

## THE GREEK MONASTERIES IN SOUTH ITALY. I.

### THE EVENTS WHICH PREPARED THE WAY FOR THE FOUNDATION OF GREEK MONASTERIES IN SOUTH ITALY.

AT the end of the sixth century South Italy was almost entirely Latin. The constant tide of Greek influence which has always ebbed and flowed on its coasts was then at its lowest point. Only at Reggio, and at some of the other sea-coast towns, were there any colonies of Greeks. The *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum* gives us no evidence of any Greek life, and Procopius, in his *History of the Gothic War*, states that there are no Greeks on the Western coast<sup>1</sup>.

But this was the low-water mark of Greek life in the South of Italy, and from the beginning of the seventh century events prepared the way for a fresh invasion of Greeks, which began in the eighth century, gathered strength and flourished in the ninth and tenth, languished in the eleventh, experienced a short but brilliant renaissance under the Normans in the twelfth, and then rapidly decayed in spite of an attempt to resuscitate it in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This Greek life in South Italy in the Middle Ages is an important factor in the evolution of Italy, and I propose to collect the chief facts which go to make up the history of one side of it—its monasteries. The materials for reconstructing this chapter of history are not good, and there are many lacunae, but enough remains to enable us to see the general lines on which the Greek monastic life developed, and to trace the growth and decay of at least the chief homes of the Basilian monks of the district.

<sup>1</sup> Αὕτη μὲν ἔστιν ἡ μεγάλη Ἑλλὰς καλουμένη τὰ πρότερά· ἐν Βρεττίοις γὰρ οἱ Λοκροὶ τέ εἰσιν οἱ Ἐπιζεφύριοι καὶ Κροταυνῖται καὶ Θούριοι, τοῦ δὲ κόλπου ἑκτὸς πρῶτοι μὲν Ἑλληνές εἰσι, κ.τ.λ., *Bell. Gott.*, i 15.

The important feature of the end of the sixth and beginning of the seventh century is the expulsion, at least in part, of the Latin population, thanks to the invasions of the Lombards, which began about the year 589. The account of these invasions has been written by Paul the Deacon in his books *De gestis Langobardorum*. The picture he gives is of a fierce and ruthless invasion sweeping Italy from the Alps to Reggio, and he relates a story of Atharis standing by the straits of Messina and claiming them as the boundary of Lombard land. That, however, would appear to have been an empty boast. It is even doubtful whether the Lombards reached Reggio at all, and certainly they could never have claimed an 'effective occupation' of the districts of the Sila and the Aspromonte, while on the eastern coast the emperor seems to have retained Bari, Brindisi, Gallipoli, and a few other towns until the middle of the seventh century.

But the Lombards never relaxed their pressure; the terror of their fame was as effectual in driving out the inhabitants as the fury of their actual onslaughts, and monks and clergy fled for refuge to Sicily, abandoning, it would seem, all thoughts of returning. They were established after a short time in the monastery of S. Theodore at Messina, as is shown by the following letter<sup>1</sup> of Gregory to Peter the sub-deacon, who was his legate<sup>2</sup> in Sicily.

#### GREGORIUS PETRO SUBDIACONO.

'Venerabilis Paulinus episcopus Tauri (l. Taurinae) civitatis, provinciae Brutiorum, nobis asseruit monachos suos occasione dispersos barbarica, eosque nunc per totam vagari Siciliam, et eos quippe sine rectore nec animarum curam gerere, nec disciplinae sui habitus indulgere. Qua de re praecipimus eosdem monachos te omni cura et sollicitudine perquisitos ad unum reducere, et cum memorato episcopo rectoreque suo in monasterio sancti Theodori in Messanensi civitate posito collocare, ut et hi, qui nunc ibi sunt, quos egere rectore comperimus, et illi, quos de congregatione eius inventos reduxeris, in unum possint, eo duce, omnipotenti Domino deservire. Quam rem venerabili Felici eiusdem civitatis episcopo nos significasse cognosce, ne

<sup>1</sup> Greg. epp. lib. 1, ep. 41 (Migne, *P. L.* 77, p. 494).

<sup>2</sup> Greg. epp. lib. 1, ep. 1 (Migne, *P. L.* 77, p. 441).

praeter suam notitiam in dioecesi sibi commissa ordinatum quipiam contristetur.'

It is easy to see from this letter that the whole of the South of Italy must have been an unsafe and unpleasant country for peaceable folk to inhabit, and that the original Latin population must have constantly diminished.

Nor did matters improve: the invaders pushed on and in 663 succeeded in making good their possession of all the eparchy of Calabria, with the exception of Gallipoli and Naples, and the name of Calabria began to be transferred to the eparchy of Bruttium, which was merged into what was sometimes called the Duchy, sometimes the Theme, of Calabria. No one has ever suggested that during this troublous time there were any Greek monasteries or even any settled Greek life of any kind in South Italy. The rule of the Emperor did not in itself at all imply Greek life; his subjects in Calabria were Latin at this time, not Greek, so far as there was any settled population at all. The wars of the previous century had driven out the old inhabitants, and nothing had been put in their place, for the Lombards were learning that success in battle does not always mean victory in war, and that they had merely desolated what they had tried to subdue.

So far Sicily had been a harbour of refuge for the fugitives, but in the middle of the seventh century it was closed to them. The Saracens appeared on the coasts of the island and Constans II sent a large army to combat them. To the inhabitants this was but a double invasion; and if there was any difference between the conduct of the Greeks and the Arabs it was not in favour of the Greeks. 'Ingressus Sicilia,' says the *Liber Pontificalis*<sup>1</sup>, speaking of Constans, 'per indictionem VII et habitavit in civitate Syracusana et tales afflictiones posuit populo seu habitatoribus vel possessoribus provinciarum Calabriae, Siciliae, Africae, vel Sardiniae per diagrafa seu capita atque nauticatione per annos plurimos, quales a seculo numquam fuerunt, ut etiam uxores a maritos vel filios a parentes separarent. Et alia multa inaudita perpassi sunt, ut alicui spes vitae non

<sup>1</sup> *Liber Pontific.* (ed. Duchesne), i p. 344.

remaneret, sed et vasa sacrata vel cymilia sanctarum Dei ecclesiarum abstollentes nihil demiserunt.'

At the same time Greeks began to obtain high preferment, civil as well as ecclesiastical, in South Italy, and the church of Sicily and Calabria became truly part of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The centre of government by the Greek army was Syracuse, but Calabria was also under its rule and influence, though subordinate to Sicily, and so it happened that when in the eighth century Leo the Isaurian claimed the church of Calabria for Constantinople, the only person who objected was the Pope. This was the turn of the tide. The army of Constans began to drive out the old population, and to supplant it by Greeks.

Another factor in the situation was the unrest and panic of all the Levantine nations, who throughout the seventh century arrived in Italy and Sicily in great crowds of fugitives. The Persians of Chosroes and afterwards the succession of Arab invasions cast up, as it were, on the Italian coasts wave after wave of terrified Orientals. From Antioch, Syria, Alexandria, Egypt, they came for refuge; some of them to Rome, some to Naples, some to South Italy and Sicily, and the strange heresies and customs which they brought caused the Romans no little discomfort, for the rules of hospitality made it necessary to provide such of them as were monks with monasteries and churches, and the situation which was produced required careful handling. Pope Donus, however, was equal to the occasion. 'Repperit,' says the *Liber Pontificalis*<sup>1</sup>, 'in urbe Roma, in monasterio qui appellatur Boetiana, Nestorianitas monachos Syros, quos per diversa monasteria divisit, in quo praedicto monasterio monachos Romanos instituit.' The wise Pope knew that it is often easy to dissipate an opposition that it is impossible to destroy. But it would have been impossible for him to do anything of the kind in Sicily or even in South Italy, where, although the Church had not yet been claimed by the Emperor and the Patriarch of Constantinople, the Papal authority can hardly have been more than nominal. In Sicily therefore Greek life and Greek monasteries must have flourished before the end of the seventh century. So it came about that when the Emperor wrote to Pope Agatho<sup>2</sup> in 678 for representatives to be sent to the Council—ἐκ δὲ τεσσ-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* i p. 348.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* i p. 355.

σάρων Βυζαντίων μοναστηρίων ἐξ ἑκάστου μοναστηρίου ἀββάδας τέσσαρας—the Pope sent among others Theophanes from Baias in Sicily. I think therefore that it is probable that we do right to distinguish at least two cases in considering the fate of the great rush of Greeks and Orientals of this period.

1. *Those who went to Rome or other truly Latin centres.* The numbers of this class were largely swelled by the fugitives from the iconoclast movement (v. p. 350) and they were given monasteries and churches by the Popes, but care was taken to arrange that their individuality should be merged in that of the ordinary Latin monk. The apparent number of Basilian monasteries of this period in Rome is delusive. They were Basilian and Greek in externals, and in the language of their services, but the Greek spirit was crushed out, or educated away, and they cannot be taken as separate from the other monasteries in any essential feature.

2. *Those who went to Sicily.* These found themselves in familiar surroundings among men of their own faith and language, and they were an important factor in the Hellenization of the country.

These two cases may be regarded as clear. The case of South Italy as distinguished from Sicily on the one hand and the Latin territory on the other is less clear. Probably the truth is that it was very nearly deserted. So far as it had any population it was perhaps by this time Greek, but I cannot find any evidence for a vigorous ecclesiastical life. Calabria in the seventh and eighth centuries seems to be in a position entirely subordinate and inferior to Sicily. It produced no saint; I cannot find that it possessed any monasteries. In the wild ravines of the Aspromonte there may have been a few hermits, but their abodes were solitary and their lives are unrecorded. This is not to be wondered at. Calabria at that time must have been a most undesirable country. Ruined by the constant warfare of centuries, always exposed to the attacks of the Lombards, it can have attracted no one to live in it, so long as it was possible and safe to remain in Sicily.

But there is one other movement which has been adduced (notably by François Lenormant in his *La Grande Grèce*) as a chief cause of the Hellenization of South Italy and Sicily.

This is the iconoclast movement. It is suggested that the monks and others who were driven out by the iconoclast emperors took refuge in Italy and Sicily, and so started the Hellenizing process.

There is no doubt that the monks came over to Italy; but I do not think that the fact is of first-rate importance for two reasons.

1. The Hellenization of South Italy and Sicily was neither partial, nor temporary. It was complete, it lasted for a long time, and it can only adequately be explained by a process of depopulation and repopulation such as has been described. It could not be accounted for by any immigration of monks alone who are, as Mgr. Batiffol reminds us, '*gens aeterna in qua nemo nascitur*.'

2. So far as the evidence goes, it would seem that the monks, at least in large and important bodies, went to Rome and Naples in preference to Sicily or Calabria. Hence the numerous foundations of monasteries for Greek monks which were made by the Popes of this period. At first sight it seems strange that monks should go to a land inhabited by foreigners, rather than to one in which at least the language was familiar to them. But it is not hard to understand that the chief object of the monks was to escape the domination of the emperors, and find freedom to venerate images without persecution. This object they could attain far more easily in a country subject to the Pope than in Calabria or Sicily, which were within the Byzantine empire, even though the Emperor's control was not always effective. The case of those Greeks who fled from the iconoclast persecution must therefore be distinguished from those who fled from Arabs or other foreign invaders. The latter, as suggested above, had every inducement to go to Sicily, where they would be among their own countrymen. The former had every inducement to keep outside the limits of an empire which persecuted them.

I therefore think that the iconoclast movement did not do much towards Hellenizing South Italy or Sicily, that its effect in this direction has been much exaggerated, and that the Hellenization of the country is to be traced (1) to the expedition of Constans II and the occupation by Greek soldiers and settlers to which it gave rise, and (2) to the immigration of Greeks, lay and monastic alike, who fled from the troubles which were depopulating the Levant generally.

The state of things sketched above continued in South Italy and Sicily until the ninth century. At that time there comes a sudden change. The vigorous and important Greek life in Sicily is almost entirely destroyed and passes to the mainland. The lives of the saints begin to be filled by Calabrians, and monasteries seem almost to spring out of the ground.

This sudden change was due to the fresh and successful vigour of the Saracens in Sicily. In the course of about seventy years they completely overran the island. Palermo was taken in 831, Messina did not fall until 878, but only Taormina, helped by the extraordinary strength of its position, lasted until the tenth century. It fell in 902. At the same time the Saracens attacked the East coast of Italy, and Bari, Brindisi, and Tarentum by the middle of the ninth century formed the realm of the Sultan of Bari. The result is obvious. The Greek population of Sicily and Calabria was driven together into the almost inaccessible districts of the Aspromonte and the Sila. Geographically speaking these two mountains have only just escaped being separated from the mainland and from each other by narrow straits, similar to the strait of Messina, and in the ninth century the Greeks who took refuge in them were for a time more isolated by the flood of invaders than they would have been by the waves of the Ionian sea. But it was not for long. Though Sicily was not recovered, under Basil I the Saracens on the mainland began to be pushed back, the east coast was recovered and formed into the Theme of Langobardia, which remained separate from Calabria until the end of the tenth century, when the two were united and placed under the control of the Catapanus of Italy and Calabria, a district including that which was afterwards called the Basilicata.

In the ninth century therefore, when Sicily practically disappeared from the Byzantine empire, Calabria, more especially its mountain strongholds, assumes a fresh importance.

#### THE AUTHORITIES FOR THE HISTORY OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE BASILIAN MONASTERIES OF SOUTH ITALY.

