

In the year 103 we read of Judas, the Essenian, who was highly venerated for his sanctity and the gift of prophecy, and whom different writers speak of in words of unstinted praise.

Year 77.—This year will be forever memorable by an event, which William Pepin, professor at the university of Paris and a famous preacher of the Dominican Order, recounts, and of which he says, that he found the report thereof in an ancient volume of the Dominican library in Valence, namely: "I found that S. Cyril, long a dweller on Mount Carmel, who ruled (as Bishop of Alexandria Egypt) about the year 428, wrote of the generation of S. Ann, showing who her parents were. He says that about 78 years before the incarnation of our Lord, there lived a virgin of the tribe and family of Juda (in Bethlehem) who was beautiful in body but more beautiful in soul, and whose name was Emerentiana. This chaste virgin, with the consent of her parents, visited certain devout brothers, living on Mount Carmel, and commenced to speak with them about the advent of the Messias and the prophecies referring to it. When she became of marriageable age, her parents wanted to give her to a very honest man in marriage, but she did not consent, as she had secretly promised virginity, if such were the will of God. Hence she had recourse to the same fathers, telling them of the will of her parents and her own. Hearing this, they prayed to God to manifest His will in this matter. After they had done this for three days there was shown to the superior and two other very pious ones a tree, on which there was a twig, bearing a most beautiful flower which contained a delectable fruit. Then they heard a voice telling them that the tree was Emerentiana, and her will so completely united to God's will. The twig signified a very holy daughter, whom God would give her in the married state. But the flower signified a most chaste virgin, whom this daughter of Emerentiana would bear, who would remain a virgin and who would have the fruit of life, the natural son of God in her virginal womb, and at the proper time would give birth to Him without labor. This revelation the fathers communicat-

ed to Emerentiana, who replied: The will of God be done. Hence she consented to be married, humbly beseeching God, that she might not be given to a man who had not the fear of God in him. When, after this six different men were proposed to her, she would not take any of them, because by inspiration she knew their bad intentions. But when a seventh, called Stolanus, came, who feared God and wished to marry not through lust, but in the hope of having issue, she consented and was married to him, conceiving by him a daughter, whom she called "Ann." She also gave birth to another girl Esmeria (otherwise called Sohe), who was the mother of S. Elisabeth, of whom was born John the Baptist.

(The book of S. Cyril "de ortu B. V. Mariæ," which he wrote after the council of Ephesus and sent to Pope Celestine I. was called in doubt because it no longer exists. But of the works of this Saint, which we find mentioned by other writers, scarcely one half exists yet, and thousands of other works have in the course of time, disappeared,—hence the argument is of no value.)

Years 65-48.—A holy Essenian, called Manahem, predicted to Herod, who at that time was studying at the college of the Essenians, that he would be the future King of Juda, that his rule would be splendid, but stained by many vices and crimes.

About the year 65 S. Elizabeth, the mother of the precursor of our Lord, was born.

Year 38.—This year was significant for the Jews, for the sceptre was taken from Juda and gave to Herod, the Judæmacan. He called Manahem, who had prophesied to him his elevation to the crown and wished to know how long he was going to rule. Manahem keeping silent, the King asked if he would rule 10 years, and Manahem replied: "Twenty, thirty—" but did not finish the sentence. The King was satisfied and dismissed him with honor and for his sake, as Josephus Flavius and Palaconydorus say, he treated the family of Carmel with honor "during his life, though to others he was a bloodthirsty tyrant."

Years 16-15.—In these years the immaculate conception and nativity of the