mora sacerdos ingreditur. Accusatus de mora et excusacionem sompniculose grauacionis opponens, adiecit se in spiritu euocatum ut celerius occurreret occurrenti, quod ab ipso mortuo factum ex eiusdem mortui publicata confessione tam sacerdos quam uirgo cognouit.

Vt agnoscamus quanta sit apud Deum prelatorum nostrorum ligandi soluendique<sup>44</sup> potestas, audi quid sacerdoti respondit, querenti si mortaliter peccauit quia uotium soluerat ieiunium, ex licencia cuiusdam consacerdotis,<sup>1</sup> propter instantiam peregrinatiui itineris. Respondit quod ex hoc nullam peccati<sup>u</sup> contraxit maculam, quia tanta est sacerdotis potestas quod<sup>v</sup> subditum soluit a reatu, si non subfuerit<sup>u</sup> penitentis simulacio; et si in soluendo uel ligando preceptis aut negligens fuit pastor aut ignorans, ouis crimen non est, sed pastoris.

<sup>x</sup>Accedit ad hec insigne mirandumque signum, quod notum fecit Dominus nostris temporibus, in conspectu gentium reuelando iusticiam suam.<sup>y</sup><sup>45</sup> Erat comes Raimundus, pater huius comitis Raimundi quem, propter consensum hereticorum Albiensium, Innocencius papa tercius, crebris impulsibus legatorum suorum et ad ultimum cotidianis Francorum insultibus, in cyneres potentie sue exsufflandos induxit.<sup>46</sup> Comes eius, inquam, pater,<sup>47</sup> comitis illustrissimi Raymond Tholosani uel, ut uulgus ait, comitis sancti Egidii<sup>48</sup> nepos, ex nobili comite Ildefonso<sup>49</sup> genitus, uir quidem in milicia singularis, consilio perspicax, urbanitate precipuus, magnanimitate operosus: hic ab illustrissimo rege Anglorum Henrico<sup>z</sup> uetusto,<sup>a</sup><sup>50</sup> auo uestro,

<sup>1</sup> sacerdotis CXQ      <sup>u</sup> peccati supplied by author N      <sup>v</sup> non add. after quod NA  
<sup>u</sup> subfuit Cβ      <sup>x</sup> Accedit . . . de hoste superbo (p. 788) ] This passage forms item 9 of the addenda in I (see Appendix i, p. 849)      <sup>y</sup> suam om. N

<sup>z</sup> Henrico Anglorum N      <sup>a</sup> uetusto supplied by author N

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Matt. 16: 19; 18: 18.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Ps. 97 (98): 2 (3).

<sup>46</sup> Raymond VI (born 1156, count of Toulouse 1194–1222) openly protected the Albigensians, and paid no heed to Innocent's legates, one of whom, Peter de Castelnau, was actually murdered (1208). The Albigensian Crusade (cf. n. 34 above) achieved the ruin of the house of Toulouse as well as the extermination of heresy. The date of composition of this passage, which was originally among the addenda attached to β (see above, pp. lxxxiii–lxxxv), was probably between 1215 and 1217, when Raymond's countship had been awarded to Simon de Montfort. However, with Aragonese help, Raymond reoccupied the city of Toulouse (September 1217), withstood a siege by Simon de Montfort (who was killed near the city in June 1218), and regained most of his lands before his sudden death in 1222. On the history of the county of Toulouse, see J.-L. Dejean, *Les comtes de Toulouse, 1050–1250* (revised edn. Paris, 1988).

<sup>47</sup> Raymond V, count of Toulouse 1148–94.

messenger to call him, he replied that the priest had already been visited by another messenger. Straight afterwards the priest came in. Charged with being late, he gave as his excuse that he had been overcome by drowsiness, adding that he had been summoned in the spirit to make haste to his rendezvous. The priest knew as well as the girl that it was the dead man himself who had done this, as he openly admitted.

That we may understand how much power of binding and loosing<sup>44</sup> our prelates have with God, hear the reply he gave to the priest when the latter asked if he was guilty of mortal sin, because he had failed to keep a fast which he had promised by a vow; he had obtained a fellow priest's permission to break it, on the grounds that he was about to go on a journey of pilgrimage. The dead man replied that he had contracted no stain of sin from this, because the power of a priest is so great that he absolves his subject from guilt, as long as there has been no pretence on the part of the penitent; and if a pastor has been hasty, careless, or ignorant in loosing or binding, the fault pertains not to the sheep, but to the shepherd.

There accords with this an outstanding and remarkable sign which the Lord has made known in our times, revealing his justice in the sight of the world.<sup>45</sup> It concerned Count Raymond, the father of the present Count Raymond whose power, on account of his sympathy with the Albigensian heretics, Pope Innocent III has reduced to ashes to be puffed away, by bringing to bear constant pressure from his legates, and finally by daily incursions of the French.<sup>46</sup> The count his father,<sup>47</sup> as I say, who was the grandson of the most illustrious Count Raymond of Toulouse (or the count of Saint-Gilles, as he was commonly called),<sup>48</sup> and the son of the noble Count Alphonse,<sup>49</sup> was a man outstanding in warfare, shrewd in judgment, distinguished for his courtesy, and active in his generosity. He was challenged on many occasions, but never conquered, by the glorious king of England, Henry the elder<sup>50</sup>—your grandfather, most worshipful

<sup>48</sup> Raymond IV, count of Saint-Gilles, born c.1041, was the younger brother of William IV, count of Toulouse; in c.1088 William took the cross and sold all his domains to Raymond. In 1105 Raymond also took the cross, leaving the government of his lands to his eldest son Bertrand.

<sup>49</sup> Alphonse-Jourdain, Bertrand's younger brother, succeeded him as count of Toulouse in 1111, when Bertrand went to the Holy Land; Alphonse in turn took the cross in 1148, and left the county to his son Raymond V.

<sup>50</sup> The only daughter of Count William IV of Toulouse had married William IX, duke of Aquitaine, in 1094. Henry II of England, as duke of Aquitaine by his marriage to Eleanor (daughter of William X), tried to enforce a claim to Toulouse. After an

imperator sacratissime,<sup>b</sup> necnon insignissimo comite Barcinonense Raimundo Berengario,<sup>51</sup> regibus<sup>c</sup> compare, comitibus ducibusque maiore, per plurima tempora laccessitus ac semper inuictus, sic omnes suo preuenit consilio quod potenciorum uictorias iminentes eludebat ingenio, et quibus utpote forcioribus resistere non poterat, astucia sua trihumfum surripiebat.

Vno ergo aliquo die, hostilibus incursibus fatigatus, et thesauris f. 82<sup>v</sup> exhaustis quibus | auxiliarios suos solitus est stipendiare, monasterium sancti Egidii<sup>52</sup> uelut pro emendicato suffragio occupat, et oblationes quas pia fidelium<sup>d</sup> peregrinancium deuocio congregabat inuadit. Tam atrocibus sacrilegiis ecclesiastica uindicta succedit, et comes propter suam contumaciam anathemati supponitur.

Dum hec aguntur, abbas Boneuallis,<sup>53</sup> ordinis Cisterciensis<sup>e</sup> subiectus, Viennensis prouincie stacionarius,<sup>f</sup><sup>54</sup> uir equidem summe perfecteque religionis, uillam sancti Egidii ingreditur ut comitem<sup>g</sup> increpet, arguat,<sup>55</sup> et ad uiam emendacionis uite reducat. Mane facta, post misse celebrationem uir sanctus, sacerdotalibus indutus ornamentis, pro foribus ecclesie<sup>56</sup> populo occurrenti predicaturus se optulit. Comite secus pedes eius sedente, astantibus proceribus militaribus popularibusque personis, abbas, manu silentium indicens, omeliam aggreditur, sumpto exordio ab illo simboli apostolici articulo: 'Credo sanctorum communionem.' Stupente clero de tanta sinceritate uiri ac facundia, prorupit declamator sanctus ad insinuandam communionis ecclesiastice dignitatem ac beneficium, et excommunicationis penam et incommodum; sicut enim, dum in corpore columbe<sup>57</sup> queuis plumula<sup>h</sup> per inherentiam perseuerat,

<sup>b</sup> sacratissime supplied by author N      <sup>c</sup> regibus supplied by author N  
<sup>d</sup> fidelium supplied by author N      <sup>e</sup> ordini Cisterciensi AXQ      <sup>f</sup> stacionarius X  
<sup>g</sup> comitem supplied by author N      <sup>h</sup> plumula supplied by author N

unsuccessful campaign in 1159, Henry continued to exert pressure on Raymond, until eventually in 1173 he limited his claim to one of suzerainty, and Raymond did homage. But further strife erupted when Raymond supported the Young King and Geoffrey in their revolt of 1182–3. Subsequently Raymond had to contend with the hostility of Henry's son Richard as well.

<sup>51</sup> Raymond also engaged in a long struggle for power with the counts of Barcelona, Raymond-Berengar IV (1131–62) and Alfonso II (1162–96), who were also kings of Aragon as a result of Raymond-Berengar's marriage with Petronilla in 1150.

<sup>52</sup> The great Benedictine abbey and pilgrimage centre founded by St Gilles in the eighth century (Cottineau, *Répertoire*, ii. 2716–7). There is no evidence that the abbey had any complaints against the count of Toulouse before 1195, by which time the count was Raymond VI. He was excommunicated in that year for ignoring Pope Celestine III's remonstrances, when the monks complained that he had destroyed several churches belonging to them, pillaged their domains, and built a castle on their land against their

Emperor—and also by the celebrated count of Barcelona, Raymond-Berengar,<sup>51</sup> who was the equal of kings, greater than all other counts or dukes. Count Raymond showed such skill in anticipating everyone else's moves that by his cleverness he fended off the imminent victories of his more powerful enemies, and by his adroitness he stole the triumph from those whose superior strength he was unable to resist.

One day, then, when he was worn out by enemy attacks, and had exhausted the funds with which he was in the habit of paying his auxiliary troops, he took possession of the monastery of Saint-Gilles<sup>52</sup> as if he were responding to an appeal for help, and seized the offerings which the pious devotion of faithful pilgrims had amassed there. The Church's punishment followed on such a dreadful act of sacrilege, and the count was excommunicated for his effrontery.

At the time of these events the abbot of Bonnevaux,<sup>53</sup> a member of the Cistercian Order with authority over<sup>54</sup> the province of Vienne, truly a man of the highest religious perfection, came to the town of Saint-Gilles to reprove and censure<sup>55</sup> the count, and to lead him back to the path of a reformed life. When morning came the holy man celebrated mass, and then, arrayed in his priestly vestments, took up his position in front of the church doors<sup>56</sup> to preach to the people gathered before him. With the count sitting at his feet and the noble knights and leading citizens standing by, the abbot imposed silence with a gesture; he then embarked on his homily, taking as his starting-point the article of the Apostles' Creed: 'I believe in the communion of saints.' While his fellow-clergy marvelled at the man's great sincerity and eloquence, the holy preacher launched into a proclamation of the value and privilege of communion with the church, and the suffering and loss involved in excommunication; for just as, while any little feather remains attached to the body of a dove,<sup>57</sup> it is

wishes. They lodged a further complaint about the castle three years later (de Vic-Vaissete, *Histoire*, vi. 171 and 187–8, vii. 141, viii. 436–8).

<sup>53</sup> Bonnevaux was a Cistercian abbey on the Valèze, founded in 1117 (L. Janaschek, *Originum Cist.* i (Vienna, 1877), 7; *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, ii. 431). The abbot in question is Hugh II de Château-Neuf, abbot of Bonnevaux 1171–83 (*Gallia Christiana*, xvi. 209–10).

<sup>54</sup> It may be that *stationarius* means simply 'resident', but it seems more likely that the term implies some sort of appointment.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. 2 Tim. 4: 2.

<sup>56</sup> R. Hamann, *Deutsche und französische Kunst im Mittelalter* (Marburg, 1923), pp. 1–9, discusses and illustrates the church doors of Saint-Gilles. See also M. C. Maguelone, 'Les ports de Saint-Gilles au moyen âge', *Cahiers d'études cathares*, xxxiii (1982), 42–60 and xxxiv (1983), 15–38, 43–65, and 77–9.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. *Otia*, i. 24, n. 18.



omni cibario per os columbe transumpto, sustentatur ac alitur, que si decerpitur a corpore arescit et putrescit, omni carens nutrimento: ita quelibet anima, dum in gremio persistit ecclesie, omni cibo sacrificii, psalorum, ac elemosinarum, atque bonorum operum, uniuersitatis ecclesiastice per participium coalescit, que cum anathemate separatur a communione ecclesie putrescit, diabolo tradita et ab omni bonorum consorcio segregata.

Vt ergo populo lapidei cordis satisfaciat et corda carnea manifestius tangat,<sup>58</sup> precipit abbas confratri ut panem calidum atque recentem<sup>i</sup> afferat. Paret frater imperanti, et allatum in publico panem deliciosa manu confectum de grano purissimo, populo exponit,<sup>j</sup> ostendens quante panis sit uirtutis, quante fragrancie, quam splendidi saporis. Hunc igitur excommunicationi subicit, ipsi maledictionis ingeminans uerba, ac si reus esset cuiusuis dampnati facinoris. Completa anathematis sollempnitate, panem frangit, et statim ex fragmentis fetor incomparabilis prorumpit; quin immo panis ante uisa dulcedo ac species in cineres soluuntur ac putredinem interiorem.

Quid moror? Iterum panem, sic corruptum ac fetidum, quasi penitentem flagellat et aqua benedicta perfundit. Facta sollempni absolutionis<sup>k</sup> benedictione, reconciliat: et statim panis, a gremio matris ecclesie uelut lotus prodiens, pristinum decorem atque saporem recipit. Stupet comes sancti Egidii, stat populus tanta miraculorum<sup>l</sup> nouitate attonitus, tactusque comes interius igne diuini luminis, ad pedes sanctissimi Hugonis abbatis<sup>m</sup> Boneuallensis prostratus, lacrimas fundit, sacrilegium ceptum dissoluit, rapta restituit, et, accepta penitencia, per manum sancti uiri communionem recipit sancte matris ecclesie.<sup>59</sup>

Ecce, princeps sacratissime, quanta cautela bono christiano est necessaria, ne in laqueum cadat diaboli, ne sua culpa consorcium amittat communionis sancte, cuius confederacione fortis est ad pugnam et triumphator de<sup>n</sup> hoste superbo.<sup>x60</sup>

<sup>i</sup> atque recentem supplied by author N      <sup>j</sup> exponit supplied by author N  
<sup>k</sup> absolutionis supplied by author N      <sup>l</sup> miraculorum supplied by author N  
<sup>m</sup> abbatis supplied by author N      <sup>n</sup> de supplied by author N

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Ezek. 11: 19, 36: 26.

<sup>59</sup> This miracle also forms the theme of one of Étienne de Bourbon's *exempla*, but there the story is told of Raymond VI (*Anecdotes*, no. 308, pp. 259–60).

supported and nourished, taking all its sustenance through the dove's mouth, but if plucked from the body it withers and rots, deprived of all nourishment: even so, any soul, while it remains in the Church's bosom, grows strong by its participation in the whole body of the Church, with all the sustenance of the mass, the psalms, alms-giving, and good works; but when it is cut off by anathema from communion with the Church, handed over to the devil and excluded from all fellowship with good people, it rots away.