When the Greek life of Sicily was driven into Calabria in the way just described we begin to find evidence of the rise of Basilian monasteries in South Italy.

We have no good evidence for the existence of any Basilian monasteries in this district earlier than this date—the middle of the ninth century—but from that time we have an adequate amount of material, not indeed for writing the history of the foundation of every Basilian monastery, but for illustrating sufficiently the manner in which they were founded. This material is to be found in the lives<sup>1</sup> of the Saints of the period. It may perhaps be possible some day to supplement and illustrate it by a study of manuscripts and charters in the Vatican and at Messina, and possibly at La Cava and Monte Cassino, but at present nothing of importance of this kind is known to exist.

The saints of this period and locality, whose lives have been adequately preserved, are Elias Junior, Elias Spelaeotes, Lucas of Demena, Vitalis, and Nilus of Rossano, while there is a short and inadequate life of Fantinus. These cover the period of the rise of the Greek monasteries, from the end of the ninth to the beginning of the eleventh century, and there is also extant the life of Philaretus of Aulinae, who lived in the middle of the eleventh century, which gives a picture of the Greek monasteries just before the Norman period. The authorities for these lives are as follows.

(1) The life of *Elias Junior*. This is found in a Greek MS at Messina, which was once in the library of S. Salvatore. According to the Bollandists it is cod. 41. But I think that the numbers at Messina have been altered since their time. It is published in Latin in Gaetani's *Vit. SS. Sic.* tom. 2, pp. 63 ff., and in the Bollandists' *Acta SS.* Aug. iii p. 479 ff. It was written by a monk who had known Elias, as he shows by reminding his readers that they had seen Elias. 'Quotquot adestis cives, quotquot indigenae, quotquot vestris oculis hominem vidistis, quotquot eius famam auribus accepistis, oro vos atque obtestor, ita verba mea exaudiat, ut nemo ex vobis sit, qui ea in dubium vocare audeat aut nolit illis fidem habere, iam enim vos, qui illam cognovistis, certiores reddimini; qui vero ignoratis sanctissimi viri insignem virtutem, admirabimini<sup>2</sup>.'

This also implies, and the suggestion is supported by his

<sup>1</sup> Chiefly in the *Acta Sanctorum*, by the Bollandists, which I shall refer to as the *A. SS.* by the numbers of the volumes in each month.

<sup>2</sup> *A. SS.* Aug. iii p. 489 E.

eulogy at the end of the life, that the writer was a monk in one of Elias's foundations, probably Aulinae, since he refers to the possession of the Saint's body, and there is no doubt that Elias was buried there.

(2) The life of *Elias Spelaotes*. This is found in a Greek MS at Messina (? cod. 42), formerly of S. Salvator's, and is published together with an old Latin translation by the Bollandists, in the *Acta SS.* Sept. iii p. 843 ff. According to the Latin translator the name of the author is Quiriacus, but this name does not appear in the Greek text. It is, however, certain that he was a contemporary authority, as he says in his preface, οὐδὲ λόγοις πλαστοῖς ἐγκωμιάζειν τολμώντος ἐγκωμίων ἀνθρωπίνων ἐνδέει ὑπὲρ ἐκείνα τυγχάνοντα. ἀλλ' ὅσα παρὰ τῆς ἀψευδοῦς αὐτοῦ γλώττης δι' αἰνιγμάτων μυστικῶς ἀκήκοα, καὶ ὅσα παρὰ τῶν πρὸ ἡμῶν σὺν αὐτῷ ἀσκησάντων ὁσίων ἀνδρῶν ἔμαθον, καὶ ἅπερ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἑώρακα μὲν καὶ αἱ χεῖρες ἡμῶν ἀποστολικῶς ἐψηλάφησαν, ταῦτα γράφειν, ὥς οἶμαι, ἀκουστά τε καὶ κατὰδηλα τοῖς θέλουσι ποιεῖν καὶ ἀκίνδυνον<sup>1</sup>.

I do not see anything in the life to show in what monastery it was written, but obviously the writer must have once been a monk at Melicuccà, Elias's monastery.

(3) The life of *Lucas of Demena*.

This was written in Greek by a contemporary scribe, but it is only published in Latin by Gaetani and by the Bollandists in *Acta SS.* Oct. vi p. 332 ff. from an anonymous Latin version of an inferior character. The Greek was known to Sanctorius and may be extant at Messina, which is very rich in hagiographical MSS, of which the catalogue is unpublished.

That the writer was a contemporary of Lucas who joined him at S. Julian's and went with him to Armentum is shown by a sudden change at this point in the narrative from the third to the first person, and continues, 'Timentes igitur eo in nos cum imperio venturos<sup>2</sup>, in munitum castrum fugere cogitavimus. Sed cum inter saeculares homines versari nobis turpe videretur, statuit magister noster in privatum locum naturaque munitum contendere<sup>3</sup>.'

(4) *The Life of Vitalis*. This was found in a Latin MS of the year 1565 at Armentum, and transcribed for the Bollandists

<sup>1</sup> *A. SS.* Sept. iii p. 848 f.

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to Otto's invasion in 970.

<sup>3</sup> *A. SS.* Oct. vi p. 340 A.

by Lucas Muscatus of Armentum. It is published by them in the *Acta SS.* Mart. ii p. 26. It is also published by Gaetani in the second volume of his *Lives of the Sicilian Saints* from two MSS at Armentum, but, say the Bollandists, 'quod arbitraretur stylum rudem esse, eam sua phrasi perpoluit; at nobis primi auctoris stylus minus displicebat, quem proinde retinuimus.'

But these Latin MSS only represent an early translation from a Greek original which the Bollandists describe 'auctore fere coaevo,' though, as they never saw it, and there is no clear internal evidence, they can hardly be trusted on this point. The date of this Latin version is given at the end of the Life. 'Facta est autem haec de Graeco in Latinum translatio anno Dominicae incarnationis millesimo centesimo nonagesimo quarto, mense Julii XII Indictionis.' It is interesting to notice that even by this time Greek was dying out in the Basilicata. The writer takes credit for translating the Life into Latin, and so rescuing it 'ex opaca Graecorum silva.'

(5) *The Life of Nilus*. This is the best known of all the lives of Calabrian saints. It is published by the Bollandists in the *Acta SS.* Sept. vii p. 279 ff., and in Migne, *P. G.* 120, p. 9 ff. It was written in very good Greek by a writer whose identity is doubtful. A note attached to cod. Vat. 6151 says, 'hanc vitam B. Bartholomaeus scripsit.' Bartholomew was the third abbot<sup>1</sup> of Grotta Ferrata, Nilus's last foundation, and it is very probable that he wrote the Life, but the evidence is hardly sufficient.

MSS of the Greek are to be found at Grotta Ferrata in cod. B. β. 2, in cod. Vat. 1205, in cod. Paris. suppl. 106, and also, I believe, at Messina. The vivid and detailed character of the writing suggests that it was written by a contemporary, and this view is confirmed by the use of the first person in the account of Nilus's funeral, 'Ὅτε δὲ ἐξ ἐναντίας αὐτῶν ἐγενήθημεν καὶ τῆς ψαλμωδίας ἀκηκόασιν, ἐξῆλθον καὶ ὑπήντησαν ἡμῖν πάντες . . . πάντες ὅμον ἐθροιοῦμεν κ.τ.λ.'<sup>2</sup>, which at least shows that the writer formed part of the funeral procession.

(6) *The Life of Fantinus*. This is published by the Bollandists

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Codices Cryptenses*, by Dom A. Rocchi, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> *P. G.* 120, p. 165 B.

in the *Acta SS.* Aug. vi p. 621 ff. It is an extract from a Milan MS with which other MSS have been collated, but they give neither the date nor the number. It is quite a short notice, and has no signs of having been written by a contemporary of the Saint.

It has no great value, but it clearly refers to the Fantinus who was a friend of Nilus, and left him about the year 950, to go to Greece. It is possible that a closer examination of menologies and lives of saints at Messina would reveal the existence of a longer and earlier life. This would probably be valuable, as it might throw light on the foundation of the monasteries on Mount Mercury.

(7) *The Life of Philaretus.* This life was written by a monk named Nilus, who had lived with Philaretus in the monastery of Elias Junior at Aulinae. That he was a contemporary of Philaretus is shown by his constant use of the first person; e.g. in describing Philaretus's return to the monastery, he says, 'Quid vero pro his attulit cum ad nos venit singularis virtutis homo?' It is published in Latin by the Bollandists in the *Acta SS.* Apr. i p. 605 ff.; but it was written originally in Greek. The Bollandists say that the Greek MS is at Messina, and that the Latin which they print is taken from the translation made by Augustinus Floritus, S. J. They would have published the Greek, but were unable to obtain a copy.

Philaretus died in 1070, and his Life must have been written towards the end of the eleventh century. Less interesting than the Lives of Elias or Nilus, it is a valuable monument of the monastic life of South Italy just before the Norman period.

Taken together these lives form a considerable mass of evidence as to the period of the foundation of the Greek monasteries of South Italy. They are, with the exception of the Life of Fantinus, almost contemporary documents. They represent the opinions and statements of perfectly sincere witnesses, superstitious, no doubt, and exceedingly apt to see miracles in every act of their heroes, but quite free from the suspicion that they are writing history for party purposes. Their story is worth exactly as much as is the evidence of any uneducated, superstitious, but frank and sincere witness, who is trying to tell the story of a friend's life.

In the main it is entirely trustworthy, but allowance has to be made for the credulous and superstitious imagination of the witness. If, however, historians never had to deal with greater obstacles than these, they would probably find their task considerably easier than it is.

I cannot refrain from expressing the hope that some of these lives will be properly edited and published from the Greek MSS, most of which may be found at Messina. For merely historical purposes the editions and translations given by the Bollandists are perhaps sufficient, but the Greek would be of the greatest value for the study of the development of the language in South Italy. The Bollandists say that they do not print the Greek, because it is so bad, and so full of mistakes in spellings that they cannot correct it, and cannot even always understand it. In other words, the Greek MSS of these lives are full of dialectical forms and phonetic spellings, which will probably render them a mine of information to the student of the later developments of the Greek language.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF MONASTIC LIFE.

It is possible in these histories to trace a steady development of monastic life. There is a constant tendency to go further and further towards the north, there is a constant tendency to draw closer and closer the bonds which united the monks to each other, and there is a constant tendency to a greater cultivation of literary studies. I propose now to treat only of the first two of these tendencies, reserving for another section the consideration of the third.

##### *The Tendency to move Northwards.*

The monasteries did not spread evenly or at once over the whole of Calabria and the Basilicata. There was a steady tendency to go north, in which each successive move can be explained by a reference to the course of events in the struggle between the Greeks and the Saracens, and so far as one can judge from the few scattered remarks which bear on the subject, at each step further north the monks were carrying their costume and life into districts where they were almost unknown.

The first monastery that is mentioned in the *Lives* is that at Salinae, founded by Elias Junior<sup>1</sup>, at almost the most southerly point in Calabria, close to Cape del Armi. Elias came to it from Sicily, whence he had fled from the Saracens, who captured his native town Enna (Castro Giovanni) in 837. He had wandered about for a long time, visiting, according to his biographer, most of the important places in the Levant, and had been guided to Salinae by a dream<sup>2</sup>. This was between 880 and 888. The date is fixed as between these limits, by the following considerations. Elias was at Palermo at the time when the Saracens and Greeks were preparing<sup>3</sup> for the campaign between Hasan ibn Abbas and Nasar (whom the writer of the Life calls Basil) in 879-80. Therefore Elias did not go to Salinae before 880. Again, he left Salinae and went<sup>4</sup> to Patras because of a fierce attack made by the Saracens on Reggio. This must be the attack which was made in 888, and therefore his arrival at Salinae was before that date.

After his flight to Patras, Elias returned<sup>5</sup> to Salinae, but not for long. The danger of attacks from the Saracens was too great, and he continued the movement northwards, which he had begun when he left Sicily, by going to Aulinae<sup>6</sup>, on a mountain in the north-west of the Aspromonte, close to Seminara.

It is noteworthy that whereas Aulinae enjoys a considerable period of moderate prosperity, Salinae seems to disappear soon after the death of its founder.

Elias Spelaotes, the next saint in chronological order, does not himself continue the northward movement further than Elias Junior had taken it, but he curiously duplicates the experience of his namesake. Like him he first lived near Reggio at Armo<sup>7</sup>, close to S. Agatha (though I do not think that Armo can be counted as a monastery), for some time before 888, when he also left the neighbourhood of Reggio<sup>8</sup> and, perhaps in the company of Elias Junior, went to Patras. He returned to Armo<sup>9</sup> in 896, and in 903-4 went for a short time to Salinae<sup>10</sup> and lived with Daniel, the companion of Elias Junior, after the death of the

<sup>1</sup> *A. SS.* Aug. iii p. 495 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 494 E.

<sup>3</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 498 B.

<sup>4</sup> *A. SS.* Sept. iii p. 854 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 860 F.

<sup>6</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 493 A.

<sup>7</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 498 A.

<sup>8</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 498 B.

<sup>9</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 856 E.

<sup>10</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 862 E.

latter. Then he too joined in the movement towards the north and west to Melicuccà<sup>1</sup>, not far from Aulinae and Seminara.

In this way the lives of the two earliest saints show the development of the monastic settlements from the extreme south of Calabria, the southern slopes of the Aspromonte, to a district about fifty miles (measuring by road) on the northern side of the same mountainous country.

