

and rood screen gorgeous with gilding and sombre with paintings of ascetic-looking patriarchs and apostles.

I noticed a grim picture of the Last Judgment, with ranks of the saved, in golden nimbus, sitting in rows as if in a church, the angels occupying a gallery. Beneath them was the yawning mouth of hell, revealing its doomed inhabitants.

In a picture of late date of Abraham entertaining the angels, the latter are represented as eating with a fork. In a picture of the death of the Virgin Mary, Christ is represented as taking her soul up to heaven crowned with a nimbus.

Behind this chapel, a dark cave lined with pictures, in which the brown faces gleam out from silver casings, is visible in the dim obscurity. Behind a grating are shown the bones and skulls of, it is said, 1,400 martyrs massacred by Chosroes, the Persian invader, in the beginning of the seventh century.

The founder of the monastery, St. Saba, was born in Cappadocia about 439, and when a boy of eight, fled from the world and entered the novitiate of a monastery. For over seventy years he lived in this wild gorge, first as solitary hermit, and then as Abbot or Archimandrite, and here he died at the age of ninety-four.

The grotto of St. Saba himself, in which the holy father lived and died, consists of two small chambers in the rock. A red-bearded priest while showing it to us told us in broken English the story of St. Saba and the lion. According to the legend, the saint, on entering his cave, found a lion in possession, but, after the manner of the hermits, he undauntedly said his prayers and then fell asleep. The lion twice dragged him out of the cave, but he remonstrated, "What do you want with me? If God permits you to eat me, eat me." Then the saint assigned the lion a corner of the cave and they dwelt amicably together. This sort of story is told with variations of St. Jerome, St. Paul, St. Anthony, and others of the hermit saints, and, perhaps, was an allegorical way of representing their struggle with the Devil, who "goeth about like a roaring lion," even penetrating the solitude of a hermitage.

The rule of the monks is very austere. They are under a vow never to eat animal food. In the refectory are long marble tables with wooden benches, with grim religious pictures on the walls, and a pulpit from which a reader drones the legend of the good St. Saba, or St. Basil's homilies, no one meanwhile being permitted to speak. Their midday meal consists of bread and olives—the bread very dry and poor. The best thing in evidence was some fragrant coffee which a monk was pounding in a