Then, in order to reach the stony-hearted people and to touch their hearts of flesh more directly,<sup>58</sup> the abbot ordered a monk to bring him a warm, fresh loaf of bread. The brother obeyed his command, and brought before the crowd a loaf made from the purest wheat by an expert hand. The abbot displayed it to the people, showing how much goodness there was in the bread, what a sweet smell it had, and what a delicious taste. Then he subjected this bread to excommunication, reciting over it the words of the curse, as if it were guilty of some damnable crime. Having completed the rite of excommunication, he broke the bread, and at once an unimaginable stench erupted from the fragments; moreover, the sweetness and appetizing appearance of the bread, seen a moment before, crumbled away into ashes and rottenness within.

What need to draw out my story? Next he scourged the bread, bad and stinking as it was, as if it were penitent, and sprinkled it with holy water. Then, pronouncing the solemn blessing of absolution, he reconciled it: and immediately, proceeding from the bosom of our mother the Church as if it had been washed, the bread recovered its former fine appearance and taste. The count of Saint-Gilles was astounded, and the people stood gaping at such remarkable miracles. Touched inwardly by a blaze of divine light, the count fell at the feet of the holy Hugh, abbot of Bonnevaux, and wept; he repudiated the sacrilege he had committed, restored what he had stolen, and, after doing penance, received at the holy man's hand the communion of our holy mother the Church.<sup>59</sup>

So you see, most worshipful Prince, how much care a good Christian must take not to fall into the devil's snare, lest he should by his own fault be deprived of the privilege of partaking of holy communion; for only as a party to this covenant is he strong for the fight and victorious over his proud Enemy.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>60</sup> This is no idle admonition: Otto himself was under excommunication from 1210 (see above, p. xxxii).



civ. *De pullo strutionis et uase uitreo*<sup>a</sup>

Quantum fuit<sup>b</sup> Salomonis ingenium dum meditor, nullam subtilitatis eius potentiam inuenio<sup>c</sup> preter sapientiam ex solo Dei munere secreta quadam inspiracione uenientem. Inter preclara eius artificia legimus quod <sup>1</sup>Biblos est ciuitas Fenicis, de qua dicit Ezechiel: ‘Senes Biblii et prudentes eius’.<sup>2</sup> Biblios ergo elegit Salomon ad sculpenda et polienda marmora<sup>d</sup> et ligna edificacionis templi.<sup>3</sup> Tradunt autem Iudei ad<sup>e</sup> celerius eruderandos lapides Salomonem habuisse sanguinem uermiculi, quem dicunt *tamir*,<sup>f</sup> quo conspersa marmora facile secabantur. Huius autem rei repertorium hoc fuit. Erat Salomoni structio habens pullum, et cum conclusisset<sup>g</sup> pullum in uase uitreo, strucio, uidens pullum nec eum potens habere, de deserto tulit uermiculum, cuius sanguine liniuit uitrum:<sup>h</sup> ita sectum<sup>i</sup> est. Videns autem Salomon cacumen montis Moria<sup>4</sup> angustum, deiecit illud et in aream spaciis amplioribus diffudit.<sup>1</sup>

f. 83<sup>r</sup> Sane temporibus nostris, sub papa | Alexandro tercio, dum puer eram,<sup>5</sup> inuenta est Rome<sup>i</sup> fiala plena liquore lacteo, quo conspersa omnia<sup>k</sup> lapidum genera sculpturam talem recipiebant qualem manus insculpere uolentis protrahebat. Erat autem fiala ex antiquissimo palacio elicita, cuius materiam aut artificium populus Romanus admirabatur.

cv. *De arbore ex*<sup>a</sup> *qua lignum Domini*<sup>b</sup>

Traditio Grecorum habet quod de arbore illa in cuius fructu peccauit Adam, ramus fuit translatus in Ierusalem; qui in tantam excreuit

<sup>a</sup> uase uitreo] ingenio Salomonis CXQ <sup>b</sup> fuerit Cβ <sup>c</sup> inuenio potentiam N <sup>d</sup> marmorea N <sup>e</sup> ad supplied here by author; also written by scribe after celerius and deleted N <sup>f</sup> tamir Comestor <sup>g</sup> cumclusisset (cum-supplied by author, correcting ex-) N <sup>h</sup> liniuit uitrum] uitrum liniuit et ACβ <sup>i</sup> fractum Comestor <sup>j</sup> Rome supplied by author N <sup>k</sup> omnium CXQ

<sup>a</sup> ex supplied by author N <sup>b</sup> De . . . Domini] De ligno paradisi et cruce Domini CXQ

<sup>1-1</sup> Biblos . . . spaciis amplioribus diffudit] Cf. Comestor, *III Reg.*, c. 8 (*PL* cxcviii. 1353-4); see Liebrecht (pp. 158-9) for a number of variants of the story. Duchesne (*Livre*, p. 170, n. 296) draws attention to the fact that the use of implements made of iron was forbidden in the building of the temple, because of the association of iron with weapons of war (*Middot*, 3.4: see *The Mishnah*, transl. J. Neusner (New Haven, 1988), pp. 878-9);

104. *The Ostrich's Chick and the Glass Jar*

When I reflect on the greatness of Solomon's genius, I conclude that his powerful insight must represent the wisdom which only comes as a gift of God, by some mysterious inspiration. The following is just one of his extraordinary feats. We read that <sup>1</sup>Gebal is a city of Phoenicia; Ezekiel says of it: ‘The ancients of Gebal and the wise men thereof’.<sup>2</sup> Solomon therefore chose men of Gebal to carve and polish the marble and wood used in the building of the temple.<sup>3</sup> Now, according to a Jewish tradition, Solomon kept the blood of a worm, which they call *tamir*, for shaping the stones more quickly, since marble which had been sprinkled with this blood was easy to cut. The manner of discovering this fact was as follows. Solomon had an ostrich with a chick, and he shut the chick inside a glass jar. Its mother, seeing her offspring but not being able to get at it, brought a worm from the desert and daubed the glass with its blood: by this means the glass was cut. Solomon, moreover, seeing how narrow Mount Moriah<sup>4</sup> was at the top, hurled down the peak, and levelled out a building space of more ample dimensions.<sup>1</sup>

In our times, during the papacy of Alexander III, when I was a boy,<sup>5</sup> a phial was found at Rome full of a milky liquid: when stones of any kind had been sprinkled with this liquid, they allowed themselves to be carved just as the hand of the person trying to work them intended. The phial had been unearthed in a very ancient palace; its materials and workmanship aroused the wonder of the Roman people.

105. *The Tree from which Came the Lord's Cross*

A tradition of the Greeks has it that from the tree whose fruit gave rise to Adam's sin, a branch was brought to Jerusalem; this branch grew into such a large tree that the Lord's cross was made from it.

hence the need for this worm's blood. For the belief in Solomon's magical powers, see *Otia*, i. 20, n. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ezek. 27: 9

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 3 Kgs. (1 Kgs.) 5: 18.

<sup>4</sup> Solomon built the temple on Mount Moriah (2 Chr. 3: 1), where David had built an altar on the threshing-floor (*area*) of Ornan (or Araunah) the Jebusite (2 Kgs. (2 Sam.) 24: 18-25).

<sup>5</sup> See above, pp. xxv-xxvi.

arborem quod de illa facta est crux Domini, ut in eodem ligno repararetur quo perditum fuit genus humanum.<sup>1</sup>

cvi. *Vrbanum principi responsum*<sup>a, b</sup>

Vt polimita tunica Ioseph<sup>1</sup> plus deliciarum habeat, audi, princeps sacratissime, urbanitatis responsum. <sup>2</sup>Cum post Ptholomeum in Egypto regnaret Filadelfus, uir studiosus et librorum cupidus, peciit ab Elezaro, sacerdote in Iudea, sibi mitti legem Dei ore editam et digito eius<sup>c</sup> scriptam,<sup>3</sup> et ad hoc<sup>d</sup> facilius digniusque habendum, liberauit captiuos<sup>e</sup> Iudeos centum .xx. milia, dans dominis eorum pro capite .cxx. dragmas argenti. Cumque dixisset rex hoc magnum esse, dixerunt: 'Hoc quidem<sup>f</sup> magnum est, sed non regi munifico.'<sup>2</sup> O urbana responsio, que utinam corda legentium tangat!

Audi urbano uerbo iunctam mirandam et miraculosam memoriam. <sup>4</sup>Cum<sup>g</sup> enim Eleazarus ex singulis tribubus sex<sup>h 5</sup> uiros misisset<sup>i</sup> Filadelfo, qui septuaginta interpretes dicuntur, duobus ex numero crescente non numeratis, secundum morem scripture, que modicum numerum excrescentem in<sup>j</sup> magna summa subticet,<sup>4</sup> more potentum qui ad perfectionem magne quantitatis in calculo modicam summam pretereunt,<sup>k 6</sup> ipsi regem de agnitione unius Dei instruxerunt, plenius disputando de uno Deo colendo, et quod nulla creatura esset Deus. Inde est quod ubicumque occurrit eis aliquis de Trinitate sermo, uel sub silentio transierunt, uel sub enigmate transtulerunt, ne tres deos colendos tradidisse uiderentur; similiter de incarnatione<sup>l</sup> Verbi

<sup>a</sup> responsum supplied by author N      <sup>b</sup> Vrbanum principi (principis AI) responsum] Mirum de concordia .lxx. interpretum CXQ      <sup>c</sup> suo N      <sup>d</sup> hoc supplied by author N      <sup>e</sup> captiuos om. N      <sup>f</sup> Hoc quidem] Quidem hoc X; quod hoc CQ      <sup>g</sup> cum supplied by author N      <sup>h</sup> sex Comestor; duos (supplied by author) N, ACβ      <sup>i</sup> misisset supplied by author N      <sup>j</sup> in supplied by author N      <sup>k</sup> pretereunt CI; preterit NA; preteriit XQ      <sup>l</sup> incarnatione supplied by author N

<sup>1</sup> Gervase is the earliest known author to assert that the cross was derived from the tree of knowledge: cf. *Otia*, iii. 54, n. 1.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gen. 37: 3, 32.

<sup>2-2</sup> Cum . . . non regi munifico.] Cf. Comestor, *Esther*, c. 7 (PL cxcviii. 1499); Gervase substantially abbreviates his source. Ptolemy Philadelphus (285–46 BC) succeeded Ptolemy son of Lagus, who had acquired the kingdom of Egypt on the dismantling of Alexander's empire. The so-called *Letter of Aristeas*, a Hellenistic Jewish apologetic treatise composed at Alexandria in the second century BC, describes how Philadelphus released the Jewish captives which his father had taken, and petitioned the Jewish high priest, Eleazar, for a Greek translation of the Pentateuch; Eleazar dispatched seventy-two elders to Alexandria,

This was in order that the human race might be restored on the same tree by which it was lost.<sup>1</sup>

106. *A Witty Rejoinder to a Prince*

In order that Joseph's coat of many colours<sup>1</sup> may charm the more, hear, most worshipful Prince, a rejoinder which displayed a nice wit. <sup>2</sup>When Philadelphus, a studiosus and book-loving man, had succeeded Ptolemy as king of Egypt, he requested of Eleazar, the high priest in Judaea, that the Law should be sent to him, as it had been proclaimed by the mouth of God and written with his finger.<sup>3</sup> And in order to gain this the more easily and deservedly, he released 120,000 Jewish captives, giving their masters 120 silver drachmas per head. When the king commented that it was a great thing that he had done, they said: 'It is a great thing indeed, but not to a munificent king.'<sup>2</sup> Oh, what a nice rejoinder! Would that it might touch the hearts of my readers!

Hear this story of a wonderful miracle which is associated with that well-turned remark. <sup>4</sup>Eleazar sent six<sup>5</sup> men from each tribe to Philadelphus. They are known as the seventy translators: the two extra ones were not counted, in accordance with the practice of scripture, which does not mention a few extra over and above a large round number;<sup>4</sup> wealthy people do the same in their calculations, passing over a small sum in order to round off a large amount. <sup>6</sup>These men instructed the king in the knowledge of the one God, laying particular emphasis on the necessity of worshipping God alone, and on the fact that no creature was God. As a result, whenever they were confronted with some mention of the Trinity, they either passed over it in silence, or translated it obscurely, lest they should seem to have presented three gods to be worshipped; in like manner they remained silent concerning the incarnation of the Word, or expressed only a who duly performed this task. For an English translation and commentary, see Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, ii. 83–122. The idea that the elders worked separately but produced identical translations (see below) seems first to have been added to the story in the anonymous *Cohortatio ad Graecos* (Charles, ii. 92); in the later tradition, also, the elders translated the whole of the Old Testament. The legend was frequently reproduced by Jews and Christians alike: for a collection of *testimonia* up to Isidore of Seville, see P. Wendland, *Aristeae ad Philocratem Epistula* (Leipzig, 1900), pp. 85–166.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Exod. 31: 18.

<sup>4-4</sup> Cum . . . magna summa subticet] Cf. Comestor, *Esther*, c. 7 (PL cxcviii. 1500).

<sup>5</sup> The scribe of N omitted the Comestor's *sex*, and the author incorrectly supplied *duos*; the mistake persisted in the copies.

<sup>6-6</sup> ipsi . . . tradidisse hominem deificatum (p. 794)] Cf. Comestor, loc. cit.

tacuerunt, aut minus expresserunt. Vnde in Esaia,<sup>7</sup> cum dixisset puerum nobis nasciturum et addidit sex nomina, quorum unum est 'Deus', pro illis sex nominibus transtulerunt 'magni consilii angelus', ne uiderentur tradidisse hominem deificatum.<sup>6</sup>

Et ecce mirum: <sup>8</sup>cum enim, datis singulis cellis, diluculo egressi ad optandum regi bona et polichronitudinem<sup>m 9</sup> (id est diuturnitatem annorum, sicut fit pape, cum ei proclamatur 'Multos annos!'), loti ad mare secundum purificationem Iudeorum, interpretabantur usque ad horam nonam, inde transeuntes ad cibum et ad<sup>n</sup> requiem; et consummato opere in septuaginta duobus diebus, una et eadem inuenta est singulorum edicio, sine collatione concors, et sine omni dissonantia eadem. Quod uix alibi legimus, preter id quod de Esdra<sup>o 10</sup> legitur, qui per Spiritum<sup>p</sup> Sanctum legem reparauit, quam postea cum<sup>q</sup> ueteri scriptura que apud Samaritanos erat correxit.<sup>8</sup> Sic in *Passione Domini*,<sup>11</sup> quam Nicodemus Ebraice dictauit et Aneas<sup>12</sup> Ebreus transtulit in Grecum, Carinus et Leucius, qui apparuerunt Iudeis in resurrectione sanctorum qui dormierant<sup>r</sup> et uisi sunt ingredi in sanctam ciuitatem, singulis thomis,<sup>s</sup> id est cartulis, seriem passionis et resurrectionis, diuisi per loca, uelut uno ore dictauerunt.

cvii. *De mirabilibus que sunt ubi quinque ciuitates sunt submerse*<sup>a, b</sup>

Propter peccata populi quinque ciuitatum<sup>c</sup> Sodomorum, <sup>l</sup>uersa est tota regio illa in lacum salsum et sterilem, qui dicitur mare Mortuum,

<sup>m</sup> polichronitudinem *Comestor*; <sup>n</sup> polichritudinem *N*; <sup>o</sup> pulcritudinem *ACβ* <sup>p</sup> ad om. *ACβ* and *Comestor* <sup>q</sup> Esdra supplied by author *N* <sup>r</sup> Spiritum om. *CXQ* <sup>s</sup> cum] in *CXQ* <sup>t</sup> dormierunt *CXQ* <sup>u</sup> thomis supplied by author *N*

<sup>a</sup> sunt submerse supplied by author *N* <sup>b</sup> que . . . submerse] terre Pentapolis *C*, terre Pentapolis que est Sodomorum *XQ* <sup>c</sup> ciuitatum *ed.*; ciuitates *MSS*

<sup>7</sup> Isa. 9: 6, where the LXX has Μεγάλης βουλῆς ἄγγελος; cf. the Vulgate: 'Admirabilis, Consiliarius, Deus, Fortis, Pater futuri saeculi, Princeps pacis.' Deliberate mistakes had to be postulated in the LXX to protect its reputation for having been directly inspired.

