

JUSTIN BEFORE THE PREFECT.

A SCENE IN THE SECOND CENTURY.

Marcus Aurelius is Emperor of Rome. He is a philosopher of the Stoic sort, and is considered on the whole a good ruler, though the Christians suffered much in his reign. Justin had been a Platonic philosopher, but is now a Christian. Crescens, a philosopher too, but of the Cynic order, has a strong personal pique against Justin, and he caused him to be brought before the Præfect Rusticus, who passes sentence of death upon him.

Rusticus. First of all sacrifice to the gods, and do homage to the emperors.

Justinus. He who obeys Christ is guilty of no crime, (meaning that he ought to be discharged without further process.)

R. Of what sect do you profess yourself? (Justinus was in the habit of wearing the philosopher's cloak even after his conversion.)

J. I tried all, and finally embraced that of Christ: though that is not pleasing to those who profess what is erroneous.

R. Do you profess that doctrine, unfortunate man?

J. Yes, for it seems to me that it is true.

R. What is the doctrine?

J. That we should worship the God of the Christians, whom we believe to have been from the beginning, One; the Creator and Artificer of all things seen and unseen: and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God; who was predicted of by the prophets, as the future Saviour of mankind, their preacher, and instructor in excellent doctrine: