

epistle either from ancient Babylon, about which divers Jewish Christians might be residing, or from a city in Egypt, which had also the same name. All this, we may remark, goes to shew the feebleness of the Imperial fabric, seeing that on which it rests with all its weight, namely, Peter's being bishop of Rome, has not one verse in holy writ to support it. There is another peculiarity in Peter's life which it may be here proper to notice. Three of the evangelists have mentioned the fact of Peter's wife's mother lying sick of a fever, from which we gather that he was a married person. The Romish church however has laid an absolute interdict on all priests, from the Pope downwards, in regard to the enjoyment of this divine institution—a plain demonstration that they are in no sense the followers of the apostle. Luther, a man not only of courage but of wisdom, saw this, and that he might separate himself from the Romish priesthood, and shew himself to be what he was, a follower of the ancient apostles, married a wife—a circumstance which excited the surprise of many of his contemporaries, but which had a wholesome effect in advancing the reformation.

Of James, the kinsman of Christ, little is known besides what is mentioned in the book of Acts. He has been called Bishop of Jerusalem, and if so, he was a Bishop in the Presbyterian sense of the word, seeing at the Synod held there he had no higher place than the rest of the brethren. He appears, however, to have resided more in that city than the rest of his brethren. He did not confine his attention to the Jews at home merely, he wrote an epistle to the twelve tribes that were scattered abroad, wherein he corrects the errors in doctrine and practice into which the Hebrew Christians had fallen, and seeks to comfort them under their trials. It would seem that James and his brethren conformed to the ordinances of Moses, Acts xxi, 18—24, and this doubtless was one reason why he was less offensive to the Jews than Paul; still so long as the essential truths of the gospel are maintained, there can be no friendship with unbelievers. James, accordingly, after Paul had escaped from their hands by appealing to Cæsar, soon experienced their malignity. He suffered Martyrdom in Jerusalem, and Josephus ascribes the destruction of the city, which happened a few years after, A. D. 70, to their slaying that just man. His words are, "these things" (the calamities of the siege and taking of the city,) "happened to them by way of revenging the death of James the Just, the brother of Jesus whom they call

Christ. For the Jews slew him, though a very just man." The cup of their iniquity was full forty years before this, when they slew the Prince of Life, and this murder of an apostle shewed they were set upon opposing to the uttermost his kingdom, and now the Lord summoned the Roman armies against them, who hemmed them in on every side. Jerusalem was utterly destroyed—the temple was burned, and the plough made to pass through the city. It has been computed that 1,200,000 perished in the overthrow, and the Jews were carried captives into all nations, in which state they remain to this day.

The only remaining disciple of whom we shall speak is John. The Lord Jesus, in speaking of Peter's martyrdom, seemed also to foretell that a longer life should be allotted to his fellow-disciple (John 21, 22.) He is accordingly said to have outlived all the other disciples, and wrote his Gospel in his old age, about A. D. 97. He was banished to Patmos by the Emperor Domitian, successor to Titus, and here he was honoured by receiving that series of prophetic visions which unfolds the history of the Church in her struggles with her enemies until the consummation of all things. We are told, however, that he was liberated from his imprisonment and returned to Asia, where he lived until he was about 100 years of age. Many things are recorded of him by the inspired historians, a few additional are added by profane writers, which we shall just mention. It is said, on one occasion, while in a bath in Ephesus, that Corinthus, a noted heretic, coming in, John withdrew, saying, "Let us flee, lest the bath should fall, while Corinthus, an enemy to the truth is within it." He is said also to have been cast into a cauldron of oil by order of Domitian, and to have come out unhurt. An affecting incident showing his fatherly care of the young of his flock, is also recorded. A young man in whose spiritual well being he had been interested, falling into bad company, at length relapsed so far from his christian profession, that he became captain over certain robbers who infested the country. John, at the peril of his life, followed them into their lurking-place, and by his affectionate counsel and exhortations, persuaded the youth to abandon his evil ways, and conducted him back to the society of Christians. The last anecdote carries with it something of its own internal evidence. When a very old man, and unable to speak much in the congregation, his constantly repeated sermon was "Christians love one another," and on being asked why he preached only one thing, he