<sup>8-8</sup> cum . . . Samaritanos erat correxit] Cf. *Comestor*, *Esther*, c. 7 (*PL* cxcviii. 1500-1); the words in parentheses were added by Gervase.

<sup>9</sup> The scribe of *N*, or another before him, corrupted the *Comestor*'s *polichronitudinem* to *polichritudinem*; thence a baffled copyist produced *pulcritudinem*, which appears in the other MSS. The word is derived from πολυχρονιότης, 'longevity'; in *Additio* 3 (*PL* cxcviii. 1501) the *Comestor* elaborates: 'Polichronitudo dicitur oratio, quae fit ab Ecclesia pro regibus, pontificibus, principibus terrae, et optat eis bona spiritualia, et temporalia, et aeterna, et temporis longitudinem' ('Polychronitude is the word for the prayer which is made by the Church on behalf of kings, bishops, and the princes of the earth, seeking their spiritual, temporal, and eternal well-being, and length of life'). On the papal *laudes*, see E. H. Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae*, University of California Publications in History, xxxiii (Berkeley, 1958), 129-42.

<sup>10</sup> The apocryphal book, 4 Esdras, also known as the *Apocalypse of Ezra*, was well-

part of the meaning. Accordingly in Isaiah,<sup>7</sup> when, having said that a child would be born to us, he added six names, one of which is 'God', they translated those six names as 'an angel of great counsel', lest they should seem to have presented a deified human being.<sup>6</sup>

Now here is the marvel: <sup>8</sup>separate cells were allocated to all the translators, and after going out at dawn to pray for the king's prosperity and polychronitude<sup>9</sup> (that is, length of years, just as is done for the pope, when the cry 'Many years!' is raised for him), having washed on the sea-shore, in accordance with the Jewish rites of purification, they would work at their translation until three o'clock; then they would go for a meal and take their rest. The work was completed in seventy-two days, and the version that each had produced was found to be one and the same: though there had been no collation, their translations were all identical, corresponding without a single discrepancy. We read of hardly any other instances of this, apart from what is read of Ezra,<sup>10</sup> who restored the Law at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, and subsequently corrected it from the Old Testament which had been preserved among the Samaritans.<sup>8</sup> A similar thing is told of Carinus and Leucius in *The Passion of the Lord*,<sup>11</sup> which Nicodemus composed in Hebrew and Aneas<sup>12</sup> the Hebrew translated into Greek; these two, who appeared to the Jews and were seen entering the holy city, at the time when the saints who had fallen asleep rose from the dead, wrote the story of the passion and resurrection on separate leaves, that is, pieces of paper, telling it as if with one voice, even though they were in different places.

107. *The Marvels which Occur where the Five Cities were Submerged*

On account of the sins of the population of the five cities of the Sodomites, <sup>1</sup>that whole region was turned into a salty and barren lake. It is called the Dead Sea, because neither birds nor fish can live in it.

known in the first Christian centuries, and was frequently quoted by the Fathers. It is a Jewish work of composite character, first published c. 120 AD. In chapter 14 Ezra is said to have restored from memory all the books of the O.T., which were believed to have perished during the exile (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, ii. 623-4).

<sup>11</sup> According to the *Evangelium Nicodemi*, cc. 17-27, Carinus and Leucius, the sons of Symeon, rose from the dead and wrote identical accounts of Christ's harrowing of hell.

<sup>12</sup> The translator names himself as Ananias in the Prologue of the Greek version of the *Evangelium Nicodemi*, but appears as Aeneas in the Coptic version (James, *Apocryphal New Testament*, p. 95).

<sup>1-1</sup> uersa . . . filii Israel uagabantur (p. 796)] Cf. *Comestor*, *Gen.*, c. 53 and *Additio* 1 (*PL* cxcviii. 1101); Isidore, *Etym.* xiii. 19. 3-4; *Gen.* 19: 24-5. Gervase has rearranged the material from his source in this chapter, giving rise to a number of awkwardnesses. On the Pentapolis, see *Otia*, i. 12, n. 10; cf. iii. 5.

quia in eo nec aues nec pisces uiuere possunt. Nauim non patitur, quin immo<sup>d</sup> tota supereminet<sup>e</sup> nisi sit bituminata, et hoc forte propter homines intus uiuentes.<sup>2</sup> Si quid uiuum aliqua arte immiseris, statim superexilit. Lucerna ardens supernatat, extincta mergitur. In multis locis nigras bituminis glebas euomit, ideoque lacus<sup>f</sup> Asfaltidis<sup>g</sup> dicitur. De hac<sup>3</sup> ait Iosephus:<sup>4</sup> ‘Fabula<sup>h</sup> Sodomitice terre fidem habet. Nimia enim<sup>i</sup> eius<sup>6</sup> leuitate, etiam grauissima in eum iacta referuntur. Vnde Vespasianus quosdam, manibus post tergum uinctis,<sup>j</sup> iussit in altum proici, et omnes tamquam spiritus sursum repulsi desuper stabant.’<sup>k</sup> Hic lacus Iudeam diuidit et Arabiam, que olim fuit<sup>l</sup> solitudo inuia et inaquosa per quam quadraginta annis filii Israel uagabantur.<sup>1</sup>

cviii. *De coitu Loth cum<sup>a</sup> filiabus<sup>b</sup>*

Quando Loth cognouit filias, inebriatus a uino,<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>duo dicunt in eo<sup>c</sup> facto esse<sup>d</sup> mirabilia: quod coierit nesciens;<sup>e</sup> quod in defloracione uirgo concipiat. Vnde secundum hoc<sup>f</sup> dicunt Antichristum se dicenturum filium uirginis.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>d</sup> immo supplied by author N      <sup>e</sup> quin . . . supereminet] om. CXQ      <sup>f</sup> lacus C  
(presumably a scribal correction) and Comestor; locus NAß      <sup>g</sup> a faltidis N  
<sup>h</sup> favilla Comestor      <sup>i</sup> enim om. N      <sup>j</sup> iunctis I and Comestor      <sup>k</sup> fluitabant  
A and Comestor      <sup>l</sup> fuit supplied by author N

<sup>a</sup> cum supplied by author N      <sup>b</sup> cum filiabus om. CXQ      <sup>c</sup> eo om. XQ  
<sup>d</sup> fuisse ACß      <sup>e</sup> et add. after nesciens ACß      <sup>f</sup> secundum hoc supplied by author N

<sup>2</sup> The Comestor adds here: ‘Nam omne carens vita in profundum mergitur’ (‘For everything that has no life in it sinks to the bottom’). He contradicts himself in this chapter: first, following Isidore (loc. cit.), he says that all lifeless objects sink in this sea, but then in Additio 1 he cites Josephus (see n. 4 below) as saying that nothing at all can sink in it; cf. Appendix i. 30, n. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Gervase’s ‘De hac’ (not found in the Comestor’s text) presumably understands ‘re’ (‘On this topic’, i.e. the Dead Sea), or possibly ‘regione’ from the first sentence. The reading ‘hoc’ (sc. ‘lacu’) adopted by Leibniz (p. 1001) would seem preferable, but must derive from a scribal correction: all the MSS collated read ‘hac’.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Josephus, *Bell.* iv. 485 and 476–7.

It suffers no ship to sail in it, but the whole vessel rides on top of the water, unless it is caulked with bitumen; this is presumably because of the living people inside it.<sup>2</sup> If by some means you introduce a living thing into the water, it immediately bobs up to the surface. A lamp floats if it is alight, but if it is put out, it sinks. In many places the lake disgorges black clods of asphalt, and so it is called Lake Asphaltites. On this topic<sup>3</sup> Josephus<sup>4</sup> says: ‘The things people say<sup>5</sup> about the land of Sodom are trustworthy. For it is a fact that, because of the water’s<sup>6</sup> extreme buoyancy, even the heaviest things which are thrown into it are cast up to the surface. To test this, Vespasian ordered some people to be thrown into deep water with their hands tied behind their backs: they were all forced up again and stood on the water as if they were spirits.’ This lake divides Judaea and Arabia, which was once a trackless and waterless desert through which the children of Israel wandered for forty years.<sup>1</sup>

#### 108. *Lot’s Intercourse with his Daughters*

When Lot got drunk on wine and knew his daughters,<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>they say that two aspects of that event were miraculous: that he had intercourse without knowing it, and that a virgin conceived in her deflowering. So they say that it is after this fashion that Antichrist will claim to be the son of a virgin.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Gervase has here omitted an account of the apples full of ashes which he has already described in *Otia*, iii. 5. With reference to these the Comestor says: ‘Unde, ut ait Iosephus, favilla terrae Sodomiticae fidem habet’ (‘And so, as Josephus says, the ashes of the land of Sodom are genuine’). In Rufinus’ Latin translation of the *Bellum Iudaicum* this sentence also refers to the ashes, but the word used is *fabula*, as in Gervase’s text (Josephus, *Opera*, ed. S. Golenius (Lyons, 1557), iii. 405). It is possible that *favilla* in the Migne text derives from a scribal corruption; otherwise, Gervase must have been influenced here by a direct acquaintance with the Latin version of Josephus.

<sup>6</sup> In the *Historia scholastica* this follows Gervase’s last sentence, and the *eius* refers to the lake.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gen. 19: 30–8.

<sup>2-2</sup> duo . . . dicturum filium uirginis] Cf. Comestor, *Gen.*, c. 54 (PL cxcviii. 1102). On the birth of Antichrist, cf. *Otia*, i. 17, n. 9.

cix. *De arbore quam dicimus Agnum castum*<sup>a1</sup>

f. 83<sup>v</sup> <sup>2</sup>Est arbor quam Agnum castum nominant, | cuius ramus, si capiti dormientis supponatur, uisiones capitis fantasticas dormiens non sentiet.<sup>b</sup> Vnde eius<sup>c</sup> ramum Rebecam capiti suo supposuisse tradunt, collidentibus in utero geminis,<sup>3</sup> cum consuleret Dominum, dormiens super pelles hostiarum in monte Morian,<sup>4</sup> ubi Abraham altare crexerat.<sup>2</sup>

cx. *De pascuis<sup>a</sup> Egipti*

Mirandum satis arbitror quod <sup>1</sup>in terra Egypti, quando imminet sterilitas in messibus, habundat in pascuis, et e conuerso, cum hoc sit contra naturam aliarum regionum. Quod asserunt euenire quia diuturnior mora fluminis super terram<sup>b</sup> oportunitatem colligendi spicam uel sata adimit, pascua autem<sup>c</sup> nutrit.<sup>1</sup>

cxi. *De peritia<sup>a</sup> Moysi in<sup>b</sup> sculptura<sup>c,d</sup>*

Legimus <sup>1</sup>Moysen tante fuisse pulcritudinis ut nullus adeo seuerus<sup>e</sup> esset qui eius aspectui non hereret;<sup>f</sup> multique dum cernerent eum per plateam ferri, occupationes in quibus studebant deseruerunt.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Hic Ethiopes dux factus Egypciolorum persecutus, ut eos breuiori<sup>g</sup> itinere preuentos superaret, transiens per loca deserta

<sup>a</sup> quam . . . castum] que dicitur agnus castus CXQ <sup>b</sup> sentit CXQ  
<sup>c</sup> heius N

<sup>a</sup> pascuis] contrarietate CX, ciricietate(?) Q <sup>b</sup> terre CXQ <sup>c</sup> autem] ante supplied by author N

<sup>a</sup> patria N <sup>b</sup> sic A; et NI <sup>c</sup> et sepultura (sic) supplied by author N  
<sup>d</sup> De . . . sculptura] De Moysen et ciconiis CXQ <sup>e</sup> seuerus supplied by author N  
<sup>f</sup> hereret supplied by author N <sup>g</sup> sic Q; breuiore ACXI; breuiori (sic) altered by author(?) from breuiore N

<sup>1</sup> *Agnus castus* was a name given to the shrub *vitex*, a kind of willow. *Agnus* is a Latinization of the Greek word for this shrub, *ἀγνος*, which was confused with the word *ἀγνός*, meaning 'chaste'. Pliny describes the *agnus castus*, saying of it: 'Graeci lygon uocant, alias agnon, quoniam matronae Thesmophoriis Atheniensium castitatem custodientes his foliis cubitus sibi sternunt' (*Hist. nat.* xxiv. 38. 59). He goes on to speak of its medicinal uses, and says (61) that if one sleeps on it, it puts *uenenata* to flight. For further references, see *Dict. of Med. Latin from British Sources*, s.v. *agnus* 2.

109. *The Tree which we call Agnus Castus*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup>There is a tree which people call *Agnus castus*: if a branch of this tree is laid underneath someone's head while they are asleep, that person will not experience mental hallucinations in their sleep. So they say that Rebekah laid a branch of this tree under her head when, as the twins were struggling in her womb,<sup>3</sup> she sought counsel from the Lord, sleeping upon the skins of sacrificed animals on Mount Moriah,<sup>4</sup> where Abraham had built an altar.<sup>2</sup>

110. *The Pastures of Egypt*

I find it quite remarkable that, <sup>1</sup>in the land of Egypt, when failure threatens the harvest the pastures are rich, and *vice versa*, even though this is contrary to the nature of other regions. They say that this comes about because, when the river's flood-waters linger for too long on the land, they allow no opportunity for gathering the grain-crops, but they do nourish the pastures.<sup>1</sup>

111. *On Moses' Skill at Carving*

We read that <sup>1</sup>Moses' beauty was so great that no one was so insensitive as not to hang upon the sight of him, and many people abandoned whatever occupation they were engaged upon to watch him pass in the street.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Moses was appointed as commander of the Egyptian army, and he set off in pursuit of the Ethiopians. In order to cut them off by a shorter route and gain the upper hand, he travelled across a desert

<sup>2-2</sup> Est . . . Abraham altare crexerat] Cf. Comestor, *Gen.*, c. 66 (*PL* cxcviii. 1109-10).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Gen.* 25: 22.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Gen.* 22: 2; note that for 'into the land of Moriah' (A.V.) the Vulgate has 'in terram visionis'.

<sup>1-1</sup> in terra . . . pascua autem nutrit] Cf. Comestor, *Gen.*, c. 98 (*PL* cxcviii. 1134). Pliny (*Hist. nat.* v. 10. 58) and Solinus (*Collect.* xxxii. 14) both mention the problems which arise if the flood-waters remain on the land too long or not long enough; they do not, however, contrast the needs of the harvest and the pastures, as the Comestor does.

<sup>1-1</sup> Moysen . . . quibus studebant deseruerunt] Cf. Comestor, *Exod.*, c. 5 (*PL* cxcviii. 1144); Josephus, *Ant.* ii. 231.

