INTRODUCTION. ] 1 PETER. {ou. xvi.   
   
 This passage can meau nothing else than that Peter and Paul suffered   
 at Rome, and that either their graves or some memorials of their mar-   
 tyrdom were to be seen on the spot.   
 17. To these testimonies we may add that of Eusebius himself, who   
 says in more.than one place that   
 “ Nero was at last uplifted to murder the Apostles, and that Paul   
 is related to have been beheaded at Rome, and Peter to have been   
 erucified also under Nero.”   
 18. And that of Lactantiu:   
 “ When now Nero reigned, Peter came to Rome, and by working   
 certain miracles by the power granted him of God, converted many to   
 righteousness, aud confirmed and established the church of God, which   
 being told to Nero, when he found that not only at Rome, but every   
 where, multitudes were daily falling off from the worship of idols, and   
 going over to the new religion in contempt of antiquity; execrable   
 and noxious tyrant as he was, he determined to destroy the heavenly   
 church, and to abolish righteousness ; and first of all men becoming   
 persecutor of God’s servants, he erucified Peter, and slew Paul.”   
 19. In this report later testimonies concur.   
 In forming an estimate of its trustworthiness, some discrimination   
 is necessary. The whole of that which relates to the earlier visits   
 under Claudius, and the controversy with Simon Magus, fails us, as   
 inconsistent with what we know, or are obliged to infer, from Scripture .   
 itself. This being so, is the rest, including the martyrdom at Rome, so   
 connected with this fabulous matter, that it stands or falls with it ? When   
 we find in this, as in other matters, that the very earliest Christian   
 writers might and did fall into historical errors which wo can now plainly   
 detect and put aside,—when we find so prevalent a tendency even in   
 early times to concentrate events and memorials of interest at Rome,   
 how much are we to adopt, how much to reject, of this testimony to St.   
 Peter’s martyrdom there ?   
 20. These are questions which it would far exceed the limits of this   
 Introduction to discuss, and which moreover do not immediately belong   
 even to collateral considerations regarding our Epistle. ‘They have been   
 very copiously treated, and it seems almost impossible to arrive at even   
 reasonable probability in our ultimate decision upon them. ‘Their own   
 data are perplexing, and still more perplexing matters have been mixed   
 up with them. On the one hand, ancient tradition is almost unanimous :   
 on the other, it witnesses to particulars in which even its earliest and   
 most considerable testimonies must be put aside as inconsistent with   
 known fact. Then again we have on the one hand the patent and un-   
 scrupulous perversion of fact to serve a purpose, which has ever been the   
 charaeteristic of the church of Rome, in her desperate shifts to establish   
 a suecession to the fabulous primacy of St. Peter, and on the other the   
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