At this point the movement north was arrested for about forty-five years, and a flourishing collection of monasteries grew up in the Seminara district, of which we know the monastery of Elias at Melicuccà and the monasteries of John, Zacharias, Fantinus, and Nilus on Mount Mercury. But in the middle of the tenth century the movement suddenly began again, and spread with greatly increased rapidity. Elias Spe-lacotes<sup>2</sup>, it is true, did not leave his own district, though he was in obvious danger. He was an old man, and unwilling to move. Probably some of his followers remained with him and found protection in the poverty which rendered them unobtrusive, and in the inaccessible nature of their home, which made them a difficult object of attack. But on every side there were signs of movement. Fantinus<sup>3</sup> left Mount Mercury and went to Thessalonica, Lucas<sup>4</sup> went to the Basilicata, Nilus<sup>5</sup> returned to his old home, Rossano, a city which had always boasted of its invincible resistance to the Saracens, while Vitalis, who had gone to the north in his youth, stopped<sup>6</sup> on his way southwards and never went back further than the Basilicata. This movement must be dated in each case between 950 and 958—it is not easy to fix the precise time of the migration of each saint, nor is it matter of very great importance. The most probable dates are 950–2 and 957–8. In each of these years there was a special outbreak of war, the earlier being Hasan's invasion, and the later the disturbance which began when Constantine Porphyrogennetus sent Argiros to Calabria and was resisted by Amar, Hasan's brother.

<sup>1</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 863 c.

<sup>2</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 875 f.

<sup>3</sup> *A. SS.* Aug. vi p. 623 B and *P. G.* 120, p. 57 B.

<sup>4</sup> *A. SS.* Oct. vi p. 338 A.

<sup>5</sup> *P. G.* 120, p. 73 A.

<sup>6</sup> *A. SS.* Mar. ii p. \*27 A. The Bollandists' notes interpret San Severina here as the Episcopal town in Calabria. This is probably wrong, as Cassano is mentioned in the context, and there is a San Severino in the neighbourhood.

When we reach the second half of the tenth century, the movement northwards is still the chief feature. It accounts for the rise of the Greek monasteries in the district of the Sila, and in the Basilicata, as well as of the isolated convent at Grotta Ferrata, near Rome, and it extends over a far wider field than that which was covered by the monks of the previous half-century. At least one reason for this fact is that the leaders worked more independently and at greater distances from each other. They seem to have preferred to have separate 'spheres of influence,' although Lucas and Vitalis met on at least one occasion<sup>1</sup>, and it is inconceivable that Nilus and Lucas were quite unknown to each other, as they had lived so near each other on Mount Mercury, in the cave of S. Michael, and at Melicuccà respectively.

The district which comes nearest to the Aspromonte is the Sila, separated from it by the valleys of the Ippolito and the Corace. For some cause which I cannot explain this was never quite so popular with the Greek monks<sup>2</sup> as the mountainous districts to the north and south of it. The chief centre of the monasteries in this neighbourhood is Rossano, and the man who founded the first of them is Nilus. His chief foundation is that of S. Adrian's, on the high ground near the district of S. Demetrius; but he also reorganized and practically refounded a nunnery which had been established a short time previously by Eupraxias<sup>3</sup>, an Imperial official.

Nilus stayed at Rossano or its neighbourhood until the time of Kasem in 976, when he went on further north, across the valley of the Crati, and past the Basilicata, to Capua<sup>4</sup> and Monte Cassino<sup>5</sup>, but before looking at his work in this locality, it will be well to notice that of Lucas and Vitalis, who took the Basilian monasteries into the Basilicata while Nilus was doing the same for the Sila.

Lucas had been a pupil of Eliás Spelaeotes at Melicuccà<sup>6</sup>, and probably left him at the same time that Fantinus went to Thessalonica and that Nilus went to S. Adrian's at Rossano, i. e. about 950. Frightened, as had been Nilus and Fantinus, at the

<sup>1</sup> *A. SS.* Mar. ii p. \*28 D.

<sup>2</sup> It was in the thirteenth century the head quarters of the Latin order of Florus.

<sup>3</sup> *P. G.* 120, p. 85 B.

<sup>4</sup> *P. G.* 120, p. 124 D.

<sup>5</sup> *P. G.* 120, p. 124 C.

<sup>6</sup> *A. SS.* Oct. vi p. 337 F.

attacks of the Saracens, he went towards the north, but, without stopping at the next mountainous district, the Sila, as Nilus did, he went on until he reached the mountains of the Basilicata, and stopped at Noia<sup>1</sup>. Here he stayed seven years, and then, apparently from a desire for privacy, he moved to a deserted monastery, S. Julian's<sup>2</sup>, near the Agri, 'quod,' says the writer of his Life, 'refecit auxitque.' Here he stayed for about ten years, and then, alarmed at the invasion of Otto I in 970, he moved to a safer spot in the same district<sup>3</sup>: 'statuit,' says the author of the Life, 'magister noster in privatum locum naturaque munitum contendere,' etc. Here he built the monastery of Armentum, and here he died either in 984 or 993. (It is difficult to say which date is right, as the Life<sup>4</sup> says that he died 'imo. Oct. a mundo condito 6493, ab incarn. Domini 993.') Lucas was the great founder of monasteries in the Basilicata, and, besides those mentioned above, tradition assigned to him the foundation of several other monasteries, e.g. a monastery at Bombicino called S. Cirico, and the great monastery of S. Anastasius or S. Elias at Carbo. I much doubt whether he founded the latter, but S. Elias is in any case so distinctly a monastery of the Norman period that I shall leave the discussion of its foundation until later.

So far the lives of the Saints of South Italy have all proceeded in much the same manner—they have all started from the south, and gone north; but the remaining Life gives a slightly different picture. Vitalis, a Sicilian by birth, went first of all to Rome<sup>5</sup>, and then made his way southwards to S. Severina<sup>6</sup> (no doubt the one in the Basilicata, not the one in Calabria) and to Casano<sup>7</sup>. This seems to be a different tendency, but I do not think that it is really difficult to explain. Vitalis's intention was to return home. His Life is more carelessly and obscurely

<sup>1</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 338 B.

<sup>2</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 340 A.

<sup>3</sup> *A. SS.* Mar. ii p. \*26 F.

<sup>7</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. \*27. The Life at this point inserts another visit of twelve years to Sicily. I have thought this an insertion; if not, Vitalis's career is an even closer parallel to the others. It would consist of a youth spent in Sicily; a visit to Rome; a return to Sicily; and then a steady progress to the north.

I have adopted the view that the story is an insertion, because it seemed to be a possible and even probable theory, and one which was slightly adverse to my general view of the development of the monastic system.

<sup>3</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 339 A.