<sup>2-2</sup> Hic . . . Maria et Aaron (p. 800)] Cf. Comestor, *Exod.*, c. 6 (*PL* cxcviii. 1144); Josephus, *Ant.* 239-53.

plena serpentibus, tulit in archis papireis super plaustra ybices, hoc est ciconias Egypcias, naturaliter infestas serpentibus,<sup>3</sup> que rostro per posteriora misso aluum purgant.<sup>4</sup> Castra igitur metatus, demisit ibices ut deuorarent serpentes. Sicque preuentos et uictos<sup>h</sup> Ethiopes inclusit in ciuitate Meroe, que antea Sabba Regia dicebatur.<sup>5</sup> Quam cum diu obsedisset quia inexpugnabilis erat, iniecit oculos in eum Tharbis, filia regis Ethiopum, que ex conducto tradidit ei ciuitatem si eam duceret<sup>i</sup> uxorem: et ita factum est. Contra hanc et Moysen iurgati sunt<sup>6</sup> postea<sup>j</sup> Maria et Aaron.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Dum autem redire uoluisset Moyses, non acquieuit uxor. Proinde, tamquam uir astrorum peritus, ymagines sculpsit in gemmis huius efficacie, ut una memoriam, altera obliuionem conferret; cumque paribus anulis eas inseruisset, anulum obliuionis uxori prebuit, alterum ipse tulit: et tandem libere Egyptum ingressus est.<sup>7</sup>

cxii. *De ossibus Ioseph et oue*<sup>a</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Cum populus Israel exiret de Egypto, accidit quod Nilus preter solitum<sup>b</sup> inundabat terram in qua sepulchrum erat Ioseph. Tenebantur autem<sup>c</sup> ex iuramento asportare ossa eius.<sup>2</sup> Tunc scripsit Moyses nomen Domini in lamina aurea<sup>3</sup> tetragramaton in hunc modum:<sup>d</sup> יהוה;<sup>e</sup><sup>4</sup> que superposita<sup>f</sup> aque superenatauit, usquequo<sup>g</sup> ueniens staret supra ubi erat sepulchrum. Et ascendentes<sup>h</sup> sustulerunt ossa; que sublata leguntur eis profetasse, forte de difficultate itineris. Tamen Ebrei tradunt quod ouis ex inprouiso astitit iuxta eos, loquens

<sup>h</sup> et uictos *supplied here by author; also written by scribe after Ethiopes and deleted N; om. Comestor* <sup>i</sup> duceret *supplied by author N* <sup>j</sup> postea *om. CXQ*

<sup>a</sup> oue] de oue *supplied by author (correcting nomine) N; nomine tetragramaton CXQ*  
<sup>b</sup> adhuc *add. after solitum ACβ* <sup>c</sup> autem *supplied by author N* <sup>d</sup> in hunc modum *supplied by author N* <sup>e</sup> An attempt is made in all the MSS to draw the Hebrew letters; in N, the names of the letters are also written in the margin by the rubricator as: he uau he iot <sup>f</sup> que superposita *supplied by author N* <sup>g</sup> usque N; usque dum *Comestor* <sup>h</sup> ascendentes *MSS; effodientes Comestor*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Pliny, *Hist. nat.* x. 40. 75; Solinus, *Collect.* xxxii. 32–3.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Pliny, *Hist. nat.* viii. 41. 97; Isidore, *Etym.* xii. 7. 33.

<sup>5</sup> As Josephus explains (*Ant.* ii. 249), the royal city of Saba was later named Meroe by Cambyses, after his sister; cf. *Otia*, ii. 4, nn. 101 and 105.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Num. 12: 1–15.

<sup>7–7</sup> Dum . . . Egyptum ingressus est] Cf. Comestor, loc. cit. The same story is told of Vespasian in the *Gesta Romanorum* (c. 10). Such stories of rings, herbs, potions etc. causing forgetfulness are very common; see Kittredge, *Wüchcraft*, p. 106 and n., and for further examples, *MI D1365*.

region. As this region was full of snakes, he took with him waggon-loads of rush cages containing ibises, that is, Egyptian storks, which are naturally hostile to snakes.<sup>3</sup> These birds plunge their beaks into their own posteriors to clean their bowels.<sup>4</sup> So, when Moses had pitched camp, he let out the ibises so that they would devour the snakes. Thus he overtook the Ethiopians and, having vanquished them, confined them in the city of Meroe, which was formerly called Saba Regia.<sup>5</sup> This city was impregnable, and he had been besieging it for a long time, when the eyes of Tharbis, the daughter of the king of Ethiopia, fell upon him. She promised to betray the city to him if he would marry her; and so it came about. Later Miriam and Aaron quarrelled<sup>6</sup> with this woman and Moses.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Meanwhile, when Moses wanted to return home, his wife would not agree. Accordingly, as a man skilled in astrology, he carved images on precious stones; the power of these images was such that one conferred remembrance, and the other forgetfulness. Having set them in identical rings, he gave the ring of forgetfulness to his wife and took the other himself, and so at last he went back to Egypt unhindered.<sup>7</sup>

112. *The Bones of Joseph and his Sheep*

<sup>1</sup>When the people of Israel were leaving Egypt, it chanced that the flood-waters of the Nile had remained for longer than usual over the region where Joseph's tomb was. Nevertheless they were bound by an oath to take his bones with them.<sup>2</sup> So Moses wrote on a plate of gold<sup>3</sup> the four letters which stand for the name of the Lord, as follows: יהוה.<sup>4</sup> When this plate was laid on the surface of the water, it floated along until it came to a standstill above where the tomb was. They then went up and removed the bones. We read that, when they were picked up, the bones prophesied to them, perhaps about the difficulty of the journey. On the other hand, there is a Hebrew

<sup>1–1</sup> Cum . . . uelud ouem Ioseph (p. 802) ] Cf. Comestor, *Exod.*, c. 27 (*PL* cxcviii. 1155).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Gen. 50: 25; Exod. 13: 19; Josh. 24: 32.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Exod. 28: 36.

<sup>4</sup> The tetragrammaton, or 'word of four letters' (yod he waw he), was used to represent the name of God (regarded as ineffable), and was seen as a mysterious symbol of the divinity. The words: 'in hunc modum' and the tetragrammaton itself do not appear in the chapter of the *Historia scholastica* on which Gervase is drawing here; he may, though, have copied the tetragrammaton from the Comestor's commentary on Exod. 28: 36 (*Exod.*, c. 65, *PL* cxcviii. 1186), where he gives the Hebrew forms of the letters, and names them as *iod he wau he*.

ad eos,<sup>i</sup> ob quam rem duxerunt eam per desertum multo tempore, appellantes eam<sup>j</sup> ouem Ioseph. De quo<sup>k</sup> in psalmo:<sup>5</sup> 'Qui deducis uelud ouem Ioseph.'<sup>1</sup>

Enimuero si licet tantis miraculis ingenia nostri temporis comparare, ecce nouum quod nostris temporibus accidit. Tempore regis Siculi Rogeri,<sup>6</sup> quidam magister,<sup>7</sup> natione Anglus, ad regem accessit, postulans aliquid a rege munifico dari. Cumque rex, illustris genere et moribus, arbitraretur<sup>l</sup> aliquid a se beneficium peti, respondit: 'Pete quod uis beneficium, et dabo tibi.' Erat enim petitor summe litteratus, in triuio et quadriuio<sup>m</sup> potens et acutissimus, in fisica operosus, in astronomia summus. Ait ergo regi se non<sup>n</sup> temporalia solacia petere, sed potius quod apud homines uile putatur, ossa uidelicet Virgilii, ubicumque possent inueniri infra metas regni sui. Annuit rex, et magister, acceptis litteris regiis, Neapolim uenit, ubi Virgilius<sup>o</sup> studium ingenii sui in multis exercuerat. Porrectis litteris, populus hoberedientiam parat, et ignarus sepulture, libenter annuit quod pro impossibili credebat existimandum.

Tandem magister, arte sua ad manum ducta, repperit ossa infra tumulum in medio montis cuiusdam, ad quem nec signum scissure dinoscebatur. Foditur locus,<sup>p</sup> et effoditur post longos labores tumulus, in quo inuenitur continuum corpus Virgilii, et ad capud liber in quo ars notaria<sup>8</sup> erat inscripta, cum aliis studii eius characteribus. Leuatur puluis cum ossibus, et liber a magistro extrahitur. Ad hec populus Neapolitanus, attendens specialem affectionem quam habuerat Virgilius erga ciuitatem, timens ne ex ossium subtractione enorme dampnum ciuitas tota pateretur, elegit susceptum regis mandatum eludere, quam hoberiendo tante urbis excidio occasionem  
f. 84<sup>r</sup> prestare.<sup>q</sup> Arbitrabatur enim eo consilio Virgilium sibi in | montis archano tumulum posuisse, ne ossa eius euecta artificiorum<sup>9</sup> suorum

<sup>i</sup> illos ACβ      <sup>j</sup> multo . . . eam] om. CXQ      <sup>k</sup> sic MSS for qua  
<sup>l</sup> arbitraretur supplied by author N      <sup>m</sup> quadriuio N      <sup>n</sup> nondum N  
<sup>o</sup> Virgilius om. N      <sup>p</sup> locus supplied by author N      <sup>q</sup> prestrare N

<sup>5</sup> Ps. 79 (80): 1.

<sup>6</sup> On Roger II of Sicily, see *Otia*, ii. 12, n. 31; ii. 19, nn. 73-4. He succeeded to Naples on the death of its last duke, Sergius VII, in 1137.

<sup>7</sup> The rubricator of *N* wrote alongside this story: 'mirum ingenium astronomi Ricardi'; his identity, however, remains a matter for speculation.

<sup>8</sup> On the *ars notaria*, or *notoria*, see Thorndike, *History of Magic*, ii. 279-89; the art was ridiculed by Erasmus (*Colloquia*, ed. L.-E. Halkin, F. Bierlaire, R. Hoven (Amsterdam, 1972), pp. 647-9).

<sup>9</sup> For examples of Virgil's *artificia*, see *Otia*, iii. 10, 12, 13, 15, and 16.

tradition that a sheep unexpectedly appeared beside them and spoke to them, as a result of which they led it through the desert for a long time, calling it the sheep of Joseph. It is this sheep which is referred to in the words of the psalm:<sup>5</sup> 'You who lead Joseph like a sheep.'<sup>1</sup>

If indeed it is legitimate to compare the ingenious devices of our own age with such great miracles, here is a strange thing which happened in our times. In the time of the Sicilian king Roger,<sup>6</sup> a certain master<sup>7</sup> of English nationality came to the king, with the request that he should grant him something out of his royal munificence. The king, who was as noble in his character as in his birth, assuming that some material favour was being asked of him, replied: 'Ask what favour you will, and I shall grant it to you.' The petitioner was, in fact, a man of great learning: proficient and highly talented at the trivium and quadrivium, he had achieved much in medical studies, and was unrivalled in astronomy. He therefore told the king that he was not looking for temporal comforts, but rather for something which was accounted worthless among men, namely the bones of Virgil, wherever they could be found within the bounds of his kingdom. The king gave his consent and the master, armed with a royal warrant, came to Naples, where Virgil had put his genius to work on many projects. When he produced his warrant, the people did not hesitate to obey: since they did not know where his tomb was, they readily consented to something which they thought had to be counted as impossible.

At length the master, bringing his art to bear on the matter, found the bones inside a tomb in the middle of a certain mountain, on which not even the trace of an opening was distinguishable. The place was excavated and, after prolonged toil, the tomb was laid bare. Inside it the body of Virgil was found intact, with a book by his head in which the art of magic<sup>8</sup> was written down, along with other signs relating to his practice of that art. His dust and bones were gathered up, and the book was appropriated by the master. At this point, calling to mind the special affection which Virgil had had for their city, and fearing lest the whole city should suffer an enormous loss as a result of the removal of his bones, the people of Naples decided not to cooperate with the mandate they had received from the king, rather than, by obeying it, to provide an occasion for the destruction of such a great city. For they reflected that when Virgil prepared a tomb for himself in the secret depths of the mountain, it must have been his intention to guard against the chance that the removal of his bones might bring destruction upon the creations of his art.<sup>9</sup> Therefore the military



importarent interitum. Magister ergo militum cum turba ciuium ossa coniuncta copulat,<sup>r</sup> et in culleo reposita in castello maris<sup>10</sup> ad urbis<sup>s</sup> ipsius confinium deferunt,<sup>11</sup> ubi per medias crates ferreas intueri uolentibus ostenduntur.

Requisitus autem magister quid de ossibus facturus erat, respondit se per coniurationes effecturum quod ad eius interrogationem ossa omnem Virgilio artem ipsi panderent; quin immo satisfactum sibi proposuit si per quadraginta dies ei ossium copia daretur. Asportato ergo libro solo, magister abiit; et nos quedam ex ipso libro, per uenerabilem Iohannem Neapolitanum cardinalem,<sup>12</sup> tempore pape Alexandri, excerpta<sup>t</sup> uidimus, et probari<sup>u</sup> uerissima rerum experientia fecimus.<sup>13</sup>

### cxiii. De cherubim et figura eorum<sup>a</sup>

In Exhodo<sup>1</sup> legitur quod<sup>2</sup> ex utraque parte oraculi, scilicet in duobus angulis anterioribus,<sup>b</sup> positi sunt duo cherubim, aurei et productiles; non scilicet fusiles,<sup>3</sup> sed crebris tusionibus<sup>c</sup> malleorum producti sunt. Sunt autem, ut dicit Iosephus,<sup>4</sup> animalia uolatilia, habencia figuram

<sup>r</sup> copulat (corrected from copulant) *N*; copulant *ACβ* <sup>s</sup> ad urbis ad *N* <sup>t</sup> sic  
*C*; excerpta *NAβ* <sup>u</sup> et probari supplied by author *N*

<sup>a</sup> De . . . eorum] De duobus cherubin *CXQ* <sup>b</sup> anterioribus *om. N*  
<sup>c</sup> tusionibus *XQ*; tusionibus *Comestor*

<sup>10</sup> Not the Castell' a Mare (which was built by William I, after the time of this story), but the Castel dell' Uovo. A legend first recorded in the mid-thirteenth century in the *Image du Monde* relates that Virgil founded Naples on an egg, which was kept in the city; if the egg was moved, the city shook (see Spargo, *Virgil*, p. 87). In the *Cronica di Partenope* (c. 31), the egg is said to be kept in a *castello marino* which is called after it. In ancient Greece and Rome, and in Moslem countries, it was customary to place ostrich eggs in tombs, and it may be that the supposed presence of Virgil's bones in the castle led to the story of an egg talisman there (see Spargo, *Virgil*, pp. 95–9, 114).

<sup>11</sup> The subject is strictly speaking singular; *copulat* was corrected, in *N* only (probably by the author), from *copulant*, but *deferunt* escaped notice.

<sup>12</sup> John of Naples, cardinal priest of St Anastasia from 1158 to 1183, served as Pope Alexander III's envoy at the Sicilian court. See B. Zenker, *Die Mitglieder des Kardinalkollegiums von 1130 bis 1159* (Würzburg, 1964), pp. 73–7; F. Chalandon, *Histoire de la domination Normande en Italie et en Sicilie* (Paris, 1907), ii. 312, 314, 318, 354–5.

<sup>13</sup> Virgil's bones are also mentioned by the two authors who preceded Gervase in recording Virgilian legends: John of Salisbury (*Policraticus*, ii. 23) mocks a certain Ludovicus who spent years in Apulia seeking to acquire the bones to take back to France; and Conrad of Querfurt (*MGH SS* xxi. 194) says that they were kept in a castle surrounded by the sea, and that if they were exposed to the air, a storm immediately blew up. Gervase gives the fullest of the early accounts, and his version was subsequently

commander, with a crowd of citizens, assembled the bones and joined them together, and placing them in a bag, they deposited<sup>11</sup> them in a castle out at sea,<sup>10</sup> on the boundary of that city. They are exhibited there behind iron gratings, to anyone who wants to see them.

When the master was asked what he had been going to do with the bones, he replied that by means of spells he would have made the bones reveal the whole of Virgil's art to him when he questioned them; indeed he maintained that it would have sufficed for him if access to the bones had been granted to him for forty days. The master therefore went away, taking the book alone. We saw some excerpts from that very book, thanks to the venerable cardinal, John of Naples,<sup>12</sup> in the time of Pope Alexander, and we put them to the test by infallible experimental proof.<sup>13</sup>

### 113. The Cherubim and their Appearance

One reads in Exodus<sup>1</sup> that<sup>2</sup> at the two ends of the mercy seat, that is to say, at the two front corners, two cherubim were placed, made of beaten gold; in other words, they were not cast,<sup>3</sup> but were beaten into shape by repeated hammer-blows. Cherubim, according to Josephus,<sup>4</sup>

adopted by Neapolitan writers (see Comparetti, *Virgil*, p. 274; and for a summary of later stories featuring the bones, see Spargo, *Virgil*, pp. 103–5).

Virgil's ancient biographers asserted that he was buried at Naples (e.g. Servius, *In Vergilii carmina commentarii*, Harvard edition (1946), ii. 3; Suetonius, *Life of Virgil* (once attributed to Donatus), c. 36, in *Ancient Lives of Virgil*, ed. H. Nettleship (Oxford, 1879), p. 17), and this was from earliest times a source of pride for the city. In the years 1130–40, when Roger II was attempting to establish his control over the south of Italy, Naples appeared to be impregnable; K. L. Roth ('Über den Zauberer Virgilius', *Germania*, iv (1859), 257–98) surmises that this led Roger to suspect that Virgil's bones were serving to protect the city. The bones of Aristotle at Palermo, and of Jeremiah at Alexandria, were similarly believed to have protective powers (see Spargo, *Virgil*, pp. 109–11; Cary, *The Medieval Alexander*, p. 132). Roth suggests that Roger may have despatched someone to Naples to remove the bones, so giving rise to this story; at any rate, there may well be a connection between the city's reputation for impregnability and the legend of the bones.

The veneration of Virgil's remains as Gervase describes it is suggestive of the veneration of saints' relics; in other similar stories, however, the magical art is firmly attributed to the devil (cf. Liebrecht, pp. 160–1).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Exod. 25: 18.

<sup>2–2</sup> ex utraque . . . sede conspexisse figurata (p. 806)] Cf. Comestor, *Exod.*, c. 47 (*PL* cxviii. 1170). <sup>3</sup> As were the golden calf (Exod. 32: 4) and other idols (Exod. 34: 17).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* iii. 137. Moses' vision of the cherubim, mentioned by Josephus here, is not recorded in the Pentateuch or in any known rabbinical tradition; there may be a reminiscence of Ezekiel's vision, in which cherubim upheld the firmament supporting God's throne (Ezek. 10: 1).

que a nullo hominum<sup>d</sup> est conspecta. Hec dixit<sup>e</sup> Moyses se in Dei sede conspexisse figurata.<sup>2</sup>

cxiv. *De lapidibus rationalis*<sup>a</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tradunt Iudei in medio rationalis fuisse lapidem quadrum, magnitudine duorum digitorum, in quo secundum coloris mutationem perpendebant utrum Deum placatum haberent an offensum. Iosephus<sup>2</sup> dicit sardonice qui in dextro humero gerebatur, cum sacrificium Deo placebat, tanto splendore micare quod etiam procul positus radius eius apparebat. Egressuris uero ad prelium, si Deus esset cum eis, tantus fulgor in lapidibus rationalis<sup>b</sup> apparebat quod omni multitudini erat manifestum eorum auxilio Deum adesse. Et ob hoc<sup>3</sup> rationale iudicii dicunt nuncupatum.<sup>c1</sup>

cxv. *De facie Moysi cornuta*<sup>a1</sup>

Non sine admiracione est quod legitur <sup>2</sup>Moysen, descendentem de monte cum tabulis, apparuisse cum facie cornuta, et ipse ignorabat: id est, radii miri splendoris ferebantur de facie eius, qui reuerberabant oculos intuencium; quos radios 'gloriam uultus Moysi'<sup>3</sup> appellat Apostolus. Tradunt etiam Ebrei<sup>b</sup> quod tercio Moyses ascenderit<sup>c</sup> in montem<sup>d</sup> ad Dominum, et quod cum eo fuerit<sup>e</sup> quadraginta diebus et quadraginta noctibus ieiunans; cumque rediret, cum certitudine uenie,<sup>f</sup> erat nona<sup>g</sup> septimi mensis, et in crastino afflixerunt animas suas ieiunio,<sup>4</sup> in cuius uenie memoriam dictus est decimus<sup>h</sup> dies illius

<sup>a</sup> homine *QI*      <sup>e</sup> dixit supplied by author (correcting dicit) *N*; dicit *CI*

<sup>a</sup> De . . . rationalis] De lapide rationali (rationalis *Q*) et (eius add. *X*) uirtute *CXQ*  
<sup>b</sup> rationalis supplied by author *N*      <sup>c</sup> numcucupatum *N*

<sup>a</sup> cornuta *AI*, supplied by author *N*; om. *CXQ*      <sup>b</sup> Ebrei supplied by author *N*  
<sup>c</sup> ascendit *Comestor*      <sup>d</sup> in montem supplied by author *N*      <sup>e</sup> fuit *XQ* and *Comestor*  
<sup>f</sup> uenie supplied by author *N*      <sup>g</sup> nona *Nβ*; nona dies *C* and *Comestor*      <sup>h</sup> dictus est decimus] dicta est decima *Comestor*

<sup>1-1</sup> Tradunt . . . iudicii dicunt nuncupatum] Cf. *Comestor, Exod.*, c. 64 (*PL* cxcviii. 1185); *Exod.* 28: 15-30, 39: 8-21. Gervase has extracted this passage, on the miraculous qualities of the breastplate, from a lengthy commentary on the vestments of the high priest. The breastplate was made of gold, violet, purple, and scarlet thread woven into linen, which was folded double into a square; in it were set twelve precious stones, each engraved with the name of one of the twelve tribes. A pouch was attached to it which contained the oracle of the Urim and Thummim.

are living creatures with wings, whose appearance has been seen by no mortal. It was representations of these that Moses said he had seen on God's throne.<sup>2</sup>

114. *The Stones of the Breastplate*

<sup>1</sup>The Jews say that in the middle of the breastplate there was a square stone, two inches across, and they could tell by the changing colour of this stone whether they had pleased or offended God. Josephus<sup>2</sup> says that the sardonyx which was worn on the right shoulder used to shine with such dazzling brightness when a sacrifice was pleasing to God that its radiance was visible even to people a long way away. And when they were about to go into battle, if God was with them, such a bright glow appeared in the stones of the breastplate that it was clear to the whole multitude that God was with them to help them. And they say that this<sup>3</sup> is why it was called the breastplate of judgment.<sup>1</sup>

115. *The Horned<sup>1</sup> Face of Moses*

It is not without wonderment that one reads that <sup>2</sup>when Moses came down from the mountain with the tables, he appeared with a horned face, though he was unaware of it himself: that is, rays of wondrous splendour shone out from his face, which dazzled the eyes of beholders; the Apostle calls these rays 'the glory of the countenance of Moses'.<sup>3</sup> The Hebrews also record that Moses went up into the mountain to the Lord a third time, and that he was with him for forty days and forty nights fasting; when he returned, with the assurance of forgiveness, it was the ninth day of the seventh month, and on the next day they afflicted their souls with fasting.<sup>4</sup> In memory of this forgiveness, the tenth day of that month is called the day of

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* . iii. 215-17.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. because it made known the mind of God in their regard.

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew and the LXX say that Moses' face shone: the Latin *cornuta* is a mistranslation, responsible for the depiction of Moses with horns in medieval and renaissance art.

<sup>2-2</sup> Moysen . . . Helyam, et Christum (p. 808)] Cf. *Comestor, Exod.*, c. 77 (*PL* cxcviii. 1192-3); *Exod.* 34: 29, 30, 35.

<sup>3</sup> <sup>2</sup> Cor. 3: 7.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Lev.* 16: 29-31.

mensis dies propiciacionis. Quod si uerum est, potest esse quod ob hoc tres sunt in ecclesia<sup>i</sup> penitentibus constitute quadragesime, uel, ut alii tradunt, propter<sup>j</sup> tres ieiunantes:<sup>5</sup> Moysem, Helyam, et<sup>k</sup> Christum.<sup>2</sup>

cxvi. *De serpentibus ignitis<sup>a</sup> et urentibus<sup>b</sup>*

In libro Numerorum<sup>1</sup> legitur quod, dum populus Israel circuiret montes Hor, qui iunguntur Arabie<sup>2</sup> (preteriens Archim, metropolim Arabum, que nunc Petra dicitur),<sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup>propter murmuracionem Israelis immisit Dominus in eos serpentes ignitos, hoc est minimos et ueloces ad modum scintillarum, uel ut alii tradunt, quia tactos ueneno inflamabant usque ad tumorem et ruborem igneum. Sed ab hoc ueneno serpentum liberati sunt ex erectione serpentis enei, quem postea celebriter obseruatum contriuit in puluerem Ezechias,<sup>4</sup> rex Iuda.<sup>3</sup> In Deuteronomio<sup>5</sup> uero legitur quod inter beneficia que repetiit Dominus Israeli murmuranti,<sup>c</sup> memorauit<sup>6</sup> quod euaserant serpentes flatu urentes circumstantia. Qui *dipsades* dicuntur, latine uero situle, quia perimunt hominem siti;<sup>7</sup> adeo parue quod si conculcantur uix uidentur. Harum uenenum ante extinguit quam sentiat, nec tristiciam sentit moriturus.<sup>8</sup> Dicitur autem situla per contrarium: uas enim quod situla dicitur sitim aufert,<sup>9</sup> hec affert; sic faretra, quia infert mortem, et feretrum,<sup>10</sup> quia fert uel aufert mortuum.<sup>6</sup>

Sane in Tuscia est insula ad dominacionem spectans comitis Eldebrandini,<sup>d</sup> <sup>11</sup> in qua sunt uermes alati ad formam serpentum, qui statim ut uolant subiecta sibi corpora hominum in tantum<sup>e</sup>

<sup>i</sup> sunt in ecclesia] in ecclesia sint ACβ      <sup>j</sup> propter supplied by author N      <sup>k</sup> et supplied by author N

<sup>a</sup> ignitis supplied by author N      <sup>b</sup> urentibus] sticulis C, situlis XQ  
<sup>c</sup> murmuranti supplied by author N      <sup>d</sup> Edelbrandini (altered by author from Elebrandini) N      <sup>e</sup> in tantum] statim N

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Exod. 34: 28; 3 Kgs (1 Kgs) 19: 8; Matt. 4: 2; Luke 4: 2.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Num. 21: 4–9.

<sup>2–2</sup> Cf. Comestor, *Num.*, c. 25 (PL cxcviii. 1233). Petra, a city near Mount Hor, was once the capital of Edom. Under the Romans it was the centre of the province of Arabia Petraea, and by the fourth century it had a bishopric, becoming the metropolis of Palestina Tertia. In Hebrew it was normally called Sela ('rock'), but Josephus (*Ant.* iv. 83) says that its ancient name was Arke: this is possibly a corruption of Rekam, which seems to have been its name in Syria.

<sup>3–3</sup> propter . . . Ezechias, rex Iuda] Cf. Comestor, *Num.*, c. 28 (PL cxcviii. 1234).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 4 Kgs. (2 Kgs.) 18: 4.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Deut. 8: 15.

propitiation. If this is true, it is possible that it is on this account that three forty-day fasts have been instituted in the Church for penitents; or it may be, as others say, on account of the three people who fasted:<sup>5</sup> Moses, Elijah, and Christ.<sup>2</sup>

116. *The Burning Fiery Serpents*

In the book of Numbers<sup>1</sup> one reads that, while the people of Israel were going round the mountains of Hor, which adjoin Arabia<sup>2</sup> (bypassing Archim, the chief city of the Arabians, which is now called Petra),<sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup>on account of the murmuring of the Israelites the Lord sent fiery serpents among them. They were said to be fiery because they were as tiny and darting as sparks, or as others say, because they made those who were infected with their poison smart, producing a fiery red swelling. But the Israelites were freed from this poison of the serpents by the erection of the brazen serpent, which Hezekiah,<sup>4</sup> king of Judah, later ground into dust because it was being venerated as an object of worship.<sup>3</sup> One reads in Deuteronomy<sup>5</sup> that among the favours of which the Lord reminded the murmuring Israelites, he recalled<sup>6</sup> that they had escaped the serpents which were burning everything around them with their breath. They are called *δυσάδες* (thirsty), or in Latin *situlae* (buckets), because they kill a person by thirst (*sitis*).<sup>7</sup> They are so small that if they are trodden underfoot they are hardly noticed. Their poison kills before it is felt, and the one about to die feels no distress.<sup>8</sup> The name *situla* arises from an association of opposites: for the container which is called a *situla* takes away thirst,<sup>9</sup> while this creature brings it on; even so a *pharetra* (quiver) is so-called because it brings on (*infert*) death, and a *feretrum* (bier)<sup>10</sup> because it bears (*fert*) or takes away (*aufert*) a dead person.<sup>6</sup>

There is an island in Tuscany pertaining to the domain of Count Ildebrandino,<sup>11</sup> in which there are winged snakes which look like dragons. As soon as they take to the air, they infect the bodies of people beneath them so severely that they strike them down with

<sup>6–6</sup> quod . . . uel aufert mortuum] Cf. Comestor, *Deut.*, c. 4 (PL cxcviii. 1250).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Isidore, *Etym.* xii. 4. 13.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Isidore, *Etym.* xii. 4. 32.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Isidore, *Etym.* xx. 6. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Isidore, *Etym.* xviii. 9. 1.

<sup>11</sup> i.e. the island of Capraja, belonging to the Aldobrandeschi, the most powerful feudal lords of Tuscany; Ildebrandino VIII (d. 1208–12) was among the supporters of Otto IV.

inficiunt quod ipsis dissinteriam incutiunt, et demum, superueniente sompno, fluxus importunus<sup>f</sup> curatur. Sed et in Siria sunt uermes qui sua punctura tumorem uentositatis infligunt.

cxvii. *De agro Ebron et crucis parte*<sup>a</sup>

In Siria inferiore, ciuitate Ebron, terra scilicet Damascena, est ager cuius gleba rubea est,<sup>1</sup> que ab incolis ostenditur et<sup>b</sup> effossa comeditur, ac per Egyptum uenalis portatur, pro specie carissima comendata. Hic ager, | in quantum late et profunde effossus fuerit, in tantum Dei<sup>f. 84<sup>v</sup></sup> dispositione, anno finito, reddita gleba gratus inuenitur.<sup>2</sup>

Cui simile dicunt esse quod quedam pars crucis dominice est apud \* \* \*,<sup>c3</sup> cuius frustula annuatim decoriantur, nutuque diuino ad caput anni lesura reintegratur.

cxviii. *De mari Pamfilico*<sup>a</sup>

Non est mirandum<sup>b</sup> aut incredibile quod in transitu filiorum Israel mare se diuiserit et hinc inde murum fecerit,<sup>1</sup> cum Iosephus dicat, Alexandro Darium prosequente,<sup>c</sup> mare Pamfilicum exercitui fuisse diuisum Domino uolente, qui per eum regnum Persarum delere uolebat.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>f</sup> importunius N

<sup>a</sup> De . . . parte] De gleba effossa et renascente CXQ <sup>b</sup> et supplied by author (correcting ac) N <sup>c</sup> Space left after apud NCβ

<sup>a</sup> De . . . Pamfilico] written in margin by scribe, marked R(ubrica) by author N; De diuisione maris Panfilici CXQ <sup>b</sup> mrandum N <sup>c</sup> persequente ACβ; insequenti Comestor

<sup>1</sup> It was from the soil of this field that God formed Adam; Adam and Eve returned there when they were expelled from paradise, and it was there that Cain killed Abel, and Adam was buried (cf. *Otia*, i. 8, n. 5; i. 16, n. 4; i. 19, n. 7; ii. 4, n. 37).

