

Alexander of Cappadocia.

Translator's Biographical Notice.

[a.d. 170–233–251.] Alexander was at first bishop of a church in Cappadocia, but on his visiting Jerusalem he was appointed to the bishopric of the church there, while the previous bishop Narcissus was alive, in consequence of a vision which was believed to be divine.¹²²⁷ During the Decian persecution he was thrown into prison at Cæsarea, and died there,¹²²⁸ a.d. 251. The only writings of his which we know are those from which the extracts are made.¹²²⁹

1227 Euseb., *Hist. Eccles.*, vi. 11. [Narcissus must have been born about a.d. 121. Might have known Polycarp.]

1228 Ibid., vi. 46. [Narcissus lived till a.d. 237, and died a martyr, aged 116.]

1229 [He was a pupil of Pantænus, continued under Clement, and defended Origen against the severity of Demetrius. Two dates which are conjectural are adjusted to these facts. I find it difficult to reconcile them with those *implied* by Eusebius.]

From the Epistles of Alexander.



I. An Epistle to the People of Antioch.¹²³⁰

Alexander, a servant and prisoner of Jesus Christ, sends greeting in the Lord to the blessed church of Antioch. Easy and light has the Lord made my bonds to me during the time of my imprisonment since I have learned that in the providence of God, Asclepiades—who, in regard to the right faith, is most eminently qualified for the office—has undertaken the episcopate of your holy church of Antioch. And this epistle, my brethren and masters, I have sent by the hand of the blessed presbyter Clement,¹²³¹ a man virtuous and well tried, whom ye know already, and will know yet better; who also, coming here by the providence and supervision of the Master, has strengthened and increased the Church of the Lord.

1230 A fragment. In Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, book vi. ch. xi.

1231 It was the opinion of Jerome in his *Catalogus* that the Clement spoken of by Alexander was Clement of Alexandria. This Clement, at any rate, did live up to the time of the Emperor Severus, and sojourned in these parts, as he tells us himself in the first book of his *Stromateis*. And he was also the friend of bishop Alexander, to whom he dedicated his book *On the Ecclesiastical Canon, or Against the Jews*, as Eusebius states in his *Eccles. Hist.*, book vi. ch. xiii. (Migne). [But from the third of these epistles one would certainly draw another inference. How could he, a pupil of Clement, describe and introduce his *master* in such terms as he uses here?]

II. From an Epistle to the Antinoites.¹²³²

Narcissus salutes you, who held the episcopate in this district before me, who is now also my colleague and competitor in prayer for you,¹²³³ and who, having now attained to¹²³⁴ his hundred and tenth year, unites with me in exhorting you to be of one mind.¹²³⁵

1232 In Euseb., *Hist. Eccles.*, book vi. ch. xi.

1233 συνεξεταζόμενος μοι διὰ τῶν εὐχῶν. Jerome renders it: *Salutat vos Narcissus, qui ante me hic tenuit episcopalem locum et nunc mecum eundem orationibus regit.*

1234 ηνυκῶς.

1235 The text gives ὁμοίως ἐμοὶ φρονῆσαι. Several of the codices and also Nicephorus give the better reading, ὁμοίως ἐμοὶ ὁμοφρονῆσαι, which is confirmed by the interpretations of Rufinus and Jerome.

III. From an Epistle to Origen.¹²³⁶

For this, as thou knowest, was the will of God, that the friendship subsisting between us from our forefathers should be maintained unbroken, yea rather, that it should increase in fervency and strength. For we are well acquainted with those blessed fathers who have trodden the course before us, and to whom we too shall soon go: Pantænus, namely, that man verily blessed, my master; and also the holy Clement, who was once my master and my benefactor; and all the rest who may be like them, by whose means also I have come to know thee, my lord and brother, who excellest all.¹²³⁷

1236 In Euseb., *Hist. Eccles.*, ch. xiv.

1237 [This contemporary tribute confirms the enthusiastic eulogy of the youthful Gregory. See p. 38, *supra*.]

IV. From an Epistle to Demetrius, Bishop of Alexandria.¹²³⁸

And he¹²³⁹—i.e., *Demetrius*—has added to his letter that this is a matter that was never heard of before, and has never been done now,—namely, that laymen should take part *in public speaking*,¹²⁴⁰ when there are bishops present. But in this assertion he has departed evidently far from the truth by some means. For, indeed, wherever there are found persons capable of profiting the brethren, such persons are exhorted by the holy bishops to address the people. Such was the case at Laranda, where Evelpis was thus exhorted by Neon; and at Iconium, Paulinus was thus exhorted by Celsus; and at Synada, Theodorus also by Atticus, our blessed brethren. And it is probable that this is done in other places also, although we know not the fact.¹²⁴¹

1238 In Euseb., *Hist. Eccles.*, ch. xix.

1239 Demetrius is, for honour's sake, addressed in the third person. Perhaps ἡ σὴ ἀγιότης or some such form preceded.

1240 ὀμιλεῖν.

1241 [This precise and definite testimony is not to be controverted. It follows the traditions of the Synagogue (*Acts xiii. 15*), and agrees with the Pauline prescription as to the use of the *charismata* in *1 Cor. xiv*. The chiefs of the Synagogue retained the power of giving this liberty, and this passed to the Christian authorities.]

Note by the American Editor.

If Alexander died in the Decian persecution, it is noteworthy how far the sub-apostolic age extended. This contemporary of Cyprian was coadjutor to Narcissus, who may have seen those who knew St. John. See vol. i. p. 416, note 1, this series; also vol. i. p. 568, Fragment ii.