<sup>4</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 341 F.

<sup>6</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. \*27 A.

written than the others, and it is almost impossible to make out exactly when Vitalis reached Cassano, or whether it was not really only a stage on a journey home after a visit to Rome. In any case, as soon as Vitalis reaches Cassano he seems to be drawn into the same gradual movement northwards which marks the lives of his contemporaries. From Cassano he goes to Roseto<sup>1</sup>, and from that he strikes inland and towards higher ground, and he settles for a time at S. Angelo near Mount Rapora<sup>2</sup>. He then goes to S. Julian's<sup>3</sup>, and finally lives for a time in a cave near Armentum<sup>4</sup>, where he sees Lucas.

After a time he founds a monastery<sup>5</sup> near his cave on the site of an old church or shrine of SS. Adrian and Natalia. But he does not stop there, and presently moves seventy or eighty miles further north<sup>6</sup> to Rapolla, going through the *partes Turrinensium* (? Tursi), and here, in 994<sup>7</sup>, he dies.

This is almost the northern limit of the Basilian monasteries which can be traced to the Hellenizing movement in South Italy. The next generation, as represented by Elias III, Vitalis's nephew, or by Philaretus, did not wander; they were content with their position. It only remains to notice the concluding years of the life of Nilus, who, at the time of Lucas's death, was pushing still further north, and founding as it were little islands of Greek monks in the middle of the Latin population.

Nilus left Rossano about the year 976 because of Kasem's invasion, or rather because of his fear that it would be renewed, soon after the time that Lucas founded his monastery at Armentum, and, passing by the Basilicata, perhaps because of its disturbed condition (Kasem's second attack was in progress), went northwards until he reached Monte Cassino<sup>8</sup>, where the Latin monks welcomed him and gave him the dependent monastery of Vallelucio<sup>9</sup>. But when the Abbot of Monte Cassino died circumstances were changed, and he moved<sup>10</sup> to the neighbourhood of Gaeta, where he founded the monastery of Serperi. Finally, because in the first instance of his friendship

<sup>1</sup> A. SS. tom. cit. p. \*27 c.

<sup>2</sup> A. SS. tom. cit. p. \*27 d.

<sup>3</sup> A. SS. tom. cit. p. \*29 e.

<sup>4</sup> A. SS. tom. cit. p. \*32 c note.

<sup>5</sup> P. G. 120, p. 125 B.

<sup>6</sup> A. SS. tom. cit. p. \*27 d.

<sup>7</sup> A. SS. tom. cit. p. \*28 A.

<sup>8</sup> A. SS. tom. cit. p. \*31 c.

<sup>9</sup> P. G. 120, p. 124 D.

<sup>10</sup> P. G. 120, p. 145 f.

for the Anti-Pope<sup>1</sup>, himself a Greek, he went on to Rome to the convent of S. Anastasius<sup>2</sup>, and afterwards to Tusculum to the monastery of S. Agatha<sup>3</sup>, which had been hospitably given to the Greek fugitives and still contained a few Greek monks. While he was there a nobleman named Gregory<sup>4</sup> gave him some ground at Grotta Ferrata between Tusculum and Marino, and here, just before the death of Nilus, was founded the monastery of S. Mary's, now a national monument of the kingdom of Italy, and almost the only Greek monastery which still remains in that kingdom.

From this account of the general progress of the Basilian monasteries between the end of the ninth and the beginning of the eleventh centuries, it is clear that the monks gradually moved further and further north, and that each move is due to a fresh outbreak of war between the Saracens and Greeks, or some similar disturbance. The monks are first found near Reggio, but the Saracens come, and they move to the north of the Aspromonte. The Saracens return, and they go to the Sila. They are threatened by Otto's invasion, and they take refuge in the highlands of the Basilicata, or still further north. That is the outline of the way in which the monasteries spread north; but in each case it was only the more energetic monks who moved; the others probably scattered for a time, and returned to their home after the danger was past. In this way each attack of their enemies drove the Greeks further north, but did not leave the more southern monasteries entirely deserted. On the other hand, those monks who remained in the south were probably inferior to those who went north, and this is at least a partial explanation of the fact that none of the monasteries in the south seem to have flourished, and that those which play an important part in the Norman period are not the old foundations, but new ones founded by men who do not appear to have been willing to stay in the more ancient convents.

In concluding this survey it may be well to bring together the chief points which have persuaded me that the men whose lives I have used were the real founders of Greek Monasticism

<sup>1</sup> *P. G.* 120, p. 149 A.

<sup>2</sup> *P. G.* 120, p. 157 C.

<sup>3</sup> *P. G.* 120, p. 149 D.

<sup>4</sup> *P. G.* 120, p. 160 A.

in South Italy, and that they are not, as some Italian writers maintain, merely a part of a great system, which has left no other traces behind. No doubt there were a few other founders of monasteries, whose names and memory have perished, but these were so far the chief and important part of the movement that its history is adequately given in their lives.

The earliest evidence, that of Elias Junior, gives no support to the theory that the Greek Monasticism of South Italy dates from a period anterior to the end of the ninth century. There is no mention of his going to already existing monasteries. But it is only fair to admit that Elias Junior was so fond of solitude that he probably would have avoided monasteries even if they had abounded. His evidence, therefore, should not be pressed. More important is the testimony given in the life of Elias Spelaeotes. He was a native of Reggio, and at an early age wished to become a monk. But in order to accomplish his purpose he went to Sicily<sup>1</sup>. There is no note of surprise in his biography that he did this. It is apparently regarded as the obvious course. Does not this imply that there were no monasteries in the neighbourhood of Reggio? Again, when he returned to Calabria he did not go to a monastery, but settled at Armo<sup>2</sup> with Arsenius, who previously had lived alone. Later on in his life he did go to a monastery, but it is to Salinae<sup>3</sup>, which Elias Junior had founded, and which was then under the rule of Daniel.

The same thing is true of the later lives, they refer to the monasteries of the Aspromonte, the origin of which we know, but not to others.

Nilus, for instance, went to the monasteries of Mount Mercury. We know of three monasteries there, S. John, S. Zacharias, and S. Fantinus. The founders of these monasteries were still living when Nilus arrived, and one of them, Fantinus, was his closest friend.

In order to avoid the opposition of the law<sup>4</sup>, Nilus went to a monastery which we cannot identify certainly, but which Agresta<sup>5</sup> states to have been Aulinae, Elias Junior's foundation.

That there were no monasteries in the neighbourhood of Rossano

<sup>1</sup> *A. SS.* Sept. iii p. 850 F.

<sup>2</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 862 E.

<sup>3</sup> *Vita di San Basilio*, p. 365.

<sup>4</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 854 F.