<sup>2</sup> The red earth of the field of Damascus was well known to travellers in the east. Gervase's source here is probably Fretellus, *Liber locorum sanctorum terrae Jerusalem*, PL clv. 1039-40 (= ed. Boeren, c. 8, p. 9); see Appendix ii. 2, n. 1. Guides to the holy places proliferated in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and this is one of a number of passages which were reproduced time and again, practically word for word; cf. e.g. John of Würzburg, *Descriptio terrae sanctae* (PL clv. 1067); Theoderic, *Libellus de locis sanctis*, c. 34

diarrhoea, and the distressing flux is only cured when sleep overtakes them. Further, in Syria there are snakes which make people swell up with flatulence by their bite.

117. *The Field of Hebron and a Piece of the Cross*

In Lower Syria, in the city of Hebron, in the territory, that is to say, of Damascus, there is a field which has red soil.<sup>1</sup> This soil is pointed out by the local people. It is dug up and eaten, and is taken to be sold in Egypt, where it fetches as high a price as the most costly spices. However widely and deeply this field has been dug up, when the year comes to an end it is found to be rejoicing in the restoration, by God's disposition, of the same amount of soil.<sup>2</sup>

They say that there is another phenomenon resembling this one: there is a piece of the Lord's Cross at \* \* \*,<sup>3</sup> bits of which are chipped off in the course of each year, but by divine will the damage is repaired at the end of the year.

118. *The Sea of Pamphylia*

It is not surprising or unbelievable that for the passing of the children of Israel the sea parted and formed a wall on either side;<sup>1</sup> for Josephus says that when Alexander was pursuing Darius, the Sea of Pamphylia parted for his army by the will of the Lord, who wished to destroy the kingdom of the Persians through him.<sup>1</sup>

(ed. M. L. and W. Bulst, p. 39). Fretellus himself seems to have derived the bulk of his description from an earlier model: see P. C. Boeren, *Rorgo Fretellus de Nazareth et sa description de la Terre Sainte: Histoire et édition du texte* (Amsterdam, 1980). The substance was not in fact earth, but a red powder consisting of the glandular hairs from the fruit-capsules of a tree (see *OED*, s.v. kamala).

<sup>3</sup> According to Annie Duchesne (*Livre*, p. 171, n. 337) this place is named as 'Saint-Jean d'Acre' in MS R (Cambridge, St John's College 219); however, when this MS was examined, the sentence appeared to have been omitted.

<sup>1-1</sup> Cf. Comestor, *Exod.*, c. 31 (PL cxcviii. 1158); Josephus, *Ant.* ii. 348. The incident involving the Sea of Pamphylia is narrated by a number of ancient authors, including Strabo (*Geographica*, xiv. 3. 9), Arrian (*Anabasis*, i. 26), and Appian (*Bella civilia*, ii. 21).

cxix. *De tumulo Moysi et sancte Katerine*<sup>a</sup>

In Arabia est mons Abarim, in quo Dominus sepeliuit Moysen, eius tumulo nusquam<sup>b</sup> apparente.<sup>1</sup> Sic alias in monte Synai ab angelis<sup>c</sup> collocatum sancte Katerine<sup>d</sup> uirginis et martyris corpus legimus.<sup>2</sup> Et corpus discipuli quem diligebat Iesus<sup>3</sup> in manna scaturiens permutatur.<sup>4</sup>

cxx. *De hominibus qui fiunt lupi*<sup>a</sup>

Sepe apud doctos questio mouetur si Nabugodonosor per iniunctum tempus penitentie in bouem uerum sit diuina uirtute mutatus,<sup>1</sup> cum facilius sit creaturam transmutando formare quam de nichilo creare. Scribunt plerique<sup>b</sup> ipsum uitam bestialem in conuictu bouis comedentis fenum sumpsisse, non naturam.

Vnum scio apud nostrates cotidianum esse, quod sic fatis hominum currentibus, quidam per lunationes mutantur in lupos.<sup>2</sup> Scimus enim in Aluernia, episcopatu<sup>c</sup> Claramoncensi,<sup>d</sup> Poncium de Capitolio,<sup>3</sup> nobilem uirum,<sup>e</sup> pridem exhereditasse<sup>f</sup> Reimbaldum<sup>g</sup> de Puicto,

<sup>a</sup> et sancte Katerine om. CXQ <sup>b</sup> numquam ACXQ <sup>c</sup> in . . . angelis] ab angelis in monte Synai N <sup>d</sup> Katherine supplied by author N

<sup>a</sup> De . . . lupi] De gerulis et eorum lunationibus CXQ <sup>b</sup> plerique supplied by author N <sup>c</sup> episcopatu supplied by author N <sup>d</sup> Claremocensi N <sup>e</sup> uirum supplied by author N <sup>f</sup> exheredasse ACβ <sup>g</sup> sic X; pridem . . . Remulbaldum] supplied by author N

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Fretellus, *PL* clv. 1041 (= ed. Boeren, p. 56); John of Würzburg, *Descriptio terrae sanctae* (*PL* clv. 1068); Theoderic, *Libellus de locis sanctis*, c. 31 (ed. M. L. and W. Bulst, p. 37); Deut. 32: 49, 34: 5–6.

<sup>2</sup> On the burial of St Catherine, see *Otia*, iii. 33, n. 4. <sup>3</sup> Cf. John 13: 23, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Manna was the term used for the fragrant liquid or dust which some saints' bodies were said to produce; for a bibliography with special reference to St John, see Du Cange, s.v. *manna*. The Eastern church celebrated the manna of St John on 8 May (see N. Nilles, *Kalendarium manuale utriusque ecclesiae orientalis et occidentalis* (Innsbruck, 1896–7), i. 154–5). The eastern cult was sometimes incorporated in western martyrologies, generally under the main feast of St John on 27 December. It is possible that a martyrology was the immediate source of all three items in this chapter.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dan. 4: 32–3. Medieval exegesis was undecided as to whether Nebuchadnezzar actually changed into an ox or not: for a bibliography, see M. Summers, *The Werewolf* (London, 1933), p. 129, n. 90; see also P. Doob, *Nebuchadnezzar's Children* (New Haven, 1974), pp. 55–94 and *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> For the large bibliography on werewolves, see Kittredge, *Witchcraft*, pp. 492–4, nn. 5–7; *MI* D113. 1. 1. For a modern orientation see Charlotte F. Otten, *A Lycanthropy Reader: Werewolves in Western Culture* (Syracuse, NY, 1986), with bibliography on

119. *The Tombs of Moses and St Catherine*

In Arabia is Mount Abarim, on which the Lord buried Moses, although his tomb is nowhere visible.<sup>1</sup> Similarly we read that on another occasion the body of St Catherine, virgin and martyr, was laid to rest by angels on Mount Sinai.<sup>2</sup> And the body of the disciple whom Jesus loved<sup>3</sup> is transformed into a source of manna.<sup>4</sup>

120. *Human Beings who Turn into Wolves*

The question is often raised among the learned as to whether Nebuchadnezzar was really changed into an ox by divine power for the period of penitence imposed on him:<sup>1</sup> for it is surely easier to make a creature by transformation than to create one out of nothing. Many writers think that he adopted the lifestyle of a beast, feeding like an ox that eats hay, but without adopting its nature.

One thing I know to be of daily occurrence among the people of our country: the course of human destiny is such that certain men change into wolves according to the cycles of the moon.<sup>2</sup> We know, for instance, that in the Auvergne, in the diocese of Clermont, some time ago a noble gentleman, Pons de Chapeuil,<sup>3</sup> disinherited Raimbaud de Pouget, a dashing knight, well-trained in arms. This

pp. 321–4. An older study is M. Summers, *The Werewolf* (London, 1933). See also R. Eisler, *Man into Wolf* (London, 1951); M. Cheilik, 'The Werewolf', in *Mythical and Fabulous Creatures: A Source Book and Research Guide*, ed. M. South (New York, 1987), pp. 265–89. On the two stories that follow, see L. Harf-Lancner, 'La Métamorphose illusoire: des théories chrétiennes de la métamorphose aux images médiévales du loup-garou', *Annales Économies Sociétés Civilisations*, xl (1985), 208–26, esp. 217–18; F. Dubost, *Aspects fantastiques de la littérature narrative médiévale (XII<sup>e</sup>–XIII<sup>e</sup> siècles): L'Autre, l'Ailleurs, l'Autrefois* (Paris, 1991), pp. 547–50. Augustine mentions reputed transformations of men into wolves (*Civ.* xviii. 17, *CSEL* xl (2). 289 = *PL* xli. 573). The canon *Episcopi* and the *Corrector* both condemn the belief that anyone but God can effect such transformations (Hansen, *Quellen*, pp. 39–41; cf. *Otia*, iii. 86, n. 8; iii. 93, n. 6). But the superstition flourished; in *Otia*, i. 15 (at n. 8), Gervase asserts that werewolves existed in England as well as France, and they were also known in Ireland: see Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hibernica*, ii. 19, and *Expugnatio Hibernica*, ii. 23; cf. Liebrecht, pp. 161–3. On their role in later literature, see K. F. Smith, 'An historical study of the Werwolf in literature', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, ix (1894), 1–42; C. Dunn, *The Foundling and the Werwolf* (Toronto, 1960).

<sup>3</sup> Pons de Chapeuil or de Capdueil played an important role in the wars which ravaged the Auvergne from 1198 to 1213. Afterwards he lived in Provence, distinguishing himself as a troubadour, until he left for the Holy Land in 1227, where he died (Duchesne, *Livre*, p. 172, n. 343).

militem strenuissimum et in armis exercitatum.<sup>h</sup> Hic uagus factus et profugus super terram,<sup>i4</sup> dum solus more ferino deuia lustraret et saltus, una nocte, nimio timore turbatus, cum mentis alienacione in lupum uersus,<sup>j</sup> tantam patrie cladem intulit quod multorum colonorum mansiones coegit esse desertas. Infantes in forma lupina deuorabat, sed et grandeuos ferinis morsibus lacerabat. Tandem a quodam fabro lignario grauiter atemptatus, ictu securis alterum pedem perdidit; sicque specie resumpta hominem induit, nunc in propatulo confessus sibi placitam pedis iacturam, eo quod illo amputato miseriam illam et maliciam cum dampnatione perdidit. Asserunt enim qui talia dixerunt michi<sup>k</sup> membrorum truncacione ab huiusmodi infortunio homines tales liberari.<sup>5</sup>

Sed et apud castrum Luch, in confinio Viuariensis episcopatus et Mymdensis, est accola Calcefaria numcupatus qui consimilis fati per mutaciones neomenie sorte fatigatur, asserens se, cum tempus aduenerit, uestes suas relictis omnibus sociis sub dumo uel rupe secreta seponere,<sup>6</sup> et cum in harena se diu nudus uolutauerit, lupi formam et ingluuiem induit, ore patulo et apertis rictibus in predam inhiat, asserens lupos<sup>17</sup> idcirco<sup>m</sup> aperto ore currere, quia os cum magno labore pedumque adiutorio aperit, quod<sup>n</sup> aperire nequit cum a persecutoribus<sup>o</sup> preuenitur. Tunc ergo a captura frustratur<sup>p</sup> et facile capitur.

cxxi. *De Chimera et decem Sibillis*

<sup>1</sup>Chimeram belluam esse tradunt, ore leonem, postremo drachonem, medio capellam, capite uomentem ignem; quam Bellerofons dicitur peremisse. Et hec quidam<sup>a</sup> poetica figmenta esse<sup>b</sup> asserentes,

<sup>h</sup> excitatum XQ      <sup>i</sup> super terram supplied by author N      <sup>j</sup> R. Supra decisione prima de oculis apertis post peccatum written in margin by author N      <sup>k</sup> michi CQ; in usum N (in supplied by author correcting non), AI; michi usum X      <sup>l</sup> lupum CI  
<sup>m</sup> icirco N      <sup>n</sup> quia CXQ      <sup>o</sup> ab insecutoribus ACβ      <sup>p</sup> Tunc . . . frustratur] om. CXQ

<sup>a</sup> quidem AXI      <sup>b</sup> esse supplied by author N

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Gen. 4: 12. Summers (op. cit., p. 186) points to a long-standing connection between the wolf and outlawry.

<sup>5</sup> On the resumption of human form on the loss of a limb, see W. Hertz, *Der Werwolf* (Stuttgart, 1862), pp. 69 and 78–83; cf. *Otia*, iii. 93, n. 6. For a consideration of the significance of this, see C. Ginzburg, *Storia notturna: Una decifrazione del Sabba* (Turin, 1989), p. 229 (transl. R. Rosenthal, *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath* (London, 1990), p. 247).

man became a vagabond and a fugitive upon the earth.<sup>4</sup> One night when he was wandering alone like a wild beast through unfrequented woodlands, deranged by extreme fear, he lost his reason and turned into a wolf. He then wreaked such great havoc upon his country that he drove many of the inhabitants to abandon their homes. While in wolf's form he devoured the young, and even mangled the old with savage bites. In the end he was boldly attacked by a certain woodcutter, and lost one paw by the blow of an axe; this enabled him to resume his former appearance, and he put on human form again. Thereupon he confessed in public that he welcomed the loss of his foot, because when it was cut off he was freed from that wretched, wicked condition which would have brought his damnation. For those who have spoken to me of such things assert that such people are delivered from this kind of misfortune by having limbs cut off.<sup>5</sup>

In the town of Luc as well, on the boundary of the dioceses of Viviers and Mende, there is a citizen called Chaucevaire who is tormented by having to suffer the same fate, whenever there is a new moon. He says that when the time has come he parts company from all his friends, lays his clothes under a bush or a secluded rock,<sup>6</sup> and then rolls naked in the sand for a long time until he takes on the shape and voracity of a wolf, gaping for prey with wide-open mouth and yawning jaws. He asserts that the reason why a wolf<sup>7</sup> runs with its mouth open is that it can only unlock its jaw with a great effort and with the help of its paws, and it is unable to do so when it is overtaken by hunters. It is then therefore rendered unable to catch anything and is easily caught itself.

121. *The Chimera and the Ten Sibyls*

<sup>1</sup>According to legend the Chimera was a monster made up of a lion in front, a dragon behind, and a goat in the middle, which belched fire from its head; Bellerophon is said to have killed it. But some people maintain that these things are poetic fictions, and explain that in its

<sup>6</sup> This was standard practice: if the clothes were removed, the werewolf was condemned to remain in wolf-shape (see e.g. Marie de France's *Lai de Bisclavret*).

<sup>7</sup> The singular *lupum*, found (probably due to scribal corrections) in C and I, would be preferable here, in view of the singular verbs that follow.

