

It was under the law established by the above edict that the pious and excellent Ignatius, Presbyter of Antioch, was put to death. He met Trojan flushed with his victories over the Scythians and Dacians, and having made a noble confession of his faith, was ordered to be thrown to the wild beasts, at Rome, for the entertainment of the people, which sentence he was enabled to bear with a holy fortitude and joy. We pass over the epistles said to have been written by this eminent martyr, while travelling from Syria to Rome, as they rather appear to have been done by another hand, or at least they are so interpolated as to render their authority very doubtful.

The next Presbyter, who was a disciple of John, of whom we shall speak, was Polycarp. This excellent person ministered the word in Smyrna, and most probably was engaged in this ministry, at the time that the Lord Jesus addressed to John in Patmos, the epistle to the Smyrnan church: "Fear thou none of those things which thou shalt suffer, behold the Devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Polycarp suffered martyrdom A. D. 167. When he was brought before the Roman Pro-consul, and being asked to reproach Christ, Polycarp replied, "Eighty and six years have I served Christ, and he has never done me the least wrong; how can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour." He was condemned to the flames, of which we are informed he had a prophetic intimation beforehand, when he dreamed that his pillow was in flames, and which he interpreted as referring to his martyrdom by burning. The Jews we are informed were especially busy on this occasion in collecting wood and faggots out of the shops and booths for the pile, shew-

ing that their opposition to the gospel was in no respect diminished by the overthrow of their city and commonwealth, and teaching us that adversity has no power of itself to humble the heart of man, or to bring him nearer to God. In his epistle addressed to the Phillipians, and which is generally admitted as genuine, we find the following reference to Paul's epistle to the same church: "These things my brethren I took not the liberty of myself to write unto you concerning righteousness, but you yourselves before encouraged me to it; for neither can I, nor any other such as I am, come up to the wisdom of the blessed and renowned Paul, who being himself in person with those who then lived, did with all exactness and soundness teach the word of truth, and being gone from you, wrote an epistle to you, into which, if you look, you will be able to edify yourselves in the faith that has been delivered unto you, which is the mother of us all, being followed with hope, and led on by a general love both towards God and towards Christ, and towards our neighbour. For if any man has these things, he has fulfilled the law of righteousness; for he that has charity is far from all sin." "Wherefore I exhort all of you that ye obey the word of righteousness, and exercise all patience, which ye have seen set before your eyes, not only in the blessed Ignatius and Zozimus and Rufus, but in others among yourselves, and in Paul himself and the rest of the Apostles. Being confident of this, that all these have not run in vain, but in faith and righteousness, and are gone to the place that was due to them from the Lord, with whom also they suffered; for they loved not this present world, but him who died, and was raised again by God for us."^{*}

* Translation by Wake.