<sup>5</sup> *P. G.* 120, p. 24 B.

is distinctly stated by Nilus's biographer. In his youth, he says<sup>1</sup>, Nilus found no one to control his passionate nature; he knew no bishop, priest, abbot or monk, so rarely was the monastic dress seen in Rossano.

Lucas, again, and Vitalis consistently established monasteries; they never find them already established. Lucas, it is true, revived an old monastery, S. Julian's<sup>2</sup>, but it was deserted, and from the name was probably one which had been left by the Latins when they fled from the country.

The same thing is true of the life of Vitalis, though his evidence is less important as, like Elias Junior, he was for the most part a hermit.

Therefore I believe that, at least until more evidence has been produced, we ought tentatively to regard it as probable that the saints whose lives have come down to us were really the founders of Greek monasticism in South Italy, and that before their time there were no Greek monasteries in the district.

There probably were hermits; but the rise of monasteries does not begin before the end of the ninth century; and the leaders of the monks were Elias Junior, Elias Spelaeotes, Nilus of Rossano, Lucas of Demena, and Vitalis.

### *The Development of Organization.*

The earliest Greek monks in South Italy seem to have been hermits. The founding of monasteries was, as it were, an accidental result which was thrust on them by the force of circumstances.

Elias Junior was a hermit for the greater part of his life, attended only by his faithful friend Daniel. There is, it is true, an extraordinary story<sup>3</sup> that before he went to Salinae he converted twelve Saracens, who were baptized and followed him; but they play no part in the subsequent story, and are almost certainly one of those mythical additions which grow up so quickly round the life of a saint. The chief reason why he left Salinae was no doubt the fear of the Saracens, but he was also influenced by the desire to lead a more secluded life than he had found possible at Salinae, 'ubi autem,' says the historian of his

<sup>1</sup> *P. G.* 120, p. 20 A.

<sup>2</sup> *A. SS.* Oct. vi p. 338 c.

<sup>3</sup> *A. SS.* Aug. iii p. 494 A.

Life, 'a multis interpellari se videt, inanem populi auram fugiens, in Mesobiani (?) montes se abstrudit, nimirum pacatiorem vitam exacturus<sup>1</sup>.' This shows both that he himself did not wish to encourage the growth of a large monastery, and that his cell at Salinae was beginning to be famous, and becoming a centre for those who wished to lead a 'religious' life. Apparently some of those who had been attracted to Salinae by the fame of Elias remained there after his removal, for we find that when Daniel was bringing the corpse of his master from Thessalonica to Aulinae for burial he turned aside to go to Salinae<sup>2</sup>, and bade the brethren there go to Tauriana and await his arrival, Tauriana being in the days before the building of Seminara the most convenient town near Aulinae.

Exactly the same thing happened at Aulinae: Elias had gone there in order to lead a secluded life, but he was soon joined by others, and if the story in his Life be correct, the community thus established became so famous that it was endowed by the Emperor Leo the Wise. 'Sed Leo,' says the Life of the saint, 'imperator religiosissimus, qua fuit vel post mortem in Patrem sanctum observantia, census et praedia eius monasterio liberalissime attribuit, ut omnium quae in Italia sunt monasterium clarissimum ac celeberrimum existeret<sup>3</sup>.'

The same development may be traced in the *Life of Elias Spelaotes*. This is perhaps the most valuable document that we possess for this stage of the monastic history, as it is fuller than the *Life of Elias Junior*, and earlier than that of Nilus or Lucas, in whose time the coenobite system was more widely spread. From it we may gather that the monks did not pass at once from hermit life to the true coenobite life. There is an intermediate stage, which may be called the period of the Lauras. That is to say, the true convent is led up to by a collection of hermits who live close together without altogether living in common. They join for purposes of prayer and religious exercises, but each man is his own master. This evolution from hermits' cells to monasteries is found throughout the East. To some extent all the stages are still preserved on Mount Athos, that curious survival from the Middle Ages, for there are there

<sup>1</sup> A. SS. Aug. iii p. 498 B.

<sup>2</sup> A. SS. Aug. iii p. 507 C.

<sup>3</sup> A. SS. Aug. iii p. 507 A (should be D).

to this day hermits' cells, often placed in the most inaccessible corners of rocks that can only be reached by rope ladders; idiorrhythmic monasteries, in which the monks live in their own rooms and only have their religious services in common<sup>1</sup>; and the true coenobite monasteries in which the monks feed in common and are ruled by an ἡγούμενος instead of by ἐπίτροποι. It is interesting to notice that the great monastery of Athanasius<sup>2</sup> still retains traces of the very loose bond which there was at one time between its members, both in its architecture, which in places clearly represents a collection of cells arranged in a little street, and in its usual name—the Laura. This survival of different stages of history on Mount Athos helps to explain the analogous history of the South Italian convents. It is clear that many of the brothers felt unhappy in anything like a coenobite life. So we find that when the fame of Elias Spelaeotes attracted many brethren to Melicuccà, Cosmas, who had been there before him, went away<sup>3</sup> to some more secluded region. No doubt his case was one among many, for the Aspromonte probably had many hermits at this time. The remarkable thing about Elias and the other saints, whose lives are recorded, was not that they were hermits, but that, being hermits, they attracted others to join them, and so became the founders first of Lauras and then of convents.

These three stages, Hermitage, Laura, Convent, are clearly marked in the life of Elias Spelaeotes. He begins his career as a hermit<sup>4</sup>, accompanied only by Arsenius, and chooses a desolate spot near Reggio for his home. After staying a short time in the monastery of Salinae<sup>5</sup>, he goes away to Melicuccà<sup>6</sup>; and leads a hermit's life there in a cave with Arsenius.

There is no description of his life here, but it may be assumed to have been the same as that which he led in his hermitage at

<sup>1</sup> It is, however, probably true that some of the monasteries which are now idiorrhythmic were once coenobite, and have returned to the earlier form of organization.

<sup>2</sup> Athanasius the Athonite, whose ὄνομα κοσμηκόν was Abraham, lived at the close of the tenth century, v. *A. SS.* Jul. 11 p. 246 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *A. SS.*, Sept. iii, p. 863 c.

<sup>4</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. pp. 853 f (on Mindino in this passage, see Minasi, *Lo Speleota*, p. 166) and 854 f.

<sup>5</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 862 e.

<sup>6</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 863 c.

Patras, except, perhaps, that some of the severity described may have been due to the temptations which he had just endured at the hands<sup>1</sup> of a φλύαρον, μάλλον καὶ βέβηλον καὶ δύστροπον γύναιον. Here we are told he lived, ὑποπνέζων ἐπὶ πλείον ἑαυτὸν πείνῃ καὶ δίψει καὶ παννύχῳ ἀγρυπνίᾳ, ὥστε δι' ὅλης τῆς νυκτὸς καλλιγράφειν καὶ προσεύχεσθαι καὶ μετὰ τὴν συμπλήρωσιν τῶν ἐωθινῶν ὕμνων ἐν τῷ ἐδάφει ἑαυτὸν ἀνακλίνων τῷ ὕπνῳ ἐγκελεύεσθαι καὶ αὐτὸς λέγων· Δεῦρο κάκε δοῦλε<sup>2</sup>, but his fame attracted many others, and although he was willing to leave Melicuccà and seek seclusion elsewhere with Cosmas, he was obviously destined to be a leader of men, and Cosmas refused to take him from his work. He and his own disciple, Vitalis, would go, but the vocation of Elias was clear<sup>3</sup>.