<sup>1-1</sup> Chimeram . . . fingitur Chimeram occidisse (p. 816)] Cf. Isidore, *Etym.* xi. 3. 36; Servius, *Commentarii*, v. 118, vi. 288. The phrase 'quam Bellerofons dicitur peremisse' is an addition by Gervase.

exponunt ad litteram Chimeram esse montem Cilicie, qui locis quibusdam leones nutrit<sup>2</sup> et capreas, quibusdam ardebat,<sup>c</sup> quibusdam plenus erat serpentibus. Hunc Bellerofons habitabilem fecit, unde fingitur Chimeram occidisse.<sup>1</sup> Legitur autem Sibilla que in Italia uaticinata est Chimera<sup>3</sup> dicta propter sua uaticinia, que mutabilitate sua uarias profecie producebat figuras.

<sup>4</sup>Erant enim decem Sibille, dicte sic a *syos*, quod Eolico sermone sonat 'deus', et *belos*,<sup>d</sup> quod est 'mens'. Inde Sibilla quasi Dei mens uel diuina mens. Sicut ergo prophete uates, ita femine Sibille appellabantur. Prima erat Persica; secunda Libissa; tercia Delfica, in templo Delfi<sup>e</sup> genita, que Troiana bella uaticinata est; quarta Chimera<sup>f</sup> in Ytalia; quinta Eritrea nomine Griffilla,<sup>g</sup> orta in Babilone, que Grecis Ylion pententibus uaticinata est perituram Troiam et Homerum mendacia scripturum; sexta Samia, que Seminace<sup>h</sup> dicta est; septima Cumana nomine Amalthea, que et Cymeia; octaua Ellespontis,<sup>i</sup> in agro Troiano nata, que scribitur tempore Cyri et Solonis<sup>j</sup> fuisse;<sup>k</sup> nona Frigia, que uaticinata est Ancire;<sup>l</sup> | decima et ultima Tyburtina, nomine Albunea.<sup>m</sup>

Porro omnes hee de Christo manifestissime<sup>n</sup> scripserunt.<sup>o</sup> Celebrior autem inter omnes Eritrea,<sup>4</sup> <sup>5</sup>que uaticinata legitur tempore quo Roma condita fuit; quo tempore regnauit Achaz,<sup>p</sup> uel ut alii dicunt Ezechias,<sup>5</sup> ut supra, *De ducibus Israel et regibus Lacii*,<sup>6</sup> lacius diximus. <sup>7</sup>Huic<sup>q</sup> ascribit uir clarissimus Flaccianus in quodam Greco codice illud celebre uaticinium, *Iudicii Signum*.<sup>r</sup> Tradunt alii hec dixisse Cymeam inter multa alia que contra falsos deos scripsit.<sup>7</sup> *Hystoria*

<sup>c</sup> ardebat NC; alebat A; om. β (space left in Q) <sup>d</sup> belon ACXQ, belen I and MSS of Isidore <sup>e</sup> Delfi NXI, Delphi ACQ; Delphii Apollinis Isidore <sup>f</sup> Cimmerica Isidore <sup>g</sup> Griffilla supplied by author N; Crifilla AXQ, Trifila C; Erifila I; Herophila Isidore <sup>h</sup> Semonoe I, Pemonoe Isidore <sup>i</sup> Helespontia I, Hellespontia Isidore <sup>j</sup> Solonis Isidore; Salonis (correcting Salomonis) N, CQI; Salomonis A <sup>k</sup> fuisse supplied by author N <sup>l</sup> Ancire supplied by author N; nomen est Cuniatis written by author in margin N <sup>m</sup> Albulnea N <sup>n</sup> manifeste CXQ <sup>o</sup> scripserunt supplied by author N <sup>p</sup> Akaz N <sup>q</sup> hinc N <sup>r</sup> Signum supplied by author N

<sup>2</sup> One would expect *nutriebat*. In place of the relative clause here, Isidore has: 'quibusdam locis leones et capreas nutrientem, quibusdam ardentem, quibusdam plenum serpentibus.'

<sup>3</sup> Varro, Lactantius, and Isidore name this Sibyl Cimmerica (see n. 4).

<sup>4-5</sup> Erant . . . inter omnes Eritrea] Abbreviated and adapted from Isidore, *Etym.* viii. 8. The list of Sibyls derives ultimately from Varro (*Antiquitates rerum diuinarum*, ed. B. Cardauns (Wiesbaden, 1976), i. 42, frag. 56a); it was also drawn on by Lactantius (*Divinae institutiones*, i. 6. 7-12, *CSEL* xix. 20-3), Augustine (*Civ.* xviii. 23, *CSEL* xl (2). 297-300 = *PL* xli. 579-81), and others.

literal meaning Chimera is the name of a mountain of Cilicia, which supported<sup>2</sup> lions and goats in some parts, blazed with fire in others, and in others was full of snakes. Bellerophon made this mountain habitable, whence he is represented as having killed the Chimera.<sup>1</sup> One reads elsewhere that the Sibyl who prophesied in Italy was called Chimera<sup>3</sup> because of the nature of her oracles: she produced different kinds of prophecy, in accordance with her own changeableness.

<sup>4</sup>There were in fact ten Sibyls, so-called from *σιός*, which means 'god' in the Aeolian dialect, and *βουλή*, which means 'mind'. And so a Sibyl is, as it were, the mind of God, or the divine mind. Just as male prophets, then, were called *uates* or soothsayers, so female prophets were called Sibyls. The first Sibyl lived in Persia; the second in Libya; the third at Delphi, where she was born in the temple: this one prophesied the Trojan Wars; the fourth was Chimera in Italy; the fifth was the Erythraean Sibyl, called Herophila: she was born in Babylon, and prophesied to the Greeks, when they were on their way to Ilium, that Troy would fall and Homer would write lies; the sixth was the Samian Sibyl, who was called Pemonoe; the seventh was the Cumaean Sibyl, called Amalthea, or Cumaea; the eighth was the Sibyl of the Hellespont, who was born on the Trojan plain, and who is reported to have lived in the time of Cyrus and Solon; the ninth was the Phrygian, who prophesied at Ancyra; the tenth and last was the Tiburtine Sibyl, whose name was Albunea.

Now all of these Sibyls wrote quite explicitly about Christ. The most famous of them all was the Erythraean,<sup>4</sup> <sup>5</sup>who prophesied, one reads, at the time when Rome was founded, during the reign of Ahaz or, as others say, of Hezekiah;<sup>5</sup> we have spoken of this more fully above, in *The Leaders of Israel and the Kings of Latium*.<sup>6</sup> <sup>7</sup>The eminent Flaccianus ascribes to this Sibyl that famous oracle, *The Sign of Judgment*, found in a certain Greek book. Others say that the Cumaean Sibyl pronounced this oracle, among many others which she wrote against false gods.<sup>7</sup> The *History of the Romans* ascribed it to

<sup>5-5</sup> Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xviii. 22-3 (*CSEL* xl (2). 296-7 = *PL* xli. 578-9).

<sup>6</sup> *Otia*, ii. 14 ends with the founding of Rome, but the passage Gervase has in mind here would seem to be ii. 15 at nn. 30-2.

<sup>7-7</sup> Huic . . . falsos deos scripsit] Cf. Augustine, *Civ.* xviii. 23 (*CSEL* xl (2). 297-300 = *PL* xli. 579-81). In this chapter Augustine gives an account of a conversation he had had with Flaccianus, a former proconsul. Flaccianus showed him the prophecy which was known as the *Iudicii Signum* after its opening words in Latin. A Latin translation is quoted in full by Augustine; the Greek text may be found in *Sibyllinische Weissagungen*, ed. A. Kurfess (Munich, 1951), pp. 170-2.



*Romanorum*<sup>s</sup> hec Sibille<sup>t</sup> Tyburtine ascripsit, ut supra,<sup>u</sup> titulo *De Romano imperio*,<sup>8</sup> memorauimus. <sup>9</sup>Lactentius<sup>v</sup> quoque interserit apertissima de Christo uaticinia Sibille, quamuis cui<sup>w</sup> Sibille ascribantur non exprimat. Sed hoc certissimum est, quod in uerbis illis apertissime series passionis, de<sup>x</sup> felle et aceto, de cruce et colaphis, de obscuracione solis per tres horas, de morte et resurrectione continetur.<sup>9</sup>

cxxii. *De montibus quorum nix ad clamorem aggerata descendit et plurimos corrui<sup>a</sup>*

Est in regno Arelatensi et prouincia Ebredunensi locus quo per Alpium summa cacumina, facili cursu in estate et breui, sed plurimum periculoso transitu, descenditur in Ytaliam. Nomen uallis de Lentuscla<sup>b</sup> incole indiderunt. In cuius apice, si quis tussierit uel<sup>c</sup> clamauerit, statim ex altis rupibus nix coagulata descendit, et exaggerationem<sup>d</sup> ad se trahens, infinito cumulo transeuntes obruit et ad infinitam abissum deiectos prosternit.

cxxiii. *De auibus que ex arboribus gignuntur<sup>a</sup>*

Cum secundum insitam prime creationis naturam ex primis generantibus animalia prodeant per<sup>b</sup> generationem et corruptionem, nouum et inauditum est apud omnes pereque nationes quod in quadam maioris Britannie parte cotidianum est. Ecce enim, in archiepiscopatu Cantuariensi, comitatu Cancio, ad confinium abbacie de Faueresham,<sup>1</sup> in littore maris arbuscule nascuntur ad quantitatem salicum. Ex istis nodi pullulant, uelud future germinacionis

<sup>s</sup> Romana CXQ      <sup>t</sup> Sibille om. CXQ      <sup>u</sup> supra supplied by author N  
<sup>v</sup> sic MSS for Lactantius      <sup>w</sup> cui supplied by author N      <sup>x</sup> de] et supplied by author N

<sup>a</sup> De . . . corrui] supplied by author N; De ualle de Lentuscla CXQ; De niibus obruentibus transeuntes I; om. A      <sup>b</sup> Lentuscula N      <sup>c</sup> uel] aut ACβ  
<sup>d</sup> exaggerationem Q, ad exaggerationem X, ex aggregatione ACI

<sup>a</sup> De . . . gignuntur] supplied by author N; De auibus que nascuntur ex arboribus CXQ; De auibus nascentibus ex arboribus I; om. A      <sup>b</sup> per supplied by author N

<sup>8</sup> See *Otia*, ii. 16, at n. 5. The work referred to here as the *Historia Romanorum* is the *Mirabilia urbis Romae*.

the Tiburtine Sibyl, as we have recorded above, in the chapter *The Roman Empire*.<sup>8</sup> <sup>9</sup>Lactantius also inserts in his work some very explicit prophecies concerning Christ pronounced by a Sibyl, though he does not specify to which Sibyl they are to be attributed. But what is utterly certain is that in those words is contained quite clearly the sequence of events of the passion: there are references to the gall and the vinegar, the cross and the blows, the darkening of the sun for three hours, and the death and resurrection.<sup>9</sup>

122. *Mountains whose Snow Descends in an Avalanche at a Shout, and Overwhelms a Great Many People*

In the kingdom of Arles and the province of Embrun, there is a place from where it is possible to descend into Italy from among the highest peaks of the Alps. The route is easy in summer, and short, but it is very dangerous to travel along it. The locals have given this place the name of the Valley of Lantosque. If anyone coughs or shouts at its highest point, the frozen snow is immediately dislodged from the high crags and gathers volume until, in a vast mass, it overwhelms any people passing through; casting them into a bottomless abyss, it hurls them to their death.

123. *Birds which Grow out of Trees*

Complying with a property implanted in primal creation, from their first progenitors living creatures come into being through a process of generation and decay; but there is a strange thing, unheard of in any other country, that is of daily occurrence in a certain part of Great Britain. It is this: in the archdiocese of Canterbury, in the county of Kent, near Fauersham Abbey,<sup>1</sup> small trees grow on the sea-shore, about the size of willows. From them nodes sprout, which look like the harbingers of future germination, but when they have grown for

<sup>9-9</sup> Lactentius . . . et resurrectione continetur] Cf. Augustine, loc. cit.; Lactantius, *Divinae institutiones*, iv. 18-19 (CSEL xix. 349-64). Gervase here summarizes Augustine's abridgement of Lactantius, who quotes a number of prophecies, joined together into one by Augustine, telling the story of Christ's passion and resurrection.

<sup>1</sup> Fauersham Abbey, a Benedictine house of Cluniac observance, was founded in 1148 by King Stephen and his queen Matilda (D. Knowles and R. N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales* (London, 1971), p. 65).

prenuncii, cumque secundum tempora creationis excreuerint, formantur in auiculas. Que post dies nature datos, rostro dependent et uiuificate, facta<sup>d</sup> leui alarum succusacione, quasi puerperio consumato, in mare decidunt, et quandoque capiuntur ab indigenis, quandoque marinis fluctibus exposite humanis contactibus<sup>e</sup> subtrahuntur. Aues iste ad quantitatem modicorum anserum crescunt, pennis uariis et aucinis intermixte. Quadragesimali tempore assate comeduntur, considerata ad hoc potius<sup>f</sup> natiua processione quam carnis sapiditate. Auem uulgu bernectam nominat.<sup>2</sup>

cxxiv.<sup>a</sup> *De racemis que<sup>b</sup> nullum animal comedere potest et cum faciunt uinum optimum<sup>c</sup>*

In Galliis, prouincia Narbonensi, iuxta ciuitatem Vcetiā,<sup>d</sup> est uinea ad dominium episcopi<sup>e</sup> pertinens, de cuius racemis nec<sup>f</sup> canis nec porcus nec aliud animal gustare potest; et facit uinum optimum.

cxxv. *De fonte qui tempore metendorum pratorum apparet<sup>a</sup>*

In prouincia Narbonensi, Lodouensi episcopatu, est fons apud Spauiacum<sup>b1</sup> qui tempore metendorum et adaquandorum pratorum<sup>c</sup> ad pratum quoddam irrigandum scaturit affluenter, et post eiusdem prati tonsionem statim arescit et non comparat.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>e</sup> et | et N      <sup>d</sup> facta XQ; facto NACI      <sup>e</sup> contractibus ACβ      <sup>f</sup> potius  
supplied by author N

<sup>a</sup> In I chapters cxxiv–cxxx appear as items 10–16 of the addenda (see Appendix 1)  
<sup>b</sup> sic N for quos      <sup>c</sup> De . . . optimum] supplied by author N; De uinea Vcetiā  
(Noricie I) Cβ; om. A      <sup>d</sup> Viennam N, Vienniam A      <sup>e</sup> dominum episcopum  
Cβ      <sup>f</sup> nec om. XQ

<sup>a</sup> De . . . apparet] written by rubricator at head of following chapter, and keyed to right place  
N, A; De fonte qui tempore pratorum scaturit Cβ      <sup>b</sup> Spanniacum Cβ  
<sup>c</sup> pratorum supplied by author N

<sup>2</sup> On the barnacle-goose, see H. Büchtold-Stäubli et al., *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1927–8), s.v. *Baumgans*, coll. 958–62; V. Chauvin, *Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes* (Liège, 1892–1922), vii. 18; Liebrecht, pp. 163–4. The earliest account of the creature, dating from the tenth century, is found in an Arabic travel-book. In all the first accounts it is said to be found in England or Ireland; later it spread to the rest of northern Europe. Descriptions similar to Gervase's are given by Alexander Neckam (*De naturis rerum*, i. 48) and Gerald of Wales (*Topographia Hibernica*, i. 15). The barnacle-goose may be compared with the vegetable-lamb which grew in the east: there

the time allotted in creation, they take on the shape of little birds. At the end of the number of days required by nature, these birds hang down by their beaks and come to life with a light fluttering of their wings; then, with their incubation, as it were, complete, they drop into the sea. Sometimes they are caught by the locals, but sometimes they go free on the ocean-waves, escaping human grasp. These birds grow to the size of small geese, their plumage consisting of a mixture of goose- and other feathers. In the season of Lent they are roasted and eaten, their manner of birth being taken into consideration for this rather than the fact that they taste of meat. The people call this bird the barnacle-goose.<sup>2</sup>

124. *Grapes which No Animal Can Eat even Though they Make Very Good Wine*

In Gaul, in the province of Narbonne, near the city of Uzès, there is a vineyard pertaining to the bishop's demesne. No dog, pig, or any other animal is able to eat the bunches of grapes in this vineyard; even so it produces very good wine.

