

of a very pronounced character. In proof of this, Mark informs us, ch. 3 : 17, that he and his brother received from Jesus the name of *Boanerges*. What that actually means would in all probability have remained a mystery till this day, had not Mark considerably given the sense, by translating it "The sons of Thunder." This designation is supposed by some to have reference to their powers of eloquence in preaching, but it is far more likely it was applied to them as indicative of the fiery impetuosity of their natures.

The answer to the puzzling question, "Who was the father of Zebedee's children?" having already leaked out, we may now ask "Who was their mother?" Comparing Matthew 27 : 56 with Mark 15 : 40, it is safe to say that Salome was their mother. As Zebedee was a fisherman, their home must have been on the lake shore, probably in Bethsaida or in Capernaum. It is inferred from some casual remarks that the old gentleman was pretty well off. He had "hired servants" in his employ, Mark 1 : 20, implying that he was doing a considerable business, and that he was by no means in indigent circumstances. His mother, too, seems to have been one of the women who ministered to Jesus "of their substance," Luke 8 : 3; she was certainly one of those who brought costly spices for embalming his body, Mark 16 : 1. It is probable that Zebedee died soon after his sons were called to become fishers of men, for his name is not mentioned after that time, while we hear of Salome on several occasions, as one who followed the Lord from place to place, which she would not likely have done, to the neglect of her domestic duties, had her husband been alive. The earliest mention of James is by the first three evangelists in their accounts of the calling of the twelve. He seems to have been one of those present at Capernaum when Jesus cured Simon Peter's wife of a fever, Mark 1 : 19-30. In addition to the three occasions already specified in which he shared with Peter and John in a marked degree the confidence of the Master, there are only two others in which the sayings and doings of James are mentioned in a way that calls for special remark. The first of these was the incident mentioned by Luke, ch 9 : 51-56, when Jesus, previous to going to Jerusalem with his disciples, sent, as it seems, James and John in advance to make

suitable preparations for stopping over-night at a Samaritan village. The messengers went as directed and announced the proposed visit of the Galilean prophet; to their annoyance, however, the Samaritans, true to their national antipathies, declined to receive them; whereupon the two envoys returned, highly indignant at the affront put on their Master, and enquired of him, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, as Elias did?" Many of the Fathers, as well as eminent later theologians, including Calvin, with almost idolatrous reverence for the infallibility of the apostles, have endeavoured to justify James and John in this matter. In the estimation of Jesus, however, it is clear that they were the subjects of misguided zeal, almost as reprehensible as those whom they would thus mercilessly have consigned to perdition. "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of," replied the Saviour of mankind, or you would not have betrayed a spirit so revengeful—"For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." The rebuke administered to these disciples cuts at the root of ecclesiastical despotism, whatever form it may assume.

The other instance in which James figures conspicuously, betrays a family failing. Salome and her sons appear to have been strongly impressed with the idea—shared in more or less by all the twelve, that in some way or other, they were to be rewarded for their adherence to Christ by worldly advancement. They clung, one and all, with singular tenacity to the old Jewish view of the Messianic Kingdom, expecting that one day Jesus would emerge from his mysterious humility, and place himself at the head of the civil government. This accounts for their "slowness of heart" to believe the Scriptures concerning him, and their perversion of his own oft-repeated statements. Had he not promised them "an hundredfold now, in this time?" Mark 10 : 30. Nay, had he not said that when his work was accomplished they should "sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes!" Matthew 19 : 28. Salome was a strong-minded woman. She reasoned that her sons were already favorites with the Master, and that there is nothing like striking the iron while it is hot. If there are to be any good berths in the new Kingdom, why not make timely application for them? If