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 SECTION III.   
 TO WHAT PLACE ADDRESSED, &c.   
   
   
   
 1. From comparing Col. iv. 9, with ib. 17 and Philem. 2, we infer   
 that Philemon was a resident at Colossw. The impression on the reader   
 from Philem. 1, 2, is that Apphia was his wife, and Archippus (a minister   
 of the church there, Col. iv. 17), their son, or some near relative dwelling   
 with them under the same roof. A letter on a matter so strictly domestic   
 would hardly include strangers to the family in its address.   
 2. An hypothesis has been advanced, recently by Wicseler, that our   
 present Epistle is alluded to in Col. iv. 16, as “that from Laodicea,” and   
 that the message to Archippus in the next verse favours the view that   
 he, and. consequently Philemon, dwelt at Laodicea. And this is corro-   
 borated, by Archippus being called bishop of Laodicea in the Apostolic   
 Constitutions (vii. 46).   
 8. The objection to this hypothesis is not so much from any evidently   
 false assumption or inference in the chain of facts, all of which may have   
 been as represented, but from the improbability, to my view, that by the   
 Jatter limb of the parallelism—\*“ this Epistle,” “that from Laodicea,”—   
 can be meant a private letter, even though it may have regarded a member   
 of the Colossian church. We seem to want some Epistle corresponding   
 in weight with that to the Colossians, for such an order, in such a form,   
 to receive its natural interpretation.   
 4. Of Onesimus we know nothing for certain, except from the notices   
 here and in Col. iv. 9. Tradition reports variously respecting him. In   
 the Apostolical Canons (73) he is said to have been emancipated by his   
 master, and in the Apostolical Constitutions (vii. 46) to have been   
 ordained by St. Paul himself bishop of Bercea in Macedonia, and to have   
 suffered martyrdom in Rome, Nicephorus, H. E. iii. 11. In the Epistle   
 of Ignatius to the Ephesians, he mentions an Onesimus as being their   
 bishop. It is just possible that this may be our Onesimus. The earliest   
 date which can be assigned to the martyrdom of Ignatius is a.p. 107,   
 i.e, thirty-five years after the date of this Epistle. Supposing Onesimus   
 to have been thirty at this time, he would then have been only sixty-   
 five. And even setting Ignatius’s death at the latest date, a.p. 116, we   
 should still be far within the limits of possibility. It is at least singular   
 that in ch. ii, immediately after naming Onesimus, Ignatius proceeds   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
 to play on his name as St. Paul does. (Compare Philem. ver. 20, and   
 above, § i. 2.)   
   
   
   
   
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