125. *A Spring which Appears in the Hay-Making Season*

In the province of Narbonne and the diocese of Lodève, there is a spring at Spaviacum<sup>1</sup> which gushes up profusely to irrigate a certain meadow, at the time when meadows have to be mown and watered. Once the mowing of this same meadow is finished, it immediately dries up and disappears.<sup>2</sup>

was said to be a shrub whose seed-pods burst open to reveal little lambs with beautiful fleeces. This was the cotton plant. See H. Lee, *The Vegetable Lamb of Tartary* (London, 1887); C. W. Bynum, 'Wonder', *American Historical Review*, cii (1997), 25 (ill.). Both these misconceptions went unquestioned for many centuries.

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Aspiran, near Lodève (Duchesne, *Livre*, p. 172, n. 355), or Les Espagnats, near Pignan (Barrière, *Contribution*, p. 133, n. 1440).

<sup>2</sup> Gervase here embarks on a group of chapters on the properties of springs, one of the most popular subjects of folklore; see also *Otia*, iii. 48 and 89. A similar grouping together of marvellous springs occurs in Neckam's *De naturis rerum* (ii. 3–9) and in Gerald of Wales's *Topographia Hibernica* (ii. 7–8). On the folklore of springs, see Sébillot, *Folk-Lore*, ii. 209–303. The idea that some springs only flowed at a certain time of the year was quite common; sometimes it was in honour of a particular feast day that a spring appeared (Sébillot, *Folk-Lore*, ii. 212).

cxxvi. *De aqua ex qua sanantur gutturnosi*<sup>a</sup>

Est in prouincia Ebredunensi, que pars est regni Arelatensis, castrum de Barles, in cuius territorio fons scaturit, ex cuius aque potu ac lauacro curantur gutturnosi.<sup>1</sup>

Sunt et in regno Arelatensi plurimi fontes qui estate feruente scaturiunt, yeme uero siccantur.

cxxvii. *De fonte qui repente perditur et redit*<sup>a</sup>

Insigne mirabile: in regno Arelatensi, comitatu Aquensi, uilla Camps,<sup>b,1</sup> territorio Argentino, est<sup>c</sup> fons qui repentina ebullicione prodit,<sup>d</sup> in quo lauatur; et post modicum, cum respicitur locus scaturiginis, nullum prorsus fontis<sup>e</sup> apparet uestigium, usque adeo quod et<sup>f</sup> si signum baculi aut pallii pro nota dimiseris,<sup>g</sup> nec baculum nec pallium reperies, nisi forte post octo dies et sub eodem casu. Huic mirabili argumentum prestat insula perditā que Fortunatorum dicitur, ut supra, *De tertia parte orbis*, iuxta finem tituli.<sup>2</sup>

cxxviii. *De duobus fontibus, quorum unus numquam coquit, alius numquam bullit*<sup>a</sup>

Est in prouincia Narbonensi uicus Aluiganus nomine, in quo duo sunt fontes, quorum unus numquam aliquid coquit, alterius aqua numquam bullit.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>a</sup> De . . . gutturnosi] *supplied by author in margin; also written by rubricator at head of following chapter and deleted N; (ex om.) A; De fonte quo curantur gutturnosi CQI; om. X*

<sup>a</sup> De . . . redit] *written by rubricator at head of following chapter, and keyed to right place N, A; De fonte qui subito disparet Cβ* <sup>b</sup> Camps *supplied by author N* <sup>c</sup> est *supplied by author after fons N* <sup>d</sup> prodit] *scaturit I; om. CXQ* <sup>e</sup> fontis prorsus *N* <sup>f</sup> et *supplied by author N* <sup>g</sup> demerseris *C, dimerseris XQ*

<sup>a</sup> De . . . bullit] *written by rubricator (De . . . fontibus) and author (quorum . . . bullit) at head of following chapter, and keyed to right place; quorum unus numquam bullit written by rubricator at head of chapter cxxx and deleted N; De duobus fontibus quorum unus numquam ebullit, alius numquam coquit A; De fontibus Aluigani Cβ*

<sup>1</sup> On Barles, see Achard, *Description*, i. 305–6; it is perhaps the same healing spring which he mentions: ‘On trouve dans son territoire une fontaine d’eau minérale qu’on dit propre à la guérison des écrouelles’—sufferers from scrofula, rather than goitre. Sébillot

126. *Water by which People who Suffer from Goitre are Cured*

In the province of Embrun, which is part of the kingdom of Arles, is the village of Barles. In the territory of this village flows a spring, by drinking and washing in whose water people who suffer from goitre are cured.<sup>1</sup>

There are also a great number of springs in the kingdom of Arles which gush forth in the heat of summer, but dry up in winter.

127. *A Spring which Suddenly Disappears and then Comes Back Again*

Here is an outstanding marvel: in the village of Camps,<sup>1</sup> which is in the kingdom of Arles and the county of Aix, in the territory of the Argens, there is a spring which appears with a sudden gush. One washes in it, and then a little while later when one looks at the place from where it was flowing, no trace of the spring is visible at all. Its disappearance is so complete that even if you have left a stick or a cloak as a sign to mark the place, you will find neither the stick nor the cloak, unless by chance you find them eight days later in the same circumstances. The lost island known as the Isle of the Blessed, which we mentioned above, in *The Third Part of the World*, towards the end of the chapter,<sup>2</sup> provides evidence in support of this miracle.

128. *Two Springs, One of which Never Cooks, while the Other Never Boils*

In the province of Narbonne there is a village called Le Vigan, in which there are two springs: one of them never cooks anything, while the water of the other never boils.<sup>1</sup>

remarks (*Folk-lore*, ii. 256): ‘De toutes les croyances qui s’attachent aux fontaines, la plus répandue, la plus persistante, la plus considérée comme vraie, est celle qui leur attribue le pouvoir de guérir.’

<sup>1</sup> Achard (*Description*, i. 398–9) describes Camps as built on a hill-side, at the foot of which rises a beautiful spring, but he does not say that this spring is prone to disappear. The river Argens runs nearby.

<sup>2</sup> See *Otia*, ii. 11, at n. 34.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Otia*, iii. 48, for another spring whose water would not boil.

cxxxix. *De fonte qui sola hora in die scaturit*<sup>a</sup>

In prouincia Arelatensi, ad confinium Massilie, est castrum Cesaresta, in cuius finibus est fons qui una tantum hora<sup>1</sup> scaturiens cotidie mare ingreditur.<sup>2</sup>

cxxx. *De fonte qui nihil sordidum admittit*<sup>a</sup>

f. 85<sup>v</sup> Apud Narbonensem prouinciam,<sup>b</sup> episcopatu Vticensi, est fons<sup>c</sup> | in quem si quid sordidum miseris, statim fons scaturiginem suam mutat et priorem locum deserit.<sup>d1</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *Exitus operis. Epistola ad magistrum Iohannem Marcum,*<sup>b</sup> *secretarium domini imperatoris*<sup>c1</sup>

Venerabili amico, uni ex paucis, Iohanni Marco, preposito de Hyldenesham, unus ex precordialibus suis et deuotis, magister Geruasius, in regno Arelatensi imperialis aule mariscallus, salutem, et in actiua cum Martha Marie optimam partem eligere.<sup>2</sup>

Cum mediator Dei et hominum Christus<sup>3</sup> sic<sup>d</sup> ordinauerit rerum seriem ut non per rapinam<sup>4</sup> arbitremur nos<sup>e</sup> diuinam pertingere celsitudinem posse, sed quasi scala media diuinitatem contemplemur,

<sup>a</sup> De . . . scaturit] written in margin by author N; De fonte Cesaresta Cβ; om. A

<sup>a</sup> De . . . admittit] written by author in margin, also by rubricator at head of following epistle and deleted N, A; De fonte qui sordes omnes respuit Cβ <sup>b</sup> prouinciam supplied by author N <sup>c</sup> apud cenobium sancti Nycolai de Campaniaco added after fons C <sup>d</sup> This chapter is followed in X by items 17–31 of the addenda, and in Q by items 17–28

<sup>a</sup> This letter appears at the end of the text in 13 MSS, including NAQI. In Q it follows the addenda; in I it precedes them <sup>b</sup> magistrum . . . Marcum] om. Q <sup>c</sup> Exitus . . . imperatoris] written by author in margin N <sup>d-d</sup> ordinauerit . . . amplius erit merear (p. 826)] ordinem ascensionis nostre disposuerit ut, humanitatis sue beneficio uelut ad interpellandum nuncio, maiestatis eius celsitudinem pertingamus, non indignum est humiliora queque corporis membra dignioribus uti ad secreta cordis uiciniora capessenda. Inde est quod oculus superior gressus dirigit, et opera manuum quadam rationalitatis directione nunc arcet, nunc ad operandum inuitat, et dum inclusu regis, id est cordis, est nunciis, appetitum internum ad bonos extraneos actus dirigit, asperrando mala, et bona discernendo. Sic ego, considerans uestram erga dominum communem fidem, et circa eius fideles beniuolentiam, uos operis huius presentatorem elegi, ut maiestati offeratis imperiali minutum quod ex affectu ponderabit, non censu Q <sup>e</sup> ad add. after nos I

129. *A Spring which Flows for a Single Hour in the Day*

In the province of Arles, near Marseilles, is the village of Ceyreste, within whose bounds there is a spring which bubbles up and flows into the sea for only one hour<sup>1</sup> every day.<sup>2</sup>

130. *A Spring which Admits Nothing Dirty*

In the province of Narbonne and the diocese of Uzès, there is a spring which, if you throw anything dirty into it, immediately alters its flow and abandons its former site.<sup>1</sup>

*The End of the Work. A Letter to Master John Mark, Secretary of the Lord Emperor*<sup>1</sup>

To the venerable John Mark, provost of Hildesheim and a rare friend, Master Gervase, one of the number of his affectionate and devoted servants, marshal of the imperial court in the kingdom of Arles, sends his greetings, and desires that, in the midst of the active life which he shares with Martha, he may choose Mary's better part.<sup>2</sup>

Christ, the mediator between God and humankind,<sup>3</sup> so arranged the order of the world that we should not think that we can reach God's sublime majesty by a direct assault,<sup>4</sup> but should contemplate the divinity with a ladder, as it were, in between, letting his beneficent

<sup>1</sup> Gervase does not always observe the proper distinction between the accusative and the ablative in expressions of time; here and in the title the ablative expresses duration.

<sup>2</sup> Achard (*Description*, i. 442) says of Ceyreste (the ancient Greek colony of Citharista): 'Le Pays manque d'eau, on n'y boit que celle qui se ramasse dans les citernes. On a à la vérité deux sources qui sont nommées "les fouents d'ammoun": mais quoiqu'elles soient près du lieu, on n'en profite pas.'

<sup>1</sup> Liebrecht (p. 164) connects this marvel with the belief in the purifying power of water. Sébillot (*Folk-lore*, ii. 192–3) gives a number of other examples of springs which remove themselves or dry up if they are sullied, and suggests that they derive either from a belief in a divinity inhabiting the spring, or from a respect for drinking-water. These stories may be compared with others which tell of water taking offence if anything is thrown into it: cf. *Otia*, iii. 66, n. 2, and iii. 89, n. 2.

<sup>1</sup> On the identity of John Mark, see above, p. xl.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Luke 10: 38–42.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 1 Tim. 2: 5.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Phil. 2: 6: 'non rapinam arbitratus est esse se aequalem Deo' ('thought it not robbery to be equal with God' (A.V. and D.V.)).

mediante sue humanitatis beneficio: dignum est ut nos, Christi exemplo, imperialem non attemptemus maiestatem pastorum sibilo,<sup>5</sup> si non internuncium premiserimus ad gratiam capessendam. Quoniam igitur ad tante celsitudinis benivolentiam captandam liberalitas uestra uelud mediatrix est, opusculum quod ad ocium imperiale contexui uestre dilectioni preoffero, ut si uideritis acceptum fore, munusculum a uobis probationem capiat et oblationem, et secundum illud:

Vox, precor, augustas pro me tua molliat aures,<sup>6</sup>

non quasi in aliquo demeruerim, sed ut facilius quod amplius erit merer. <sup>d</sup> Sit ergo inter dulcedinem principis et deuocionem subditi liberalitas uestra dextera mediatrix, ut quod in me operatur pia deuocio ad merendum, te mediatore<sup>f</sup> operetur effusa principis largitas ad gratificandum. Profecto non modica nostri meriti portio redundabit in uos, si gratiam augustalem ex gratia uestre interpretationis<sup>g</sup> senserimus augeri, cum non minor sit gratia suggerentis quam remunerantis; etenim causa<sup>h</sup> retributionis multotiens est instantia memorantis.

Valeat dominus et<sup>i</sup> amicus, liberalitatem consuetam<sup>j</sup> sine intermissione continuans apud deuotum.<sup>k</sup>

<sup>f</sup> mediante *Q*                      <sup>g</sup> gratia uestre interpretationis] uestra suggestione *Q*  
<sup>h</sup> causa supplied by author *N*                      <sup>i</sup> dominus et om. *Q*                      <sup>j</sup> liberalitatem consuetam]  
 intus assuetam liberalitatem *Q*                      <sup>k</sup> Explicit add. after deuotum *A*; Finis *Q*; Deo  
 gracias. Amen *I*

human nature mediate for us; it is therefore fitting that, learning from Christ's example, we should not assail the imperial majesty with our rustic piping,<sup>5</sup> without having sent a herald before us to win his favour. Since, therefore, your kindness serves as a kind of mediatrix for winning the good-will of such an exalted personage, I am offering this little work which I have composed for the emperor's recreation to you first, counting on your friendship, in the hope that, if you regard it as acceptable, our offering may have the privilege of being presented with a recommendation from you, even as the verse says:

May your voice, I pray, win the august ears to my cause.<sup>6</sup>

It is not that I have really done anything to deserve it, but rather that I may more easily obtain what will be more than I deserve. May your kindness, then, prove an effective mediatrix between the prince's gentleness and his subject's devotion, in order that, so far as loyal devotion makes me worthy, the prince's generosity may, through your mediation, make him lavish in bestowing favour. To be sure, no small part of our thanks will redound upon you, if we find that the emperor's approval is increased by your favourable representation, since the kindness shown in speaking on someone's behalf is no less than that shown in offering some recompense: indeed, it is very often the urging of one's advocate which procures a reward.

I bid my lord and friend farewell: may he never cease to show his accustomed kindness towards his devoted servant.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ovid, *Met.* xiii. 785.

<sup>6</sup> Ovid, *Ex Ponto*, i. 2. 117.