In this way Melicuccà passed from a hermitage to a Laura. It soon became a true κοινόβιον, as Cosmas foresaw. In cap. vi<sup>4</sup> we find that the monks no longer lived in small caves near one another, but all together in one large cave. Soon even this became too small for them, and they migrated to one which was still larger. At first it was unfit for habitation, even by monks, as it was quite dark, but a hole was knocked through in the side, and a monk named Cosmas built a salt-pit, and a mill for grinding corn. At the same time a church was built, and called τῶν κορυφαίων καὶ θείων ἀποστόλων<sup>5</sup>.

This was the beginning of a true monastery at Melicuccà, and probably the foundations of other monasteries were of the same kind.

For instance, when Nilus first went to S. Adrian's he seems

<sup>1</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 857 v.

<sup>2</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 858 d.

<sup>3</sup> The writer of the Life naturally throws this incident into a semi-miraculous form, but his meaning is obvious, ὁ μέντοι, he says, θεῖος Κοσμάς ὀχληθεὶς ἐπὶ τῷ πλήθει τῶν ἀδελφῶν, καὶ σφόδρα μεταμεληθεὶς, φιλήσυχος ὢν, ἐβουλήθη τοῦ ἀπαραι τῶν ἐκείσε σὺν τῷ μαθητῇ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν ἐτέρῳ τόπῳ αἰθῆς καταμόνας οἰκῆσαι. "Ὅπερ ἐπιγνοὺς ὁ πανάγαστος πατὴρ ἡμῶν Ἑλίας, προσέειπε τοῖς ποσὶν αὐτοῦ, λέγων· Μὴ διασυχθῶμεν ἀπ' ἀλλήλων, πάτερ ὅσιε, ἀλλ' ὡς συνέθεμεν ἀλλήλους, διαμείνωμεν. Ἔσομαι γὰρ σοι πειθῆνιος ἐν πᾶσιν, καὶ δουλεύσω σοι ὡς πατέρι καθὼς τῷ μεγάλῳ Ἀρσενίῳ. Εἴξας οὖν ἐν τῇ κλήσει τοῦ μεγάλου Ἑλίου ὁ μοναχός, καὶ μικρὸν ἐφησυχάσας, θεωρεῖ κατὰ τοὺς ὕμνους πᾶσαν τὴν περιγραφὴν τοῦ μοναστηρίου σπηλαίοις μικροῖς πλήθει τε καὶ μοναχῶν αἰνούντων καὶ ψαλλόντων τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ τὸν ὅσιον Ἑλίαν ὥσπερ περιφανὴ ἀστέρα ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν· ταῦτα θεασάμενος καὶ καλῶς διακρίνας, ἔωθεν ἀναστάς, λέγει τῷ μαθητῇ αὐτοῦ· Ἀνάστα, ἀδελφέ· ἐγὼ μὲν ἐντεύθεν· εὐδόκησεν ὁ Θεὸς κοινόβιον γενέσθαι τὸν τόπον τοῦτον, καὶ πολλοὺς σωθῆναι διὰ τοῦ πατέρος ἡμῶν Ἑλίου, ὡς γὰρ προέγνω καὶ προῦρσεν. Ἀσπασάμενός τε αὐτοὺς ἀπῆρεν ἐκείθεν καὶ ἀπεδήμησεν. *Acta SS.* tom. cit. pp. 863 f.

<sup>4</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 853 f.

<sup>5</sup> *A. SS.* tom. cit. p. 865 v.

to have been alone, or accompanied only by Stephen, but he was soon joined by George of Rossano (the text might mean that George was with him on Mount Mercury, but I do not think that it does), and after a short time we have the following incident: *Αὐτὸς δὲ ἀνεξάλειπτα ἔχων ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ τὰ τοῦ ἁγίου εὐαγγελίου ἐντάλματα, καὶ τὸ 'ὕμεις δὲ μὴ κληθῆτε ῥαββί μηδὲ κληθῆτε καθηγηταί,' οὐδέποτε κατεδέξατο ἀκοῦσαι οἶον δήποτε ὄνομα δόξης ὑπόληψιν ἔχον, ἀλλ' αἰετὸ φρόνημα πάντων κατώτερον ἔχων, ὡς ἓνα τῶν ἐσχάτων ἀδελφῶν ἑαυτὸν ἐλογίζετο. Διὸ καὶ τῶν τέκνων τῆς ἐρήμου πληθυνομένων, καὶ καθ' ἡμέραν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πνευματικῶς γεννωμένων καὶ εὐαγγελικῶς ποιμαινομένων, ἐτέρω τὸ τῆς ἡγουμενίας ὄνομα πάσας τῆς ἡμέρας τῆς ζωῆς αὐτοῦ ἐνεχείριζεν, ὧν εἰς ὑπῆρξε καὶ πρῶτος ὁ παμμακάριστος καὶ τρισόσιος Πρόκλος, ἀνὴρ τῆς ἐγκυκλίου παιδεύσεως σφόδρα πεπειραμένος, βιβλίων τε τῶν ἕξωθεν καὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων, ἐνδιαθέτων τε καὶ τῶν ὕστερον ἐκτεθέντων, κιβώτιον τὴν οἰκίαν καρδίαν ἀποτελέσας<sup>1</sup>.*

This seems to show that Nilus himself, at least at this stage of his life, did not seek actively to found monasteries, but that his fame attracted men to him, and the force of circumstances compelled the establishment of a convent.

The same tendency may be seen, though not so clearly, in the other lives of this period, viz. those of Lucas and Vitalis; but it is perhaps unnecessary to pursue the point further. Enough has been said to show that the monasteries in South Italy were no exception to the rule which obtains in other early Basilian foundations. They were due to the fame of a hermit attracting men to come and live near his cave, and so forming first a Laura, and afterwards a convent.

A point which it would be interesting to settle is whether these early monasteries had any solid and valuable buildings. I do not think that there is any definite evidence to be obtained from the lives of the saints, but they leave the impression that architecture was not given much care by the monks. Possibly an examination of the ruins which remain in Calabria might throw some light on the subject, but it is more probable that whatever does remain is much later than the original foundations.

K. LAKE.

<sup>1</sup> *P. G.* 120, p. 77 B.

(*To be continued.*)